Service Definition Document for Spend Network.

12.04.2022

Spend Network.

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Contents

Our services

Contracts register services

Service description

Public bodies are required to publish high quality, accurate data on their contracting. Our data preparation services helps bodies to gather, prepare and update their contracts registers. Our service breaks down into five key elements: identifying sources of data, data gathering, data standardisation, data publishing and continual updating the register.

Service features

- Identify contract sources
- Manual data gathering
- Automated data gathering
- Deduplication
- Mapping to Open Contracting Data Standard
- Data publication
- Continuous updates available

Key benefits of this service

- Increases the accuracy of your published data
- Reduces the cost of maintaining data
- Removes the need for staff to maintain multiple registers
- Reduces Freedom Of Information costs
- Improves internal awareness of procurement policies
- Ensures much greater control of active spending
- Allows insight into local spending, contract overspend and spend aggregation
- Enables early warning of budgeting risks

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Global tender opportunity API

Service description

An API service providing details of tender notices from around the world. Service can be used to promote export opportunities for businesses and to analyse purchasing activities of individual buyers from the UK and overseas.

Service features

- Daily updates of tender opportunities from around the world
- Collects data from over 700 sources
- Staging platform for developments and upgrades
- Complies with Open Contracting Data Standard
- Provides categorisation option for tender notices
- Entity matching also available for data linking
- Filter by language, source, country and date

Key benefits of this service

- Instant access to over 150,000 live opportunities
- Common data standard means easy data ingestion
- We're adding new sources all the time
- Global intelligence opportunities that are easy to find

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Global contract awards API

Service description

An API service providing details of contract awards from around the world. Service can be used to promote export opportunities for businesses and to analyse purchasing activities of individual buyers from the UK and overseas.

Service features

- Daily updates of contract awards from around the world
- Collects data from over 500 sources
- Staging platform for developments and upgrades
- Data complies with Open Contracting Data Standard
- Provides categorisation option for award notices
- Entity matching also available for data linking
- Filter by language, source, country and date
- Additional sources can be added

Key benefits of this service

- Instant access to contract awards from around the world
- Common data standard means easy data ingestion
- We're adding new sources all the time
- Easy to find global intelligence for benchmarking

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Procurement performance & benchmarking analysis

Service description

This service allows public bodies to compare the performance of their procurement functions with other buyers. Using data from across the sector, our analysis can show how our customers perform relative to their peers in different categories. Our analysis can be used to show good performance and opportunities for improvement.

Service features

- Using data we can show success of spending by category
- Compare spending with peers by categories and services
- Highlights areas of focus to limit cost and improve delivery
- Shows where procurement teams outperform the average

Key benefits of this service

- Gives procurement teams a clear understanding performance
- Shows reasonable performance for each category vs peers
- Shows where buyers are excelling compared to peers
- Allows buyers to focus on areas for improvement

Red flag alerts for any procurement event

Service description

This service gives our customers alerts for procurement events. We help you monitor activity through procurement events alerts so that you can monitor and manage the business activities of your organisation. From just knowing if you've got to market, through to complex, corruption risk indicators you'll always stay informed.

Service features

- Custom built alerts to monitor purchasing behaviour
- Triggers and alert system e.g. contracted thresholds reached
- New tender notices published, contracts awarded
- Single bid tenders let or VEAT awards
- Contracts awarded to a specific supplier
- We can keep you abreast of all your commercial activity

Key benefits of this service

- Never lose track of what is happening in your organisation
- Construct complex triggers to alert to specific events
- Reduce duplication, prevent maverick tenders
- Monitor poor behaviour and track outcomes
- Demonstrate that you have control over commercial events

Supplier performance diagnostics

Service description

This service helps public bodies identify the best suppliers. Buyers looking to increase competition and seeking to find new sources of supply can find the highest performing suppliers for their needs. We used data to find new suppliers and then to monitor their costs and overspending.

Service features

- Identify the suppliers winning contracts across the sector
- Find new suppliers to invite to contract
- Show the scale and value of the contracts they win
- Show where they win contracts and for how long
- Show how much they bill for their services
- Show if a supplier routinely overspends on contracts
- Show who is using a supplier and at what cost

Key benefits of this service

- Gain savings by increasing competition in your tenders
- Avoid poorly performing suppliers
- Spot suppliers who often expand their billing
- Estimate likely costs of using a specific supplier
- Find new references for a supplier

Economic development and growth opportunity analysis

Service description

This service helps public bodies use their buying power to deliver economic growth. From finding new local suppliers to supply your needs to targeting areas of deprivation, we use our unique national dataset on spending to help economic development teams bring growth their region.

Service features

- Analysis of all public spending in your region
- Identifying the best suppliers in your region
- Analysis of suitable suppliers in areas of deprivation
- Building a future pipeline of growth opportunities
- Benchmark your performance against other buyers nearby
- Identify collaborative opportunities for local working
- Works with your own Business Intelligence tools
- Or we can provide a business intelligence platform

Key benefits of this service

- Leverage your procurement spend to deliver growth
- Base actions and investments on evidence
- Target spending to areas of deprivation
- Greater competition for contracts
- Collaborate with other public buyers to deliver growth

Carbon analysis and augmentation

Service description

This service helps public bodies apply carbon value to their tenders, contracts and spend. These bodies can create carbon pipelines to contracts to reduce emissions, benchmark their performance with other bodies and identify their top suppliers by emissions. They can also add carbon values to spend.

Service features

- Analysis of emissions from public spend
- Identify emissions heavy contracts and spend
- Analysis of suppliers' emissions in spend and contracts
- Building a future pipeline of emissions reduction opportunities
- Benchmark your performance against other buyers nearby
- Identify collaborative opportunities for emissions reductions
- Works with your own Business Intelligence tools
- Or we can provide a business intelligence platform

Key benefits of this service

- Leverage your procurement to reduce emissions
- Base actions, investments, and reduction plans on evidence
- Target spending around key areas of high emissions
- Greater scope for emissions reductions in contracts
- Collaborate with other public buyers to deliver more emissions reductions

Spend analysis & savings diagnostics

Service description

This service helps public bodies identify savings. Using data gathered from across the public sector, we compare spending and contract costs between customers and their peers, showing who is achieving best value, where there is overspend, how savings on contracts are being delivered and future opportunities for aggregation and collaboration.

Service features

- Highlight potential overspend in your contracts
- Measure savings on contracts and in categories each month
- Identify new collaboration opportunities with other buyers
- Show how aggregation can deliver savings

Key benefits of this service

- Analyse future savings based on changes to strategic procurement
- Demonstrate savings from each contract on a month-by-month basis
- Identify maverick spending in your organisation
- Monitor contract overspend on a month by month basis
- Plan future opportunities for collaboration with other buyers

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Payment efficiency diagnostics

Service description

This service monitors spending activity to identify wasteful transactions and reduce accounts payable costs. Using data on spending, we show which services and which suppliers are creating too many invoices, highlighting where they might be converted to electronic payments such as card or e-invoicing.

Service features

- Use your own open data to show where waste is
- Find suppliers who are creating 100s of invoices a week
- Find which services are generating the work for AP teams
- Accurately cost the current process
- Use the data to make a business case for investment
- Monitor change over time

Key benefits of this service

- Make savings by removing unnecessary paper invoices
- Show precisely where change has to happen
- Estimate savings with a high degree of accuracy
- Monitor activity month by month for change that sticks

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Risk scoping and de-risk strategy

Service description

Through this service, authorities can effective identify and manage their exposure to procurement risk. We can identify which authorities are significantly exposed to high-risk suppliers that have high levels of leverage. From this analysis, Spend Network can advise authorities on how to reduce exposure.

Service features

- Due diligence of suppliers' performance
- Due diligence of suppliers' leverage and debt
- Business case creation for aggregation or disaggregation

Key benefits of this service

- De-risk Authorities' supply chains
- Insulate budgets from risk
- Better identify outcomes
- Change towards greater efficiency justified through business cases

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Data Ingestion

Service description

We currently gather data from over 700 different sources every day, so we are adept at combining inconsistent and messy data sources into a single database. If you have to gather data from multiple sources in multiple formats we can help set up systems and processes to automate the ingestion of mapping of this data, so that it can be used on a consistent basis.

Service features

- Collect data from multiple sources
- Collect data in multiple formats (e.g. PDF)
- Collect messy or inconsistent data
- Map data to a common standard
- Prepare data for analysis

Key benefits of this service

- Build services and products from messy data
- Combine multiple data sources into one dataset
- Create reliable streams of consistent data
- Expand existing services by adding new data

Database development

Service description

We store and manage SQL and NoSQL databases with hundreds of millions of lines. We can use our experience in creation, establishment and maintenance of data and the infrastructure to create a database that suits your technical stack and your data and analysis needs.

Service features

- Scalable, secure datastores optimised for analysis
- Works with any dataset
- Full cloud based database creation
- Database maintenance
- Allows for better analysis and reporting

Key benefits of this service

- Reduces business risk
- Reduces business cost
- Increases accessibility of the data
- Enables faster analysis of datasets

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Procurement data lakes

Service description

We can provide hundreds of millions of lines of public procurement data (tenders, contracts and spend) gathered over 10 years and already linked to company, charity and carbon emissions data to create compelling analysis and insights into your spending and procurement

Service features

- BI-ready analytics for hundreds of data sources
- Linkable data to other datasets
- Accessible through API or other data sharing
- Cleaned, structured data
- Allows for better analysis and reporting

Key benefits of this service

- Flexibility for adding new business functionality
- Maximised control of clean datasets
- Increases accessibility of the data
- Enables faster analysis of datasets
- Empowers analysis of data to detect and identify patterns
- Correlations between procurement data and other datasets

Data dashboard services

Service description

This service provides our customers with dashboards that have been developed specifically for their needs and requirements. Working with your teams we will use common BI platforms to display and disseminate your data within your organisation.

Service features

- We work with your analysts to establish required metrics
- We provide layouts and charts to represent the data
- We link the data to the data sources
- We populate the dashboard for display
- We test the dashboard with users

Key benefits of this service

- Converts spreadsheets to insights
- Engage senior managers
- Easily monitor key KPIs
- Exploit your data to show progress

Artificial Intelligence for classification

Service description

This service helps customers categorise their data to the ProClass or CPV procurement classifications. We use specifically developed artificial intelligence algorithms to classify your data so that you know how you are spending money.

Service features

- Uses artificial intelligence to classify spending
- Can classify millions of records in 24 hours
- Can classify to ProClass, CPV and others
- Uses open data, so no need for additional licenses/products

Key benefits of this service

- Create real insights into spending by showing correct categories
- Build case for aggregation and savings by comparing spending
- Allows comparison of data with other agencies and buyers
- Makes sure that spending can be quickly understood

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Artificial intelligence for entity linking

Service description

This service helps customers link their data so that new forms of analysis can be conducted on the data. We use specifically developed artificial intelligence algorithms to and link your data to suppliers and charities so that you know exactly who earns money from your spending.

Service features

- Uses artificial intelligence to find and link records to suppliers
- Can link accounts payable and contracts data to supplier records
- Provides additional data on suppliers, including SME status, location
- Links to accounts and other critical data
- Uses open data, so no need for additional licenses/products

Key benefits of this service

- Create real insights into spending by showing correct beneficiaries
- Build case for aggregation and savings by comparing spending
- Establish risk profiles of suppliers through their accounts
- Generate dependable source of data for future analysis

Cleaning untidy data

Service description

This service helps customers cleanse and map their data to common standard to make it easier to use in analysis.

Service features

- Converts complex and inconsistent data into a common standard
- Takes data in any format and readies it for databases
- Prepares all data for analysis

Key benefits of this service

- Efficient and fast way to process data
- Go from idea to analysis in days
- Make use of tools optimised for fixing dirty data

Data backup, restoration, and disaster recovery

Data services and assets risk mitigation

Our primary risk profile exists in the delivery of cloud computing services. We maintain a constant update and backup service for all of our platforms and all of our production databases are run with a real-time failover service allowing us to switch to a new source of supply in the event of our primary source failing.

In the event of our supplier platforms failing, we will assess their ability to respond to the loss of service and to resolve their own service failures before taking action.

Where necessary we will move our primary database to a new service, based on availability and our ability to replace the current service in the shortest possible time.

Data and distribution risk mitigation

As detailed above, where our cloud providers experience a catastrophic failure, we will use our best efforts to source a new data service. Where our back ups are unavailable, we will rerun our scrapers to regather available data and to restart each of our services. We will reinstate our service on a new platform within 48 hours of making the decision to move to a new platform. This allows us time to re-run a complete harvest of all required data.

In the case of data feeds, in the event that we are unable to reinstate our API during this time, we will provide customers with static, bulk data files to allow for service continuity. As none of the data we publish is sensitive, we are confident that distribution of the data via email or file sharing services will be a viable mechanism for customers. It should be reiterated that this contingency is designed for the complete failure of our cloud solution provided by substantially sized market leaders so is therefore a genuinely remote contingency.

Where staff responsible for maintaining our API are unavailable, we can will undertake the following steps

- Evaluate the potential for other staff to second into the role
- Estimate the time for 'normal service' to resume
- Communicate with available staff and customers and detail the impact on the business

Over the medium term we will seek to source additional personnel to fill any gaps where individuals are unable to work. It should be noted that our harvesting and publishing systems are automated and there is no reliance on staff for this service to run.

Product or service development risk mitigation

Product or service development is the activities associated with bringing a new, improved or redesigned product or service to market. This includes our development, research, design and engineering.

The following functions encompass all functions related to product or service development. The list is prioritized with the most important functions listed first.

- Development
- Research
- Account management

In the event that our teams are impacted by an emergency and are unable to provide a service to our customers, we will undertake the following steps:

- Evaluate the potential for other staff members to second into the role
- Estimate the time for 'normal service' to resume
- Communicate with available staff and customers and detail the impact on the business

Over the medium term we will seek to source additional personnel to fill any gaps where individuals are unable to work.

Disaster mitigation

Summary Business Continuity Plan

We have an Emergency Management Group in the event of a disaster. For each key member of the Emergency Management Group, we have a 'double' briefed and ready to take their place in the event of incapacitation. Our data infrastructure and organisation are both remote and distributed obviating the need for a disaster specific centre of operations. Because our data infrastructure is cloud based, we are able to migrate where necessary.

Our disaster mitigation plan is outlined and further detailed in our business continuity plan. This will be shared upon successful award.

COVID-19 contingency steps

Spend Network has substantial experience in managing virtual teams both within the UK and across locales including concurrently in the Far East and Americas. We can leverage this to continue to effectively deliver any contract without disruption caused by quarantine alone. Our managers have not only managed projects and ensured delivery within these contexts but also managed remote interviews and delivered reports across timezones.

As a remote working organisation, we have established tools and processes in place to allow remote working from home or 'hot desk' locations. Through:

- our project management software Notion, we have a Kanban board, calendar and meetings for each workstream which is regularly updated to ensure that all stakeholders are clear about their assigned tasks and what needs to be done.

- virtual meetings: e.g. combined hangout, Slack and Notion pages, we can secure a direct, constant and live communication channel.

- organising regular standups, check-ins and managing the project management software Notion, our managers are proactive in ensuring accessibility and accountability of our team.

Onboarding and offboarding support

How we ensure a quick and effective mobilisation

Spend Network prides itself on being a flexible organisation to the needs of our client. We are extremely quick to mobilise and can start working within two weeks of a contract signature. This means establishing a named point of contact and a clear communication channels to ensure that questions are ticketed quickly and actioned as soon as possible. We also establish weekly telephone conferences to discuss progress and to provide a consistent feedback mechanism for both parties.

Project onboarding - co-operate

We are ready to co-operate, assist or even lead onboarding for projects. We have used a variety of project software, communication and shared boards in the past and can therefore be quickly and easily adaptable to your working arrangements.

Project onboarding - leading

Where we are called on to lead project onboarding, we establish and share a project Kanban board on Notion. On this Kanban, we track and evidence progress, changes and improvements and report any issues. We also establish a shared Google drive and Slack instant messaging between teams and project specific channels.

Project onboarding - data and knowledge

We are committed to openness, evidenced by our publishing of millions of documents openly. We extend this commitment to open working and sharing in all our projects. This means that we will open up our work, whether it's research, data and/or knowledge within days of contract signature.

As part of our commitment to working in the open and our aforementioned sharing of our internal project board, our progress can be scrutinised in real time. This allows questions to be raised and issues to be picked up quickly.

Flexibility of onboarding

We are just as comfortable speaking and presenting in a room with suits as we are with remote calls and teleconferencing. We are not prescriptive and can adapt to suit your style and your cadence of work. At the start we will work with you to establish the fundamentals. First are clear lines of communication, so that you can know who can best answer your questions and resolve your issues. Second is an approach to "Ways of Working" with diarised meetings, regular standups and bi-weekly notes outlining progress, all structured in a way that best suits your team's schedule. Third is a plan set to a unified 'Agile Sprint' structure, typically set to two week sprint cycles. As part of this, we will build a tailored roadmap for the project wherein we triage the priorities of the specification, outline key milestones and areas of improvement.

As part of our flexible approach, we work in the open and have an open door policy. On day one, as part of our onboarding process, we will share our project board along with our Kanban board and set up a shared Google drive to ensure that you have access to our workings and documents. Our open door policy means that our project lead is available on call or instant messenger to discuss with your team and answer questions.

Offboarding

Our commitment to sharing our progress and work means that you will have everything you need from the project by the time of its conclusion. As a team we are happy to help and can answer reasonable questions outside the project time or scope.

Our plan for implementation

We appreciate that no two projects are the same but for each, we aim to mobilise within two weeks.

For every project, we will establish a plan set to a unified 'Agile Sprint' structure and agree on it during the kick off meeting. We will build a tailored roadmap for the project wherein we triage the priorities of the specification, outline key milestones and areas of improvement. The roadmap will also set a preliminary sprint structure (typically two weeks) and lay the groundwork for the first ticket items that we can start working on as part of the first sprint.

We will also, as part of this roadmap, outline how we will hit any agreed Statement of Work milestones, Key Performance Indicators and Service Level Agreement targets. We will establish, early on, clear lines of communication between key users and our project or development team, typically through a shared Slack channel.

We will establish a "Ways of Working" with key stakeholders, adapting our approach to suit your schedule, with diarised meetings, regular internal standups and bi-weekly notes outlining progress. We will engage with you with a structure and a cadence that suits you operationally, and importantly, culturally.

For APIs and subscriptions, we establish key users from the onset and set up log in and access within days of kick off. We will onboard your team through face to face demos and provide support through Slack.

In all our projects, we prefer an inclusive approach. This means regular stand ups within a cadence that suits your team, access to a shared project page wherein your team can see our Kanban board, notes and workings openly and transparently. We work in the open, meaning that you can clearly see what we are working on, what stage we are at in the project life cycle and what our thoughts are as they evolve. Not only that but we have an open door policy: we are never more than a Slack message away. This means that we can work together to spot issues early and make sure the project is on the right track.

An overview of our pricing

Service	Guide price per unit (minimum)
Contracts register services	£50 to £100 per unit per month
Global tender opportunity API	£50 to £100 per unit per month
Global contract awards API	£50 to £100 per unit per month
Procurement performance & benchmarking analysis	£750 per unit per month
Red flag alerts for any procurement event	£750 per unit per month
Supplier performance diagnostics	£750 per unit per month
Economic development and growth opportunity analysis	£750 per unit per month
Carbon analysis and augmentation	£750 per unit per month
Spend analysis & savings diagnostics	£750 per unit per month
Payment efficiency diagnostics	£750 per unit per month
Risk scoping and de-risk strategy	£750 per unit per month
Data ingestion	£350 per unit per day
Database development	£350 per unit per day
Procurement data lakes	£350 per unit per day
Data dashboard services	£350 per unit per day
Artificial Intelligence for classification	£350 per unit per day
Artificial intelligence for entity linking.	£350 per unit per day
Cleaning untidy data	£350 per unit per day

Resourcing Standard Rate Card

Level	Day rate
1. Follow	£350 - £350
2. Assist	£650 - £650
3. Apply	£750 - £875
4. Enable	£875 - £950
5. Ensure/Advise	£975 - £1,100
6. Initiate/Influence	£1,200 - £1,325
7. Set strategy/Inspire	£1,400 - £1,550

Level	Day rate
Analyst/Junior Developer	£800
Consultant/Developer	£1000

Standards for Day Rate Cards

Working Day 8 hours exclusive of travel and lunch

Working Week Monday to Friday excluding Bank Holidays

Office Hours Monday to Friday from 09:00 – 17:00

Travel and Subsistence This is included in-day rate within M25. Payable at department's standard T&S rates outside M25.

Professional Indemnity Insurance Included within day rate.

Service constraints

Level of customisation

We are quick to adapt, test and deploy in accordance to the needs of users. We have proven experience of customisation based on evidenced user testing whether it be from providing data products, including bulk data, dashboards and analytics. We can customise our products and services using your or our existing user research report templates and methodologies. We have worked on open source tools and our data service can integrate into common BI software such as Tableau or Power BI.

Maintenance windows

For our data provision and analytics website, our users are international and require us to have a 24/7 service. Therefore, we aim to target low traffic windows for maintenance, such as in the middle of the weekend to minimise disruption. Our daily data imports are done between midnight and 6am in the morning UK local time.

Licensing

We are open data publishers, so when we provide bulk data, users can reuse it for any purpose. We only ask, when publishing the data, that you attribute us.

Service levels

Performance

As part of kickoff and mobilisation, we will commit to an agreed service level on performance, guided firmly by the original specification. Our data sources are publicly available so we will advise clearly and openly on how best to use our data. For projects, we pride ourselves in our track record of delivering to satisfaction, on time and in full, with our clear conclusions based on firm evidence and our methodology broken down in full.

Availability

Our team is committed to being available between 9-5 on working days. We also have an 'always on' mentality at most points of the day and weekend. This means that we can at the very minimum respond to questions and log complex questions at almost any time, as soon as possible.

Support Hours

Our 'always on' mentality extends to an extent to support queries. This means that we can respond to and log basic and/or serious questions at most points of the day. Where these are non-critical and received outside of traditional work hours, we will thoroughly follow up during the next work day.

Remedies

To ensure security and clarity for all parties, we prefer to operate within a formally agreed and signed contract with specific mechanisms for remedies for non performance. In the unlikely event that service levels are not met, we will offer time and research from a Senior Analyst. For substantial drops in service levels, we will operate under the remedies stipulated and agreed in the contract.

Ordering and invoicing process

We are flexible and can adapt to an ordering and invoicing process that suits you, for example working to a signed off statement of works or a regular monthly subscription fee. Our standard process is to obtain a purchase order number and submit approved invoices on a monthly basis. We track our time in order to provide evidenced justification of our invoices.

Furthermore, where applicable, we will comply to any and all of your policies on allowable expenses.

Termination of a contract

To ensure security and clarity for all parties, we prefer to operate within a formally agreed and signed contract with specific mechanisms for contract termination.

We are flexible within that framework and, in the absence of a contract for the proposed work, we have standard contracts that can be used.

After sales support

We provide comprehensive support for our analysis and intelligence services and are happy to chat about questions that may arise during the after sales period, whether it's within or beyond the time or specification scope of the contract or following the conclusion or a project.

Where customers are using our business intelligence tool, we will support them to manage their own dashboards and analytics, providing technical advice on the analysis they can conduct as well as the underlying data, covering updates, data quality and data integrity. Where customers use their own business intelligence tool we can provide support for the underlying data and analytics.

Technical requirements

All our solutions can be tailored to your needs and to support your technical stack infrastructure. Where this does not apply, we can offer log-ins to our own service and guide users in how to use our services as part of the mobilisation stages of the contact.