

The Procurement Leader's Scorecard



9 questions that separate reactive procurement from strategic leadership



The Procurement Leader’s Scorecard

Every day, businesses around the world are confronted with constant volatility driven by shifting trade and national security policies; tariffs, exemptions, sanctions and retaliation; and hot-zone military conflicts. Procurement teams have to maintain supply continuity and margins while trade rules, transport routes, technology risks, and supplier economics change quickly.

CEOs and Boards of Directors are now asking procurement and supply chain leaders to solve unprecedented problems — to become a source of strategic business intelligence. Doing so requires new tools, new skills, and a new perspective that most procurement teams don’t currently have. These 9 questions can help reveal how advanced and strategic your procurement function is. Just provide an honest Yes or No answer, and gauge your score:

What the Scorecard reveals

The questions were devised to provide a quick assessment of whether your supply chain and procurement functions are up to the challenges of today’s market. Each question corresponds to one of ImportGenius’ 4 pillars of strategic procurement:

- Geopolitics and trade exposure
- Supply chain resilience
- Data skills and artificial intelligence
- Competitive advantage and growth

Strategic Pillar		Question	Yes	No
Geopolitics and trade exposure	1	Do you know where your tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 suppliers manufacture the products you buy?	☐	☐
	2	Can you quantify how changes to tariffs and trade policy affect the true landed cost of your critical products and components?	☐	☐
Supply chain resilience	3	Can you identify, with evidence, which of your top suppliers has gained or lost production capacity over the past 12 months?	☐	☐
	4	Have you recently assessed your critical suppliers for financial, geopolitical, compliance and supply-chain risk?	☐	☐
Data skills and artificial intelligence	5	Can your team use AI and procurement data to identify risks, opportunities and sourcing alternatives faster?	☐	☐
	6	Can your team independently use internal and external data to evaluate suppliers, markets and sourcing decisions?	☐	☐
Competitive advantage and growth	7	Would your team know within 30 days if a major competitor changed suppliers, shifted production to another country, or materially increased purchasing from one of your suppliers?	☐	☐
	8	When market or supply conditions change, can your team quantify the impact and recommend a course of action within days, not weeks?	☐	☐
	9	Do you know if your competitor is getting a better price from your supplier?	☐	☐

Your ranking is based upon the number of Yes answers:



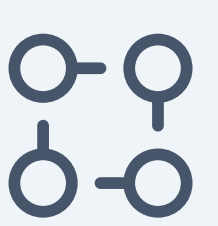
0–2
Reactive

Procurement primarily responds to immediate needs and disruptions.



3–6
Capable

Strong processes exist, but visibility and intelligence gaps remain.



7–8
Strategic

Procurement actively influences risk, cost and business decisions.



9
Leading

Procurement functions as a source of competitive advantage.

Regardless of your ranking, what really matters is the questions where you answered No. They reveal where your procurement function is facing gaps in knowledge and skills, leaving your business exposed.

In the pages that follow, you’ll learn how to fill those gaps and redefine the procurement mandate from a cost center into a source of real competitive advantage.

Pillar 1

Geopolitics and trade exposure

Fast-changing government policies and actions are jeopardizing once-reliable lanes and routes and placing established supplier relationships at risk. Intensified border enforcement means importers are expected to know the provenance and value of every component from every tier in the supply chain. Procurement leaders need to know which products, locations, and lanes can be affected by a policy change; what alternatives exist; and how quickly they can adjust.

What leading teams do:

Build an exposure map with end-to-end supply chain visibility. Use trade data to verify supplier claims about tier 2 and tier 3 origins. Then map out — and price out — substitutable supply scenarios.

Ask your team:

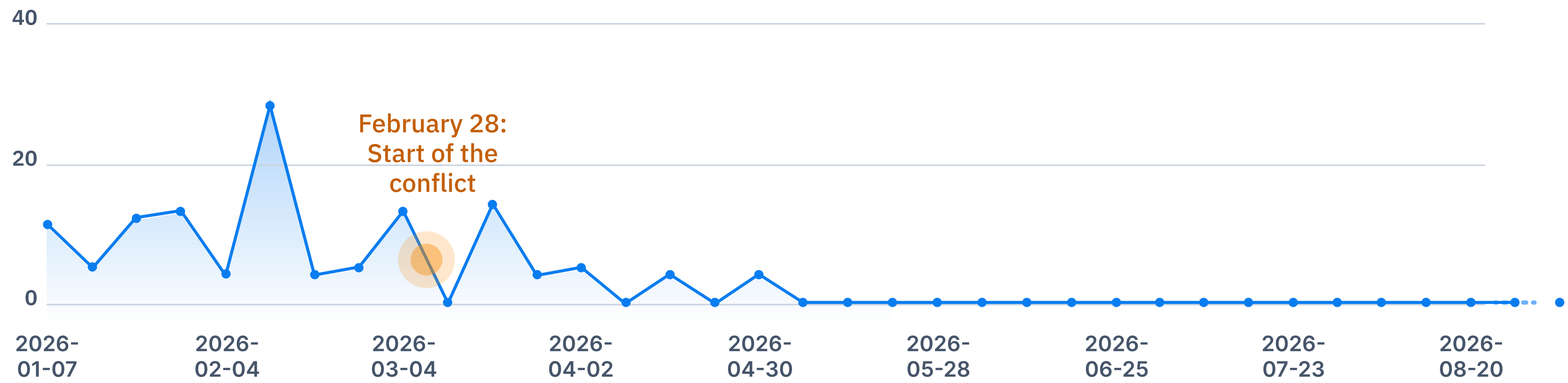
If a tariff, trade restriction or geopolitical event affected one of our critical sourcing markets tomorrow, how quickly could we quantify the impact and identify viable alternatives?

How data supports geopolitical readiness and response:

Data can quantify exposure for any category of goods, exposing new trade patterns and uncovering early indications of disruptions to come.

Trade data provided the first signals of how the closure of the Strait of Hormuz affected the flow of multiple products beyond just oil — notably the end of aluminum imports from Qatar.

Aluminum imports from Qatar
TEUS BY WEEK, JANUARY 1 TO SEPTEMBER 10, 2026



The Hormuz crisis, combined with the 50% U.S. tariff on all aluminum imports, is raising prices on a wide range of downstream products from packaging to car parts. This kind of trade intelligence can provide a first-mover advantage in the search for alternatives.



Supply chain resilience

Resilience today is about adaptability and speed: how quickly can your team respond to the ebb and flow of product demand, operational needs, and supplier capability? The lowest unit price for a component is now less important than the lowest risk-adjusted cost — a determination that includes freight volatility, the likelihood of disruptions, and the duration and cost of any line stoppages. Every supply chain is only as strong as its weakest link, and every link carries risks.

What leading teams do:

Institutionalize continuous supplier intelligence.

Establish systems that can combine internal and external data to detect changes in supplier capacity and exposure. Assess every link of your existing supply chain for financial security and viability, quality, manufacturing and shipping capacity.

Ask your team:

What do we believe is the greatest weakness of each of our tier 1 suppliers? What's our go-to alternative for each one? And what data do we have to support that solution?

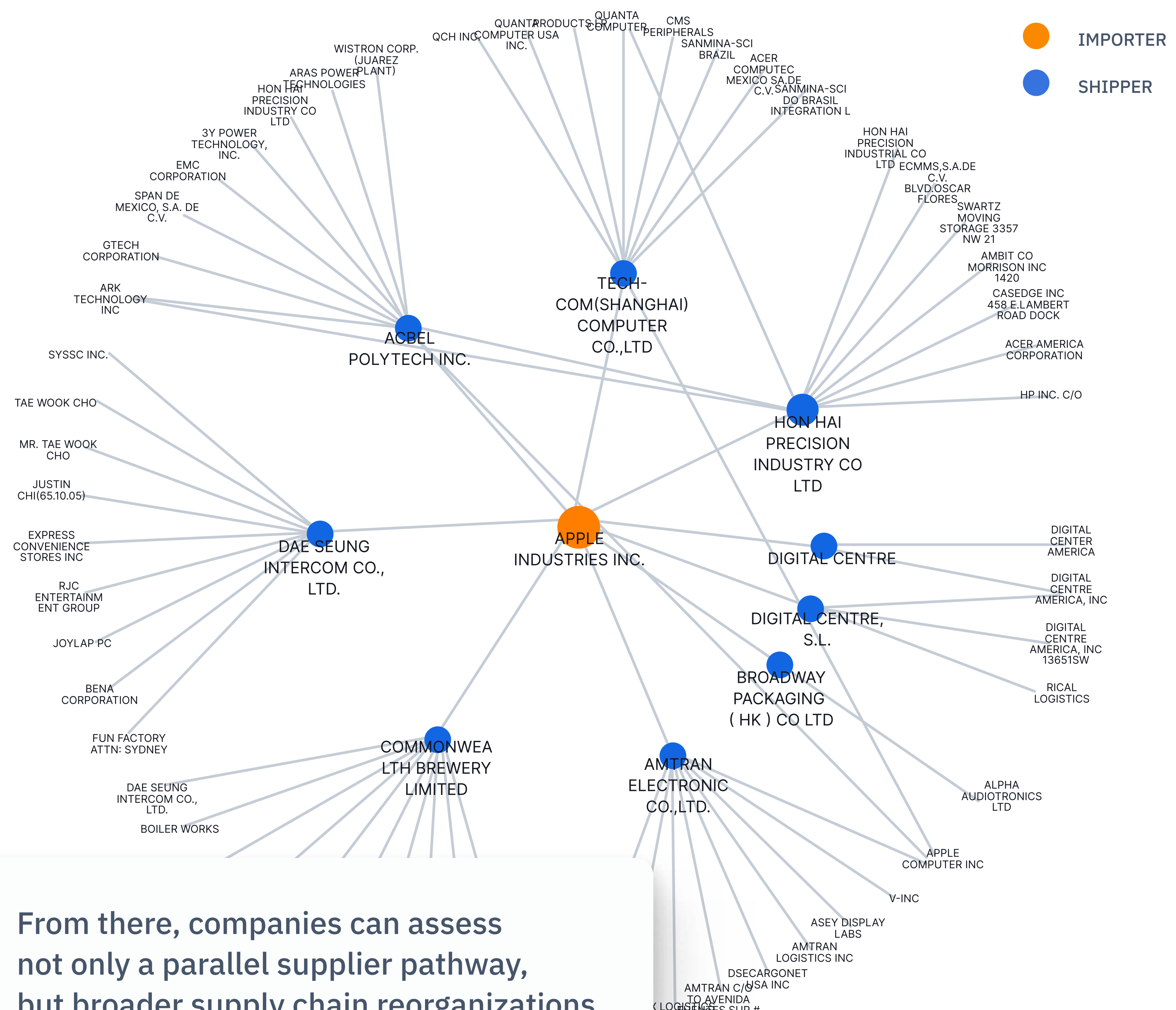
How data supports resilience:

Trade data, sometimes gathered from multiple countries, can reveal the connections between tier 1, tier 2 and tier 3 suppliers, exposing and visualizing hidden networks.

It can also do the same for any alternative pathway, providing details on capacity, carriers, and shipment records.

Relationship mapping: importers and their suppliers

MEDIUM-SIZED, US-BASED SMALL APPLIANCE MANUFACTURER



From there, companies can assess not only a parallel supplier pathway, but broader supply chain reorganizations such as nearshoring, regionalization, or vertical integration.

Data skills and artificial intelligence

Every supply chain generates reams of data on a daily basis. Combine that with manifest-level trade databases and it’s a treasure trove that can unlock highly valuable, analytics-driven insight. Because data can travel faster than goods, the ability to analyze data quickly can drastically shorten decision and response times to emerging problems. Artificial intelligence can transform periodic decision-making into a continuous intelligence capability.

- 44% of companies report using AI in supply chain management (BCG)
- 23% of companies have a structured, formal AI strategy for procurement (Gartner)
- 40% of all traditional S2P procurement activities can be automated (McKinsey)

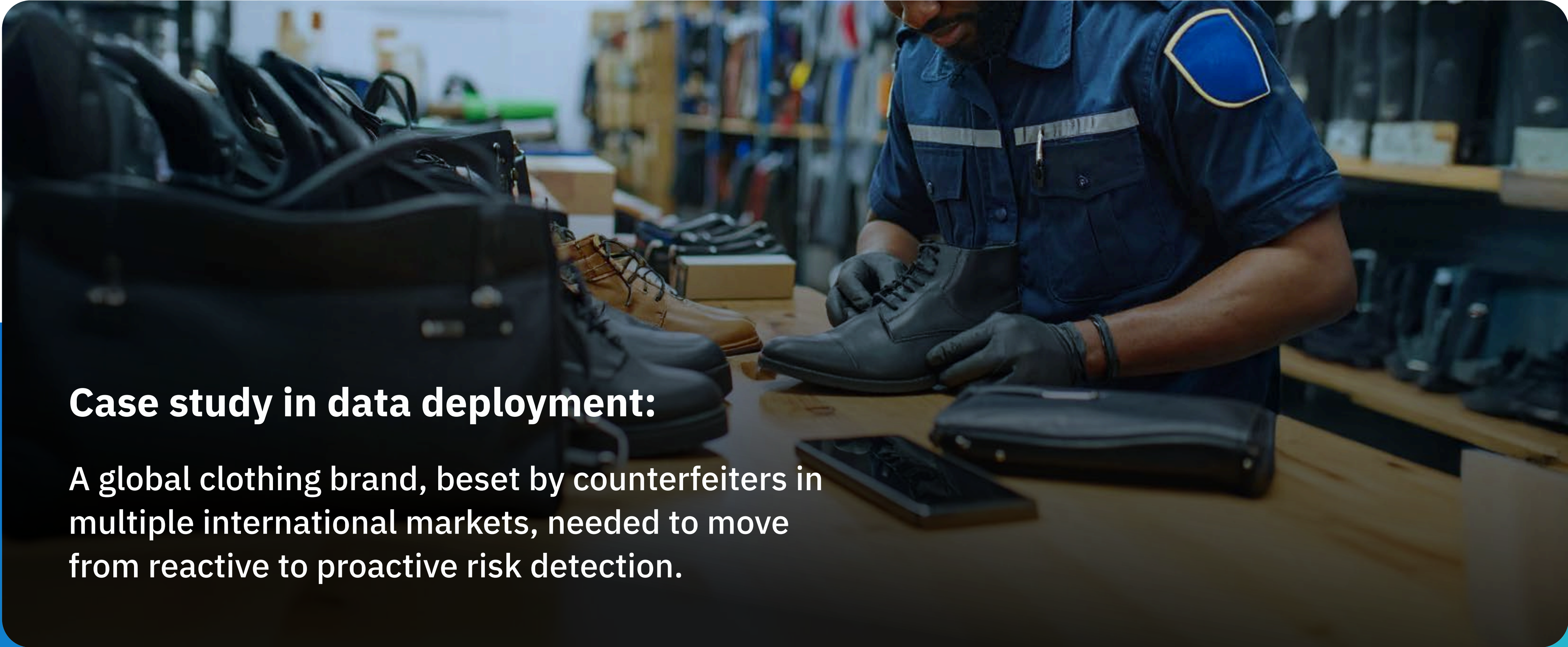
What leading teams do:

Build a reliable, flexible data foundation.

Put digital infrastructure in place to collect and house internal data, and supplement it with external trade and pricing data from multiple sources in order to analyze trends and benchmark your progress. And invest in the data skills needed to put that digital infrastructure to work, from S2P automation to AI-driven analytics.

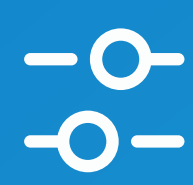
Ask your team:

What procurement decision currently takes us days or weeks that better data and AI could help us make in hours?



Case study in data deployment:

A global clothing brand, beset by counterfeiters in multiple international markets, needed to move from reactive to proactive risk detection.



The team integrated trade data into its systems, searching by HS codes and product keywords for shipments in key destinations.



They tracked trade volumes, routes, and company profiles, and set live alerts when suspicious patterns appeared.



The results: Vendor screening became faster and cross-functional teams finally worked from a single source of truth, grinding the problem to a halt.



Real-time alerts ensured new threats were flagged before products ever reached the market.

Pillar 4

Competitive advantage and growth

Strategic procurement is all about expanding the traditional mandate beyond the focus on costs and becoming part of the visioning process for your organization. Instead of asking “How can procurement support operations?”, ask “How can procurement shape and transform operations?”

What leading teams do:

- 1. Build a competitive intelligence function.**
Your competitors’ shipments are public record. With trade data, you can see their procurement changes in real time, so that nothing comes as a surprise, allowing you to assess whether you are keeping pace — and enabling you to become the pace-setter.
- 2. Adopt agile and dynamic sourcing.**
One of the ASCM’s [top 10 trends of 2026](#), agile sourcing prioritizes iteration, speed and adaptability, allowing procurement teams to dynamically adjust strategies in response to market shifts

Ask your team:

If a competitor changes suppliers, entered a new sourcing market or began buying significantly larger shipments of a critical commodity, how quickly would we know?

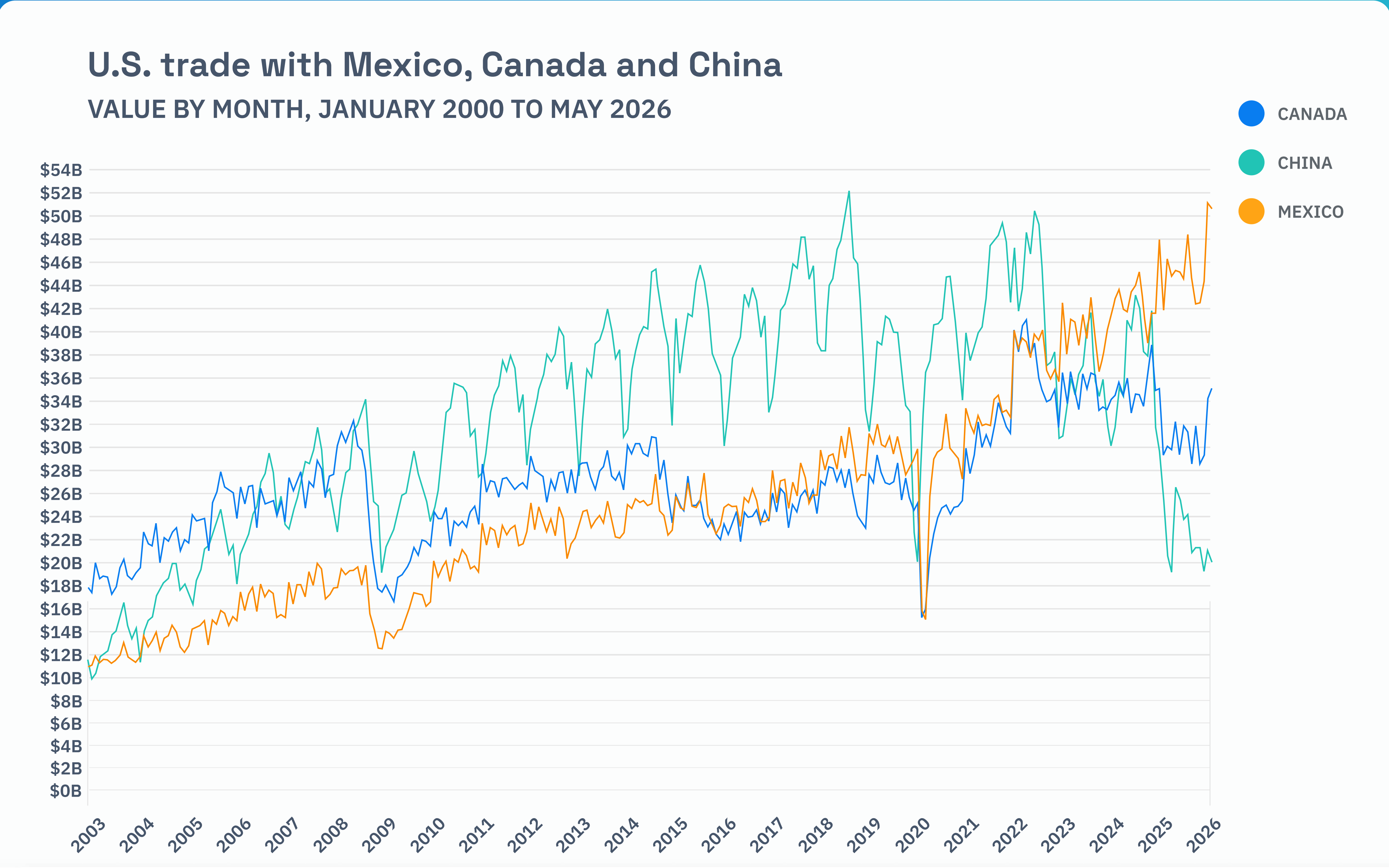
Case study in business transformation:

In 2021, a regional American canned foods manufacturer was facing bankruptcy due in part to pandemic-related supply chain disruptions. The adoption of procurement intelligence changed what the company was capable of doing.

How data supports strategy:

Internal data tells a company what it has bought from whom, and what it believes its supply chain is. Trade data helps test that view against observed market behaviour from competitors and others, unveiling what its supply chain can become.

For example: as companies have adopted nearshoring, Mexico has overtaken both China and Canada as America’s top trading partner. Was your firm part of the trend? If not, is it too late?



That spike in activity has also led Washington to step up enforcement on the Mexican border against what it calls a global “shadow transshipment network.” Leading companies are already re-assessing recent nearshoring moves in anticipation of what’s next.



Using trade data, procurement leaders identified growers in the Caribbean and processors in Asia that had maintained uninterrupted production — including some their competitors had been using for years.



Data also helped determine which suppliers could grow which ingredients, which could handle the required production volumes, and where to locate the canning process.



By restructuring its regional supply chain to a global one, costs fell by more than 50%, the company became a national brand, and enterprise value increased.

The procurement leader’s action plan

As global markets change, so does the procurement mandate.

Market volatility has become structural. It’s the new normal for doing business, yet most procurement teams remain built for the previous era of stability. Procurement and supply chain leaders need to adapt.

The Scorecard provides a roadmap for moving your procurement team forward. The questions you answered NO to indicate where your organization needs to take action. If you answered NO to all questions in a single pillar, fixing that function should be a top priority for 2027.

Turn your scorecard gaps into action

Your “No” answers reveal where greater visibility and intelligence could strengthen your procurement function.

ImportGenius can help you close those gaps: from uncovering supplier networks and monitoring competitors to benchmarking costs, identifying alternatives and responding faster when markets change.

		If you answered NO to...	Your exposure	Your next move
Geopolitics and trade exposure	1	Supplier origin	Hidden tier-n or geopolitical exposure	Map critical supply chains
	2	Landed cost	Margin / tariff exposure	Establish cost benchmarks
Supply chain resilience	3	Supplier capacity	Continuity risk	Monitor supplier shipment volumes
	4	Supplier risk	Disruption / compliance	Continuous monitoring
Data skills and artificial intelligence	5	AI/data	Slow decision-making	Build intelligence workflows
	6	External data	Data blind spot	Add external market intelligence
Competitive advantage and growth	7	Competitor sourcing	Competitive blind spot	Establish competitor monitoring
	8	Response speed	Organizational lag	Create alerts/decision protocols
	9	Supplier pricing	Negotiation disadvantage	Pricing benchmarks

See how ImportGenius
can help close the gaps
in your Procurement
Leader's Scorecard

Learn more

Talk to an expert