



# Getting Started with **More Responsible Procurement**

**amazon** business

# Introduction

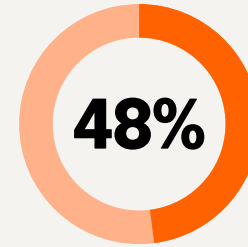
Amid recent geopolitical disruption and the deglobalization of supply chains, procurement must maintain its steadfast commitment to driving socially responsible and smart business buying across the entire organization. This ensures that the organization consciously operates in ways that positively contribute to the economic, social, and environmental development of society.

However, a concerning development around sustainability may hinder the transition towards responsible procurement. Despite ranking among the top priorities for organizations, more than half are yet to develop concrete plans to address sustainability.<sup>1</sup> This may stem from the evolving regulatory landscape worldwide. According to research by The Hackett Group, the largest uptick in sustainability focus was observed in Europe, with similar efforts in both the U.S. and Asia still trailing behind.

To truly embed sustainability within the organization, procurement leaders need to cement their positions as strategic business partners within their organization. They must illustrate the broader impact of purchasing policies on both the business and its wider society, including local communities.

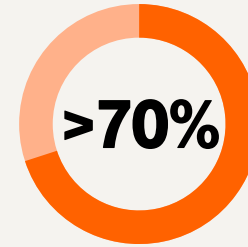
By prioritizing small and local suppliers, procurement can support the organization's broader sustainability goals. This approach fosters more resilient supply chains that can better withstand external pressures and disruptions. While this may involve upfront investment, procurement can - and should - leverage technology to procure responsibly, benefit from enhanced operational efficiencies, and remain a key strategic partner to business success.

1. The Hackett Group, The CPO Agenda, 2024



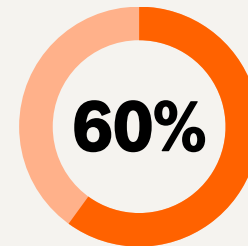
or organizations have plans to address sustainable procurement.

Source: The Hackett Group, The CPO Agenda, 2024



of companies cited procurement as a top three driver of their corporate sustainability program – up from 63% in 2021.

Source: Ecovadis, Sustainable Procurement Barometer 2024



of supply chain leaders are acting to regionalize their supply chains.

Source: McKinsey & Company, Supply Chains: Still Vulnerable, 2024

## Business case for responsible procurement

Given the global and interconnected nature of today's supply chains, business leaders are increasingly aware of the social and environmental impact of their procurement decisions. By harnessing technology, procurement leaders can help their organizations meet responsible purchasing goals, reduce risk and costs in the long run, generate value, and realize greater profitability.





## Leveraging technology to meet purchasing goals

Digital transformation is reshaping how procurement teams operate. At the same time, the growing emphasis on responsible purchasing is driving procurement teams to take on a stronger leadership role in fostering sustainable and diverse supply chains. In fact, 80% of organizations are now working toward certified supplier mandates.<sup>2</sup>

Having a broad selection of suppliers, combined with tools that provide spend visibility and purchasing guardrails, can empower procurement leaders to create a smoother buying experience for their teams while building a stronger, more resilient supply chain. By leveraging technology, organizations can implement policies that align with their goals and gain greater oversight of their spending across suppliers. Procurement teams can also enable employees to easily identify and purchase from suppliers that align with these policies.

*2. Amazon Business, 2025 State of Procurement*



**We've increased our diversity spend approximately 25%. We also love that we have the ability to support our local vendors or other small businesses. I don't have to go out and do the research myself. It's all right there provided by Amazon Business.**

*Jack McCarty, Senior VP Sales and Marketing  
Pacifica Senior Living*

## Long-term cost reduction

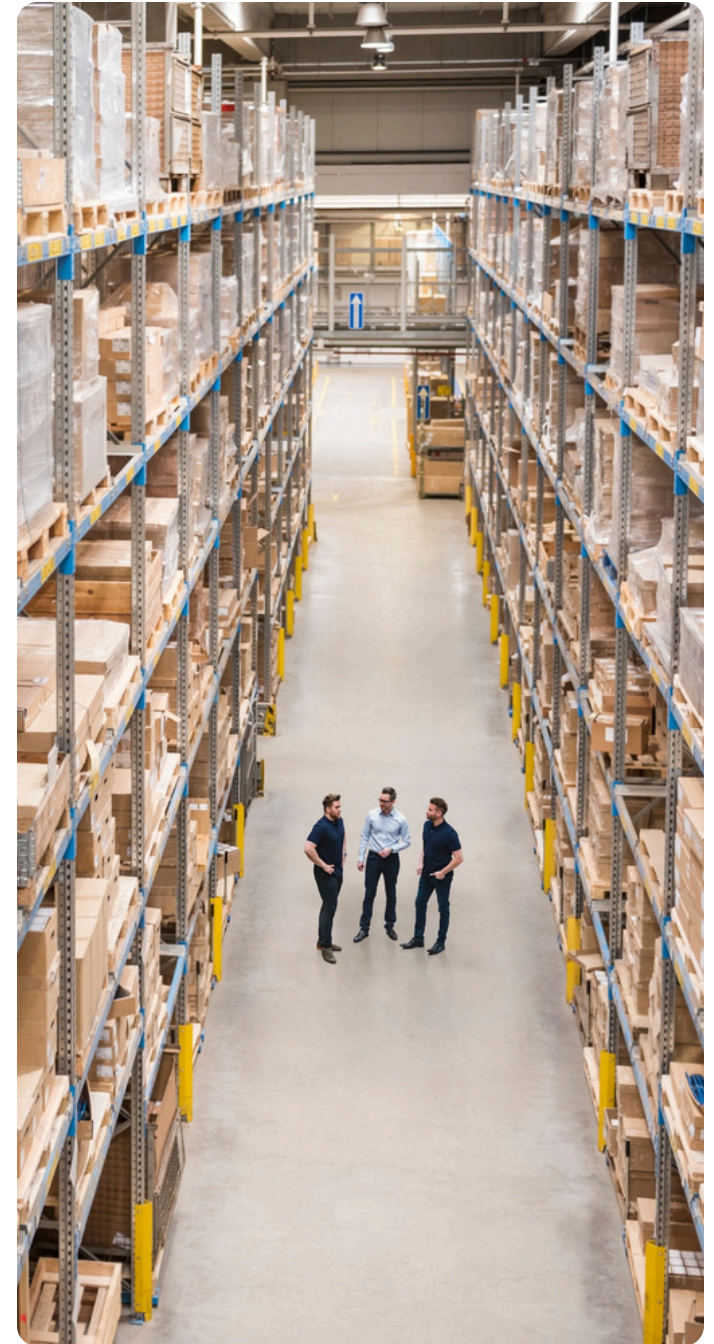
Initial costs may be a barrier to responsible procurement in the short term, for example investment into new technology or transitioning to new purchasing policies and buying processes.

Yet responsible procurement can serve to improve the resilience of supply chains, reducing potential cost increases associated with supply chain disruptions, which are more and more likely due to today's uncertain geopolitical and economic landscape. Gartner research found that 80% of executives indicated that sustainability programs contributed to cost reductions in response to disruptions, while 83% agreed that sustainability generates value that facilitates recovery from disruptions.<sup>3</sup>

## Risk reduction

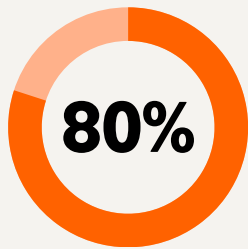
Recent global conflicts, persistent inflation, and extreme weather continue to increase supply chain and organizational risk.

Responsible purchasing can play a critical role in managing and reducing such risks. By prioritizing buying from local suppliers, procurement can enhance supplier diversity and reduce purchasing risks associated with supply chain disruptions.



## Challenges

While some organizations have self-imposed goals based on internal commitments, others have formal mandates they must satisfy and report on regularly. Additionally, many organizations have documented social responsibility initiatives but find it difficult to achieve their goals, since buying from credentialed local and diverse businesses and identifying certified sustainable products have traditionally been manual and time-consuming processes.



of decision-makers say their organizations have mandates or goals for working with certified suppliers.

*Source: Amazon Business, 2025 State of Procurement*

**7th**

Sustainable procurement ranks 7th out of 10 improvement initiatives planned by procurement leaders for 2024, behind data analytics and talent management

*Source: The Hackett Group, The CPO Agenda, 2024*

### Top three challenges for implementing responsible purchasing organization-wide:



**Create a business profile:**  
Communicate your unique story with Profile Editor. Add quality certifications and diversity credentials.



**Set up products:**  
Add your catalog and use the Enhanced Content feature to display additional product information for buyers.



**Start selling:**  
Reach millions of business customers already shopping on Amazon Business.

## Migrating to more socially responsible purchasing

The approach to responsible purchasing should be tailored to each organization and their brand identity, core values, stakeholder priorities, and market strategy.

Organizations looking to improve responsible purchasing performance will need to manage the short-term goal of transitioning existing procurement practices, while driving the long-term goal of inclusivity across the supply chain and organization.



### Three steps to accelerate responsible purchasing:



**Amazon Business is a simple way for our employees to shop for items with clear visibility into options from diverse and small companies. It's not just important to our organization, but also to our customers and employees.**

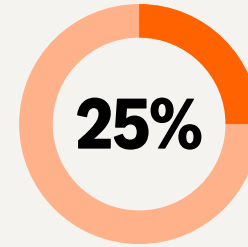
*T.J. Mahoney,  
Vice President,  
Supply Chain United Rentals*



## 1. Define targets and policies

To ingrain responsible purchasing into the procurement process, define clear requirements — potentially inclusive of diversity, local buying, or sustainability goals — that enable more strategic purchasing. A responsible purchasing strategy will not only look at cost savings, but will also consider the supplier's contribution to and compliance with the organization's overall responsible purchasing goals.

Procurement will need to align with corporate responsible purchasing objectives and develop purchasing values that meet those goals. Integrating these metrics into procurement standards is a powerful lever to hold suppliers accountable and keep track of performance.



of companies recognize supplier diversity as a major ESG issue shaping their short-term sustainable procurement strategy

*Source: Ecovadis, Sustainable Procurement Barometer 2024*



**The tools of Amazon Business allow ABM to elevate suppliers with diversity and sustainability in mind, so those in the field can make purchasing decisions in line with strategic goals. Over the past five years, ABM has grown its supplier diversity spend by 145%.**

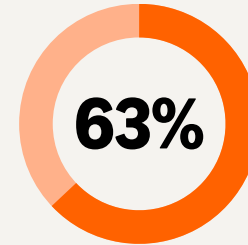
*Stefanie Bensmiller,  
Director of Procurement,  
Indirect ABM Industries*



## 2. Identify and select suppliers

For responsible purchasing performance to be successful, identify and select partners that meet supply chain standards, comply with applicable environmental laws, or that meet your diversity goals. By allocating spend to these suppliers, your return on investment is recognized beyond dollars.

First, organizations must assess whether current suppliers and partners meet sustainability and social responsibility practices. Second, when evaluating new suppliers, screen their business practices to ensure they meet your organization's sustainability and social objectives.



of decision-makers state their organization's responsible purchasing goals and priorities have increased in the past year.

*Source: Amazon Business, 2025 State of Procurement*

### Consider the following screening criteria:

#### Economic

- Previous/current experience
- Productivity/service capacity
- Design robustness/innovation
- Whole-life costing of product
- Switching cost of current supplier

#### Social

- Accreditation by independent certification organizations, such as the National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC) and Small Business Administration (SBA)
- Evidence that workers know their rights and responsibilities at work
- Presence of independent trade unions or effective management/ worker committees which address workers' priorities, including pay, hours and condition
- Sub-supplier practices and conditions
- Participation in multi-stakeholder initiatives that educate and change practices to address ingrained problems

#### Environmental

- Impact of materials used and processes and production
- Impact of packaging
- Impact or transport (air freight from Europe may be greater than sea freight from Asia/Africa)
- Impact of product life cycle, including disposal

### 3. Measure and report impact

Organizations must assess supplier performance against their defined purchasing values to track progress towards responsible purchasing goals. Effective reporting and evaluation help quantify impact, highlight wins and opportunities, and create accountability. Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) that organizations should consider fall into two categories: Process indicators and outcome indicators.

Process indicators measure internal progress towards aligning practices with responsible purchasing goals, such as percentage of bids from local suppliers. Outcome indicators include economic, social, and environmental impacts, such as the amount of emissions reduced as a result of combining shipping.

Look to leverage third party certifications from respected sources to provide accurate disclosures and reporting. Build in reporting capabilities to showcase progress towards responsible purchasing goals for key stakeholders and keep up with regulatory changes by identifying areas for adjustment.



# Accelerate your path to more socially responsible purchasing

Amazon Business combines procurement expertise with curated solutions to help organizations define, meet, and measure their social responsibility and sustainability goals. We empower small, diverse, and local businesses by making it easy for buyers to purchase from within their community.

## Empower responsible purchasing with Amazon Business:

**4,500+**

certified diverse sellers

**2,000+**

minority-owned sellers

**1,800+**

Black-owned businesses

**550,000+**

Climate Pledge Friendly products



**CISCO**

**Cisco's purpose is to power an inclusive future for all. That means everyone. Partnering with Amazon Business, we are able to easily discover diverse-owned businesses, increasing their visibility, and ultimately spend, across our company.**

*Denise Lombard,  
Director of Responsible Procurement,  
Cisco Systems*



## Selection and solutions to meet your responsible purchasing goals

Amazon Business helps organizations operationalize and scale responsible purchasing procurement programs by doing the hard work of finding, retaining, and nurturing suppliers – so you don't have to.

Account administrators can create policies to highlight and prefer products with sustainability certifications or small, diverse, or local sellers according to your specific requirements or social initiatives. Save time for buyers by implementing organization-wide or departmental policies, then track spend towards your goals with simplified reporting.



Millions of customers around the world buy on Amazon Business:

**96**

of the top Fortune 100 companies

**99**

of the 100 largest U.S. hospital systems

**Over 90%**

of the 100 most populous local governments in the U.S.

### Three ways to drive socially responsible purchasing:

- 1 Make purchasing more sustainable
- 2 Promote local businesses
- 3 Increase supplier diversity

# 1. Make purchasing more sustainable

Procurement leaders are positioned to positively impact their organization's sustainability goals. In line with Amazon's commitment to building a sustainable business for our customers and the planet, Amazon's sustainable shopping initiatives give customers the chance to buy more sustainable products.

## Sustainability certifications

Shop more than 550,000+ products with the Climate Pledge Friendly label from [50+ third-party certifications](#), including Amazon-owned certifications, Compact by Design and Pre-owned Certified. Certifications include EPEAT and ENERGY STAR, and certifiers such as Forest Stewardship Council.

## Prefer more sustainable products

Create a sustainability policy that automatically highlights products with Climate Pledge Friendly certifications to your buyers.

## Flexible delivery

Set delivery times to avoid peak traffic or receive palletized deliveries when available to reduce packaging. Choose Amazon Day with Business Prime to minimize deliveries with a once-a-week delivery on eligible products.

## Sustainable packaging

Select [Ships in Product Packaging](#) for eligible products that ship safely and reduce waste.

## Climate Pledge Friendly Certifications include:

- Bluesign
- Carbon Neutral by Carbon Trust
- Compact by Design
- ENERGY STAR Most Efficient
- EPEAT
- Fairtrade International
- The Forest Stewardship Council
- Global Organic Textile Standard
- Rainforest Alliance
- U.S. EPA Safer Choice
- USDA Organic
- and more



**We are consolidating orders and shipments with Amazon Business to one day per week timed with our vessel schedules. This adds reliability to our supply chain, and will have a positive impact on our ambition and commitment to be net zero by 2050.**

*Justin Burnett,  
Vice President of Materials Management  
and Warehousing,  
bp*

## 2. Promote local businesses

Find and purchase products from sellers in your city, county, or state by shopping on Amazon Business. Our features make it easy to buy the products you need while supporting the growth of local businesses and strengthening community relationships.

### Guide buyers to local sellers

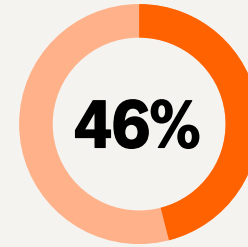
Create customized buying policies to highlight and prefer sellers in your city, county, or state. Add a personalized message for buyers explaining the policy and set a pricing threshold for offers.

### Reduce search time

Highlight offers from preferred local sellers within the buyer's shopping experience based on criteria set by the account administrator. Search for products within e-procurement systems by integrating Amazon Business APIs, further simplifying the buying process.

### Simplified reporting

Track spend with local businesses and report on progress towards goals. Use the credentials report in Amazon Business Analytics to report on socially responsible purchases, or create exportable reports of orders filtered by seller zip code, city, or state.



of organizations report having goals to purchase from local businesses this year, up from 39% last year.

*Source: Amazon Business, 2025 State of Procurement*



**Enabling the buying policies to prefer all registered small businesses and diverse companies was quick, easy, and as a result over 16% of our Amazon Business spend went to these suppliers. Our next focus is to prefer local suppliers not only in the State College and Centre County area, but throughout Pennsylvania in those communities surrounding our Commonwealth Campuses located in various regions of the State. This will ensure that Penn State procurement has positive impact on our local community.**

*Richard D. Elmore, Chief Procurement Officer,  
Penn State University*



### 3. Increase supplier diversity

Simplify purchasing and reporting for your supplier diversity program and empower the communities your organization supports. Diversity Certifications Policies can help you connect with businesses identified as small, minority-, woman-, veteran-, and LGBT-owned.

#### Streamline discovery

Implement an organization-wide or departmental Diversity Certifications Policy to highlight and prefer products sold by small and diverse sellers who hold select certifications.

#### Purchasing flexibility

Buyers have visibility to “Organization preferred” offers along with similar products from non-certified sellers all in one place. Buyers can review and validate the certifications uploaded by sellers.

#### Track spend towards supplier diversity goals

Simplify reporting on spend towards small and diverse sellers. Integrate Amazon Business on the Supplier GATEWAY platform to visualize the impact of purchasing with diverse and local suppliers, or use Amazon Business Analytics to create exportable reports of orders filtered by seller certifications.

#### Recognized certifying agencies include:

- Department of Veterans Affairs (VA)
- National LGBT Chamber of Commerce (NGLCC)
- National Minority Supplier Development Council (NMSDC)
- National Veteran Business Development Council (NVBDC)
- **Small Business Administration (SBA)**
- SupplierGATEWAY Enhanced Digital Certification (EDC)
- **System for Award Management (SAM)**
- Women’s Business Enterprise National Council (WBENC)
- and other certifying agencies



 **smartsheet**

**We are committed to partnering with vendors who have strong environment, social and governance programs and a shared focus on supplier diversity.**

*Julia Braun, Senior Director of  
Strategic Vendor Operations  
Smartsheet*

## Onboard small, diverse, and local businesses

Amazon Business can help small, diverse, and local businesses connect with new customers and scale as they grow. Join hundreds of thousands of Amazon Business sellers and get tools to enable B2B e-commerce through a trusted Amazon experience.



**The small business certification is a badge of honor, and it created a level of trust between us and the customer, knowing that we care for one another and want to provide the best service.**

*Peter C., CEO  
The Boxery*

### Start selling on Amazon Business

- 1 Register:** Open a Professional Selling Account on Amazon.com. Existing customers can add Amazon Business features through Seller Central.
- 2 Create a business profile:** Communicate your unique story with Profile Editor. Add quality certifications and diversity credentials.
- 3 Set up products:** Add your catalog and use the Enhanced Content feature to display additional product information for buyers.
- 4 Start selling:** Reach millions of business customers already shopping on Amazon Business.



Get started today

**Contact us** to uncover valuable insights on your organization's buying behavior and discover how we can help your organization define, meet, and measure responsible purchasing goals.