

# Uber

## Overview

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Uber is going places fast and needs purchasing solutions that support that growth. That's what it has with Amazon Business. Beyond the benefits of access to millions of products, fast and reliable delivery, and a world-class fulfillment network, Uber gains analytics and reporting from Amazon Business for unprecedented insight into its spending. It can now implement procurement policies, ensure its employees adhere to those policies, and make better, data-driven decisions to support its growth.

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With powerful reporting tools, **Uber now catches maverick purchases before they happen**—rather than after the fact.



**Uber gains unprecedented, real-time insight into its spend**, enabling it to make better, data-driven decisions.



The company has a **procurement program that supports its rapid growth**, integrates with its Coupa platform, and employees love.

## Uber drives better decisions with its procurement program

### Procurement—yes, procurement!—helps drive growth at Uber

Uber's exponential growth is fueled in part by speed, simplicity, and convenience: Customers know they're getting all three when they summon and pay for Uber rides with just a few taps on their phones.

But it wasn't always as fast, simple, and convenient for Uber to carry out other functions, such as procurement. When the company began in 2009, it operated like most startups: employees bought what they needed through non-standard channels.

"That was a big challenge for the payables team," recalls Mark Arrigotti, Head of Global Procure2Pay at Uber. "We were operating by the seat of our pants when it came to making purchases and that's not where we wanted to be. We wanted to develop a mature process that could scale with Uber while providing the necessary controls and oversight. A formal procurement process needed to be implemented."

Arrigotti and his colleagues wanted a procurement program that would enable the company's growth, that would help enforce procurement policies, and that would give them broad visibility into fast-growing expenses that remained largely opaque.

### Who wants the hassle?

In 2015, they got what they wanted. That's when Uber signed up with Amazon Business, which serves millions of business customers of all sizes with hundreds of millions of products. Amazon Business offers business discounts, fast shipping, account management tools including reports and analytics, and a range of payment options.

"We looked at the typical big-box office suppliers," says Blaine Milner, Senior Procurement Analyst at Uber. "We chose Amazon Business as a preferred provider because it could keep up with Uber's rapid growth. It has a broad basket of categories, great fulfillment, and a simple interface that's already familiar to nearly everyone. We could replace multiple vendors and the hassle of managing them. And we could finally understand our spending—and control it."

Arrigotti and Milner use the new Spend Visibility feature in Amazon Business—powered by Amazon Quicksight from AWS—to automatically generate highly graphical business-analytics reports that they liken to what they get from Tableau. The reports are both comprehensive and detailed. "With Amazon Business Spend Visibility, we can see total spend across business groups,

average order size, number of items, amount spent on each item, and more," says Milner. "And we don't have to build this. All the calculations are done by Amazon, and it aligns with the raw data that is pulled out of our procurement system."

The Uber team also takes advantage of the tight workflow integration between Amazon Business and its Coupa business spend management platform, which coordinates the flow of purchase orders and other documentation between the two systems.

## Making Uber more agile

Amazon Business Analytics is changing the nature of reporting—and how reporting is used—at Uber. "We no longer have to ask if we trust the data we're looking at," says Arrigotti. "With Amazon Business, we can focus on what the data means rather than on whether it is accurate. We used to review procurement data every two or three months. Now we can look at it in real time, which makes us much more agile in our decision-making. What procurement policies do we need and which policies need refinement? We can answer questions like that far better than we could before."

Using the Amazon Business data, Arrigotti and Milner can identify items that employees buy too often and activate policies that limit the frequency and amount of those expenditures. When an employee submits a purchase request that exceeds the policy, he or she receives a noncompliance notice and an option to amend the request.

## Limiting maverick spending

"Right off the bat, we can use Amazon Business to stop people from making maverick purchases," says Arrigotti. "With Amazon Business, we can get awareness of maverick spend before it happens. The analytics we get are the building blocks for that. This is a key part of transforming into a mature purchasing system."

Another part of getting to a mature procurement system is getting employees to use it. If a system isn't simple and convenient, people will find a way around it. Amazon Business must score high on this measure because an ever-increasing percent of Uber's North America-based employees use it.

"With Amazon Business, the customer experience is superb," Milner says. "Anyone who's bought anything on Amazon will know how to use Amazon Business. There's little to no learning curve."

Uber expects to expand its use of Amazon Business as it continues to grow. "We wanted a procurement program that was easy and something end-users would adopt," says Arrigotti. "Amazon Business not only does that—it helps fuel the growth of the company."

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**MARK ARRIGOTTI**

Head of Global Procure2Pay, Uber



**NAME:** UBER  
**INDUSTRY:** TRANSPORTATION  
**COUNTRY:** UNITED STATES  
**SIZE:** 12,000 EMPLOYEES

# Simplify your purchasing.