

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement FAQs

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Platform and Registration

What is IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement is a digital network that connects relevant Buyers and Sellers to address tail and tactical spend.

- It is a revolutionary new private B2B network to buy and sell products and services with access to a broader network of sellers and curated content.
- It includes only pre-established, vetted and managed supplier relationships with enriched, relevant and competitive content.
- It provides a superior user experience with procurement controls that increase spend under management and compliance.
- And, it offers powerful AI-driven features for content governance with customized views for analytics and insights.

What information do I need to prepare to register for an account?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement sellers must meet the same requirements as any IBM supplier. Details on IBM's requirements for suppliers can be found at the following link: <https://www.ibm.com/procurement/becomeSupp>

How do I get an invitation?

We are actively looking for new sellers to join our platform. Please contact the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement onboarding team: http://ibm.biz/seller_inquiries

Will there be a fee to join?

There are no onboarding or annual fees to join IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

How is IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement and the Trust Your Supplier (TYS) blockchain network connected?

Acquiring a TYS passport is the first step to joining IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement. Learn more about TYS at <https://trustyoursupplier.com/>

How can I join?

If you received an invitation from the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement onboarding team, follow the instructions within the email invitation sent to you. If you have not received an invitation, you can apply to join by completing the Seller Inquiry form at the following link: http://ibm.biz/seller_inquiries

What is the purchase flow in IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

Buyers (AKA requesters) will access the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement via a punchout connection from within their existing P2P/requisitioning system. After punching out, the buyers will shop for the products and services they need. The content they have access to will be based on their organization's predefined scope, preferences, and policies. When the buyer is done shopping, they will return the selected items to their P2P platform as a purchase request (PR). Once the PR is successfully approved, a purchase order will be issued to the seller by SDI International who is the P2P Operator for IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

Why are there three parties performing different functions within the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement solution?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement is a comprehensive E2E solution that brings the best-of-breed resources, skills, and functionality to each part of the process. To achieve that goal, IBM has partners with Tradecraft and SDI International.

Is there a demo of IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

A series of short and topic-specific demonstration and training videos for onboarding, content enablement, and daily operations are available to sellers. These videos are made available to approved sellers during the invitation and onboarding phases.

What payment methods are used by IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

Purchase orders are issued by the program's P2P Operator for all transactions. Sellers will issue invoices to the P2P Operator via the platform, and payment will be made by the P2P Operator directly to the seller's designated banking institution.

Will IBM migrate from Ariba to IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

For all program-related transactions, seller payments are made via purchase orders and invoices managed by IBM's designated P2P Operator on the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement platform. IBM and participating clients will continue utilizing their existing tools and processes for other transactions.

Is IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement required for suppliers to do business with IBM?

All sellers are highly recommended to participate in the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement network as it allows sellers to offer products and services to both IBM and additional participating enterprise clients on a common platform.

Do I have the option to view the Client's profile within IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement as a Seller?

Yes, sellers are granted access to view their connected Clients' profiles.

Will the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement invitation be sent to one, or multiple contacts in my company?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement onboarding team will send an invitation to one contact in your company, once the invitation is accepted, you can add multiple users from your company to manage your account.

If a seller is part of a multi-national enterprise, are they required to register each subsidiary on Trust Your Supplier?

Tax details, country-specific company registration requirements, and banking information change significantly for most legal entities. IBM and IBM Clients in the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement network conduct business with specific legal entities. Therefore, each legal entity will have its own TYS profile and registration. TYS has a "corporate relationship" profile function that assists sellers in linking or identifying these relationships.

Does IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement show an item with a choice of suppliers and their pricing?

The content available to individual Buyers is based upon predefined Client scope, preferences, and policies. The IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement buying experience is designed to exceed the leading B2C e-commerce experience. Buyers can search and filter content from available sellers while comparing items and prices.

What are the requirements for Sellers to join IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

Refer to IBM requirements to learn more <https://www.ibm.com/procurement/becomeSupp>

We are an existing IBM supplier; is it voluntary for us to join IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

All sellers are highly recommended to participate in the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement network as it allows sellers to offer products and services to both IBM and additional participating enterprise clients on a common platform.

My company already has an existing account on TYS, why do I still receive an invitation from TYS?

If your company already has an existing account on TYS, IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement onboarding team will send you a connection request via TYS to join IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement. Accepting this connection request will allow you to proceed further with the onboarding in IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

In which countries is IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement available?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement is currently in the Pilot stage in the following countries: UK, USA, Australia, Germany, France, and Spain.

Is cross-border transaction allowed on the platform?

Currently, cross-border transactions are not allowed in IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

Why should my company join IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement enables sellers to:

- Grow revenue through a new sales channel without the traditional upfront costs
- Collaborate easily with Clients across a broad spectrum of categories
- Manage custom offers and promotions
- Optimize sales through operational analytics
- Improve market visibility and brand eminence
- Maintain a trusted digital identity in Trust Your Supplier

What are the commercial objectives (revenue-wise) and what do we potentially miss out on if we do not participate in IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

We do not disclose the projected revenue. IBM brings enterprise clients to the network as buyers, if you do not participate in the network, you might miss out on the opportunity to work with those enterprise clients you might not have in your current network.

What is the expected average order volume for Sellers?

Order volume differs from Buyer to Buyer hence order volume will be based on Buyer's requirement.

What is the planned rollout of IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement constantly expands its network worldwide.

My company is an IBM distributor; can we join the network?

An IBM distributor can join the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement network. All sellers invited to IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement are selected by IBM and/or its participating clients.

What are the methods available for Sellers to interact with buyers on the platform?

Sellers and Buyers can interact with each other through collaboration tools available on the platform.

Roles and Responsibilities

Who is the target audience for IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement is designed to support IBM Global Procurement and IBM BPO Procurement enterprise clients seeking to transform their purchasing processes for tail and tactical spend with both automation and artificial intelligence. The solution was first deployed internally to IBM as a limited pilot for US employees in 2022, followed by Australia, France, Germany, Spain, and the United Kingdom in 2023. The solution will begin deploying to IBM clients in 4Q 2023.

Will the employees of IBM clients access the platform directly, or will IBM manage the transactions for them?

Individual buyers/requesters from each organization will access IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement from their existing P2P/requisitioning systems. They will shop for the products and services that meet their organization's predefined scope, preferences, guidelines and policies, and return selected items to their P2P platform as a Purchase Request (PR).

Is IBM going to act as a reseller for IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement sellers?

IBM will not act as a reseller. However, IBM has partnered with SDI International to fulfill the Procure to Pay Operator role. While using the platform, clients will issue POs to SDI; SDI will issue sub-POs to the original sellers; the original sellers will invoice SDI, and SDI will invoice the client.

Are there any user access restrictions for IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

Access to IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement is limited to IBM, onboarded IBM clients, and by invitation only for sellers. Each client will define the scope of content that will be available to their employees. Each client can also define content restrictions by seller, manufacturer, and category. Customized seller offers can be further restricted to individual users, business units, work locations, and more.

Could you share the list of sellers who have already joined the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement program?

Due to IBM's privacy policy and our commitments to both our clients and sellers, the list of IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement sellers is confidential.

Who are the potential buyers?

Buyers include IBM employees, IBM participating enterprise BPO clients and their employees. IBM B2B Commerce sellers can also apply to participate as a buyer.

Can a seller connect to another seller via the platform?

Sellers cannot connect with other sellers directly. However, sellers can apply to become an IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement buyer which would then allow them to connect with sellers.

To whom will the Seller send the invoices?

Sellers will invoice the P2P Operator, IBM pays the P2P Operator (currently SDI International). The P2P Operator pays the Sellers.

Fees and Agreements

How does IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement impact our current method of business and contract terms with IBM?

Sellers who have joined the program will transact directly with the P2P Operator via IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement. Contract terms will remain between the client and seller. Additional terms with the seller and P2P Operator are presented during the seller onboarding process.

Are the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement terms and conditions negotiable?

The terms and conditions of IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement are not negotiable.

Are there any sales transaction fees charged to sellers or buyers?

Sellers are assessed a fee per transaction as defined by the P2P Operator. There are no sales transaction fees charged to Buyers. The seller transaction fee is expected to replace any direct marketing or proposal costs normally incurred to do business with clients.

What is the Payment Term in IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement?

The platform P2P operator defines the payment term based on the country where local law is allowed.

Will there be any fee to transact on the platform and who is responsible to pay?

There is no traditional or additional upfront cost to join or upload content on the platform; only a minimal transaction fee will apply if you make a sale on the platform. This fee is accessible in the Terms and Conditions and will be paid to the P2P operator.

As a Seller, how do I get paid for the item sold on the platform?

IBM will pay the platform P2P Operator, and the P2P Operator will pay Sellers.

Who is responsible to pay for the shipping fee?

The shipping fee is defined by the Sellers.

Support

What type of Seller support is available on the platform?

The seller enablement process is well-defined and intended to be a self-service process supported by topic-specific and how-to videos, a thorough knowledgebase, and the Seller Guide to IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

A Content Analyst and backup are assigned to each seller to provide guidance with onboarding, content enablement, content quality, and offer management. IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement has also partnered with GfK Etilize to provide manufacturer item information to enrich seller items with optimal product details. GfK Etilize is available to assist sellers by performing a coverage analysis to determine which of their items already exist within the enrichment data corpus, which of their items can and will be added by GfK Etilize, and how to collect product information for their items that are not targeted for inclusion within the enrichment data corpus.

In which language do I receive support from the IBM B2B Commerce team?

The IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement onboarding team provides support in English.

Is it possible to request IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement-related information in my local language?

All IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement-related information is currently available in English.

I have accepted and completed the TYS invitation, how long does it take for IBM to approve onboarding for my company?

Once you accept the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement invitation and complete the TYS profile, IBM will perform the supplier vetting. The length of the vetting process may vary on different suppliers and/or countries.

Content Enablement FAQ

How can sellers upload their catalogs?

Once the sellers are onboarded to IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement, sellers will have access to the Seller University to upload their catalog and maintain their offers.

Where can I find support for issues with uploading the template?

Please contact your assigned Seller Coordinator for guidance.

How often can sellers update their content?

There are no restrictions.

Can sellers manage their products' visibility?

Yes. Sellers can define their products' visibility for buyers. While preparing their offers, sellers can select which markets and countries to make their products available to.

What are the available categories for products and services?

The available categories for products and services are based on UNSPSC Version 19.

How do Sellers know if their products were uploaded correctly on the platform?

After Sellers select a content file for uploading, the platform directs them to a new page that shows the content mapping. If no mismatches are identified after clicking on "Import Now," the system uploads the file. A pop-up window confirms how many rows have been imported successfully. All the imported items are available within the "Seller Marketplace Manager." The item status also helps indicate whether the product is available to buyers.

How can I update a current offering?

Sellers can update their offers within the platform's "Seller Marketplace Manager" app.

How can I delete an offering?

Open the Seller Marketplace Manager app, click on the "Offers" tab, select the targeted offer, and click on "Withdraw offer." To delete the offer using the Content Template file, use the "Y" flag in the offer tab to tell the platform to delete the offer when uploading the file.

What are the minimum and maximum numbers of SKUs that I can include in an offer?

There is no limitation on the number of SKUs in offers.

As a Seller, will I be able to control my listed items?

Yes. Sellers can activate/inactivate their uploaded items.

How do I correct miscategorized items?

Sellers can update/change UNSPSC codes in the platform's Seller Marketplace Manager app by clicking on the item and choosing the "UNSPSC Commodity Code" field.

Is a keyword required for the listed items?

Keywords are not required but are highly recommended because they make an item more easily searchable within the platform.

How do I add mandatory and optional bundles?

Bundled offer education is available on the Seller University, sellers can view this education once onboarded to IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

Can I replace an existing offer?

Yes, by using the same Offer name, you can replace an existing offer.

How will the items be listed in IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement once the offered items are published?

Buyers can find listed items within the Shop app. They can browse categories of products/services based on UNSPSC codes.

What are the requirements to upload content? Do you have a predefined template or format made available on the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement platform?

There are no specific technical requirements. A valid template for uploading content is available on the platform. Sellers are also able to upload content manually via the User Interface.

Can I upload videos for our listed products?

Currently, the platform supports images only; however, our technical team is working on this capability.

How do I set an expiration date for an offer?

When uploading your offer, there is an option to set an expiration date.

Can I offer a single item?

Yes. As a Seller, you decide what to offer to your buyers.

How many images are required for each item?

None are required, but images are recommended to help Buyers with their purchasing decision.

How does the platform support highly configurable items?

This is a roadmap item for a future release; there is no ETA yet.

How do I create product variations/variants?

The training about variations/variants is available on Seller University, sellers can view this education once onboarded on IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

What kind of catalog do I have to provide?

You are able to provide static content during our Pilot phase. We also have a "Request for Quote" functionality in our strategic approach.

Is Punchout available?

As of now, Punchout now is not in scope for IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement.

Will there be a possibility to make individual prices/assortments for individual Customers?

Yes, we support Private Offers to individual customers and Marketplace Offers to each Client.

Will there be an electronic order exchange?

Beginning October 2023, Sellers will be able to integrate directly from their ERP/fulfillment system to auto-retrieve purchase orders, post invoices, and relay orders status, credit notes, etc. This integration will be through an established and standardized API.

Can Sellers accept/decline Customer requests for a relationship upfront?

The IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement solution is a marketplace with participating buyers (IBM Clients) and carefully selected sellers. Thus, all sellers and all buyers will have the ability to engage without having to establish a direct relationship. Rather, the Seller's "relationship" will be with IBM and its partner, SDI International Corporation (the IBM B2B Commerce P2P Operator). The seller has multiple options for both publishing and blocking their offers. These include the following:

1. General Offers can be published to the marketplace with generally available content and pricing for all customers within one or more countries.
2. Private Offers can be made to specific customers (select countries) with a specific list of items and pricing.
3. Buyers (IBM Clients) can submit private offer requests to any IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement seller.
4. If a Seller has one or more Buyers with whom you do not want your content to be accessible, the IBM B2B Commerce for Procurement Governance Team can configure a block that will ensure those users do not have access.

Can we offer products in different countries?

Yes. While offering products/services, sellers have the option to select the targeted market/country.

I uploaded products, but they are not appearing in my shop. Why?

Please make sure that the uploaded items' status is "Active." To offer an item to a marketplace or buyer, be sure to include and send it in an offer.

How do I find the removed items' information?

There is no option to view removed items. Once an item is removed, it is no longer visible.