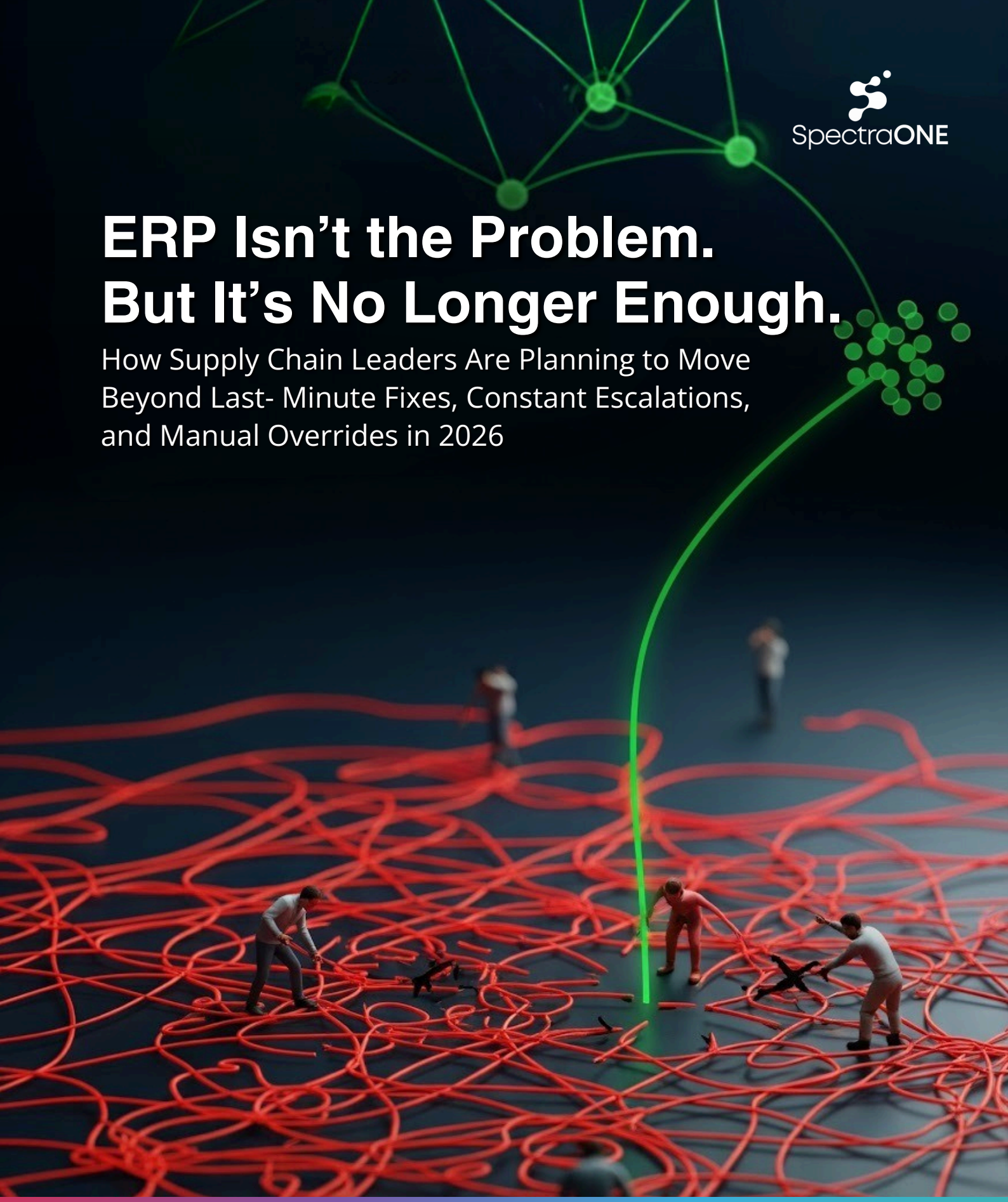
SpectraONE

ERP Isn't the Problem. But It's No Longer Enough.

How Supply Chain Leaders Are Planning to Move Beyond Last- Minute Fixes, Constant Escalations, and Manual Overrides in 2026



Produced by:
SpectraONE, Signal-First AI for Supply Chain Teams

Playbook – New Year 2026 Edition
For Supply Chain, Operations, and Planning Leaders in FMCG, Pharma, and CPG

Read Me First

A NOTE TO SUPPLY CHAIN LEADERS

If you're responsible for service levels, inventory, or forecast accuracy, you probably recognize this pattern:

- You **have** the data.
- You **have** the systems.
- You **still** don't see issues early enough to act cheaply.

This is for:

- VPs / Directors of Supply Chain & Operations
- Heads of Planning / S&OP / IBP
- Category, Demand, and Supply Planning Leaders
- Ops Excellence and Transformation Leaders

In the following few pages, you'll see:

- ERPs are doing exactly what they were designed to do, and why that's not enough anymore.
- The specific gaps between ERP-era tools and 2026 supply chain realities.
- How leading companies are quietly layering intelligence on top of ERP instead of ripping it out.
- A practical way to test this on one **KPI** in your own environment.

If you've ever said, "We did everything right, so why is the plan still failing?", this is your playbook.

From “System of Record” to “System of Signals.”

THE NEW REALITY: YOU DON’T HAVE A DATA PROBLEM

Over the past two decades, most mid-to-large enterprises have:

- Rolled out one or more global ERP instances
- Implemented planning tools and APS solutions
- Built BI dashboards, data warehouses, and reporting packs

Yet, a common frustration shows up in QBRs and S&OP reviews:

“We followed the process. We trusted the numbers. And we still got surprised.”

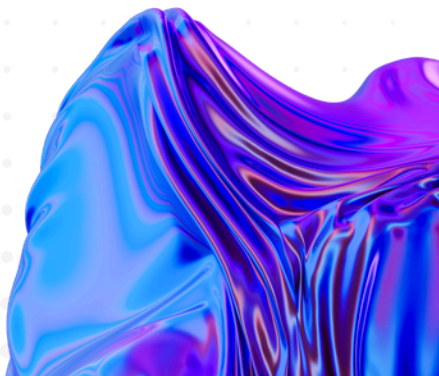
Symptoms you might recognize:

- Forecast misses on critical SKUs, even in “mature” categories
- Chronic reliance on Excel overrides for actual decision-making
- Planners are spending hours explaining “what happened” instead of planning “what’s next.”
- Late discovery of supplier delays, capacity constraints, or demand spikes

Analyst and industry studies underline the scale of the issue:

- A significant share of forecast error in CPG and pharma is now driven by external volatility (demand and supply shocks), not internal execution.
- A majority of companies still treat Excel as their “real” planning layer, even after investing in sophisticated systems.
- Only a minority have continuous supplier and risk signal monitoring in place.

This isn’t an ERP failure. It’s a scope problem.



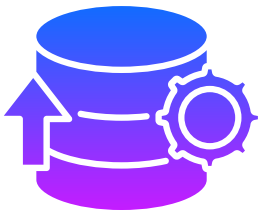
What Your ERP Was Actually Designed To Do

ERPs remain critical. They:

- Keep your **transactional backbone** stable (orders, invoices, inventory moves).
- Enforce **process consistency** and compliance across functions and regions.
- Provide a single source of truth for **historical records and financial impact.**

But they were not designed for the world you are operating in now:

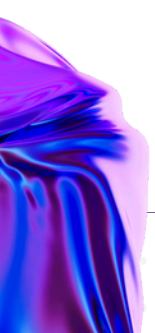
- Shorter product lifecycles and promotions that shift weekly
- Channel fragmentation (e-commerce, quick commerce, D2C, marketplaces)
- Geopolitical and logistics disruptions that appear overnight
- Highly volatile supplier performance and lead times



ERP = System of Record

What you need now is a System of Signals

- Continuously listening across internal and external data
- Spotting weak signals of risk and opportunity
- Explaining why KPIs are drifting, not just what the numbers are
- Recommending actions before firefighting becomes the only option



The Capability Gap: Where ERPs Stop Helping

Record vs. Respond

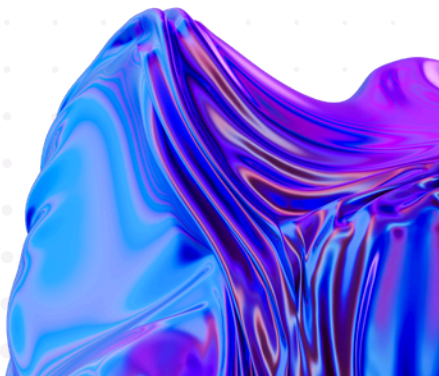
What ERPs Do Well	What Modern Supply Chains Actually Need in 2026
Centralize transaction records	Fuse ERP data with external demand, supply, and risk signals
Store master data	Continuously validate and correct data based on behavior
Generate batch reports (weekly/monthly)	Monitor key KPIs and drivers continuously
Enforce static workflows and approvals	Support adaptive, scenario-based playbooks
Trigger alerts based on fixed rules	Detect anomalies dynamically with AI and machine learning
Show historical performance	Predict near-term risk and opportunity before it hits P&L

Because of this gap, many teams end up in the same place:

- ERPs and planning tools end up as “systems of record and reports.”
- Excel, side tools, and ad-hoc analysis become the real “system of decisions.”

The cost shows up in:

- Extra working capital locked in “just in case” inventory
- Expedited freight and firefighting to rescue service levels
- Planner burnout and rising turnover in critical roles



What It Feels Like on the Ground (Real Voices)

From our conversations with planning and operations leaders in FMCG, pharma, and CPG:

Demand Planning Lead, Global FMCG

"We don't need completely new systems. We need something that tells us **why** the forecast is drifting, not just that it is."

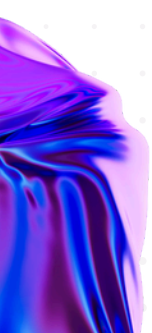
Director of Operations, CPG Brand

"Our data team spends 60% of its time cleaning up messes the system doesn't catch. We're constantly explaining yesterday, instead of shaping tomorrow."

Regional Supply Manager, Pharma

"ERP gives me a picture of what happened. I want a tool that shows me what's going to happen if we keep doing what we're doing and what options we have."

Across all these conversations, one thing is clear: Leaders don't want more dashboards or a brand-new system. They just want fewer surprises and better options.



From Dashboards to Decisions: The Signal Layer

WHAT LEADING SUPPLY CHAIN TEAMS ARE DOING DIFFERENTLY

The most resilient, fastest-growing companies aren't replacing their ERPs. Instead, they're adding an intelligence layer on top, built for signal extraction and early decision support.

This *signal layer* typically delivers four capabilities:

End-to-end signal monitoring

Tracks drivers across:

- Promotions, launches, and seasonality
- Sell-out and POS trends were available
- Supplier behavior and lead time variability
- Logistics lanes, capacity, and disruption alerts

Anomaly detection across SKUs, lanes, and timelines

Instead of static alerts, AI scans for unusual patterns:

- Demand spikes that don't match past promotions or seasonality
- Emerging supplier risks based on delivery performance
- Repeated data-quality issues that distort planning

“What if?” simulations, not just hindsight

Planners can ask:

- What if this supplier slips by two weeks?
- What if the promotion overperforms by 15%?
- What if we shift production from Plant A to Plant B?

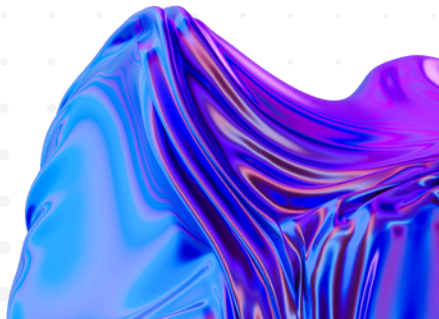
Explainable insights in plain language

Instead of cryptic codes, planners get narratives like:

- “Forecast bias in Category X is driven mainly by under-estimated uplift from recent promotions and a channel mix shift to e-com.”
- “On-time risk is rising in Lane Y due to supplier Z’s increasing lead-time variance.”

This is where AI (LLMs, domain-specific models, and agents) adds real value.

Not by replacing planners, but by helping them see more and make better decisions.



Why This Shift Can’t Wait Until the Next Transformation Cycle

You don’t need another five-year program, but you also can’t afford to wait.

Key pressures:

Volatility is structural, not temporary.
Demand shifts, climate events, and geopolitical shocks are no longer edge cases.

Decision windows are shrinking.
By the time a monthly meeting flags an issue, the cheap options are usually gone.

Planner capacity is maxed out.
Burning your most experienced planners on manual data hunting is a strategic risk.

Analyst perspectives:

- Industry research indicates that organizations using AI-enabled planning and signal detection can r**educe forecast error, lost sales, and expediting costs** meaningfully over time.
- Gartner notes that a growing share of supply chain organizations are augmenting their ERP and planning stack with **continuous, AI-driven planning and sensing** rather than monolithic replacements.

In short, organizations that build a signal layer now will widen the gap in service, cost, and resilience over the next two to three years.

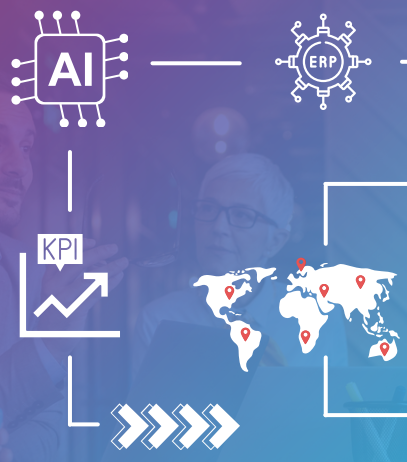
Old Playbook vs. New Playbook

HOW OPERATING MODELS ARE QUIETLY CHANGING

Old Playbook	New Playbook
Wait for the data to batch and load	Act on near real-time signals
Monthly/quarterly planning cycles	Continuous, rolling re-forecasting
Manual “what-if” in Excel	AI-assisted, scenario-based simulations
Dashboard reviews in recurring meetings	Push-based, contextual alerts into planners’ workflow
Root cause analysis after the fact	Early detection of drift with driver-level explanation

In 2026 Leaders are not starting with a big-bang transformation.

They’re starting **small and surgical**

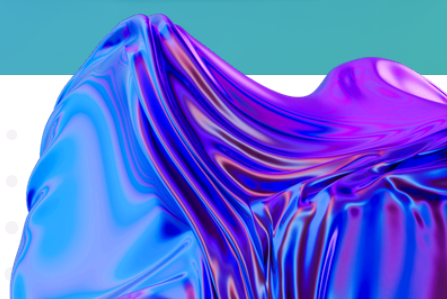


One KPI

One category or region

AI layer on top

Then they scale what works



What “Layering Intelligence on Top of ERP” Actually Looks Like

For a typical supply chain organization, a pragmatic first step looks like this:

Pick one critical KPI that really hurts when it goes wrong.

Examples:

- Forecast bias in a core category
- OTIF for a strategic customer
- Inventory turns on constrained or high-value SKUs

Connect only the data needed for that KPI.

- ERP (orders, shipments, inventory, master data)
- Planning system data
- Supplier performance and logistics data
- Where possible, external demand signals (POS, e-com, macro)

Turn on a signal-first layer to:

- Monitor that KPI and its key drivers continuously
- Detect anomalies early
- Explain drift in plain language
- Suggest and simulate response options

Deliver insights where your team already works.

- Email, collaboration tools, tickets, and tasks, not another portal that nobody opens.

In 30–60 Days

Most teams can see whether a signal layer

- Reduces Last-Minute Fixes
- Improves confidence in the plan
- Surface issues before they become escalations

Test It Without a Big Commitment

SPECTRAONE'S 30-DAY PILOT PROGRAM

To make this real, we're inviting a select group of supply chain teams to a free 30-day KPI Pilot with SpectraONE, a signal-first AI layer for operations and planning.

You choose one KPI. We focus relentlessly on that.

For example:

- Forecast bias for a flagship category
- Inventory turns for high-value or constrained SKUs

During the pilot, SpectraONE will:

- Integrate with the relevant ERP and planning data for that KPI
- Set up continuous signal monitoring and anomaly detection
- Provide driver-level explanations for major drifts
- Offer recommended actions and "what-if" simulations

At the end, your team will be able to answer: **"With a signal layer on top of ERP, how much earlier did we see issues, and how much better were our decisions?"**

About SpectraONE

SpectraONE is a signal-first supply chain intelligence layer built for enterprise teams in FMCG, Pharma, CPG, and adjacent industries.

By combining large language models, domain-specific adapters, and specialized agents, SpectraONE helps you:

- Turn ERP and planning data into **forward-looking signals**
- Detect anomalies across SKUs, regions, and lanes **before** they hit service levels
- Understand why KPIs like forecast accuracy, OTIF, and inventory turns are drifting
- Simulate corrective actions and compare impact, risk, and cost

SpectraONE does **not** replace your ERP or planning tools. It makes them smarter, more proactive, and better aligned with how your planners and leaders actually work.