

Unlocking ROI from Ariba

SAP Ariba is designed to streamline supplier onboarding, compliance, sourcing, and performance management. Yet for many global enterprises, poor supplier data quality remains the single biggest obstacle to realizing SAP Ariba's full potential.

Key Challenges Identified:

- Duplicate supplier records lead to payment errors, fragmented spend, and audit risk
- Incomplete or inconsistent data limits visibility, inflates onboarding cycle times, and skews analytics
- Lack of hierarchy mapping and categorization hampers sourcing and consolidation efforts
- Manual, error-prone onboarding processes frustrate suppliers and delay time-to-value
- Poor data integrity undermines compliance, ESG reporting, and supplier risk monitoring

Industry Insights:

- 73% of procurement leaders cite data quality as their top challenge, according to Gartner

- Supplier data is increasingly recognized as a critical barrier to scaling AI and unlocking digital procurement ROI, as highlighted by both Hackett Group and Forrester
- The need for global master data governance to support sourcing and spend visibility is high

Recommended Solution:

Enterprises are turning to supplier data platforms, like TealBook, as an enabling layer to:

- Clean and consolidate supplier records across SAP Ariba and other procurement systems
- Match suppliers to verified legal entities and enrich profiles with goods/services, hierarchy, and certification data
- Pre-fill SAP Ariba onboarding fields to reduce friction, avoid duplicates, and **cut onboarding time by >50%**
- Keep supplier profiles current with continuous, real-time updates
- Support AI, Gen AI copilots, intake orchestration, and analytics use cases with a high quality structured supplier data

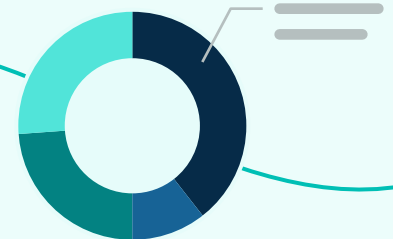
Why This Matters:

A clean, enriched supplier data foundation is the cornerstone of SAP Ariba ROI. Organizations that address data challenges head-on see:

- Faster onboarding and better supplier adoption
- More accurate spend analytics and sourcing leverage
- Improved compliance and audit readiness
- Higher utilization and user trust in SAP Ariba

Bottom Line:

SAP Ariba performs best when it's powered by clean, connected, and continuously refreshed supplier data. This paper explains why—and how leading organizations are achieving it.



Unlocking ROI from SAP Ariba

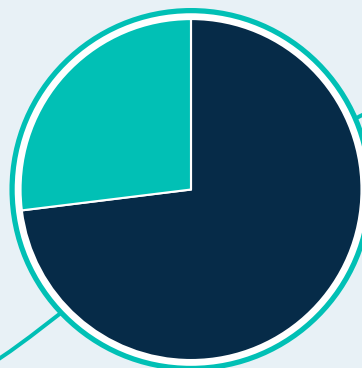
SAP Ariba is a powerful module for managing supplier information, onboarding, and performance. However, many large enterprises struggle to realize the full ROI of SAP Ariba and related source-to-pay (S2P) modules due to one pervasive issue: poor supplier data quality.

Industry analysts and consultants consistently point to data quality as a top barrier in procurement transformations. In fact, 73% of procurement leaders say data quality is their biggest challenge¹ and data quality is found to be one of the biggest roadblocks to scaling digital procurement initiatives². Data quality, as well as user and supplier adoption, are key obstacles preventing organizations from capturing expected value from S2P technology.³

Why does supplier data quality matter so much? In practice, if your supplier records are duplicative, inconsistent, or incomplete, even the best procurement software will under-deliver.

Below, we examine common pain points and failure patterns in SAP Ariba deployments caused by supplier data issues, and how addressing these challenges through data cleanup and enrichment can dramatically improve SAP Ariba ROI. We also highlight industry insights on the importance of high-quality supplier data and discuss how enhancing SAP Ariba with a reliable supplier data foundation can accelerate digital procurement success.

73% of procurement leaders say data quality is their biggest challenge¹



Common Supplier Data Pain Points in Implementations

Poor supplier data manifests in several well-documented pain points that undermine SAP Ariba and S2P initiatives:

Duplicate Supplier Records

Duplicate supplier data is a classic issue that leads to payment errors, spend fragmentation, and user confusion. When the same supplier exists multiple times in SAP Ariba (often under slight name variations), it can directly result in duplicate payments or overpayments.

Beyond financial leakage, duplicate records mean procurement cannot see a consolidated view of total spend or exposure with that supplier. In SAP Ariba duplicate supplier profiles also create extra workload for onboarding and performance tracking. In short, duplicates erode the single source of truth.

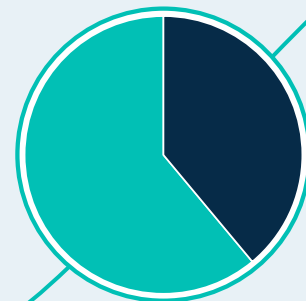
Inconsistent or Missing Supplier Data

Many SAP Ariba deployments suffer from supplier profiles that have critical gaps or inconsistencies, such as missing tax IDs, outdated addresses, incorrect commodity

categories, or blank diversity status fields. These data gaps cause routine process failures. For example, up to 39% of invoices contain errors⁴, often due to wrong or missing supplier data (invalid addresses, bank info mismatches, etc.).

Such errors lead to invoice exceptions, payment delays, and costly manual rework. Inconsistent naming conventions (e.g. “IBM Corp” vs “I.B.M.”) and incomplete data also undermine analytics. This results in spend reports getting skewed when transactions for the same supplier or category are not properly aggregated. These issues point to a larger failure pattern: without standardized, complete data, organizations lack visibility into who their suppliers are and what they are buying from them.

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Poor Visibility into Supplier Hierarchies and Services

Large enterprises often work with multi-entity suppliers offering a wide range of goods and services. However, SAP Ariba data frequently lacks the necessary hierarchy linkage to surface these relationships. This leads to:

Hidden Parent-Child Relationships

Without linked hierarchies, procurement teams may treat related entities as separate vendors. For example, “OfficeMax Pty Ltd” and “OfficeMax South Africa” might appear as unrelated suppliers—obscuring opportunities to consolidate spend or negotiate better pricing.

Fragmented Vendor Records

When systems assign multiple vendor codes to the same supplier, category managers lose visibility across contracts, compliance suffers, and leverage is lost.

On average, companies lose 22% of negotiated savings due to poor tracking.⁵

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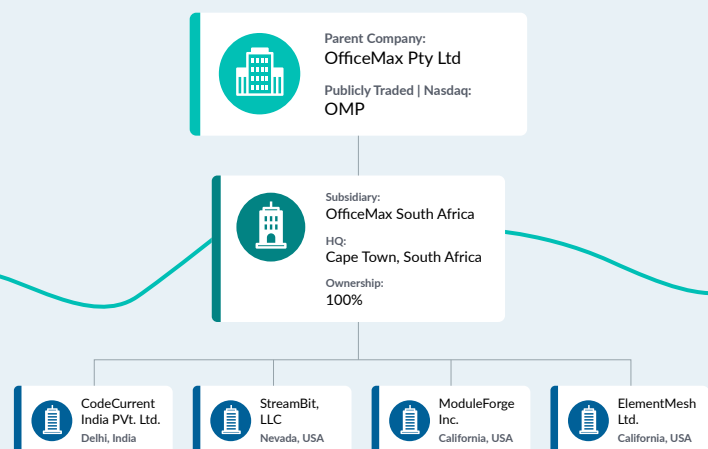
Inconsistent Service Categorization

Missing or misclassified category/service data prevents buyers from identifying all suppliers for a given product or service, making it harder to assess performance or ensure policy compliance.

Increased Maverick Spend and Lost Savings

When users “can’t find it in the system,” they turn to unapproved vendors. This lack of visibility contributes to spend leakage—on average, companies lose 22% of negotiated savings due to poor tracking.⁵

Bottom line: If SAP Ariba isn’t delivering a 360° view of supplier relationships and offerings, procurement and sourcing teams are operating without critical context—exposing the business to unnecessary cost, risk, and inefficiency.



Weak Onboarding Data Capture and

Slow Supplier Adoption: The onboarding process in SAP Ariba is only as effective as the data captured and verified at intake. A common failure pattern is relying on suppliers to self-register with little validation, resulting in new suppliers being created with duplicate entries or incomplete information. This not only grows the data quality issues above but also slows down onboarding cycle times. Procurement teams end up in a “paper chase” for missing tax forms, banking details, certificates, etc., which delays time-to-first-purchase for new vendors.

A recent survey found that 86% of accounts payable professionals believe their master vendor file needs more attention or cleaning—with 1 in 5 calling it “a total mess.”⁶

This has real operational costs:

Manual Cleanup Drains Resources

At one utility company, buyers spent 5–10 hours per week just correcting supplier info—equivalent to two full-time employees dedicated to supplier data fixes.

Onboarding Friction Reduces ROI

When supplier data issues delay onboarding by weeks, users get frustrated and may bypass SAP Ariba altogether.

Low Adoption Undermines Procurement Systems

If suppliers aren’t properly onboarded, users can’t find them in the system—so they go around it. This is why poor supplier adoption is the top reason organizations switch procurement platforms⁷: without adoption, the system fails to deliver value.

Supplier Data Impact on Compliance

and Risk: In large, regulated enterprises, incomplete supplier data isn’t just an operational hassle, it’s a compliance risk. Weak data capture during onboarding (e.g. missing regulatory certifications, diversity status, or sanctions screenings) can lead to serious blind spots.



1-in-5

call their master
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Without accurate legal identifiers and up-to-date certifications in SAP Ariba, companies risk:

- **Engaging blacklisted or non-compliant entities**

This exposes the business to regulatory breaches, especially around supplier diversity and ESG mandates.

- **Audit and Risk Management Breakdowns**

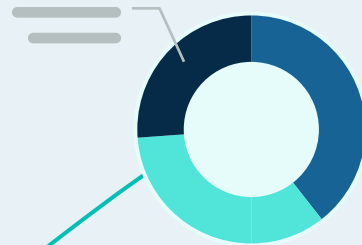
Duplicate or inconsistent supplier records make it difficult to audit spend, track performance, or assess risk across the enterprise.

- **Costly Surprises**

Data issues often go unnoticed—until something goes wrong. A missed sanction check or fraud incident reveals the hidden cost of poor supplier data quality.

These aren't isolated pain points. They're common failure patterns that derail S2P initiatives.

Bottom line: Poor supplier data is the Achilles' heel of SAP Ariba implementations. Addressing it upfront is essential to realizing the platform's full value.



How Better Supplier Data Drives Higher ROI in SAP Ariba

Improving supplier data quality via cleanup, de-duplication, legal entity matching, and data enrichment directly enables higher ROI from SAP Ariba and its connected modules (sourcing, analytics, onboarding, compliance, etc.).

Consider the following benefits:

Spend Visibility and Sourcing Leverage:

High-quality, unified supplier data gives procurement a true single source of truth. When duplicates are merged and suppliers are matched to their correct legal entities, SAP Ariba can show consolidated spend by supplier or corporate group. This visibility unlocks strategic sourcing value: companies can negotiate better volume discounts and

identify consolidation opportunities that were previously hidden in siloed or mis-classified data.

Accurate supplier hierarchies and category data also mean all purchases with, say, a “preferred supplier” are tracked, making it easier to direct spend to approved vendors and reduce off-contract leakage. In fact, best-in-class organizations (with proper visibility systems) cut savings leakage by half compared to average firms.⁸

Bottom line: Clean data ensures all spend is visible and attributable, so negotiated contracts are fully utilized and sourcing ROI is maximized.



Improved Process Efficiency & Analytics:

When supplier records are standardized and enriched, downstream processes in SAP Ariba and finance systems become significantly more efficient. Merging duplicates and filling in missing fields reduces invoice errors and exceptions. Fewer errors mean accounts payable teams can process invoices faster and capture more early-payment discounts.

Reliable data also powers better analytics. Spend analysis, supplier performance dashboards, and risk reports in SAP Ariba are only as good as the data behind them. Without a clear inventory of supplier data, users may spend 30–40% of their time just trying to locate information—followed by another 20–30% cleaning it up.⁹ That's a massive drain on productivity and a missed opportunity to focus on more strategic, value-driving work.

By establishing a single, trusted source of truth for supplier data across systems, organizations can enable greater automation and dramatically reduce the labor spent on reconciliation and rework.

Faster, Smarter Supplier Onboarding

One of the most immediate ROI boosts from better data is seen in supplier

onboarding and adoption of the SAP Ariba module. When supplier data is trusted and automation-ready, onboarding cycles shrink dramatically. Key benefits include:

- **Auto-validation at intake**
New supplier requests can be automatically checked against authoritative sources for:
 - » Business registration
 - » Tax ID
 - » Address
 - » Sanction status
- **Duplicate prevention**
Validating legal entities at the point of entry prevents duplicate suppliers from being created under similar names.
- **Complete, enriched profiles**
Supplier profiles can be pre-populated with:
 - » Parent company info
 - » Descriptions
 - » Goods & services
 - » Industry classification
 - » Diversity certifications

This reduces the burden on suppliers to fill in every field and minimizes back-and-forth on missing data, streamlining onboarding and accelerating approvals. Faster onboarding allows procurement teams to:

- Engage new suppliers sooner, which is critical for time-sensitive sourcing
- Improve supplier adoption of SAP Ariba
- Encourage supplier participation through a smoother experience (fewer manual forms, faster turnarounds)

When SAP Ariba is powered by a robust data backbone, onboarding becomes easy, accurate, and scalable. This drives:

- Higher supplier enablement
- Greater system utilization by internal users
- Stronger realized ROI—transforming SAP Ariba into the true single point of entry for supplier information and transactions

Enhanced Compliance and Risk Management

Clean, complete supplier data significantly strengthens the performance of SAP Ariba's risk and compliance modules. While many organizations invest in SAP Ariba Supplier Risk or third-party integrations, these tools are only as effective as the data they rely on. Key benefits of improving data quality include:

- **Reliable risk flagging through legal entity matching**

Ensures that each supplier in SAP Ariba can be accurately linked to:

- » External risk databases
- » Credit scores
- » Watchlists
- » Business certifications

- **Automated risk alerts during onboarding**

Enables real-time checks such as:

- » Flagging suppliers whose tax ID appears on a sanctions list
- » Detecting expired business licenses before onboarding is finalized

- **Audit-ready compliance**

Accurate, up-to-date supplier profiles make it easier to:

- » Demonstrate adherence to diversity spend targets
- » Support ESG reporting requirements
- » Comply with anti-corruption regulations

- **Reduced regulatory risk and operational disruption**

Particularly in regulated sectors, clean data helps avoid:

- » Fines and penalties
- » Supplier-related business interruptions

- **Built-in governance without added complexity**

Clean master data amplifies the impact of SAP Ariba's native compliance features—minimizing the need for costly customizations.

- **Stronger system ROI**

Better supplier data powers:

- » Continuous monitoring of supplier status
- » Enforcement of “approved supplier only” policies
- » Broader, more reliable risk controls across the SAP Ariba lifecycle

Accelerating Onboarding with a Global Supplier Data Foundation

To truly resolve the above challenges, many leading enterprises are turning to supplier data platforms as an enabling layer for SAP Ariba and other S2P systems. The idea is to continuously feed SAP Ariba with cleaned, enriched, and verified supplier information from an external source of truth. By tapping into a global supplier network – a vast database of companies and their attributes – organizations can drastically accelerate and improve the supplier onboarding and data maintenance process:

Avoiding Duplicates and Stale Data:

A supplier data platform uses AI-driven matching and legal entity resolution to detect when a new supplier request is actually a company that already exists under another record or in another system. For example, if a user tries to onboard “ACME Corp” and an existing supplier “Acme Corporation, Inc.” is in the ERP, the system will flag the potential duplicate. This prevents the creation of redundant records before they proliferate.

These platforms also regularly de-duplicate and unify records across ERP, SAP Ariba, and other systems – merging variant entries into one complete profile. This means SAP Ariba is always working off a de-duplicated master supplier list, dramatically reducing the errors and confusion caused by duplicate entries.

Pre-Populating and Enriching Supplier Profiles

Rather than requiring suppliers or employees to fill out dozens of data fields manually, a supplier data platform can automatically enrich profiles using trusted, pre-verified information.

Key benefits of this approach include:

- **Auto-filled supplier profiles**

During onboarding, the system can automatically pull:

- » Registered company name and address
- » Parent entity information
- » Industry classification
- » Product/service keywords
- » Diversity and compliance certifications

- **Access to a global, verified supplier database**

Legal entity-based supplier profiles:

- » Data with verifiable provenance (e.g., government registries, financial filings, and industry-standard sources)

- **Improved data confidence**

Drawing from authoritative external sources reduces errors and increases trust in supplier information from the start.

- **Streamlined SAP Ariba onboarding**

Pre-populated forms lead to:

- » Fewer manual entry errors
- » Faster approvals
- » Less back-and-forth between suppliers and approvers

- **Time savings across teams**

- » Internal approvers spend less time chasing basic details
- » Suppliers avoid duplicating effort for public or readily available data

The result? An onboarding process that once took weeks can now be completed in days or even hours, boosting procurement agility and user satisfaction.

Real-time Validation and Updates:

Supplier data platforms don't just improve the one-time onboarding event; they continually monitor and refresh supplier data so that SAP Ariba remains up-to-date. This means key data changes (a supplier's address, ownership, certificates, etc.) can be pushed to SAP Ariba in near real-time, keeping profiles current without manual data entry.

For example, if a supplier's business license expires or they receive a new certification, the platform can update the supplier's profile attributes and notify relevant SAP Ariba modules (such as risk or quality management). This continuous enrichment ensures that procurement decisions are made on the latest and most accurate information. By routing verified attributes into all connected systems, a data platform keeps SAP Ariba's data quality high at scale without human intervention.

Streamlined Intake Orchestration

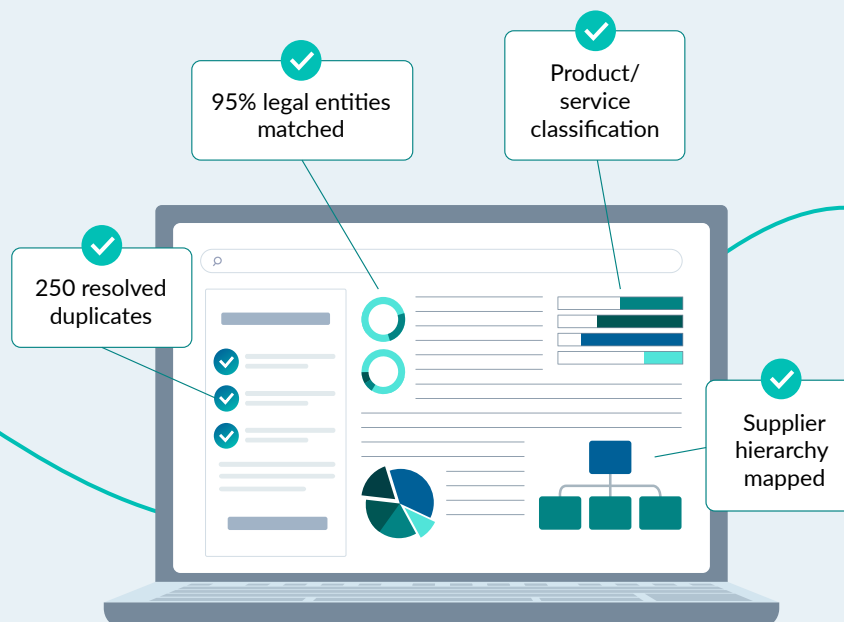
With access to a large supplier network built on legal entity data, organizations can build smarter, more responsive intake workflows. Imagine an intake process where an employee needs a new supplier for a specific service: instead of starting from scratch, the system's AI searches a global supplier network for suitable candidates—such as suppliers in the required region and category, with the necessary certifications—and presents a shortlist.

This kind of intake orchestration harnesses external data to guide users to the right suppliers, potentially even suggesting existing suppliers in the

system to avoid unnecessary creation of duplicates. It reduces rogue spend by steering requesters toward vetted, compliant options. While this capability goes beyond the core functionality of SAP Ariba, it becomes feasible when backed by a comprehensive external supplier intelligence layer.

The same principle applies to GenAI “copilots” in procurement. Large language models—such as SAP’s Joule AI or GPT-based assistants—can answer complex questions like:

- “Find diverse suppliers in X category”
- “Who are our top 5 suppliers for IT consulting in New York?”



...but only if they have a rich, connected data foundation to draw on. Access to a broad, legal entity-based supplier graph empowers these AI tools to surface insights across millions of suppliers—something not feasible when data is limited to what's stored in a local SAP Ariba instance.

Analysts project significant gains here:



AI-driven procurement could reduce sourcing cycle times by 50% by 2026¹



However, 64% of procurement leaders cite data quality as a top barrier to effective AI implementation in procurement¹⁰

By investing in high-quality, externally enriched supplier data, companies lay the groundwork for future-forward capabilities like autonomous sourcing agents and predictive risk alerts.

Importantly, this isn't about replacing SAP Ariba—it's about augmenting and supercharging it. Think of it as plugging a high-quality data power source into your existing procurement engine. The day-to-day user experience in SAP Ariba doesn't change dramatically; instead, users start to notice that:

- Supplier searches return more complete and relevant results
- Reports are more accurate and reliable
- Onboarding workflows are faster, smoother, and less error-prone

As a result, SAP Ariba modules—SLP, sourcing, spend analysis, risk, etc.—perform better. That drives higher internal user adoption, which fuels greater realized ROI, creating a positive feedback loop across the procurement function.

TealBook as a Data Enablement Layer for SAP Ariba Success

One example of such a data enablement layer is TealBook, a supplier data platform that enterprises deploy alongside SAP Ariba to address data challenges. TealBook is positioned not as a transactional system, but as a supplier data platform that continuously enriches and cleanses supplier information to support your S2P stack. It acts as a unified source of supplier truth that feeds into SAP Ariba and other procurement tools:

Data Unification and Quality:

TealBook's platform uses a legal entity-based data model to unify, validate, and de-duplicate supplier records across ERP, SAP Ariba, and other systems, providing one consistent profile for each supplier. This eliminates the inconsistencies (name variations, duplicate IDs, outdated info) that typically plague SAP Ariba implementations, ensuring that all modules are working with harmonized data. As a result, SAP Ariba can trust that when it pulls up a supplier, that profile is complete and vetted.

Enrichment with External Data:

TealBook continuously enriches supplier profiles with data from authoritative sources – including business registries, global commerce data, and cross referenced supplier maintained websites and online databases. This means that fields in SAP Ariba (parent/child hierarchy, goods & services, supplier certifications, diversity status, categories, etc.) can be automatically kept up-to-date without manual effort. For SAP Ariba users, it's like having an ever-refreshing and trusted supplier information at their fingertips. It significantly enhances SAP Ariba's analytics and risk assessments when every supplier record is bolstered with context and attributes gleaned from a 230M+ entity knowledge base.

Onboarding Acceleration and Self-Service:

TealBook's API can easily be integrated with SAP Ariba's supplier onboarding workflows to provide real-time supplier validation and profile pre-fill. When a new supplier is invited or a new request is submitted, TealBook will match the company against its global database

to verify the legal entity and prevent duplicates. It can then populate the SAP Ariba registration questionnaire with known data (e.g. addresses, tax IDs, description, ownership, etc.), so the supplier has fewer fields to manually enter. This accelerates onboarding, and faster onboarding means procurement projects aren't waiting on data, and suppliers have a frictionless experience – encouraging more complete adoption of the SAP Ariba platform.

Supporting AI and Advanced Use Cases:

Because TealBook provides a searchable global supplier network with verifiable data, it effectively future-proofs the SAP Ariba investment for the age of AI. As companies look to deploy AI copilots or automated sourcing bots, having TealBook's data layer means those AI tools can draw on a much wider and richer pool of supplier knowledge. For example, an AI-driven sourcing recommendation engine can query TealBook for alternative suppliers worldwide that meet certain criteria, then feed results into SAP Ariba for execution. TealBook thus serves as the data fuel for autonomous procurement scenarios – all while SAP Ariba remains the system of engagement for users.

By implementing TealBook alongside SAP Ariba, organizations can confidently pursue innovative use cases (like cognitive sourcing or risk prediction) knowing their underlying supplier data is reliable. This aligns with industry perspectives that emphasize data quality as the bedrock of digital procurement transformation.

It's important to note that TealBook is an enablement layer, not replacements for S2Ps or ERPs. It does not manage POs, invoices, or negotiations; rather, it empowers those processes by ensuring the master data driving them is accurate and enriched.

In practice, companies that have added TealBook have done so to boost their SAP Ariba adoption and ROI. By solving supplier data issues, they remove a major friction point that often causes user frustration or project delays, and results in the SAP Ariba module (and other S2P modules) delivering the benefits they were intended to – from supplier consolidation and cost savings to compliance and risk mitigation.



CONCLUSION:

Data Quality as the Cornerstone of Value

The experiences of leading organizations make one thing abundantly clear: clean, rich supplier data is essential to unlocking the full value of SAP Ariba and connected S2P modules. Common failure patterns—such as duplicate suppliers, incomplete records, lack of hierarchy visibility, and sluggish onboarding—can nearly always be traced back to weaknesses in data quality and governance.

The good news: these challenges are solvable. With the right combination of master data management (MDM) discipline and modern data tools, enterprises can transform supplier data from a liability into a strategic asset.

For SAP Ariba process owners and digital transformation leaders, this requires a shift in mindset: supplier data must not be treated as an afterthought, but as a core driver of procurement success. That means:

- Championing supplier data cleanup initiatives
- Implementing global data standards and policies

- Leveraging external enrichment sources to fill gaps and ensure accuracy

A global supplier data foundation like TealBook acts as a powerful enabler in this journey. Think of it as:

- A continuously updated, externally verified data layer
- An automated, policy-aligned extension of your MDM strategy
- A seamless power source that feeds SAP Ariba and the full S2P suite with high-integrity data

By prioritizing supplier data quality, organizations can:

- Maximize SAP Ariba ROI by reducing errors, delays, and manual work
- Accelerate decision-making with reliable, trustworthy data at every step
- Boost adoption and credibility of digital tools across procurement teams
- Future-proof operations for AI, analytics, and sourcing innovations that depend on clean data foundations

In summary, the path to SAP Ariba success is paved with clean data. Enterprises that act on this reality will transform SAP Ariba from a challenged implementation into a high-performing, future-ready engine—delivering the efficiencies, savings, and intelligence that modern procurement demands.



Built for Procurement. Proven in Enterprise.

- ✓ Identify legal entities with verified confidence
- ✓ Unify and enrich vendor masters across SAP Ariba
- ✓ Accelerate S2P platform rollouts with cleaner upstream data
- ✓ Improve compliance reporting with traceable data provenance

The only source for trusted supplier data | www.tealbook.com

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Sources:

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