



## COPC Indirect Procurement Standard Frequently Asked Questions

### 1. What is COPC Inc.?

COPC Inc. is a global consulting firm that has worked with hundreds of major brands to improve their customer experience operations, including vendor management and strategic sourcing. Founded in 1996, the company provides consulting, training and certification services. With U.S. headquarters in Winter Park, FL, COPC Inc. has offices and operations throughout the world. For more information, go to <http://www.copc.com>.

### 2. What is the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?

The COPC Indirect Procurement Standard is a detailed, written document that provides a performance management system for purchasing organizations responsible for indirect spend. The Standard offers a set of management practices and key metrics covering five areas: leadership and planning; business processes; support processes; people processes, and performance. [The first version is now published and is available free of charge.](#)

### 3. How was the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard created?

COPC Inc. together with Microsoft Corporation, academic leaders from the Center for Supply Chain Management at Western Michigan University, and industry executives responsible for large indirect procurement organizations recognized a gap in the industry and collaborated to develop the Standard. These companies include Cisco, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Intuit, Magna International, Perrigo, and Stryker.

The COPC Indirect Procurement Standard is the fifth in a series of Standards created by COPC Inc. and industry leaders. The first Standard, now called the COPC Customer Experience (CX) Standard, was created in 1996 and remains a trusted resource within the call center and CX industry.

In 2002, COPC Inc. and industry leaders created the COPC Vendor Management Organization (VMO) Standard, which is used today by VMOs throughout the world. The COPC Indirect Procurement was developed in 2017 based on the COPC VMO Standard and was created to address specific needs of the indirect procurement industry.

### 4. Why was the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard created?

Indirect procurement, which is the purchase of products or services needed for business operations such as office supplies, technology and recruiting services, is nearly 50 percent of all corporate spend. For service companies, indirect procurement often represents their entire spend. However, there is little in the way of established guidelines or best practices specifically focused on indirect procurement. Recognizing this need, a global group of indirect procurement leaders, initiated by



Microsoft's chief procurement officer, decided to create a Standard providing a set of guidelines to strategically manage this type of spend.

**5. Who should use the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

Anyone who is a procurement professional and managing indirect spend can use the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard. However, the best practices and operational guidance available in the Standard are best suited for companies with at least \$1 billion USD in indirect spend.

**6. What are the key features of the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

The COPC Indirect Procurement Standard is a comprehensive and integrated system for the consistent and effective management of a procurement operation. The Standard provides these key features:

- Detailed, consistent processes and outcome-based metrics for indirect procurement
- A balance between cost, risk, quality, and timely delivery
- Effective management of relationships between indirect procurement organizations and internal customers/stakeholders as well as with key suppliers
- Methodology for clearly defining requirements and metrics that meet customer needs
- Guidelines for developing agreements with all internal suppliers to ensure end-to-end processes perform at targeted levels

**7. What are the benefits of using the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

By following the guidelines in the Standard, procurement organizations will create efficient and high-performing operations that provide indirect goods and services at an optimal value --- balancing cost, quality, timeliness and risk. Key benefits to the indirect procurement organization include:

- Achieve optimal and/or lower spend with better, more consistent supplier performance
- Deliver higher levels of satisfaction among indirect procurement customers and suppliers
- Develop well-designed processes followed by well-trained staff capable of providing consistent execution
- Create high-performing procurement operation with appropriate staffing levels and optimal organizational costs
- Establish "trusted advisor" status for the indirect procurement organization within the enterprise.

**8. What is COPC Inc.'s experience with the procurement/indirect procurement market?**

COPC Inc. has over 20 years of experience working with procurement organizations responsible for buying and managing call center and other customer experience services. The company works with these groups to optimize the performance of their vendor management organizations and suppliers, and reduce total cost of ownership. COPC Inc. published the COPC Vendor Management Organization (VMO) Standard in 2002 and has been providing VMO training and certification services worldwide since that time.

COPC Inc. also offers strategic sourcing consulting, including contract review and performance analysis, strategy development, RFP process design, and contract negotiation and vendor selection. Since 2012, the company has hosted a twice-annual event called the Buyers Forum, which is an invitation-only gathering that brings together purchasing executives for industry discussions, sharing of best practices and networking.

**9. Is the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard something new or are there others in the market?**

There are other standards available for procurement with a focus on direct procurement. COPC Inc., along with the group of industry leaders who created the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard, believe this is the only standard specifically for indirect procurement.

**10. What is the relationship between COPC Inc. and Western Michigan University in developing this Standard?**

COPC Inc. and supply chain experts at Western Michigan University worked together in partnership, along with a select group of procurement executives, to create the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard.

**11. What industry executives or companies helped develop the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

Together with COPC Inc. and Western Michigan University, and industry leaders responsible for large indirect procurement organizations at these companies developed the Standard: Cisco, Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Intuit, Magna International, Perrigo, and Stryker.

**12. Does COPC Inc. own the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

Yes, COPC Inc. owns the copyright to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard, however, the Standard is managed by the Steering Committee of industry executives and academics.

**13. How does someone get the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

The COPC Indirect Procurement Standard is available to anyone by free download in PDF format. [The Standard is available on the COPC website.](#)



**14. Why is the COPC Indirect Standard provided free of charge?**

Like COPC Inc.'s other Standards, COPC Inc. believes the Standard, which was created by industry leaders, should be widely available for anyone for the benefit of the overall industry.

**15. How does someone use the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

The Standard is available to anyone free of charge. The Standard provides strategic and operational guidance to manage a high-performing indirect procurement organization. The Standard can be used as a road map for any indirect procurement group to improve its purchasing processes, lower its spend, and drive higher levels of supplier performance.

**16. Is the Standard only applicable to U.S. companies or can companies in other countries use it?**

The COPC Indirect Procurement Standard was developed by a group of professionals representing global organizations and can be used by companies in any country. Regardless of geographic location, the Standard is most appropriate for purchasing departments with at least \$1 billion USD in indirect spend.

**17. Does COPC Inc. provide any business services for indirect procurement professionals?**

Yes, COPC Inc. currently offers certification to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard. In the second half of 2017, COPC Inc. also will offer training classes based on the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard. The first public classes will be in the United States. Private classes at a client location will be available worldwide.

**18. What is certification to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

Certification to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard is an independent and objective review of an organization's processes for indirect procurement. Certification verifies that the group is using best practices and meeting benchmark performance levels with its indirect spend.

**19. How does an organization become certified to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard?**

The certification process is an ongoing engagement between COPC Inc. and a procurement organization. Certification includes planning, data collection, training to best practices, an initial review of the indirect spend process as compared to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard, the implementation of an improvement plan to address gaps, and a final audit.

**20. Why should an indirect procurement organization go through the certification process? What is the benefit?**

Organizations that earn certification by COPC Inc. improve operational performance, increase both customer and supplier satisfaction, while reducing costs. Certification to the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard is a significant achievement and offers external validation of high performance.



**21. Is an indirect procurement organization using the Standard now?**

Yes, the procurement organization at Microsoft Corporation is currently using the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard and the group is going through the certification process.

**22. How often will the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard be updated and by whom?**

COPC Inc., along with the business and academic leaders who created the Standard are members of the Standard's Steering Committee. This group, along with a Technical Advisory Council, is responsible for reviewing, managing, and updating the COPC Indirect Procurement Standard to ensure it continually addresses a changing marketplace. The Standard will be reviewed and updated as needed, based upon market conditions. All future versions of the Standard will be available on the [copc.com](http://copc.com) website.

**About COPC Inc.**

COPC Inc. provides consulting, training and certification for operations that support the customer experience. The company created the COPC Standards, a collection of performance management systems for call center operations, customer experience management, vendor management, and procurement. Founded in 1996, COPC Inc. began by helping call centers improve their performance. Today, the company is an innovative global leader that empowers organizations to optimize operations to deliver a superior customer experience across all channels. COPC Inc. is privately held with headquarters in Winter Park, FL, U.S. and with operations in Europe, Middle East, Africa, Asia Pacific, Latin America, India and Japan. [www.copc.com](http://www.copc.com).

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