



Cable & Wireless

Accelerates its Cash Collection with Esker DeliveryWare



CABLE & WIRELESS

When Cable & Wireless required a document output management solution to increase the efficiency of its document processes, it selected Esker DeliveryWare, a multi-channel document delivery solution.

The UK business unit provides enterprise and carrier solutions to the largest users of telecoms services across the UK, US, continental Europe and Asia, and wholesale broadband services in the UK.

In 1994, Cable & Wireless adopted SAP as its main Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system to drive more efficient processes across all areas of its business. As a result, it needed to replace an old version of Topcall software that was used to fax out the company's purchase orders, since this was no longer supported. Simultaneously, a project to save time and costs with the redeployment of a key SAP developer from working on creating and modifying document output was also critical.

Saving up to eight days of work per document

Esker DeliveryWare was identified as a potential new fax server solution through the SAP Packaged Service Direct catalogue, which includes specific packaged software solutions certified by SAP. Following initial discussions, it soon became apparent that Esker could help Cable & Wireless with more than just its fax requirements.

Cable & Wireless' procurement department required an automated fax solution for SAP and its SAP project team needed an easier way to deal with the constant flow of requests to change and modify business documents.

Apart from having to modify specific business documents whenever a new upgrade was implemented, the SAP developers also had to modify them each time a new request for a customer statement was made. Dave Brownjohn, ERP Manager, Cable & Wireless, explained: "This was taking up valuable internal resources, as our SAP Developer's time and expertise could have been better spent on other projects. It was also slowing down the process of issuing business-critical purchase order documents".

The project to enable more critical activities to be undertaken by the internal SAP development team was merged with the fax project.

In order to solve these issues, Cable & Wireless wanted a solution that meant it was easy to push all customer statements via a print file from the SAP system and to reformat this automatically to the company's own requirements. "It was

also imperative that the solution could automatically place the correct OMR (Optical Mark Recognition) separators on to the documents, prior to them being delivered to our outsourced print facility," added Brownjohn. "Esker DeliveryWare enabled us to do this quickly and simply. We liked the idea of the future benefits of having a multi-faceted solution that could deliver fax, email, print, XML, HTML and FTP straight from SAP. The ability to by-pass the development of SAP scripts was very cost-effective and saved us up to eight days of work per document".

Streamlined faxing with Esker Fax on Demand

An outsourced Esker DeliveryWare service called Fax on Demand was used to deliver faxed documents directly from Cable & Wireless' enterprise systems. Fax on Demand has an SAP-certified fax connection to allow fax output data to be handled easily and process Cable & Wireless purchase orders automatically from SAP, with no changes in functionality. This took away the Problem of Cable & Wireless having to use internal resources to conduct non-core activities and helped the company to communicate with customers and suppliers faster. The Fax on Demand solution also enabled savings to be made, as it reduced the per-page costs for faxes sent by Cable & Wireless to overseas customers.

Financial 'Quick Wins' — 90% saving on document development time

Under the banner of financial 'quick wins', a project was launched to improve cash collection at Cable & Wireless. David Brownjohn explained: "We realised that, with Esker DeliveryWare, a number of more complex dunning cycles could be processed and sent out to different types of customers, depending on their outstanding debtor days, which would enable us to collect cash faster".

As Esker on Demand is a metered service, we only pay for what we use, which means no unexpected costs."

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He added: “Based on the time it would take internal resources to create 25 dunning letters manually, we allocated 60 days for the development. However, with Esker DeliveryWare the time was cut by 90% - equating to over 400 hours of development time saved that could be redeployed to other critical areas of the business. This was also achieved with minimal disruption and risk to the business, allowing us to increase customer satisfaction through more personalised documentation.”

Automatic Delivery of Remittances to Speed up Procure-to-Pay Process

Looking ahead towards future projects, Cable & Wireless has identified a number of possible benefits that could be gained from sending out remittance advice by email to its customers' Accounts Payable departments. At present, these are being delivered manually through the conventional process of print and post, which slows down the process and keeps costs high.

Enabling the automatic delivery of remittance advice to their suppliers through Esker DeliveryWare will help to speed up the procure-to-pay process and enable them to manage costs more effectively.

Another future project being considered by Cable & Wireless is to format current billing processes. Certain customers are asking for specific billing processes and tailored billing presentment to suit their own requirements.

David Brownjohn explained: “At present it is expensive and risky to change the billing formats and share multiple outputs, as well as route customers through different network formats using our current billing system. It would be very difficult and time intensive to develop our billing system to make these document format changes ourselves due to the complexity of incorporating all the other adjustments that would be required further down the line”.

Personalised Documents to Accelerate Cash Collection

Many bespoke formatting requirements already exist within Cable & Wireless for individual customers or groups of customers. Changing the billing platform was not an option as there would be far too much risk involved to the customer.

“We perceive substantial savings can be made with Esker DeliveryWare through avoiding the development costs on many disparate billing systems. Supporting two or three systems is far more cost effective than having to support 20. Esker should help us to achieve this quickly,” notes Brownjohn.

He concluded: “With Esker DeliveryWare, the data can be taken from the billing system and merged to produce the preferred output very simply. For example, we're now looking at consolidating both invoices and credit notes into one document. The formatting capability of Esker DeliveryWare means that we don't have to consider configuring the current billing system. Therefore saving on development costs and accelerating our cash collection”.

About Cable & Wireless

Cable & Wireless is one of the world's leading international communications companies. It operates through two standalone business units - International and UK.

The International business unit operates integrated telecommunications companies in 34 countries offering mobile, broadband, domestic and international fixed line services to residential and business customers, with principal operations in the Caribbean, Panama, Macau, Monaco and the Channel Islands.

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