



The Purchasing Chessboard: 64 Methods to Reduce Cost and Increase Value with Suppliers

By Christian Schuh, Robert Kromoser, Michael F. Strohmer, Ramón Romero Pérez, Alenka Triplat

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The “golden” age of purchasing, in which it was relatively easy to achieve annual cost reductions of between one and three percent, has come to an end. The major reasons for this are the consolidation in many supplier markets, rising energy costs, and growing resource consumption in many emerging markets such as China. To support companies that need to master the challenges in purchasing and achieve significant value propositions, the authors have developed the Purchasing Chessboard™. The Purchasing Chessboard™ provides a suitable purchasing strategy for every constellation of buying power and selling power.

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Editorial Review

From the Back Cover

The "golden" age of purchasing, in which it was relatively easy to achieve annual cost reductions of between one and three percent, has come to an end. The major reasons for this are the consolidation in many supplier markets, rising energy costs, and growing resource consumption in many emerging markets such as China. To support companies that need to master the challenges in purchasing and achieve significant value propositions, the authors have developed the Purchasing Chessboard™. The Purchasing Chessboard™ provides a suitable purchasing strategy for every constellation of buying power and selling power. The Purchasing Chessboard™ has been tested extensively. It has also been applied in practice by clients in Australia, Austria, China, the Czech Republic, Finland, France, Germany, Italy, Russia, Slovenia, Spain, the UK, Ukraine and the US. The relevant sectors included automotive manufacturing and supply, military equipment (tanks), construction equipment, packaging, steel, transport, foodstuffs, pharmaceuticals, energy utilities, telecommunications and banking. In a recent purchasing survey accomplished by A.T. Kearney, many CEOs complained that their companies were not prepared for mastering the challenges of the seller's market. To support companies coping with the new challenges of the seller's market A.T. Kearney has developed the Purchasing Chessboard™. This tool relies on the huge amount of experience and insights from over 500 purchasing projects A.T. Kearney successfully accomplished world-wide over the last three years, i.e. more than thousand projects in the last three decades. In the past three years, more than 500 billion Euros have been placed in the market by these 500 projects. The Purchasing Chessboard™ is based on 64 fields, each representing a stand-alone, differentiating approach to reduce costs and increase value with suppliers. These specific approaches are derived from a total of 16 levers and four basic purchasing strategies. The latter provide an answer for each market constellation between suppliers and purchasing and for each relationship between the demand and supply side.

About the Author

Christian Schuh is co-leader of A.T. Kearney's Operations Practice in Central Europe and is based in Vienna, Austria. He joined A.T. Kearney 15 years ago and has since then led multiple projects for clients in the automotive, construction equipment, defense, packaging, and steel industry in Austria, France, Germany, the UK, Ukraine and the USA. His areas of expertise include strategic sourcing, product development and organization. He is the author of various books, monographs and articles. Before he joined A.T. Kearney he had worked several years for Unilever. Christian Schuh studied aeronautical engineering at TU Graz (Austria) and holds a doctorate degree in business administration. He currently lives in Vienna. Robert Kromoser has been with A.T. Kearney for 10 years. He currently lives in Austria, however gained most of his consulting experience abroad in Germany, France, Italy, Great Britain and the USA. He is a member of the Operations Practice with a focus on strategic sourcing and cost reduction. He has led multiple projects in the automotive, construction equipment, mechanical engineering, and steel industry. In several studies, he analyzed the role of strategic sourcing as a value-adding factor. Robert Kromoser studied business administration at Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration (Austria) and Carnegie Mellon University (USA). Michael F. Strohmer is a member of the Operations Practice from A.T. Kearney's Vienna office, Austria. In his eight years with the firm, he has led projects at a broad range of international clients, mainly in post merger situations. His work encompassed the mechanical engineering and plant construction, automotive, defense, food & beverage, packaging, and steel sectors. He is an expert on supply management, post merger management and large-scale CAPEX projects. He has published several books and articles on post merger management and is a frequent speaker on these topics at international conferences.

Michael F. Strohmer holds a doctorate degree in business administration and law from Johannes-Kepler-University Linz (Austria), where his work focused on Merger Management. He currently lives in Altmünster at lake Traun. Ramón Romero Pérez joined A.T. Kearney in Berlin, Germany five years ago and is a member of the Operations Practice. He has conducted and led multiple projects for clients in the mechanical engineering, automotive, construction equipment, utility, and steel industry. He is an expert in supply management and asset investment strategies. He is active in academic research on post-merger integration and its impact on purchasing. He is a trainer in negotiation strategies and application of advanced sourcing methodologies. In addition, he has published multiple articles on these topics. Ramón Romero Pérez studied business administration at WHU Vallendar (Germany), Kobe University (Japan) and Manchester Business School (UK). He currently lives in Hamburg. Alenka Triplat is a member of A.T. Kearney 's Operations Practice. In five years with firm in Vienna, Austria, she has carried out and led multiple projects on supply management topics in construction equipment, packaging, and steel sectors. She has worked with international clients based in Austria, Germany and Eastern European countries, and spent longer period of time working and living in the USA. Her areas of expertise include supply management topics, such as US-Dollar-sourcing, negotiation strategies and global sourcing. She is a trainer in sourcing strategies and negotiations and has published multiple articles on these topics. Alenka Triplat studied economics at the University of Ljubljana (Slovenia) and business administration at Vienna University of Economics and Business Administration (Austria). She currently lives between Vienna and Ljubljana.

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