

# Hatco — Streamlined Order-to-Cash Cycle and Improved Visibility in Customer Document Processing



Since 1950, Hatco Corporation has been a leader in creating innovative and cost-effective equipment solutions for the food service industry to greatly improve efficiency, reliability and profits, while meeting the industry demands for versatility, productivity and profitability. Hatco products are designed and built to handle the rigorous demands of today's food service operations, always living up to the company motto — Nothing less than the best.®

In 2007, Hatco's 400 employees assumed 100% beneficial ownership of the company. From the corporate offices in Milwaukee, WI, to the state-of-the-art manufacturing facility in Sturgeon Bay, WI, the pride and workmanship of Hatco employees are reflected in every product.

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**Food Service Manufacturing**

In an effort to eliminate errors, increase efficiency and shore up reliability, Hatco sought out a modern solution that could adapt to and improve its existing system of processing customer faxes and emails. Not only did Esker address Hatco's immediate needs, its solution held the potential for even more document process improvements in the future, including Optical Character Recognition (OCR) functionality.

## The Old Process

Despite its reputation as an outdated form of communication, fax remains a popular vehicle for many customers doing business within the food service equipment industry. Hatco is one of the many manufacturers that have to deal with the other side of this reality — processing the faxes.

Hatco sends out and receives thousands of faxes each month, which can include customer purchase orders, change orders and customer statements. Prior to Esker, the company already had a custom system in place to maximize efficiency and keep the flow of paper low:

- 1) Incoming faxes were converted to a TIF/PDF file.
- 2) Hatco's software system would route the files to customer service representatives (CSRs) who were equipped with dual monitors. The CSRs could then process the faxes and save them electronically.
- 3) Outbound documents (e.g., order acknowledgements, invoices, etc.) would be sent to the customer via fax electronically.

## Addressing the issues

While Hatco's old process did a lot of good, it still caused its share of headaches. Faxes and emails were sent in a variety of file types — all of which were connected to a single phone system. "When something within our system went wrong it would set off a chain reaction," said Joe Hatchell, Vice President of Information Technology at Hatco. "Customer orders or other documents would be backed up for hours; we'd fix the system and the documents would get dropped on the CSRs all at once."

These challenges forced Hatco to start thinking about an alternative solution that could simplify the process while eliminating the company's single point of failure. "My sense was that we could always do better," said Hatchell. "We were getting tired of all the technical support required to keep the system running, as well as all the problems we were creating for the CS team. Ultimately, we were led to Esker."

**Instead of worrying whether our CS-based emails and faxes would be processed correctly, Esker simply breaks up the attachments and puts them in PDFs for us. It couldn't be easier.**

Joe Hatchell ■ Vice President of Information Technology ■ Hatco

## Discovering Esker

Hatco's search process included exploring some of the industry's most successful and cost-effective options. However, to Hatco, Esker always seemed to be the one and only choice, mainly due to the solution's superior flexibility.

"I never came across anyone else I was comfortable with," said Hatchell. "We realized what Esker could do for us immediately: Solve our initial problems while opening the door for more opportunities later on, such as OCR and data capture. That type of 'sky-is-the-limit' capability is what intrigued us."

### What is Esker on Demand?

Esker on Demand is a pay-as-you-go document process and information exchange service designed to innovate and accelerate a variety of document processes and business communications. Companies using Esker on Demand are able to easily automate the exchange of critical documents between customers, business partners and suppliers with no up-front investment required.

## Business Benefits

Hatco's partnership with Esker is still in its beginning phases, but the benefits are already numerous. Since implementation of the Esker solution in the spring of 2012, Hatco has been able to:

- Seamlessly apply the Esker platform to its existing solution, making only a few small architectural changes in the process
- Eliminate the issues caused by different email and fax formats, as Esker breaks up all of the attachments and puts them into a single, unified format
- Secure a previously vulnerable and unstable fax/email process, thus saving time, money and resources
- Lighten the workloads of the CS and IT teams due to fewer errors and issues

"Esker has handled everything smoothly. We always know what to expect, and it's always in the same format," said Hatchell. "It's really settled the whole environment. Everyone has a tremendous amount of faith in the new process."

## Looking Ahead

Plans of leveraging the Esker solution further are already underway in the hopes of improving the speed, accuracy and efficiency of Hatco's new process even more. The company is hoping to automatically index, route and archive incoming fax/image documents using Esker's OCR and Dynamic Data Capture (DDC) technology. This will also allow them to extract and analyze relevant information directly from the documents without the use of manual steps.

"For us, this solution was all about its potential going forward," said Hatchell. "We're very excited about what OCR may do for us, and have even had discussions about implementing the Esker platform within our accounts payable department."

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Joe Hatchell ▪ Vice President of Information Technology  
▪ Hatco