

\$2.1M

SAVINGS THROUGH STRATEGIC SOURCING

The PE Technology Procurement Playbook

A structured framework for capturing \$2.1M in annual IT procurement savings that flow directly to EBITDA and create \$16.8M in enterprise value at exit.

What's Inside

Your roadmap to \$2.1M in EBITDA

01

The EBITDA Lever Hiding in Every P&L

Why technology procurement matters more than ever in today's PE environment.

02

Why Procurement Remains Underleveraged

The four structural causes mid-market portfolios systematically miss.

03

The \$2.1M Savings Model

A category-by-category breakdown of where the value lives.

04

The 100-Day Procurement Framework

A structured execution plan from close through governance.

05

The Multiplier Effect

How single-company savings compound into portfolio-wide enterprise value.

06

Readiness Checklist + Next Steps

Assess your portfolio company's procurement maturity today.

The Numbers That Matter

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY / KEY STATS

18-26%

Average software overpayment by mid-market PE portfolio companies

VendorBenchmark

32%

Of cloud spend wasted on idle resources every year

Flexera 2026

61%

Of SaaS applications have zero active users

Torii 2025

76

Cybersecurity tools managed by the average enterprise

IBM Research

\$16.8M

Enterprise value created from \$2.1M savings at 8x multiple

Accelerate model

84%

Of PE leaders seek operational value from procurement

Accenture 2024

THE BOTTOM LINE

On a \$200M revenue portfolio company, a 25% reduction in technology procurement costs produces \$2.1M in annual EBITDA. At an 8x multiple, that is \$16.8M in enterprise value at exit.

01

The EBITDA Lever Hiding in Every P&L

Private equity value creation has entered its most demanding era. Bain Global Private Equity Report 2026 frames the shift in arithmetic every operating partner now lives with: portfolio companies that once needed roughly 5% annual EBITDA growth to deliver a 2.5x return on invested capital now need 10 to 12%.¹ Borrowing costs have risen. Leverage ratios have compressed. Exit multiples remain flat. The phrase circulating among operating partners captures the environment in three words: "12 is the new 5."

The pressure is compounding from multiple directions. S&P Global Market Intelligence 2026 Private Equity Survey found that 71% of general partners now prioritize operational improvements over financial engineering, with 60% agreeing that higher capital costs are forcing greater focus on portfolio company operational performance.² McKinsey Global Private Markets Report 2026 describes a mature industry where alpha will increasingly be made through deliberate operational choices.³ Holding periods have extended in 2025 compared to 2020.⁴

In this environment, the levers that produce genuine, measurable EBITDA improvement are the ones that separate top-performing funds from the rest. Revenue growth requires market conditions to cooperate. Pricing changes risk customer friction. Headcount reductions carry legal, cultural, and capability costs. But one lever sits in a category of its own: technology procurement.

"12 is the new 5." Portfolio companies that once needed 5% annual EBITDA growth now need 10 to 12% to deliver the same returns.

For the typical mid-market portfolio company with \$100M to \$500M in revenue, technology spend represents one of the largest and least governed cost categories on the income statement. Gartner IT Key Metrics Data 2025 places median IT spending for midsized enterprises at 3.1% of revenue, but that figure masks significant industry variation.⁵ Financial services firms routinely spend 6 to 8%, healthcare 5.5 to 7%, and manufacturers 3 to 4%.⁶ VendorBenchmark analysis puts the average portfolio company overpayment for software at 18 to 26%.⁷

On a \$200M revenue portfolio company spending 4.2% of revenue on technology, that is \$8.4M in annual IT expenditure. A 25% reduction through strategic sourcing produces \$2.1M in hard-dollar annual savings that flow directly to EBITDA. At an 8x EBITDA multiple, that creates \$16.8M in enterprise value at exit. At a 10x multiple, the figure reaches \$21M. Every dollar of technology procurement savings is worth \$8 to \$15 in enterprise value.⁷ This playbook provides a structured, repeatable framework for capturing that value.

02

Why Procurement Remains Underleveraged

Despite the financial impact, technology procurement remains one of the most overlooked value creation levers in private equity. Accenture December 2024 research found that while 84% of PE leaders seek to drive operational value through procurement, 58% admit that doing so effectively is not easy.⁸ The gap between intention and execution has structural causes specific to the mid-market.

The first cause is insufficient analytical groundwork during due diligence. Investments where procurement opportunities are identified before close are 70% more likely to capture significant value, yet most deal teams defer technology assessments to the post-close period.⁸ A 2024 Accenture Research survey found that 83% of private equity leaders admit their due diligence practices are outdated and fall short of expectations, and 75% acknowledge that increasing complexity is at odds with available tools.⁹

The second cause is the absence of internal procurement capability. Unlike large enterprises with dedicated sourcing teams and spend analytics platforms, most portfolio companies in the 150 to 1,000 user range manage technology purchasing through a combination of the CIO, CFO, and department heads with no centralized visibility or benchmarking discipline. Mulberri analysis notes that spend on goods and services typically accounts for 60 to 80% of revenue, yet this spend is rarely scrutinized with the same rigor as revenue growth or headcount.¹⁰

The third cause is the keep-the-lights-on tax. Deloitte data shows that the average IT department spends 56% of its budget just maintaining current business operations, leaving less than 20% for actual innovation.¹¹ When the majority of technology spending is consumed by maintenance and renewal of existing contracts, there is no organizational incentive or bandwidth to challenge pricing, consolidate vendors, or eliminate redundancy. Contracts auto-renew without scrutiny. SaaS and cloud usage expands unchecked.

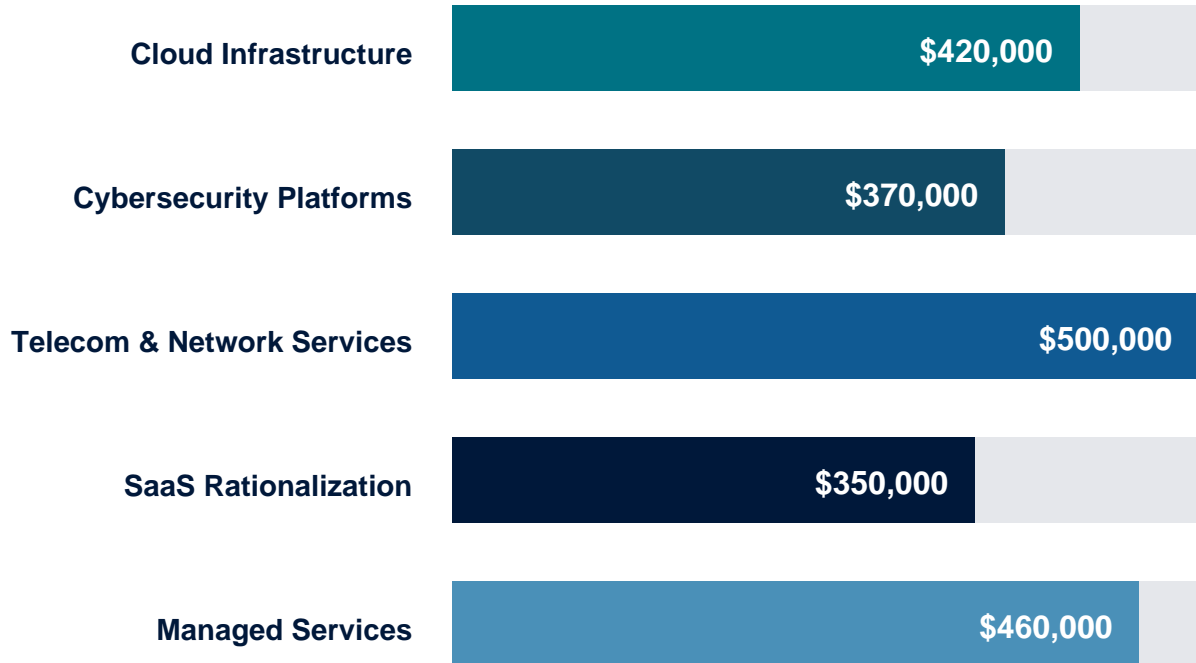
The fourth cause is shadow IT and SaaS sprawl. Torii 2025 SaaS Benchmark Report found that organizations manage an average of 668 applications, with over half (54%) classified as Shadow IT.¹² More alarmingly, 61% of SaaS applications are inactive with no active users in the last 30 days.¹² Flexera 2025 State of the Cloud found that 68% of business units spend more on SaaS than IT leadership is aware of.¹¹ VendorBenchmark data shows the average organization wastes 34% of its SaaS budget on unmanaged sprawl.¹³ For portfolio companies with no SaaS governance, waste rates reach 45 to 60%.¹³

The combination of these four factors creates a predictable pattern: technology costs accumulate without strategic oversight, and the EBITDA impact of that accumulation is invisible until someone applies a structured lens to the spend.

03

The \$2.1M Savings Model

Where the value lives, by category



TOTAL ANNUAL EBITDA IMPACT **\$2,100,000**

AT EXIT

\$2.1M savings = \$16.8M EV at 8x / \$21M at 10x

Every dollar of technology procurement savings is worth \$8 to \$15 in enterprise value.

\$420K

Cloud Infrastructure & Hosting

28% savings on \$1.5M annual cloud spend

Cloud costs are among the fastest-growing and least optimized line items in portfolio company budgets. The Flexera 2026 State of the Cloud Report found that organizations waste 32% of their cloud spend on idle resources, oversized instances, and underutilized reserved capacity, a figure that has remained structurally persistent at 27 to 32% every year since 2019.¹⁴ For enterprises with more than \$12M in annual cloud spend, the waste rate rises to 35%.¹⁵

For a portfolio company spending \$1.5M annually on cloud infrastructure, rightsizing, reserved instance optimization, commitment coverage analysis, and architectural improvements routinely produce 28% savings. Enterprises that implement structured cost optimization programs report an average 25 to 30% reduction in monthly cloud spend, while those combining automation and rightsizing reduce costs by up to 40%.¹⁶ Companies that complete cloud transformations during the holding period achieve 15 to 25% higher EBITDA multiples at exit.¹⁷

The operational discipline required to sustain these savings is FinOps, the practice of bringing financial accountability to cloud spending. FinOps adoption grew by 46% in 2025 as cost governance became a board-level priority, and organizations using FinOps frameworks are 2.5x more likely to meet or exceed cloud ROI expectations.¹⁶ For PE-backed companies, FinOps is not optional.

Organizations using FinOps frameworks are 2.5x more likely to meet or exceed cloud ROI expectations.

WHERE CLOUD WASTE LIVES

35-42%

Idle compute resources

18-24%

Oversized databases

12-18%

Orphaned storage

28%

Avg achievable savings

\$370K

Cybersecurity Platforms & Services

30% savings on \$1.2M annual security spend

Cybersecurity procurement in mid-market companies is characterized by tool sprawl, overlapping capabilities, and vendor relationships established reactively. The average enterprise now manages 76 different cybersecurity tools, according to IBM research, yet 78% of security leaders report that this tool sprawl actually weakens security posture rather than strengthening it.¹⁸ Security tool licensing, maintenance, and operational costs have increased by 23% annually over the past three years.¹⁸

The cybersecurity industry is undergoing its most aggressive consolidation wave in history. In 2025, disclosed cybersecurity M&A deal value surged to \$96 billion across 400 transactions, a 270% year-over-year increase.¹⁹ This reflects a fundamental shift away from best-of-breed point solutions and toward integrated platforms. Organizations that consolidated to platform-based architectures reported a 37% reduction in security incident costs.²⁰

A company spending \$1.2M annually on security tools, MDR services, and compliance platforms can achieve 30% savings through vendor consolidation, competitive sourcing of MSSP contracts, and elimination of redundant endpoint, email, and identity solutions. Kroll 2025 global study of 325 PE firm executives found that 80% of PE firms experienced disruption due to cyberattacks during the hold period, with an average financial impact of \$2.1 million per incident.²¹ A 53% chance of losing more than \$500,000 per incident makes cybersecurity procurement both a cost reduction and risk management discipline.²¹

Organizations that consolidated to platform-based architectures reported a 37% reduction in security incident costs.

THE CONSOLIDATION IMPACT

76

Avg tools per enterprise

78%

Say sprawl weakens posture

\$96B

2025 M&A deal value

37%

Lower incident costs

\$500K

Telecom & Network Services

25% savings on \$2M annual telecom spend

Telecommunications and connectivity remain among the most fragmented and overpriced categories in mid-market IT. Mindglobal State of Enterprise Telecom Spend 2026 report surveying 300 enterprise IT and finance leaders found the average enterprise wastes 18 to 22% of its annual telecom budget.²² This waste takes three forms: inactive lines that incur monthly charges (40% of waste), billing errors where carriers charge differently than contracted (35%), and unoptimized plans that exceed actual usage (25%).²²

Only 31% of enterprises have full visibility into their complete telecom inventory across all locations.²² Enterprises managing six or more carriers spend 40% more per seat than those with three or fewer consolidated carriers.²² Organizations with formal telecom expense management programs recover an average of 23% of annual spend in the first year.²²

For distributed portfolio companies operating multisite models in healthcare, manufacturing, financial services, or professional services, network and telecom contracts are often negotiated site by site with limited visibility into aggregate spend. A company spending \$2M annually on connectivity, voice, wireless, and SD-WAN can achieve 25% savings through carrier consolidation, contract renegotiation, billing audit and error recovery, and transition to managed network models.

Enterprises managing six or more carriers spend 40% more per seat than those with three or fewer consolidated carriers.

WHERE TELECOM WASTE HIDES

40%

Inactive lines

35%

Billing errors

25%

Unoptimized plans

31%

Have full visibility

\$350K

SaaS Rationalization

25% savings on \$1.4M annual SaaS spend

Shadow SaaS represents one of the most persistent sources of EBITDA leakage in portfolio companies. The scale is larger than most operating partners realize. Nintex 2025 SaaS Sprawl Snapshot surveying 2,000 IT decision-makers found that 51% of mid-market organizations report having between 100 and 300 SaaS tools in their tech stack, with 41% adding new tools every one to three weeks, surpassing their capacity to govern them.²³

The financial impact is direct and measurable. VendorBenchmark research across 500 enterprises shows that organizations with no SaaS governance waste 45 to 60% of their total SaaS budget, while those with active SaaS management programs reduce waste to 8 to 15%.¹³ The difference between those two figures, applied to a mid-market portfolio company software spend, is the difference between EBITDA leakage and EBITDA improvement.

A company spending \$1.4M on software licenses can achieve 25% savings by inventorying all active subscriptions, eliminating unused licenses (61% of SaaS applications have no active users in the last 30 days¹²), consolidating overlapping tools, and renegotiating enterprise agreements based on actual usage. The AI-driven tool explosion has compounded this challenge: AI tools now make up the majority of unmanaged applications in enterprise environments.¹²

61% of SaaS applications are inactive: zero active users in the last 30 days. Yet companies continue paying for them.

THE GOVERNANCE GAP

668

Avg apps per organization

61%

Have zero active users

45-60%

Waste without governance

8-15%

Waste with governance

\$460K

Managed Services & Outsourced IT

20% savings on \$2.3M annual MSP spend

Managed services contracts including MSPs, help desk, infrastructure management, and professional services are frequently the largest single vendor relationship in a portfolio company technology stack. These contracts are also among the least frequently benchmarked. The global managed services market reached \$380 billion in 2026, growing at 11.2% CAGR, with managed security services as the fastest-growing segment at 17.8% CAGR.²⁴

Research shows that 80% of organizations report reducing IT costs by 15 to 30% through managed services optimization, with managed services reducing total cost of ownership by an average of 28%.²⁵ However, these savings are only available to organizations that competitively source and regularly benchmark their managed services agreements. For portfolio companies that inherited their MSP relationship from a prior owner, or have not competitively sourced in more than 24 months, the overpayment is typically substantial.

A company spending \$2.3M on managed services can achieve 20% savings through competitive sourcing, SLA restructuring, scope right-sizing, and leveraging the operating partner portfolio-wide purchasing power. Cross-portfolio purchasing leverage is particularly effective in managed services, cybersecurity, and cloud categories, where aggregated spend creates negotiating power individual companies cannot achieve.²⁶ The same MSP serving three portfolio companies offers 15-25% better pricing than serving each individually.

\$1M in procurement savings = \$8M in enterprise value at an 8x EBITDA multiple.

THE MANAGED SERVICES OPPORTUNITY

\$380B

Global market 2026

11.2%

Annual CAGR

28%

Avg TCO reduction

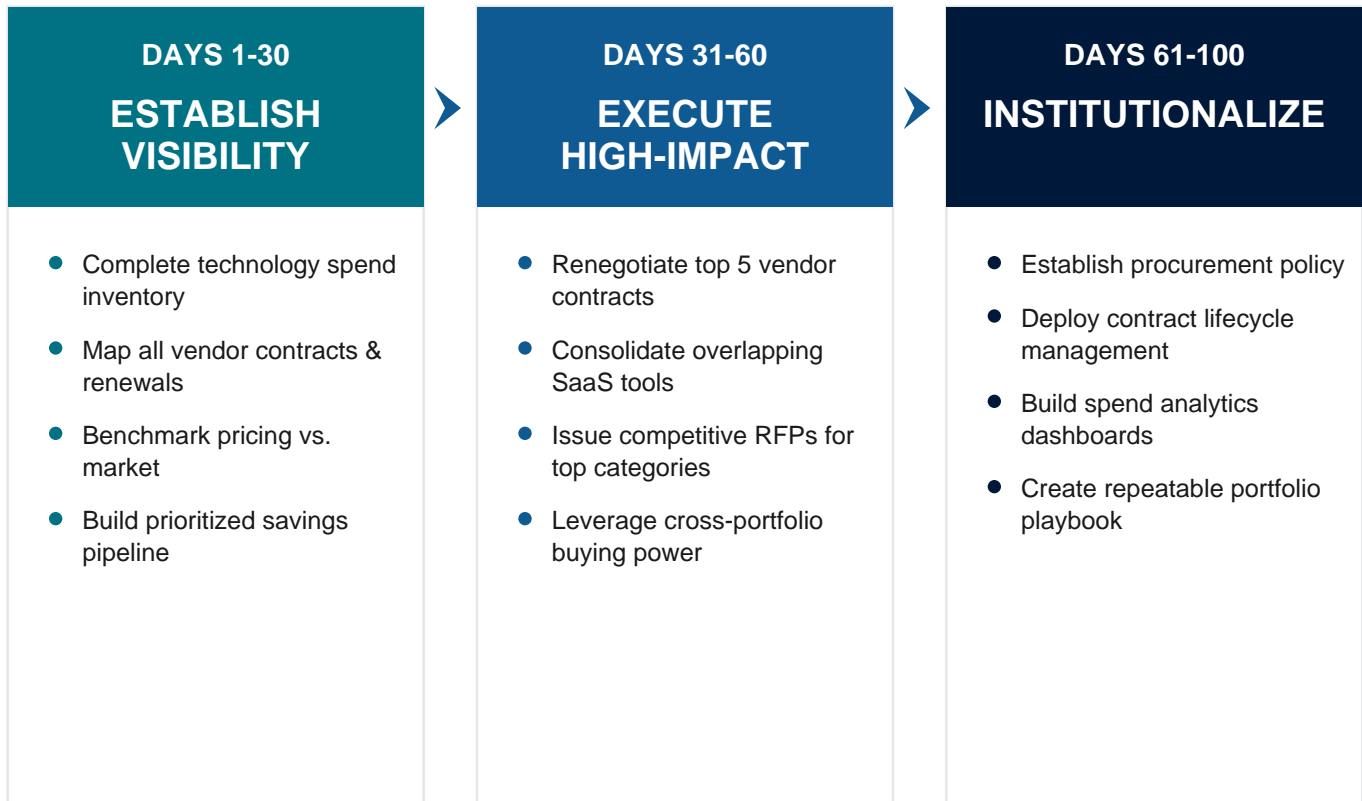
20%

Achievable savings

04

The 100-Day Procurement Framework

From visibility to execution to governance



VALUE CREATION MATH

\$1M in procurement savings = \$8M in enterprise value at 8x EBITD

Source: SpendHQ Spend Analytics Levers for PE EBITDA Impact

Days 1 to 30: Establish Visibility

The first priority is understanding where the money goes. Most portfolio companies cannot produce a clean, categorized view of technology spend without significant manual effort. Mulberri notes that a spend assessment takes less than a week, costs nothing, and typically reveals that portfolio companies are overpaying by approximately 20% versus market rates.¹⁰ The data exists in the accounts payable system. It just has not been classified, benchmarked, or acted on.

Key activities include completing a technology spend inventory across all categories, mapping all active vendor contracts including renewal dates and auto-renewal clauses, identifying the top 20 vendors by annual spend, benchmarking current pricing against market rates, and conducting stakeholder interviews. SpendHQ emphasizes that cross-portfolio contract identification is one of the most reliable methods for impacting EBITDA during this phase.²⁸

Days 31 to 60: Execute High-Impact Initiatives

With visibility established, the focus shifts to execution. The goal is to capture quick wins that demonstrate value while laying the groundwork for longer-term optimization. VendorBenchmark research identifies a 90-day window as the period for fastest technology cost wins post-close.⁷ Priority actions include renegotiating the top five vendor contracts, consolidating overlapping SaaS tools, issuing competitive RFPs for managed services, cybersecurity, and telecom categories.

During this phase, operating partners should leverage cross-portfolio purchasing power. SpendHQ notes that buying a service in bulk across the portfolio gives leverage for negotiating better pricing, and that at an 8x EBITDA multiple, every \$1M in procurement savings creates \$8M in enterprise value.²⁸ On every \$10M of addressable spend, well-executed procurement optimization routinely delivers \$800K to \$1.5M in verified annual savings.¹⁰

Days 61 to 100: Institutionalize Governance

The difference between one-time savings and sustained value creation is governance. Savings captured in the first 60 days will erode without mechanisms to maintain pricing discipline, prevent scope creep, and enforce contract compliance. FTI Consulting AI Radar for Private Equity survey found that 36% of PE firms with an AI strategy have no specific milestones or KPIs for measuring AI impact on value creation.²⁹

CLA notes that technology investments should be tracked with the same rigor as any capital expenditure, with KPIs linking directly to EBITDA drivers, monitored quarterly.³⁰ Governance activities include establishing a technology procurement policy with defined approval thresholds, implementing a contract lifecycle management process with automated renewal alerts, creating quarterly business reviews with strategic vendors, deploying spend analytics dashboards, and building a repeatable procurement playbook.

05

The Multiplier Effect

How \$2.1M compounds across the portfolio

One of the most important and frequently misunderstood elements of technology procurement in private equity is where the value compounds. The initial engagement with a single portfolio company creates a repeatable model.

E78 Partners documents how the economics compound across the portfolio.²⁶ Cross-portfolio purchasing leverage is particularly effective in cybersecurity, cloud, and telecom categories. Standardized vendor evaluation frameworks can be adapted across the entire portfolio.

The exit readiness implications are substantial. WTW has noted that a robust technology posture increases market value at exit.³¹ Dialectica 2025 confirmed that technology maturity gives buyers leverage while helping sellers command premium valuations.³²

Replicated across five portfolio companies, \$2.1M in annual procurement savings reaches \$84M in incremental enterprise value, fundamentally changing the return profile of a fund.³³



V
x 5



06

Procurement Readiness Checklist

Assess your portfolio company's procurement maturity

SPEND VISIBILITY

- Complete spend view within 48 hours?
- Top 20 vendors known by annual spend?
- Licenses reconciled vs. usage quarterly?
- Inactive SaaS apps identifiable?

CONTRACT GOVERNANCE

- All contracts cataloged with renewal dates?
- Approval process above set threshold?
- Auto-renewal clauses managed proactively?
- Every category sourced within 24 months?

COMPETITIVE SOURCING

- Pricing benchmarked vs. market rates?
- Structured RFP process in place?
- Cross-portfolio buying leveraged?
- Savings tracked as EBITDA driver?

RISK & COMPLIANCE

- Vendor cybersecurity certs verified?
- Data protection clauses in contracts?
- Vendor risk assessment process?
- Industry compliance aligned?

READY TO ASSESS YOUR PORTFOLIO?

Accelerate Partners conducts pre-close and 100-day procurement assessments.
Vendor-agnostic. No retainers.



The Accelerate Partners Perspective

Vendor-agnostic technology advisory for private equity

At Accelerate Partners, we advise operating partners, deal partners, and portfolio leadership teams on exactly this challenge. Technology procurement is not a back-office function. It is one of the fastest, most controllable margin levers available during the hold period, and for mid-market portfolio companies in regulated industries, it is consistently underleveraged.

Our approach begins with pre-close technology assessments that go beyond checklists to answer the questions that actually matter for the investment thesis: what is the company spending on technology, where is it overpaying, what will it cost to optimize, and what does day-one procurement execution actually require? We work as a vendor-agnostic advisory partner.

That independence is what makes our assessments credible when it matters most: in deal negotiations, in LP reporting, and in exit preparation. If your firm is evaluating a platform acquisition, preparing a portfolio company for exit, or looking to build a systematic approach to technology procurement across the portfolio, we are ready to have that conversation.

The \$2.1M is real. The question is whether your portfolio is capturing it.

HOW WE ENGAGE

PRE-CLOSE ASSESSMENT

Quantify the procurement opportunity before the deal closes. Build the savings model into the investment thesis.

100-DAY EXECUTION

Execute savings capture across cloud, SaaS, telecom, and cybersecurity. Renegotiate, consolidate, and benchmark.

PORTFOLIO GOVERNANCE

Institutionalize procurement governance across all portfolio assets. Build a repeatable, LP-reportable playbook.

TAKE ACTION

Ready to capture your \$2.1M?

Technology procurement is one of the fastest, most controllable margin levers available during the hold period. For mid-market portfolio companies in regulated industries, it is consistently underleveraged. We work as a vendor-agnostic advisory partner across pre-close diligence, 100-day execution, and portfolio-wide governance.

PRE-CLOSE

Quantify the procurement opportunity before the deal closes.

100-DAY

Execute savings capture across cloud, SaaS, telecom, and cyber.

PORTFOLIO

Institutionalize procurement governance across all assets.

[SCHEDULE A CONVERSATION →](#)

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\$2.1M
is real.

The question is whether your portfolio is capturing it.

●
PRE-CLOSE
DILIGENCE

●
100-DAY
EXECUTION

●
PORTFOLIO
GOVERNANCE

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