Rehau Transforms Global Procurement with Coupa AI Integration

Background

Rehau Industries is a global plastic component producer specializing in high-quality products for the construction and furniture sectors, from pipes and window profiles to edge bands. Operating across 150 sites worldwide with 12,000 employees, the company has built its reputation on producing long-term, reliable products, especially in critical applications like sewer systems, where quality failures simply aren't acceptable.

Like many large organizations with diverse subsidiaries, Rehau faced fragmented procurement operations that led to maverick buying and inconsistent procedures. Lasse Fehl, head of procurement, knew the solution required standardized processes with minimal customization. His practical evaluation approach involved testing real users on actual systems, which led him to Coupa.

Under Lasse's leadership, Rehau implemented Coupa's AI-native platform with the askLio AI integration, creating a unified system that reduced first-level support efforts to nearly zero while enabling requesters and strategic buyers to work more efficiently. The result: scalable automation that handles routine tasks while freeing teams for strategic initiatives.

REHAU

Industry: Process Manufacturing

Company Size: Enterprise

Headquarters: Muri bei Bern, Switzerland

Employees: 12,000+

Website: rehau.com

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Business Challenges

- Manual processes further complicated matters, as purchase price disputes and proof of delivery required extensive manual efforts. (About 65% of direct invoices are manually touched and worked.) The lack of a mechanism to confirm prices with direct vendors led to incorrect matches and potential overpayments. Furthermore, ATD was losing early pay discounts due to inadequate monitoring of purchase orders and invoices, resulting in significant financial losses. For indirect , only 10% of invoices are touched after the Coupa implementation. ATD is aspiring to obtain this same performance for direct invoices as well.

- Previous SAP backend system experience taught the team that endless customization discussions and complex configurations created bottlenecks, making finding a solution focused on standardized processes critical

- Manual processes required extensive key-user training and first-level support, with decentralized buyers managing complex workflows that consumed significant administrative resources

- Lack of standardized, digital sourcing processes limited the company's ability to leverage strategic procurement capabilities

Products

- **Procure-to-Pay**
- **Source-to-Contract**

Results

- Reduced first-level support efforts to nearly zero, with just one person handling support for 2,000+ users, eliminating the need for extensive key user networks and training programs that previously required decentralized support across multiple sites

- Completed initial implementation in Germany within two years, with active rollouts currently underway in four countries across Europe and expansion plans for the Americas and Asia Pacific regions

- Enabled both requesters and strategic buyers to leverage AI for faster information input and processing, with buyers unexpectedly adopting AI tools for strategic activities beyond the initial scope

- Established standardized sourcing processes with templates and e-auction capabilities, improving sourcing quality and enabling consistent global rollout across 150 sites worldwide

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From scattered systems to streamlined AI-powered operations

When Lasse Fehl evaluated procurement solutions for Rehau, user-friendliness became the decisive factor.

"We even had a contest with several solutions, and then we just set users in front of the system and let them try to work with the system. And surprise, Coupa got the best note," he explains.

This practical approach reflected his philosophy: avoid endless customization debates and focus on standard processes that work.

The transformation began with establishing Coupa as the foundation for procurement across Rehau's global operations. But the real breakthrough came with integrating askLio AI to address a persistent challenge: even with user-friendly interfaces, requesters still struggled with entering unfamiliar information and numbers.

"The AI solution askLio kicks in and helps us to fill in these numbers and information automatically, so that the requester only has to know what they want and what their cost center is, and that's it. So everything else is done by the AI," notes Lasse.

This automation eliminated the traditional friction points that required extensive training and support, creating a truly self-service procurement experience. Coupa's open platform approach meant Rehau could integrate askLio seamlessly, demonstrating the flexibility to bring their own AI agents and tools rather than being locked into a single-vendor situation.

"For me, it was quite impressive to see that with this good combination of Coupa and askLio as a knowledge base, we could reduce the efforts for first-level support for the requesters more or less to zero. So I have just one person doing all the first-level support for the system, and I think we have 2,000 users now. So that's quite remarkable."

Lasse Fehl, Head of Procurement

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AI adoption exceeds expectations across user groups

Rehau's AI integration delivered unexpected benefits beyond the original scope. While askLio was initially designed to help requesters navigate purchasing processes, strategic buyers quickly adopted the AI tools for their own workflows.

"For me, it was very surprising that the strategic buyers were also using askLio to bring information into the system," Lasse says.

This organic AI adoption shows how intuitive tools can transform procurement workflows across user groups. Strategic buyers found that AI assistance helped them input information faster, process strategic activities more efficiently, and focus on higher-value decision-making rather than routine data entry.

The platform's flexibility proved crucial for managing Rehau's complex global operations. Teams can now configure workflows independently while maintaining central oversight, essential for a company operating across multiple countries with varying regulatory requirements. Standardized processes provide the framework, while local agility ensures teams can adapt to specific market needs.

Building toward autonomous procurement processes

Rehau's AI journey represents a systematic progression from basic automation to augmentation and, ultimately, toward autonomy. Starting from email and Excel-based sourcing, the company built a fully integrated digital system with automated workflows.

Lasse envisions a comprehensive autonomous procurement process:

"In the end, I want a free-flowing process for the sourcing request. I imagine it going from the request to selecting the appropriate suppliers with AI, creating the specification, choosing the right sourcing event, and finally creating the price comparison table and letting the buyer choose," he says.

This vision positions Rehau ahead of a major industry shift. With demographic changes creating workforce shortages across Europe, companies that master AI-driven procurement will have a significant competitive advantage.

For Rehau, AI represents more than efficiency gains. It is their strategy for thriving in the future while maintaining the operational excellence that has built their reputation.

Transform your complex global operations with Coupa's AI-native Total Spend Management platform.

About Coupa

Coupa is the leader in AI-native total spend management. Using its trusted, community-generated, $7 trillion dataset, Coupa brings autonomous AI agents, a network of 10M+ buyers and suppliers, and leading apps together on one unified platform to seamlessly automate the buying process and connect to customers in a whole new way. With Coupa, you'll make margins multiply™.

Learn more at **coupa.com** and follow us on **LinkedIn** and **X (Twitter)**.

Learn Why 3,000+ Companies Trust Coupa