

AMAZON BUSINESS CASE STUDY



Procurement Excellence
Programme ESG

Standard Award 

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WORLD
CHANGING
GLASGOW



University of Glasgow Case Study: Implementing a Controlled Amazon Business Purchasing Solution at the University

1. Overview

The University's Procurement Team identified the need to enhance control, transparency, and efficiency across purchasing activities in relation to Amazon on behalf of the university. Amazon Business is a widely used platform for low-value, frequently purchased items. This case study outlines the challenges of the previous use of Amazon expenditure, the drivers for change, the Procurement transformation journey, and the improvements delivered through the implementation of a new centralised Amazon Business Account solution.

2. Background

Amazon Business provided a convenient and accessible marketplace for University of Glasgow purchasing officers, enabling them to procure a broad range of low value goods using a Purchasing Card. However, the sporadic use of Amazon exposed underlying inefficiencies, compliance shortcomings, and operational risks. Whilst these hindered overall effectiveness and efficiency, they also created a significant opportunity for the Procurement team at the university to implement a more controlled, strategic and value-driven purchasing solution.

As part of a tail end expenditure review and a desire to reduce our New Supplier request approvals for one off purchases, the Procurement team identified a compliant route to market to engage with Amazon Business to maximise cost and product optimisation. The Amazon project review has realised increased expenditure year on year, reflecting its growing adoption by all users through eProcurement.

Solution

The University implemented **Amazon Business**, consolidating all individual accounts into a single, centrally managed business account. This transformation delivered multiple benefits:

- **Consolidated Amazon business account:** Enhanced intuitive user experience.
- **Cost Savings:** Access to reduced rates (approx. 5–20+%) on all expenditure. Reduced delivery cost by introduction of Amazon Business Prime.
- **Compliance:** Invoice by Amazon only, VAT-compliant invoicing aligned with HMRC and University procurement policies
- **Operational Efficiency:** eProcurement adoption, straight through processing, reduced consolidated fees and improved customer support. Rapid delivery options.
- **Enhanced Visibility:** Robust reporting and analytics for informed decision-making. Opportunity to expand access to extensive product availability across other categories.
- **Sustainable and Socially Responsible Purchases:** Visibility of certified products, spend tracking tools, diverse suppliers and lower-emission delivery options
- **Benchmarking:** Increased opportunity to benchmark other category costs to identify cost savings solutions.

3. The Procurement Challenges

Fragmented Purchasing Channels hindered strategic management of Amazon expenditure.

Limited Visibility and Compliance Assurance

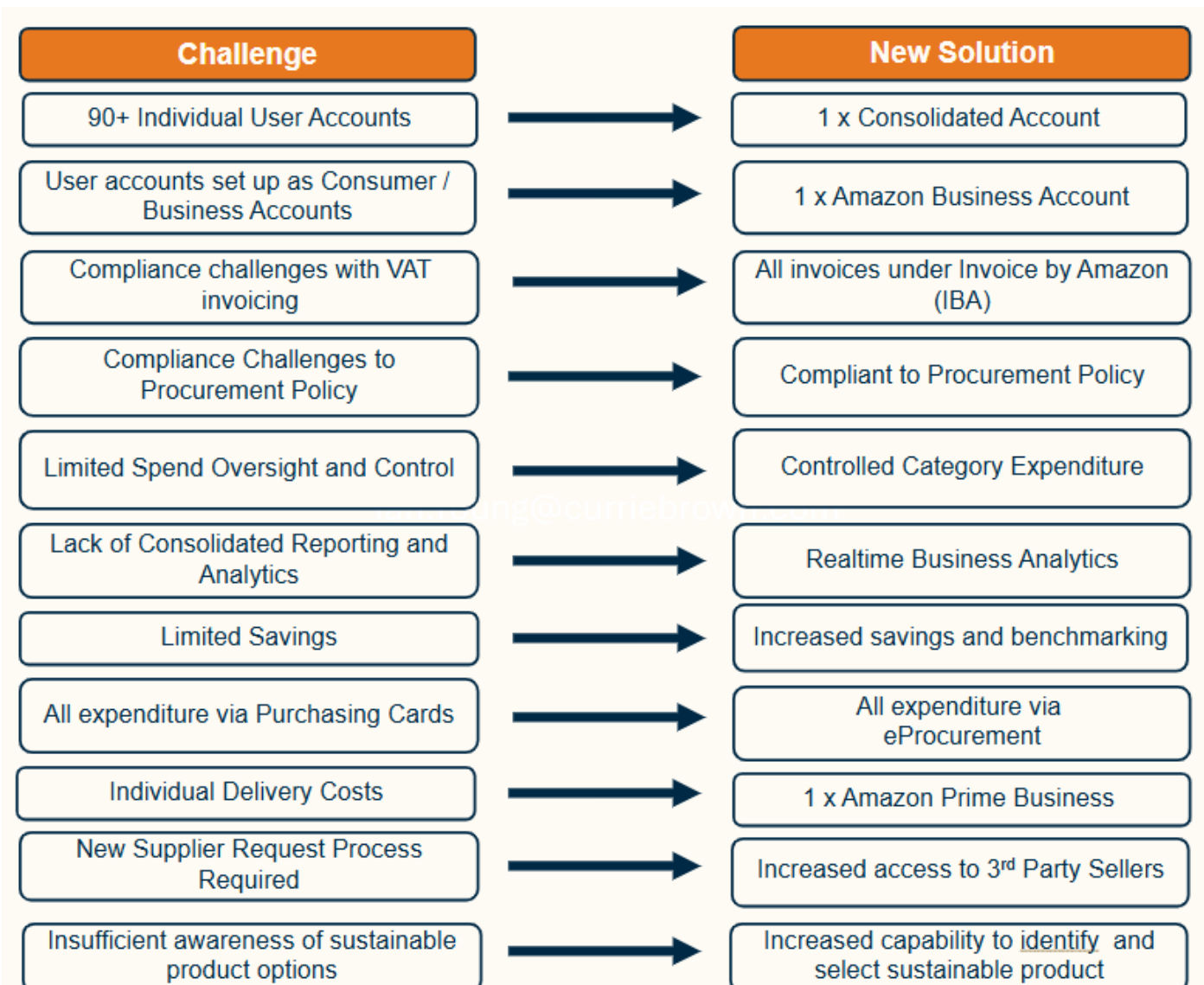
- Limited visibility of the full expenditure
- Reduced insight into purchasing patterns
- Lack of compliance with procurement policies
- Lack of Cost Optimisation
- VAT challenges

Savings and Sustainability inefficiencies

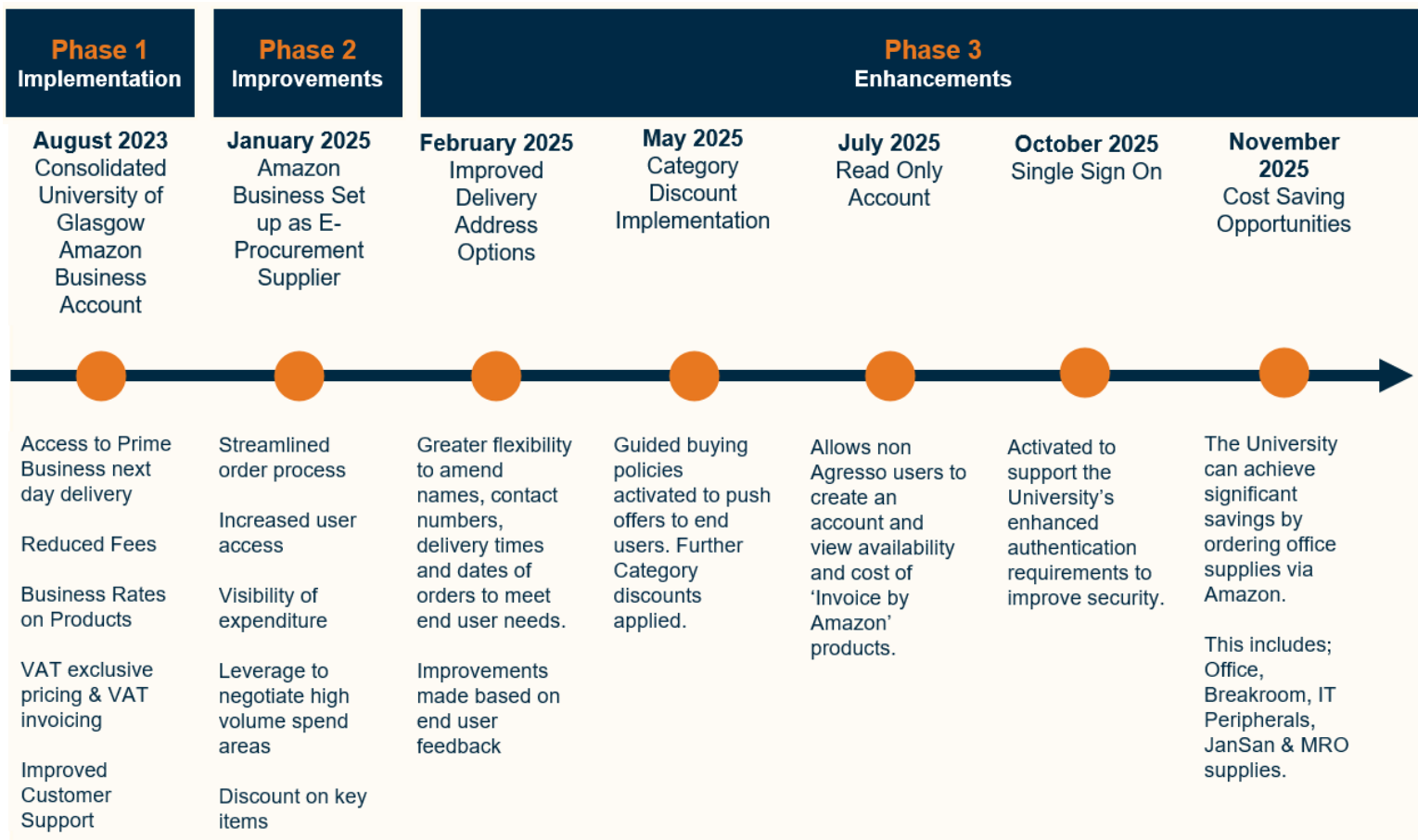
- No leverage consolidated buying power
- Loss of savings opportunity
- Individual delivery charges
- Limited visibility of Supplier types i.e. SME
- Limited Sustainability choice on product offering

Operational Inefficiencies without a centralised university business account:

- Staff faced separate sign-in processes
- Multiple accounts required individual management
- Reconciling purchases became more complex
- Lack of straight through processing
- Backlog of payment concerns



4. Transformation Journey:



5. Impact of Amazon Business Project

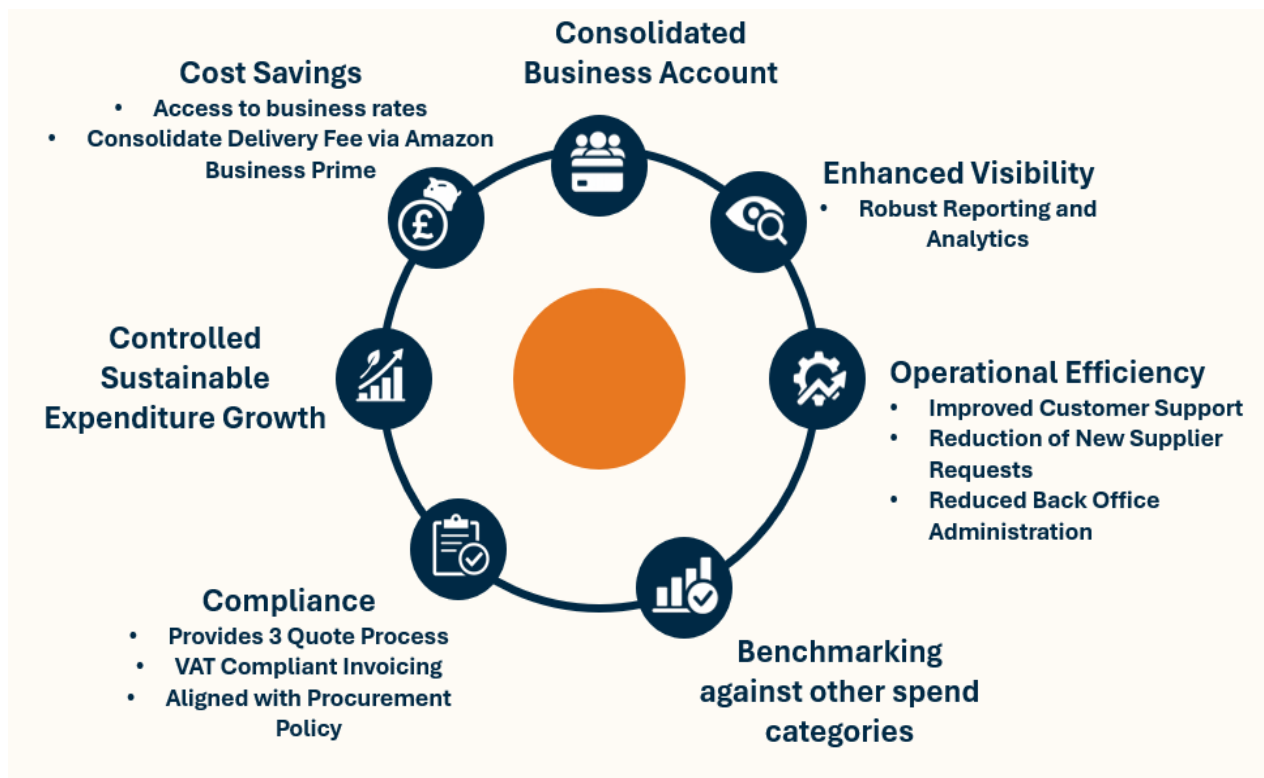
Compliant expenditure, ensuring adherence to procurement standards and regulatory requirements

The University can leverage data insights to continuously optimise purchasing practices, ensuring Amazon Business remains **fit for purpose** and delivers ongoing value.

Transaction volume and overall spend have increased significantly, reflecting **improved accessibility and trust**.

Increase in Amazon spend alongside ongoing improvements will allow the University to use combined buyer power to achieve **additional enhancements**.





6. Ongoing Opportunities

Benchmarking:

The procurement team have undertaken benchmarking to further identify potential efficiencies and best cost options across key spend categories.

By conducting critical analysis of historical volumes of items purchased within key spend categories and comparing their original pricing against Amazon Business pricing, the procurement team can target and track potential savings.

Key Spend Categories:



Sustainability:

The University is actively leveraging Amazon Business to strengthen sustainable and socially responsible purchasing, capitalising on key features:

1. Access and Visibility of Products with Recognised Sustainability Certifications
2. 'Organisation Preferred' status for Sustainable Products and / or Business Practices
3. Enhanced Reporting for Tracking Sustainable Spend Amazon Business Analytics offers tools that allow organisations to track how much they are spending on sustainable products
4. e.g., micromobility for deliveries).

As adoption grows, these tools present an ongoing opportunity for the University to further expand sustainable purchasing practices and continually enhance its environmental and social impact.

7. Available Amazon Business Training

Amazon Business training slides: [Amazon Business eProcurement Slides](#)

Amazon training videos:

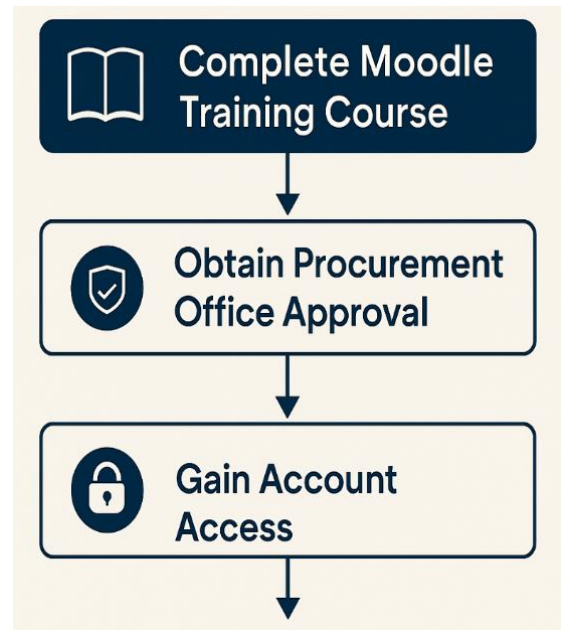
- [Amazon Account Set Up](#)
- [Agresso Ordering with Amazon](#)
- [Amazon Order Review and Options](#)
- [Amazon Business How to Guides](#)

Amazon Business account Moodle training course for Purchasing Cardholders only

In order to be granted access to the University Amazon Business Account, you must complete the following training first:

- [Amazon Business Account Moodle training course](#)

To gain access to a read only Amazon Business – please email Procurement at finance-procurementhelpline@glasgow.ac.uk



8. Conclusion:

Following the transformation journey the Amazon Business Account is an integral tool in driving value, supporting compliance and enabling procurement excellence across the University.

The implementation and optimisation of Amazon Business have fundamentally strengthened the University's procurement framework, delivering:

- measurable cost savings,
- improved compliance,
- greater operational efficiency.

The transformation from previously fragmented accounts into a single, centrally managed platform, allowing the University to benefit from enhanced visibility, full spend transparency, and data-driven insights that support more strategic purchasing decisions.

Looking ahead, continued optimisation of the Amazon Business Account alongside the introduction of additional enhanced features such as spend controls and approval workflows, will ensure Amazon Business continues to provide an effective and efficient tail end spend solution for the University.

