

# Strategies to Transform Procurement Using Technology



Texas Association of Regional Councils  
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**VARIS**

**Overview:** By putting everything a member local government needs to buy in a one-stop-shop, Varis can help member local governments save on products they buy and drive employee productivity. We can work with COGs directly to help local government members in their region.

•A few key points:

- **Easy for local member governments to use** -- Varis creates a consumer-like purchasing experience for each member. Everything is in one place and as easy to order as if you're buying from an online store
- **Visibility** -- detailed reporting on every purchase
- **Accounts Payable automation** -- purchase orders, invoicing, and payments are simplified, driving efficiency for Finance
- **Supplier support** -- Varis does the heavy lifting for suppliers, so it's quick and easy to get all of the local government contracts on the platform
- **Cost-savings** -- Varis has an innovative business model that will help drive lower cost on products purchased by your members
- **60 Second Video** – [Watch Varis in Action](#)

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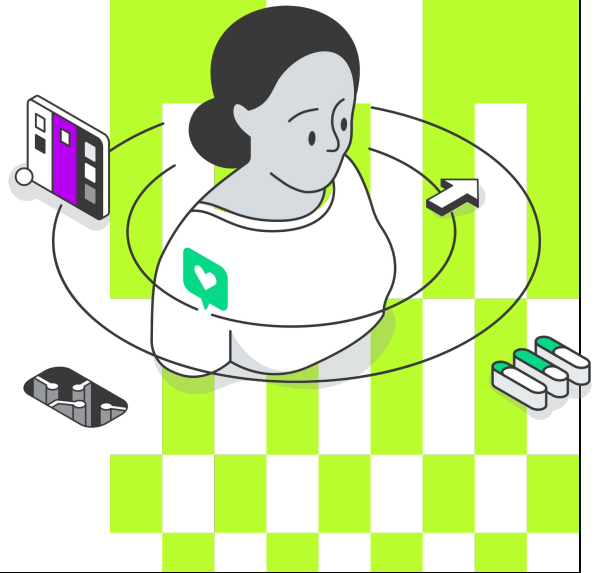
## 1. The Mindset of the Procurement Leader Matters

- Embraces change
- Focuses on the strategic
- Ownership
- Sees opportunities, despite setbacks, hiccups
- Makes tough, sometimes unpopular decisions
- Thinks long-term



## 2. Think of Employees as Customers

- Ask
- Don't assume
- Create milestones
- Adjust
- Walk the store





### **3. View Tech Transformation as a Continuous Improvement Project**

- They have a growth mindset
- Set clear goals
- Promote the project and the value for employees at all levels
- Technology will evolve and improve – you want to continue to evaluate

## 4. Consider the Supplier Experience as Much as the Buyer Experience

Relationships impact performance

What if we could help suppliers to be more strategic?

A successful customer is lowering the supplier's cost to serve

Think about the cost of the supplier to do business with government

Also think about the investment of the suppliers in building the right technology integration with their ERP – that's time and money.

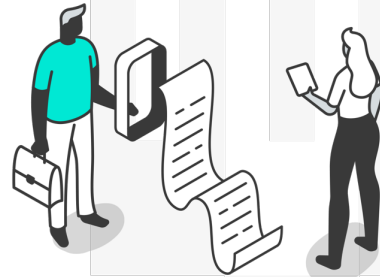
Successful customers partner with their suppliers

## 5. Implement a Change Acceleration Strategy

**Communicate shared expectations**

**Create sense of urgency**

**Create a common mission and vision**



## 6. Issue Clear, Top Down Communication Backed by Actions

Which email was more effective?

Example 1 – From Purchasing Manager  
Subject: (Customer Name) is migrating to Varis

Hello users,

We are excited to announce that we have partnered with a company called [Varis](#) to simplify the purchasing process with Office Depot Business Solutions. Varis is a marketplace platform similar to Amazon that will allow (name of customer) purchasers to take advantage of a broader selection of products (not just office supplies but any commodity or product we select) at competitive prices offered by Office Depot and other vendors/suppliers. The current list of vendors and products can be expanded to meet your purchasing needs as we move forward. The additional benefit of the Varis marketplace is that all vendors are contract suppliers so any purchases made will be 100% compliant with (name of State) Revised Statute (ORS) and our procurement rules.

Through our Varis Private Marketplace, you will have immediate access to:  
Our current ODP Business Solutions negotiated pricing  
Complimentary product categories and pre-negotiated pricing through Varis suppliers  
A consumer-like experience that allows you to quickly search for what you need at the best price

On **07/18/2023** you will be able to access our Varis Private Marketplace through the link [here](#). Credentials and login information will be emailed to each user directly. If you have any issue accessing, please contact me individually.

On **07/25/2023** we will be [discontinuing](#) direct access through the ODP Business Solutions site, though historical reporting access will remain and a link to the Varis platform will be listed.

Please reach out to me directly if you have any questions. Sincerely,

## Or this email?

Which email was more effective?

Example 2 - Department Head  
Subject: (Customer Name) is migrating to Varis

Good afternoon.

Office Depot will now be accessed solely via Varis. Should you have log-in issues please contact customer service or you can contact me and I will direct you.



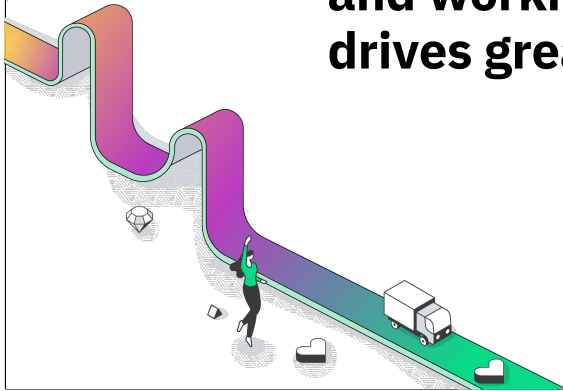
## 7. Be Willing to Adopt New Practices

- Don't automatically shut down discussions if you believe there's not a way to integrate, or a certain requirement is missing – there may be creative ways for the technology company to give you what you need– example - there may be a way to plug and play differently/be compatible with your systems.
- Business processes must also change -



## 8. Bring in Other Teams Early


**Breaking down the silos  
and working together  
drives greater benefits**



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An illustration on the left side of the slide shows a person in a green shirt running on a path that starts as a colorful ribbon (red, orange, yellow, green) and then becomes a solid green path. The path leads to a white truck. There are also some small icons like a lightbulb and a speech bubble along the path.

Varis is a digital purchasing platform. We offer organizations a one-stop shop where your employees can find all their most frequently purchased products. But... with only suppliers, items, and pricing you approve.

These can be your own local gov suppliers, including your favorite cooperative suppliers, as well as a select group of Varis suppliers that represent these common categories. Varis suppliers are a curated, high-quality set of suppliers covering core categories such as janitorial and office products who have undergone the competitive public sector bidding process and whose contracts are shareable (via a piggyback or cooperative contract). Varis' professional category management teams actively manage the categories to provide competitive pricing, great selection, superior service and reliable delivery.

The Varis platform can be completely tailored to your procurement rules and processes like approvals and budget. We also fully integrate with your ERP and other purchasing systems.