

Atlantic Technological University strengthens procurement compliance with connected Source-to-Pay processes

How Atlantic Technological University gained real time contract visibility, improved spend control, and reduced manual work with Unit4 Source-to-Contract integrated with Unit4 ERP.

Atlantic Technological University, ATU, is one of the largest multi campus universities in Ireland, based in the west and northwest of the country. In April 2022, three institutions across nine campuses merged to form ATU, bringing together multiple procurement teams, processes, and working practices into one newly unified organization.

Ollscoil Teicneolaíochta an Atlantaigh

Atlantic Technological University

Industry	Location	Size
Education	Ireland	2 250 employees

Product
Unit4 ERP and Scanmarket Source-to-Contract

Key metrics

9 campuses unified

Procurement processes brought together across nine campuses following the merger

Contract utilization visible in real time

Contract spend can be tracked as it happens

Daily spend analytics updates

Contract, purchase order, invoice, and payment data feeds into spend analytics every day, supporting current visibility for reporting and compliance



"We're catching compliance at the beginning rather than retrospectively looking back and potentially being non compliant. This is a massive win for us in terms of compliance."

- Deirdre Kinarney, Procurement Compliance Reporting and Planning Officer, Atlantic Technological University

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The challenge

- Procurement needed greater consistency, control, and visibility across a newly merged university with nine campuses.
- Three separate procurement teams brought different cultures, working practices, and contract registers.
- Contracts were not stored centrally, with some held in hard copy or saved locally by individuals.
- The procurement team lacked full oversight of contracts and the spend against them.
- Reporting was time consuming and required manual manipulation before the team could access the insight they needed.

The solution

Working with Unit4, the university implemented Unit4 Source-to-Contract integrated with Unit4 ERP to create a connected source to pay process. The integrated setup allows supplier, contract, purchase order, invoice, and payment data to flow through the process and into spend analytics. This gives the procurement team a clearer view of where money is being spent, which contracts are being used, and how much contract value remains available.

Once a contract is activated in Source-to-Contract, the contract data becomes available in Unit4 ERP. When a requisitioner creates a requisition, they can select the relevant active contract for that supplier. From there, the contract reference follows the transaction through the purchase order, invoice, and payment process. The data is then fed into spend analytics on a daily basis, giving the team access to current information for decision making, reporting, and compliance monitoring.

The results

The university now has a more transparent, controlled, and data driven procurement process. The team can see spend by department, account code, supplier, and contract, as well as the percentage of each contract that has been consumed. This helps identify when a contract is approaching a spend threshold and supports earlier action, rather than discovering issues retrospectively.

For example, the team can view a contract worth approximately 4 million and see that about 3.3 million has already been spent, representing 82 percent utilization. Spend above 80 percent is highlighted in red, while spend above 60 percent is highlighted in amber. This gives the procurement team a practical way to monitor spend, assess how quickly a contract may be consumed, and decide whether to go back to market earlier to stay compliant.

The integrated process also supports end users. Requisitioners can select an active contract directly in Unit4 ERP, which reduces manual effort while giving procurement confidence that the requisition is linked to a compliant contract.

Key benefits

- Real time visibility of spend against contracts
- Stronger procurement compliance and better control of spend thresholds
- Daily data feeds into spend analytics for more current reporting
- Less manual reporting and data manipulation
- Simpler requisitioning for end users with fewer administrative steps
- Improved workload planning for current, upcoming, and expiring contracts

Lessons learned

Preparing early was essential. A strong data foundation was critical, especially because historic spend had to be mapped to active contracts using supplier names and account codes. A clean and fit for purpose chart of accounts helped make the integration and reporting more effective.

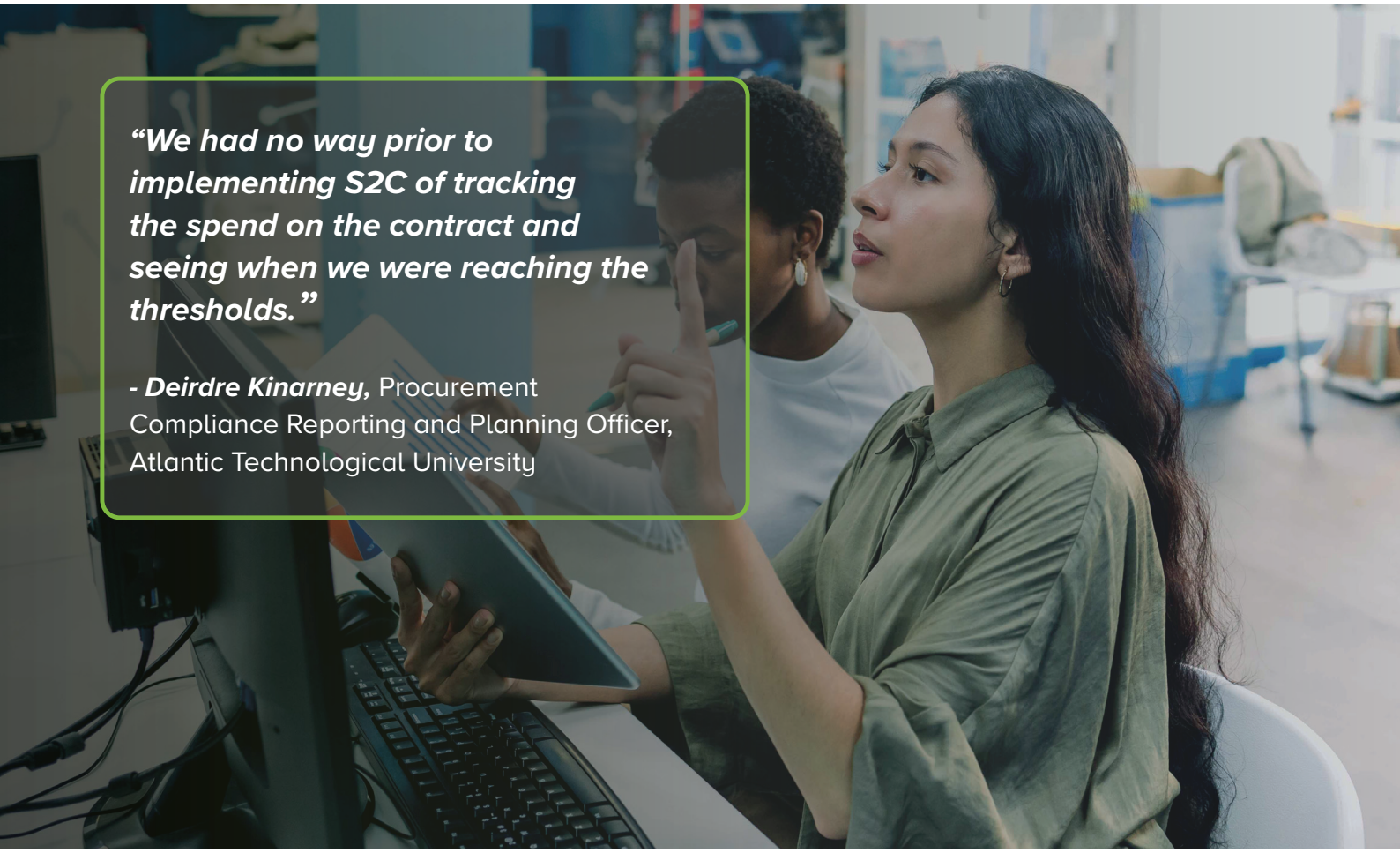
Change management was also essential. Requisitioners and stakeholders were involved early so they understood the purpose of the change and how it would benefit them. Because the new process replaced the need to upload tender documents with a simple contract selection field, the change reduced effort rather than adding work. This helped support adoption and reduced resistance.

Achievements

Unified procurement visibility across nine campuses
Procurement processes and contract visibility were brought together across a newly merged university, creating a more consistent way to manage spend and supplier contracts.

Enabled proactive contract compliance
With real time visibility into contract utilization, the team can identify when spend is approaching key thresholds and take action earlier to stay compliant.

Simplified the requisition process for end users
By allowing requisitioners to select active contracts directly in Unit4 ERP, the process reduces manual steps while helping ensure purchases are linked to compliant contracts.



"We had no way prior to implementing S2C of tracking the spend on the contract and seeing when we were reaching the thresholds."

- Deirdre Kinarney, Procurement Compliance Reporting and Planning Officer, Atlantic Technological University

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