Five Options To Leverage IR in Retail Execution

Option 1 - Packaged IR Solutions (e.g. Trax)

Packaged IR platforms offer a turnkey approach to automating in-store execution, but they operate within closed ecosystems that limit integration, customisation, and innovation. You're bound to the vendor's release cycles and development priorities, making it difficult to adapt to enterprise-specific needs or evolve quickly as your strategy changes.

Option 2 - IR Integrated within SFA Providers

Some SFA platforms bundle IR as a built-in feature, offering convenience for existing users. However, these solutions are typically generic, inflexible, and driven by the SFA vendor's roadmap—leaving little room for custom rules, AI experimentation, or scalable innovation. The result is long-term rigidity as your needs grow more complex.

Option 3 - Image Recognition as a Service (e.g. Neurolabs)

IR-as-a-Service is a modular, API-native model that plugs into any tech stack—whether in-house or third-party—giving enterprises full control over how IR connects with CRM, product catalogues, or AI engines. Like Lego blocks, each component can evolve independently, enabling long-term flexibility, customisation, and future-proof integration of AI or LLM-based intelligence.

Option 4 - Hybrid Distributed IR Capture with Central Brain

This emerging architecture separates distributed IR capture (via reps, crowd, or customers) from centralised intelligence housed in data lakes or LLMs. It offers maximum flexibility and scalability for organisations looking to build adaptive, AI-powered systems—but demands careful orchestration, cross-team alignment, and a long-term vision to execute effectively.

Option 5 - Custom IR Built In-House

Building IR capabilities internally using cloud platforms offers complete control and tailoring to specific business needs, but comes with high development, maintenance, and resourcing costs. These projects often move slowly, stretch internal teams thin, and risk falling behind advances made by dedicated IR providers.

Option 1 - Packaged IR Solutions (e.g. Trax)

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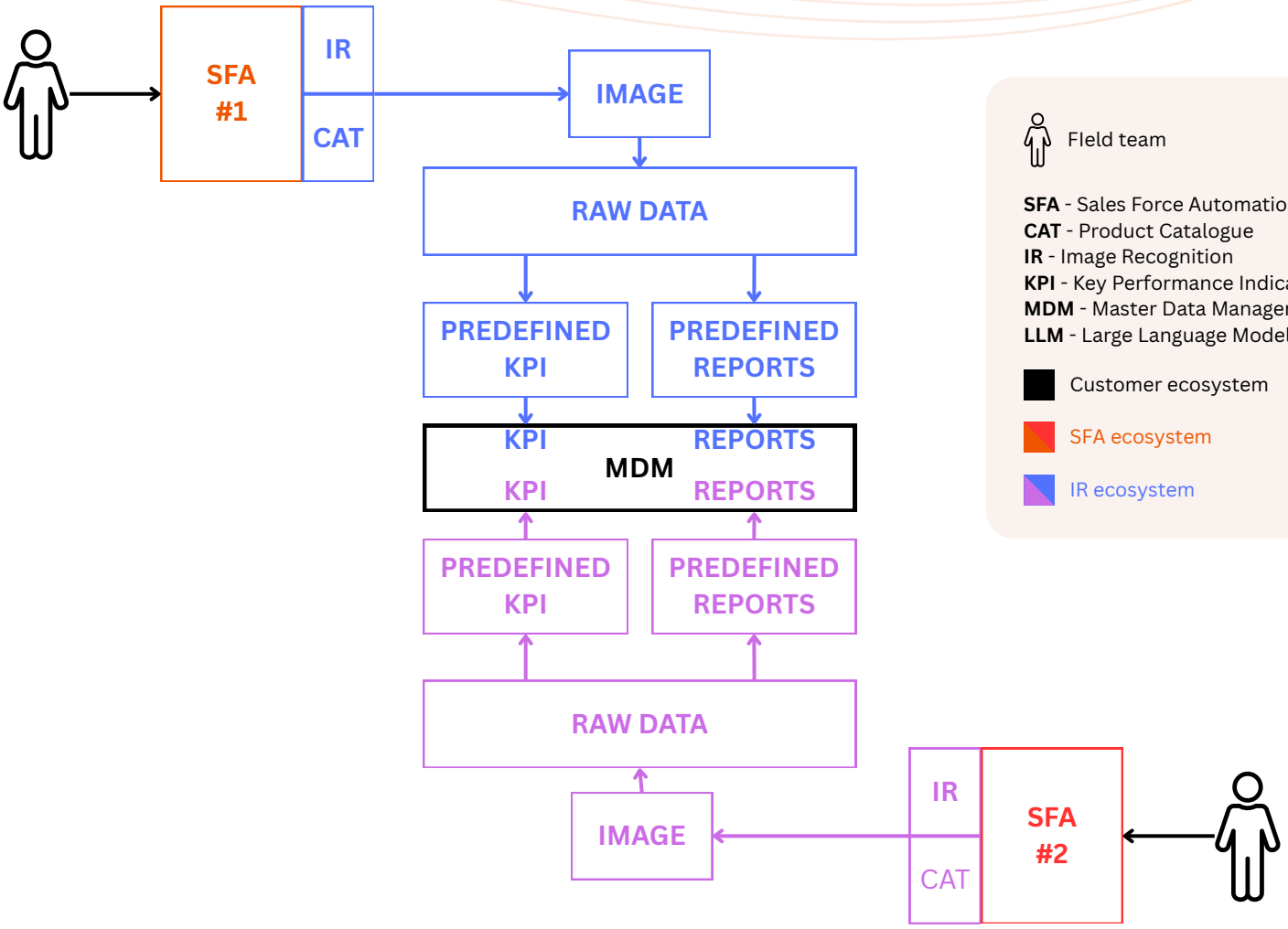
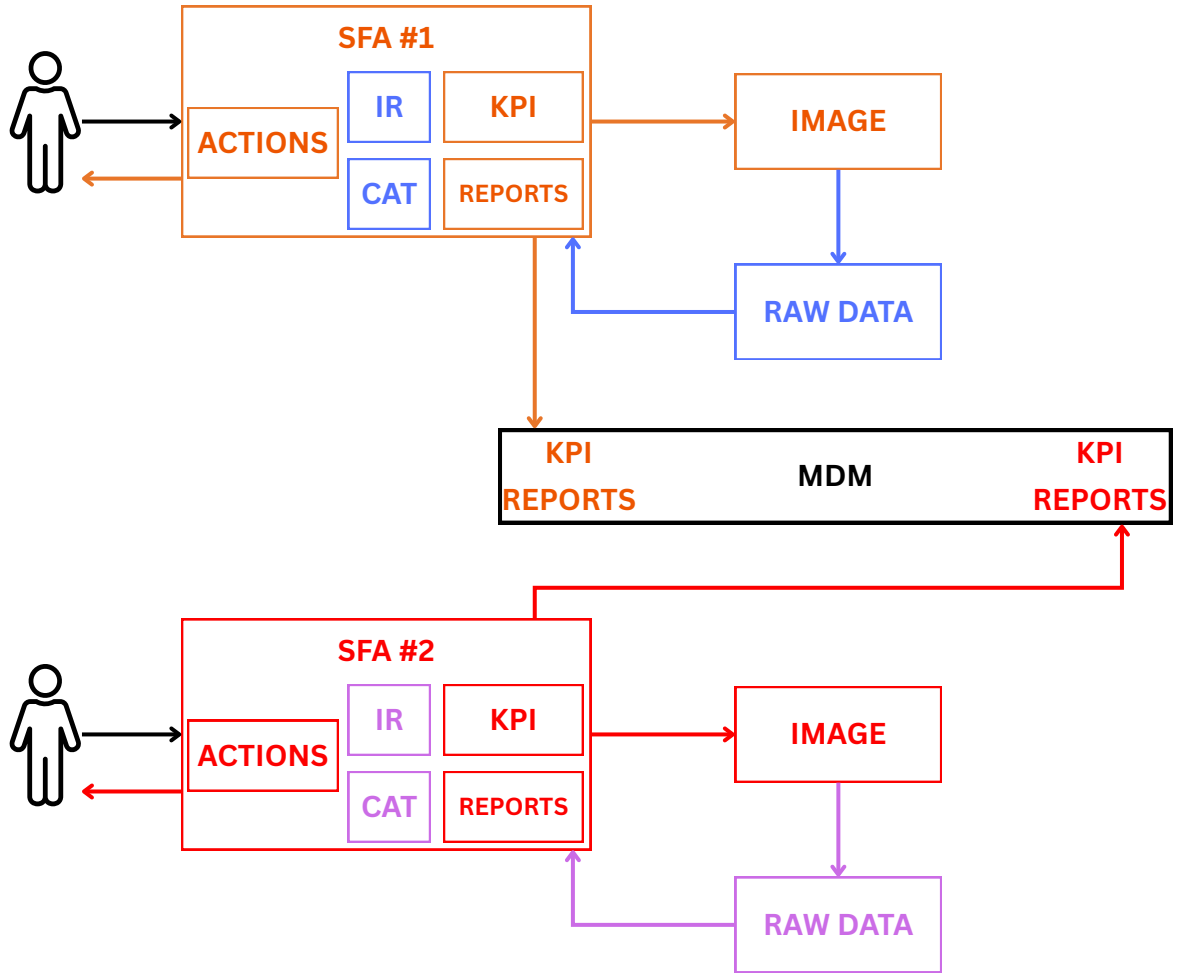
Pros	Cons
Quick time to deploy Off-the-shelf functionality (albeit typically limited to local markets) Pre-defined KPIs and reports	Vendor lock-in No access to raw data/insights to be leveraged by AI/LLM (client's MDM/ "brain") Limited flexibility and innovation Minimal customisation options No two-way connection with the SFA tool Catalogue managed by IR vendor with input from customer – often inefficient, slow, and frustrating



Option 2 – IR Integrated in SFA Tools

Some SFA platforms bundle IR as a built-in feature, offering convenience for existing users. However, these solutions are typically generic, inflexible, and driven by the SFA vendor's roadmap—leaving little room for custom rules, AI experimentation, or scalable innovation. The result is long-term rigidity as your needs grow more complex.

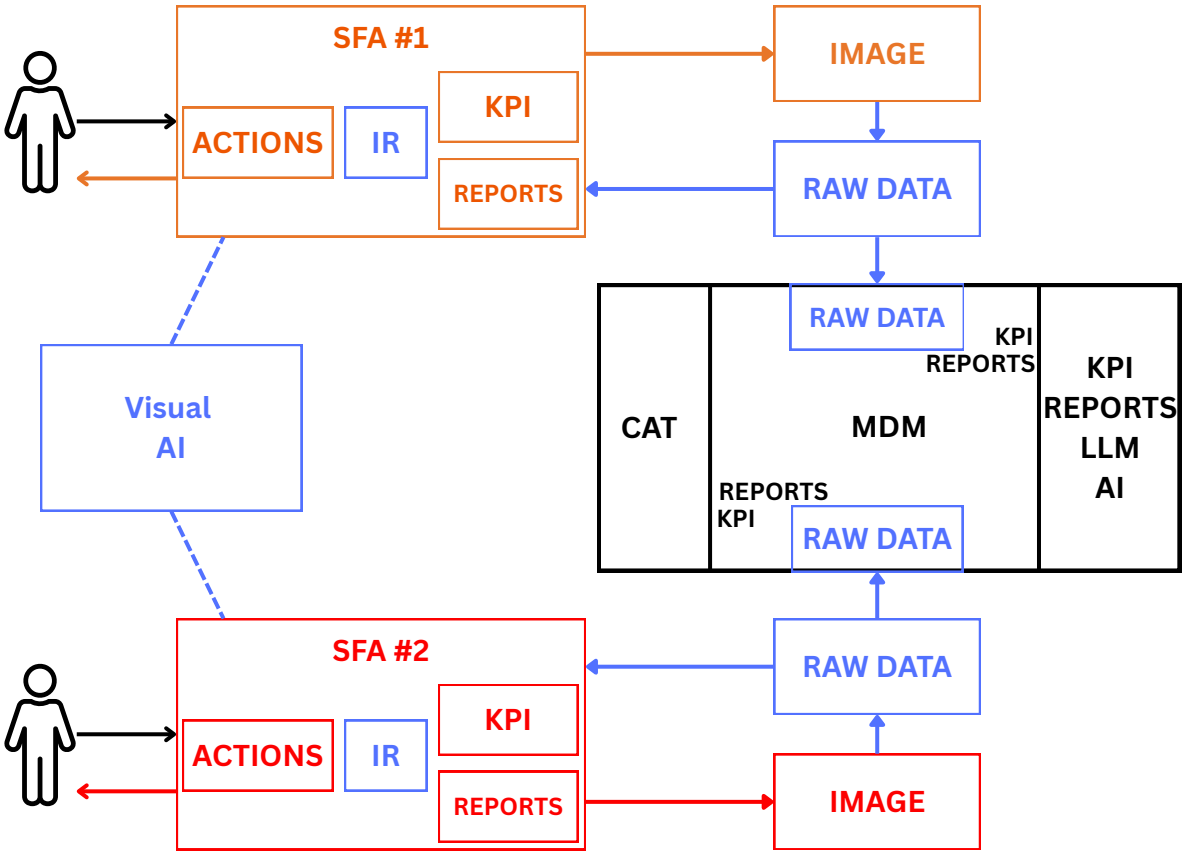
Pros	Cons
Seamless integration into field workflows	IR capabilities limited to vendor priorities
No need for additional tools	No access to raw data/insights
Simple onboarding for existing SFA users	Low flexibility or customisation
Direct connection with SFA tool allowing for immediate actions on insights	Catalogue managed by IR vendor with input from customer – often inefficient, slow, and frustrating
	Innovation takes a backseat to SFA development



Option 3 - Image Recognition as a Service (e.g. Neurolabs)

IR-as-a-Service is a modular, API-native model that plugs into any tech stack, whether in-house or third party, giving enterprises full control over how IR connects with any MDM (local/global), any SFA, product catalogues, or AI engines. Like Lego blocks, each component can evolve independently, enabling long-term flexibility, customisation, and future-proof integration of AI or LLM-based intelligence.

Pros	Cons
Fully modular and API-native Fast to deploy and integrate Standardised raw data/insights straight into the MDM Customisable KPIs, reports, and workflows Compatible with multiple image capture methods Catalogue managed and owned by client – allows faster onboarding, direct control, and API connectivity to client's MPC	Requires active orchestration by internal teams May demand greater upfront configuration



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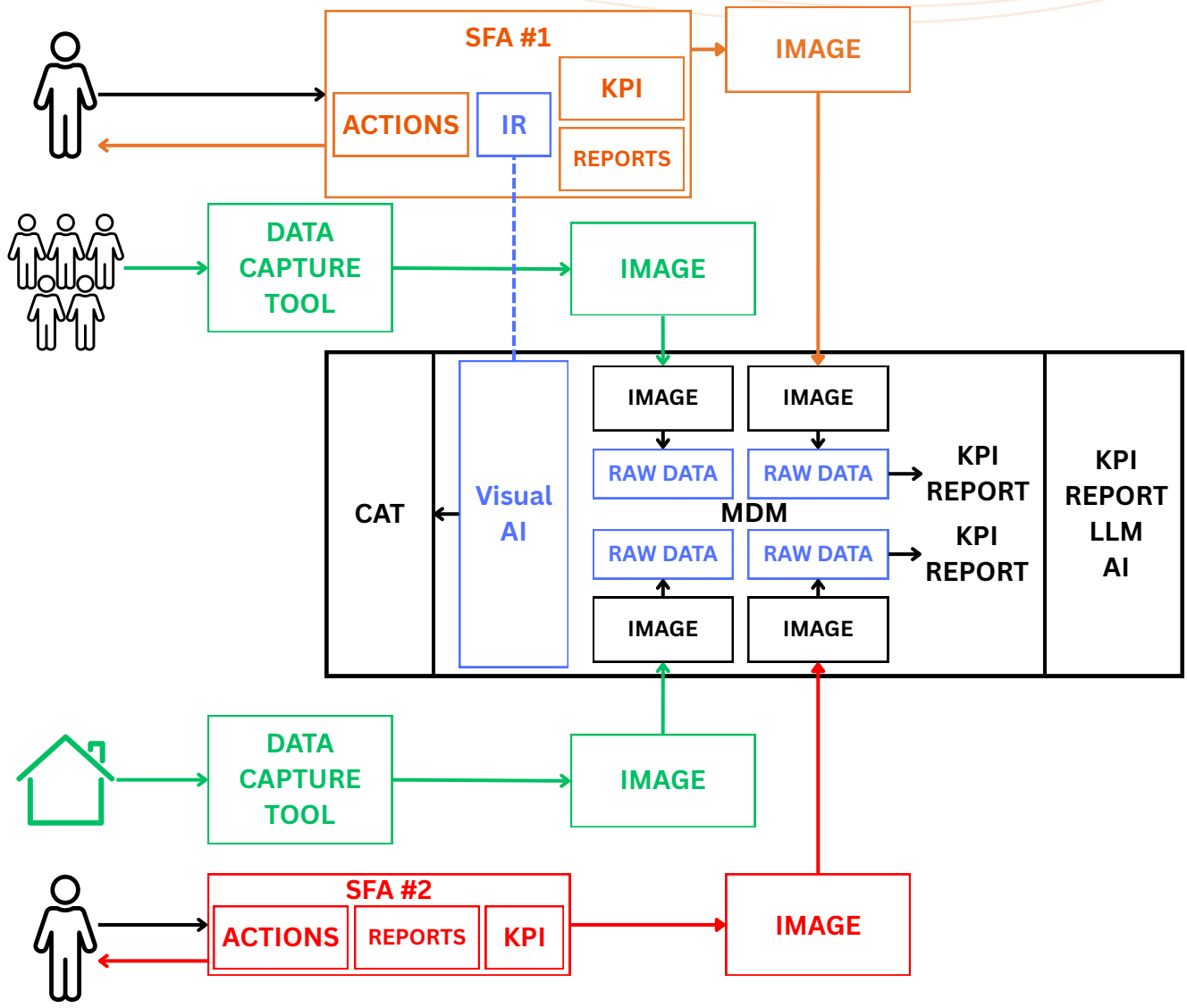
Pros	Cons
Supports any image input (dedicated field teams, crowdsourced, retailer, CCTV)	Requires complex orchestration
Decouples capture from processing for ultimate flexibility	Demands maturity in internal data and ops teams
Ideal for large-scale AI and LLM integration	Longer setup timelines
Catalogue managed centrally by client – enables global reuse and efficient integration with MDM/data lakes	



Option 5 – Custom IR Built In-House

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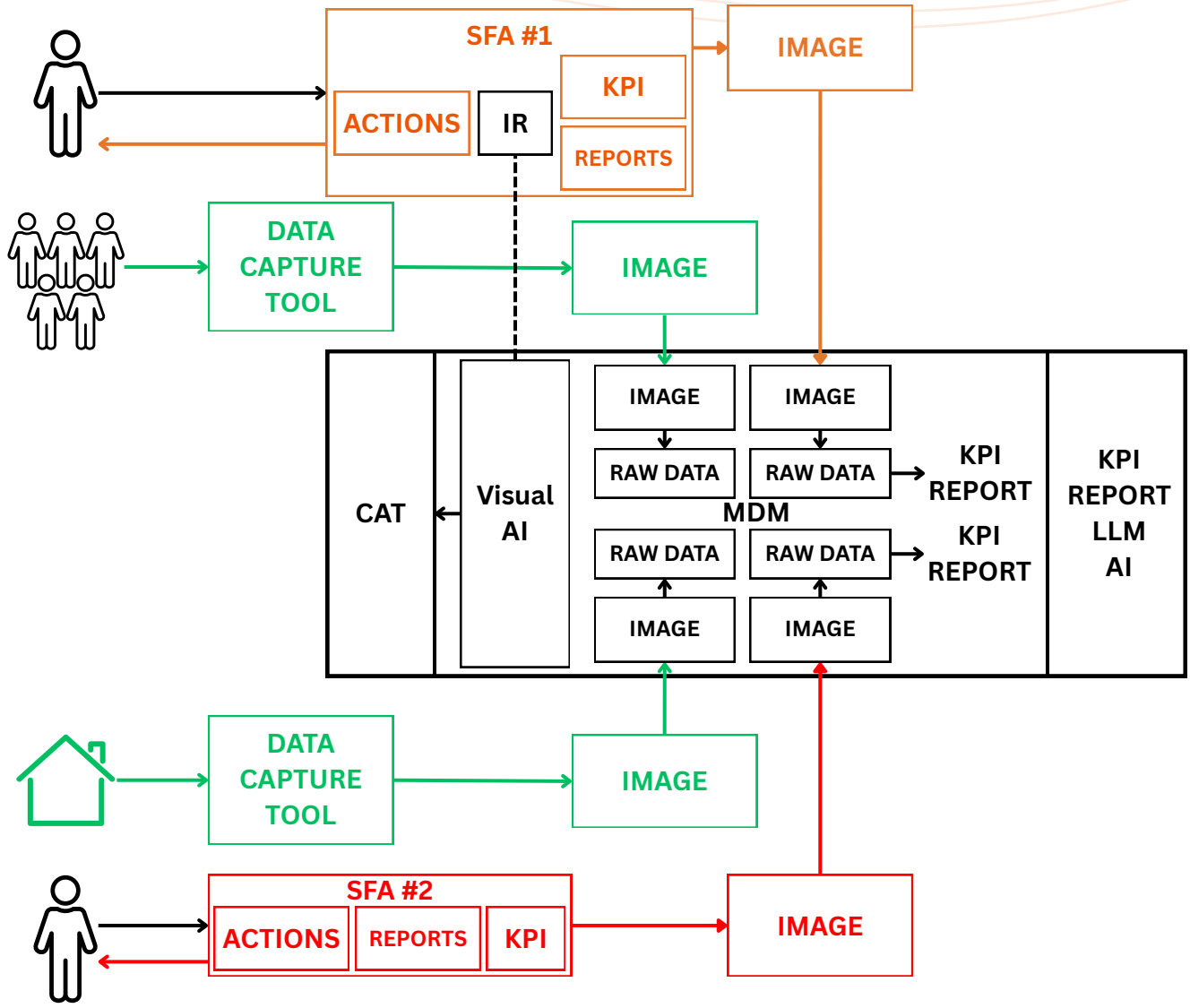
Pros	Cons
Total control over data and roadmap	High cost of development and maintenance
IP remains in-house	Slower innovation cycle
Deep customisation possible	Difficult to scale across markets
Catalogue fully owned and managed by client – tightly integrated with internal data systems	



Comparison Table

Criteria	Packaged IR	SFA-Integrated	Visual AI	Hybrid IR Capture	In-House Build
Time to Deploy	Fast	Medium	Fast	Medium	Slow
Integration Flexibility	Low	Medium	High	High	High
Customisation	Low	Low	High	High	High
Innovation Ownership	Vendor	Vendor	Joint	Joint	Internal
Cost of Ownership	Medium	Medium	Medium	Medium	High
Scalability	Medium	Medium	High	High	Medium
Control Over Data	Low	Medium	High	High	High
Suitable for Trials	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Image Capture Sources	Fixed (vendor app)	Field teams only	Any (API-compatible)	Any (crowd, CCTV, etc.)	Internal only
Support for AI/LLM Evolution	Low	Low	High	High	Medium
Catalogue Management	Vendor-managed (split, slow)	Vendor-managed (split, slow)	Client-managed (API-native)	Client-managed (centralised)	Client-managed (in-house)