



What's On Tap for the Second Half of 2025?

A new PwC survey finds that about 50% of business executives expect today's uncertainty to last less than a year, with some anticipating issues to extend through the next presidential election.

We're just about to wrap up the first half of 2025, which makes now a great time to start preparing for the rest of the year. Procurement and supply chain professionals have been dealing with more than their fair share of volatility and uncertainty this year, but there are also some new opportunity areas opening up as organizations assess their strategies and adjust accordingly.

In its new [Pulse Survey](#), PwC recognizes the current challenges businesses are facing and offers a glimpse into what's coming next. "While nearly half (48%) of the business executives surveyed expect today's uncertainty to last less than a year, many anticipate it could extend through the next presidential election," PwC says in its report.

At this point, the key variables include:

- Mixed signals regarding consumer and business confidence
- The on-again, off-again trade policies coming from the administration

- Potential tax changes
- Artificial intelligence (AI) regulation

Despite the uncertainty, PwC says nearly a third (32%) of executives expect more opportunities in the next 12 months even as 23% of them anticipate more challenges. It also says that many executives are starting to lay the foundations for future opportunities, with 62% focused on reducing costs; 59% adjusting financial forecasts and budgets; and 58% diversifying suppliers (58%).

Here are some of the other key survey findings that may help companies firm up their plans for the second half of the year:

- Nearly half of the business executives (48%) predict the current volatility will last less than a year, while roughly the same percentage say it will last longer.
- One-third of executives (32%) say there will be more opportunities 12 months from now, while 23% say there will be more challenges.
- The top factor prompting strategic change over the next 1-2 years is U.S. economic policy, with 48% ranking it in the top three.

- Two-thirds (65%) of the executives say they're renegotiating pricing with suppliers or plan to, and 60% are passing tariff-related costs on to customers or plan to.
- More than half of the executives (57%) say they're missing opportunities because they can't make decisions quickly enough.

5 Steps to Take Now

Drilling down into specific industries, PwC says survey respondents from consumer markets and industrial products companies rank trade policy higher. Technology executives are more focused on AI and data regulation, "reflecting both the investment potential of new technology and the complexity of meeting related compliance requirements," it says.

PwC also offers a range of recommendations that span the various "pain points" that surfaced in the survey. Here are five steps it says companies can take now to prepare for what's coming next:

- 1. Improve scenario-planning capabilities.** Change is a constant now, so it's essential to have some core skills in looking ahead—like thinking through possible outcomes and building what-if scenarios.
- 2. Make faster, data-driven decisions.** The ability to respond quickly—without overreacting—requires real-time insights, cross-functional alignment and tools like risk modeling and scenario planning.
- 3. Don't lose sight of the forest for the trees.** Trimming expenses might deliver quick wins, but if those cuts end up sacrificing long-term investments, they can stunt future growth, stall innovation and leave your business less resilient when challenges hit.
- 4. Segment customers to understand their price sensitivity.** This can help you identify which customers are likely to stay loyal and which ones might cut back or switch if they feel they're not getting their money's worth.
- 5. Get smarter about customs and duty strategies.** A strong tariff and customs duties strategy can help companies legally reduce costs by improving product classifications, sourcing decisions and packaging.