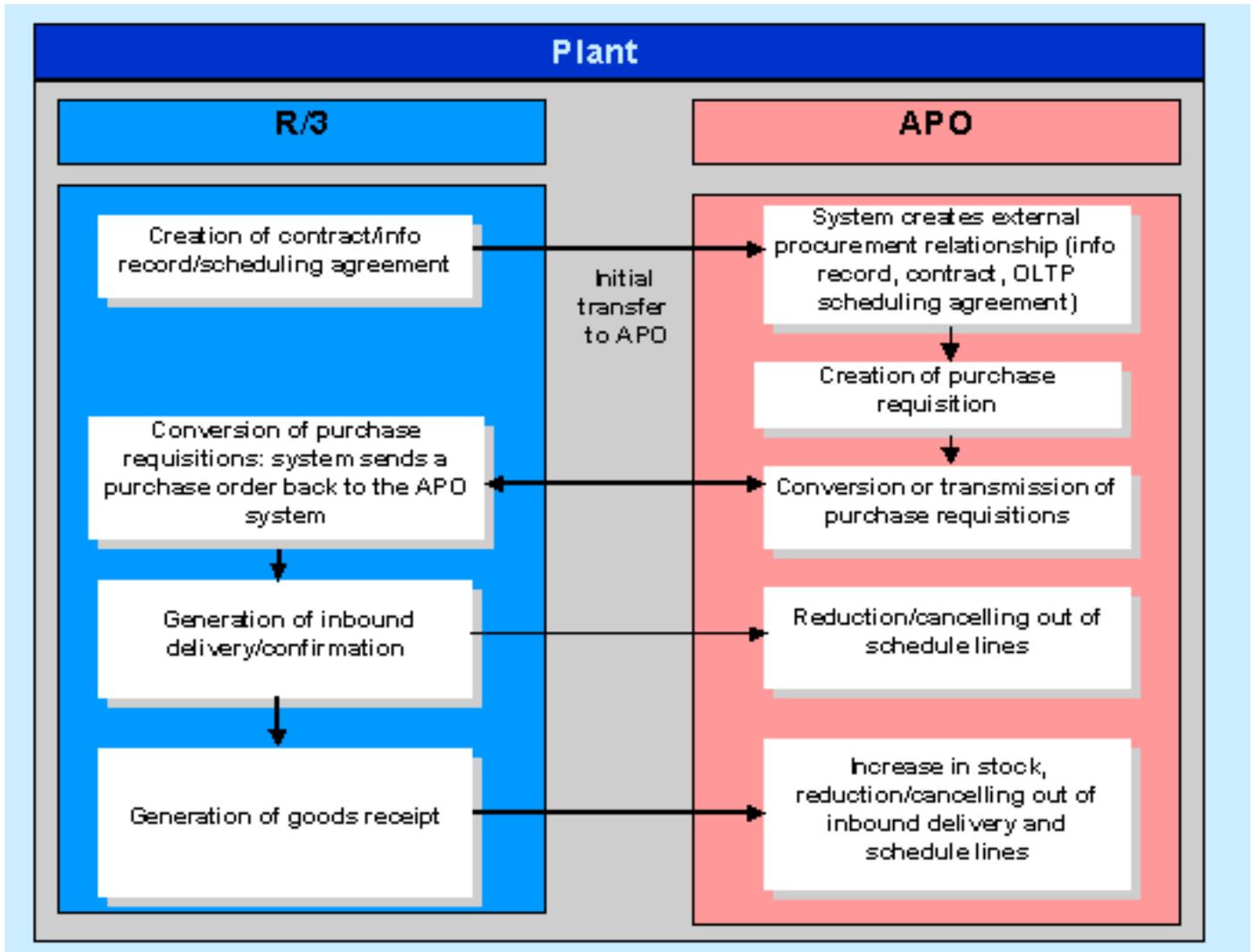


Survey: Purchasers do without IT support



Purchasing departments at German companies more often than not manage without IT systems that are tailored to their requirements.

According to a survey conducted last year by Germany's RAAD Research, fewer than 20 pc of 230 German companies interviewed use software that specifically supports the purchasing function. Instead, many use a mixture of Excel spreadsheets and Microsoft Word documents, the survey found.

"Strategic purchasing has grown significantly in importance in recent years," said RAAD analyst

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Cristian Wieland. "Yet, many companies resort to a huge amount of manual labor in their purchasing operations, which doesn't just cost money but also takes a lot of time."

Wieland added that the absence of special IT systems also limits the search for proper suppliers.

According to the survey, fewer than 50 pc of those polled used special supplier relationship management software to manage the various steps of the purchasing process. Also, barely one-fifth make use of e-procurement solutions when it comes to buying goods online in a standardized way.

Wieland said the low penetration of IT in purchasing departments leaves a lot of cost-saving potential unrealized. "To realize a clear jump in margins through purchasing, three factors are important: a consistent strategy, qualified staff and integrated IT systems," he said.

The analyst said in a press release that he was surprised that many purchasing managers seemed to accept that the administration of purchasing with the help of Microsoft Office programs is a time and labor-consuming process.

The survey found that only 20 pc of those polled considered the amount of work involved high or very high.

RAAD is a division of Hoppenstedt, a German publisher of company information.

