# HOW ESKER'S P2P SUITE HELPS INDUSTRIAL EQUIPMENT MANUFACTURERS MEET SUSTAINABILITY GOALS

ESKER®

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# CLOSING THE GAP WITH AUTOMATION

## WHO IS THIS EBOOK FOR?

This ebook is for anyone with decision making capacity within the procure-to-pay (P2P) processes at an industrial equipment manufacturer, such as:

- Accounts payable (AP) managers
- Supply chain managers
- Production directors
- CIOs
- CFOs
- Business applications directors

## AUTOMATION KEEPS THINGS MOVING

As we find ourselves in the midst of the 4th Industrial Revolution (4IR), humanity is facing huge economic, social and environmental changes. These shifts do not only encompass environmental, labour and worker health and safety regulations. Consumers also have evolving expectations regarding quality, cost and sustainability of products. If it means that they'll have a better experience, consumers are not afraid to switch brands.

Automation and massive technological advancements are impacting how, where and by whom goods are produced. Accordingly, the companies manufacturing these goods require flexibility and agility, both up and down the supply chain. Since industrial equipment manufacturers service a diverse set of industries, they are essential intermediaries in these supply chains. The continuous development of emerging technologies has allowed industrial equipment manufacturers of all sizes to access markets previously occupied by large companies. Being able to compete in this setting requires supply chain resilience and line retention through flexible, collaborative and reliable processes.

As machinery and production processes are being revolutionised, it only makes sense to give the P2P cycle some attention as well. Optimised and fluid supply chains enable industrial equipment manufacturers to focus their resources on the more strategic areas of their business.

## THE ADVANTAGES OF END-TO-END AUTOMATION

Some of the most beneficial aspects of P2P automation include:

- Increased control and visibility
- Strengthened supplier relationships
- Harmonised ERP environments
- Increased productivity
- More engaged employees
- Lower operational costs
- Better scalability and risk management
- Enhanced accuracy

This ebook provides you with an overview of the main benefits experienced by companies operating in the Industrial Equipment Manufacturing industry after implementing Esker's Procure-to-Pay automation suite, showcasing the remarkable results that were achieved and illustrated by a real-life P2P digital transformation success story.

# P2P TARGETS FOR THE MANUFACTURING INDUSTRY

## IMPROVE THE CUSTOMER SERVICE EXPERIENCE

Manufacturers need to keep their operations running smoothly to meet customer demands in an increasingly intelligent and flexible business environment. As the demands for customised products are growing, having the ability to satisfy them can truly be a competitive advantage. Emerging technologies are revolutionising access to this market for manufacturers and suppliers of all sizes. Streamlining the P2P process with an AI-based automation solution will provide them with real-time data about invoice status, enabling everyone to collaborate more closely and efficiently.

## KEEP THE SUPPLY CHAIN FLEXIBLE

Supply chains must be flexible enough to adapt to unexpected events. By identifying the crucial points of a supply chain, negative impacts caused by disruptions can be minimised. Cutting down on manual input, implementing automated workflows and streamlining internal exchanges will enable businesses to minimise payment disputes and errors, thereby easing the burden on both ends of the supplier-customer relationship.

## OFFER A GREAT USER EXPERIENCE

Industrial equipment manufacturers of all sizes can adopt innovative automation technologies with optimised workflows and a single interface to facilitate customer use and solution adoption, changing the way they do business for the better.

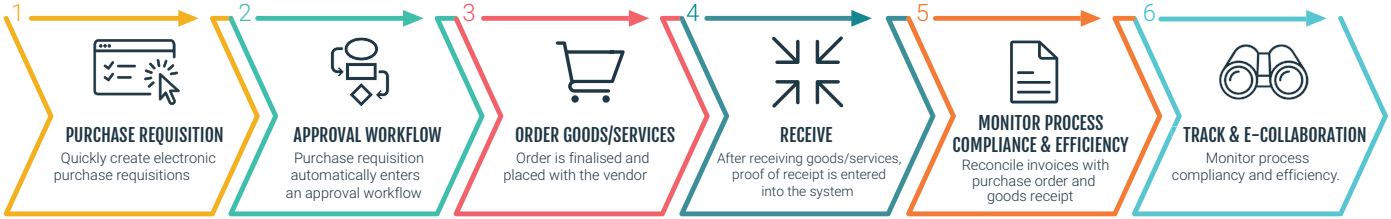
# HOW P2P AUTOMATION WORKS

## AN INSIDE LOOK AT ESKER'S SOLUTIONS

Esker's Procure-to-Pay suite integrates with a wide variety of ERP systems, enabling businesses to automate each phase of the P2P cycle — from receipt of goods to the creation of a journal entry into accounting. End-to-end automation addresses the challenges inherent in manual data processing and routing by delivering coordination and transparency to the P2P process.

Esker uses intelligent, AI-driven data capture, automated workflows and electronic archiving capabilities to process and transfer invoices electronically while providing 100% visibility of exactly where they are in the approval process. Approvers are notified automatically and, once approvals are obtained, the invoice information is generated in the ERP system and the payment processed as quickly as possible.

The six stages of P2P automation:




### A connected, consolidated workflow

In a manual environment, AP departments run the risk of paying inaccurate, fraudulent or duplicated invoices. With automation, invoice data is processed with complete accuracy and security through a single point of control, because the solution interacts with all ERP systems present. Procurement can be aligned with company purchasing policies through preferred-supplier catalogues, thereby restricting maverick buying. Throughout the process, Esker attaches information inside the ERP, with invoice data and the document image being e-delivered to the archive. A link is then sent back to the ERP for quick and easy retrieval of information when needed. A complete audit trail of every step is made available by way of Esker's reporting capabilities.

## Dashboards with customisable KPIs

Esker's dashboards provide users with easy-to-read information needed to perform daily tasks, monitor performance and spot potential opportunities or problems as soon as they arise. Metrics displayed for each user and/or profile can be quickly customised with an easy-to-use interface by removing, editing or adding indicators to dashboards. The solutions also includes options to schedule automated report generation.

Among other elements, the online portal displays:

- The number of invoices and requisitions awaiting processing, including amount totals
- The status of invoices and purchase requisitions
- The number of invoices processed by FTEs

## Mobile reach with Esker Anywhere™

Available 24/7 on both iOS and Android, the Esker Anywhere™ mobile application adds another dimension of convenience for reviewing and validating invoices, expenses and purchase requisitions on the go. Additionally, approvers can monitor P2P performance indicators and other important process metrics right from the mobile app.

## Convenient supplier portal

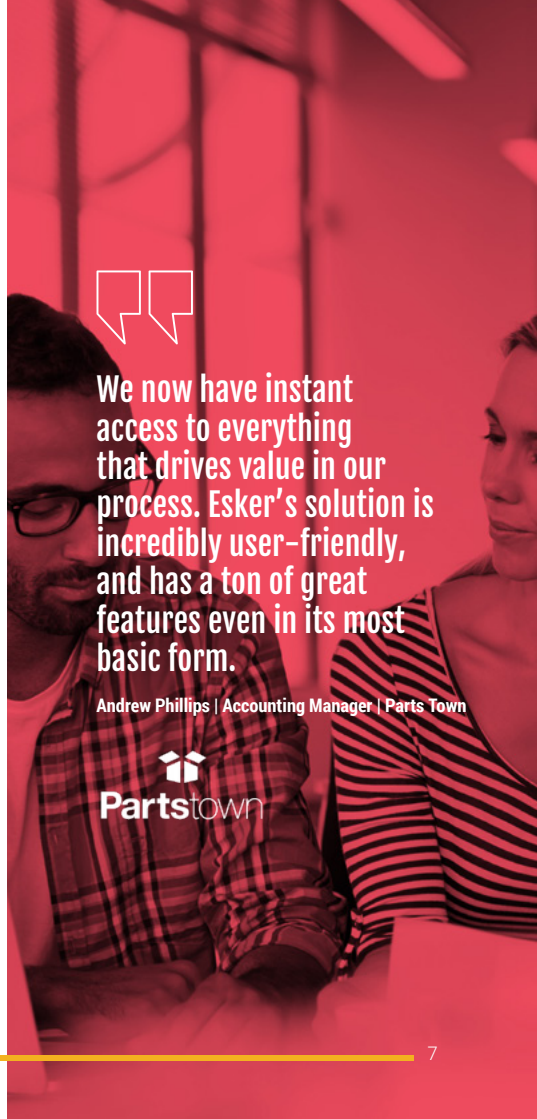
Making life easier for suppliers means enhancing a company's sales opportunities as well as its reputation. Esker's portal simplifies the communications between a business and its suppliers with a collaborative workspace that promotes rapid dispute resolution and reduces the number of follow-ups about payment status by providing easy access to invoicing information.

# ADVANTAGES OF AUTOMATION

## 4IR–READY PROCESSES

As the machinery and production processes become increasingly connected and automated, so should the procurement process for supplies and materials. Esker's AI-based cloud platform will:

- Improve the customer service experience by streamlining supplier invoice processing to help meet customer requirements
- Minimise payment disputes and errors by cutting down on manual input and implementing automated workflows and streamlined internal exchanges
- Reduce payment periods
- Negotiate discounts with suppliers
- Offer a great user experience due to a single, platform-wide interface
- Familiarise operational staff with digital technology to promote change management: Actors, not users!



We now have instant access to everything that drives value in our process. Esker's solution is incredibly user-friendly, and has a ton of great features even in its most basic form.

**Andrew Phillips | Accounting Manager | Parts Town**

Partstown

# STRENGTHEN RELATIONSHIPS WITH SUPPLIERS

Since industrial equipment manufacturers occupy an intermediary role in the chain of goods, it is essential for them to reliably have everything they need for production quickly available. Also, equipment is expensive, so manufacturers need to be especially cost-effective wherever they can.

Maintaining a great relationship with customers means accepting that things sometimes happen. But being able to predict shortages or bottlenecks is only half of the equation. The other half is having the resources available to prevent or remedy the problem immediately.

Esker supports this need by helping businesses:

- Consistently make accurate & timely payments to suppliers
- Avoid payment delays with rapid dispute resolution & real-time communication tools
- Provide real-time visibility into invoice approvals & payment statuses
- Offer suppliers the choice of how to transmit documents
- Simplify invoice creation with Esker's Flip-PO feature

**We now have the ability to support our company growth with more efficient processes and help improve the way we do business with both customers and suppliers.**

**Paul Hartwig | Production Director | Firstan**

Firstan
QUALITY PACKAGING

# REDUCE THE ENVIRONMENTAL FOOTPRINT

Both consumer demand and noticeable climate change are pushing businesses away from focusing entirely on reducing costs, moving towards building sustainable supply chains that minimise their carbon footprint instead. The pressure to reduce pollution and the effects of climate change comes from multiple sources: the public, government regulators and investors.

Industrial-machinery companies require greater agility to keep up with the pace of digital innovation while maintaining flexibility. Manufacturers that have not upgraded their systems in a while will be faced with added challenges when implementing digital processes, but making these changes today is essential to being able to quickly respond to shifting consumer and business-to-business (B2B) demands tomorrow.

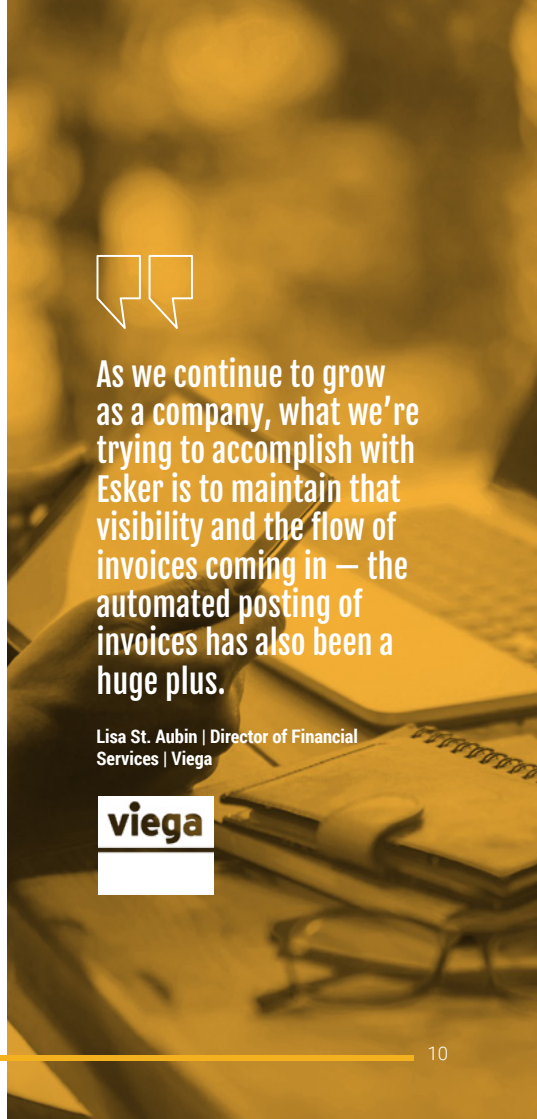
Automating the P2P cycle enables businesses to:

- Reduce paper & office equipment use
- Develop a sustainable business model by choosing ethical and environmental partnerships
- Optimise energy use with a cloud-based platform
- Reduce their carbon footprint through Esker's commitment to environmental standards (e.g., EcoVadis Platinum Medal, ISO14001 certification)

## PROVIDE VALUABLE INFORMATION THAT EMPOWERS A TEAM

Esker facilitates collaboration and improves visibility within the manufacturing and distribution functions of industrial equipment manufacturers by providing valuable process information, such as:

- Real-time tracking and reporting for financial staff
- Increased visibility and traceability at all levels
- Standardised AP invoice processing across the company
- Reduced manual data entry through AI technology
- Customised dashboards for individualised workflows



As we continue to grow as a company, what we're trying to accomplish with Esker is to maintain that visibility and the flow of invoices coming in — the automated posting of invoices has also been a huge plus.

**Lisa St. Aubin | Director of Financial Services | Viega**

viega

# SUCCESS STORY

As a supplier of genuine OEM restaurant equipment parts, Parts Town has quickly become one of the fastest growing privately held companies in North America. But with that success came a lot of added pressure and challenges — particularly concerning the company's AP processes. Like a lot of organisations, Parts Town had been using primarily manual methods to conduct critical AP tasks like data entry and approval, along with relying on Outlook as an invoicing queue. However, with close to 30% growth in the last two years alone, Parts Town simply couldn't keep up. Eventually, Parts Town came to the realisation that it needed a more cost-effective and sustainable alternative. The search for an AP automation solution provider had begun.

Fortunately, they didn't have to endure an extensive vendor search to find the replacement solution they were looking for. Esker was already playing a prominent role in the company's document process improvement efforts. Parts Town had previously used Esker with great success to automate processes within its order-to-cash cycle, including order management and accounts receivable. Because of their well-established relationship, and the fact that Esker also offered an end-to-end AP automation solution, Parts Town wasted little time in choosing Esker as its AP automation provider.

**Results after automation:**

- Enhanced productivity in the AP department by 50%, with processing capacity per person increasing from 32,000 to 57,000 annual invoices, 40% of which are now touchless
- Increased visibility and traceability at all levels
- Standardised AP invoice processing across the company
- Cut number of approvers in half with validation workflows
- Reduced incidence of disputes, thereby meeting the objective of staying below 4% due to workflows that make it possible to streamline internal exchanges and be more reactive
- Shortened payment periods that added the ability to negotiate discounts with suppliers
- Improved quality of work while allowing AP staff to spend more time on higher-value tasks, such as analysis and dispute handling

# THE 4IR FLEX

The 4th Industrial Revolution makes it a necessity for industrial equipment manufacturers to focus their resources on the most strategically relevant decisions, which include automation and digitalisation of the factory floor. Continuous and instantaneous communication between the various tools, workstations and production supply chains is key for achieving flexibility. Esker's Procure-to-Pay suite is a valuable component in streamlining production operations and has been implemented by many large companies in the industrial equipment industry to meet the growing demand for process flexibility.

Automating P2P processes provides better visibility and control of total spend, allowing finance teams to focus on reporting, operations analysis and other higher-value and strategically impactful tasks. Greater flexibility for stakeholders means that businesses are able to meet evolving customer needs. Esker's solutions enable companies to strengthen their supplier relationships, reduce their environmental footprint and bolster their processes while becoming more efficient.

## YOU'RE IN GOOD COMPANY

Leading businesses in the industrial equipment manufacturing industry trust Esker's AI-powered Procure-to-Pay suite to power efficiencies throughout their process.

# ABOUT ESKER

Esker is a global cloud platform built to unlock strategic value for finance and customer service professionals, and strengthen collaboration between companies by automating the cash conversion cycle. Founded in 1985, Esker operates in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific with global headquarters in Lyon, France, and U.S. headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin.

Our customers use our cloud solutions to increase the efficiency, productivity and visibility of their Procure-to-Pay (P2P) and Order-to-Cash (O2C) processes.

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