

## MARKET NOTE

# Delivering Insight-Led Procurement with WNS Procurement Powered by The Smart Cube

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## EXECUTIVE SNAPSHOT

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### FIGURE 1

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#### Executive Snapshot: Recent Acquisitions of The Smart Cube and OptiBuy Lead to Rebranding of WNS Procurement Powered by The Smart Cube

This IDC Market Note highlights WNS' recent rebranding of WNS Denali to WNS Procurement Powered by The Smart Cube, which was facilitated by the recent acquisitions of The Smart Cube and OptiBuy. These acquisitions reinforce WNS' core value of driving high-end, insight-led procurement with advanced analytics and enhance the company's capabilities in streamlining business operations with comprehensive procurement platform services.

#### Key Takeaways

- The Smart Cube brings intelligence, insights, and analytics about the external market to WNS clients. This external intelligence provides a view on what is happening across the categories, suppliers, and markets that clients operate in. When leveraged in conjunction with internal client data, this enables a more holistic view for improved decision-making.
- With the acquisition of OptiBuy, a leading European provider of procurement platform consulting and implementation solutions, WNS wanted to improve the extent to which it supports clients on their digital transformation journey, specifically for procurement platform selection, integration, and optimization.
- IDC believes the acquisitions will enhance WNS' procurement advisory capabilities; bring in net-new and complementary advanced analytics, machine learning, and procurement skills; and expand WNS' footprint/provide new opportunities in Europe and the Middle East. Moreover, these acquisitions enhance WNS' position as a one-stop-shop service provider for strategy, digital, and managed services.

Source: IDC, 2024

IN THIS MARKET NOTE

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**Background**

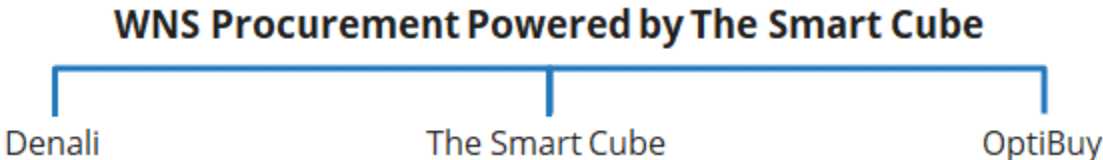
In January 2017, WNS acquired Denali Sourcing Services (which became WNS Denali) to expand its service offerings beyond transactional procure-to-pay to span the entire source-to-pay value chain. Denali started as a source-to-contract procurement managed service provider providing upstream value to customers in terms of accelerating savings and sourcing. When category management proved to be more of a challenge to customers, WNS added category management capabilities to its consulting/advisory capabilities to co-innovate with clients and make sure the source-to-contract programs were more valuable to customers.

At the end of 2022, WNS completed the acquisition of The Smart Cube, a leader in platform-driven research and analytics (R&A) solutions focused on procurement and supply chain, and OptiBuy, a leading European provider of procurement platform consulting and implementation solutions. This IDC Market Note examines the role The Smart Cube and OptiBuy have played in reinforcing WNS' core value of driving high-end, insight-led procurement with advanced analytics and platform integration. These acquisitions have played a pivotal role in the rebranding of WNS' three procurement businesses to WNS Procurement Powered by The Smart Cube (see Figure 2), which was announced in March 2024 at the Americas Procurement Congress event.

**FIGURE 2**

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**Acquisitions Made by WNS**



Source: IDC, 2024

**IDC'S POINT OF VIEW**

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**What The Smart Cube Means for WNS**

The Smart Cube was founded in 2003 and headquartered in London, United Kingdom. According to the WNS press release, The Smart Cube's offerings span four key areas including procurement and supply chain, commercial sales and marketing, digital and analytics, and strategy and investment research.

For procurement and supply chain, the company provides digitally led intelligence and analytics solutions including custom market research and deep and advanced analytics for complex categories. In addition, it brings a proven track record of enhancing procurement intelligence and insight-based decision-making, strong front-end advisory capabilities, over 800 global employees including more than 600 talented R&A specialists, and a large European footprint to the WNS portfolio (for more details, go to [wnsnorthamerica.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/wns-acquires-two-firms-enhance-digital-analytics-and-procurement?mobile=1](https://wnsnorthamerica.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/wns-acquires-two-firms-enhance-digital-analytics-and-procurement?mobile=1)).

The Smart Cube brings intelligence, insights, and analytics about the external market to WNS clients, providing a view on what is happening across the categories, commodities, suppliers, and markets that clients operate in. The process of compiling competitive intelligence and conducting market analyses enables procurement to understand how the supply market works, the direction in which the market is going, the competitiveness, and the key suppliers within the market. This is typically a manually intensive process using basic descriptive analytics and historical data with little predictability, which can leave cost optimization and partnership opportunities behind (see *IDC's Worldwide Digital Transformation Use Case Taxonomy, 2023: Procurement*, IDC #US51213122, September 2023). The Smart Cube provides customized intelligence, data points, and tools to support decision-making across the following:

- **Category Intelligence:** Timely, contextualized intelligence covering supply market dynamics, price forecasts, spend, and demand insights
- **Commodity Intelligence:** Easy-to-consume market insights and predictive price analytics, prepared by market specialists, to manage exposure to commodity risk
- **Supplier Risk Intelligence:** Continuous monitoring, assessment, and mitigation of supplier risks to ensure business continuity, enforce compliance, and meet sustainability goals

The external market intelligence provided by The Smart Cube creates value with a holistic view of commodities, market trends, and suppliers, which can be leveraged in conjunction with customers' own internal data/intelligence to enable greater insight-based decision-making. In addition, it helps better manage risk and optimize costs and enables WNS to develop client-specific perspectives and identify opportunities as it relates to the current supply base and markets.

According to 2023 IDC data, over the next three years, 25% of global organizations want to leverage more digital technologies to improve market analysis when sourcing products and services. This can include leveraging intelligent data mining to assess internal and external data sources and identifying the various dimensions enabling more informed sourcing-related decision-making and leveraging digital to model current conditions, what-if scenario planning, and forecasting to help identify issues that may arise, allowing the right supplier to be selected and the right contract to be executed.

## What OptiBuy Means for WNS

Founded in 2010 and headquartered in Warsaw, Poland, OptiBuy is a leading European provider of procurement platform consulting and implementation solutions. The company helps clients leverage the capabilities of leading third-party procurement and supply chain platforms including Ivalua, JAGGAER, and O9 and complements WNS' existing offerings with platforms such as Coupa and Ariba. Currently focused on the EMEA market, the company has approximately 90 employees including more than 40 senior-level certified platform implementation professionals based in Poland (for more details, go to [wnsnorthamerica.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/wns-acquires-two-firms-enhance-digital-analytics-and-procurement](https://wnsnorthamerica.gcs-web.com/news-releases/news-release-details/wns-acquires-two-firms-enhance-digital-analytics-and-procurement)).

With the acquisition of OptiBuy, WNS wanted to improve the extent to which it supports clients on their digital transformation journey, acting as a one-stop shop for procurement platform selection, integration, and optimization. WNS has been platform agnostic and has supported clients mainly in platform selection but wanted to better support clients with the integration/optimization of platforms like Ivalua (which WNS sees a demand for in its client base), Coupa, and Ariba.

## Key Takeaways

WNS has historically performed well in IDC's analyses of the procurement and analytics business process services markets, being ranked as a Leader in *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Procurement as a Service Vendor Assessment* (IDC #US42630617, February 2018) and Major Player in *IDC MarketScape: Worldwide Analytics for Business Operations Services 2019 Vendor Assessment* (IDC #US44118519, October 2019), the latter of which is being refreshed in 2024 specifically looking at enterprise analytics and artificial intelligence in procurement business process services.

Improved capabilities around external market intelligence on complex categories and suppliers could be a differentiator for WNS. Today's procurement teams are faced with managing fast-evolving demand-supply circumstances, numerous vendor relationships, and diverse data sources that aid in procurement decisions. In addition to global organizations indicating they want to do more AI-enabled market analysis in the next one to three years as previously mentioned, 2023 IDC data also shows among the top challenges faced today in the procurement function are access to category expertise (23%) and access to spend and supplier data (29%), further exacerbating the need for greater intelligence and insights to navigate deal negotiation, favorable price advantages, and supplier selection.

IDC believes the acquisitions of The Smart Cube and OptiBuy will enhance WNS' position as a one-stop-shop service provider that can support clients with strategy/advisory (i.e., working with clients on how operating models should work and sharing best practices), delivering on digital from a platform and analytics perspective (still with an agnostic view of technology and procurement platforms but deepened expertise) and managed services.

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### Related Research

- *Procurement Business Process Services DX Initiatives: Intelligent Contract Use Cases* (IDC #US51910124, March 2024)
- *Procurement Business Process Services DX Initiatives: Intelligent Sourcing Use Cases* (IDC #US51309123, October 2023)
- *IDC's Worldwide Digital Transformation Use Case Taxonomy, 2023: Procurement* (IDC #US51213122, September 2023)

### Synopsis

This IDC Market Note highlights the announcements of WNS' recent acquisitions and rebranding of WNS Denali and how they support and enhance WNS' vision of driving insight and data-led procurement.

## About IDC

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