

MAKING ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AUTOMATION A REALITY

More than ever, companies are exploring new process efficiencies to drive cost reduction and improve their bottom line. Internal processes such as accounts payable (AP) are being looked to as prime candidates for modernisation. Traditional paper-based vendor invoice processing is not providing the level of efficiency expected by executives. Lack of visibility, long process turnaround time and processing discrepancies are all barriers that ultimately impede business progress and profitability.



Key Figures*

Esker research has found AP automation can typically help organisations:



- Receive and enter vendor invoices up to 65% faster
- Lower purchase-to-pay process costs as much as 60%
- Improve accuracy up to 99%
- Increase visibility to 100% with electronic archiving



*Numbers are based on Esker customer results

3. **No visibility:** Lack of process visibility and control makes it harder to assess AP operations, optimise use of company cash and develop strategies for improvement.
4. **High costs:** Excess paper, transportation and physical archiving expenses costs companies money. Processing errors require resolution which can also drive up the cost per invoice.
5. **Difficult data retrieval:** From audits to vendor inquiries, finding information quickly can be virtually impossible when invoices are stored and retrieved manually.

Vendor Invoice Processing Challenges

When using manual methods to process and handle vendor invoices, the ability of an AP department to achieve its main goals – avoiding late payment fees, capturing early payment discounts, minimising vendor disputes, keeping the supply chain running smoothly – is often hampered by several main obstacles:

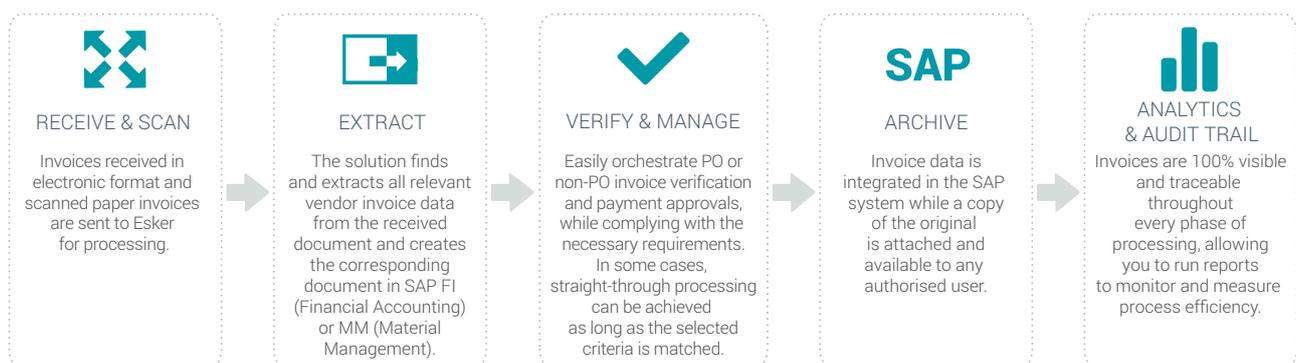
1. **Processing delays:** Manual routing, processing and sign-off procedures can lead to missed vendor discounts, late payment penalties and even strain supplier relationships.
2. **Reduced accuracy:** Errors, such as double invoice booking and payment, lack of standard processes for payment sign-off and vendor management, can directly impact working capital and compliance.

The Solution

Esker's Accounts Payable automation solution integrates with SAP MM and FI applications, allowing companies to automate every phase of vendor invoice processing – from reception of the original document to the creation of an accounting book entry – for streamlined AP management.

Using intelligent capture, touchless processing and electronic workflow capabilities, companies running SAP can address the challenges of manual data entry and routing along with lack of coordination and transparency in traditional AP operations.

How Does It Work?



Benefits of AP Automation

Streamlined AP workflow process: An end-to-end automation solution removes the error-prone and time-consuming manual steps of keying-in, reviewing, coding and approval of invoices.

Improved oversight and visibility: Since the entire AP process is electronic and 100% visible from start to finish, it is much easier to plan and forecast as well as identify areas of improvement in the process.

Efficiency at every step: Regardless of format, scanned or electronic invoices are entered into an automated workflow where Esker’s intelligent image recognition technology accurately extracts data for verification. The invoice is then dispatched for approval and automatically archived for anytime availability.

External SAP workflow: Web-based AP workflow outside of the SAP system has many advantages, including: better business continuity, anytime access, non-SAP user approval capability, easier training and user acceptance, and simplified setup of shared services centres.

KPI improvement: Over time, an automation solution can improve key performance indicators (KPIs) in comparison to top industry metrics (e.g., increase productivity, lowered cost per invoice, more discounts captured, etc.).

Flexible and Step-by-Step Deployment Options

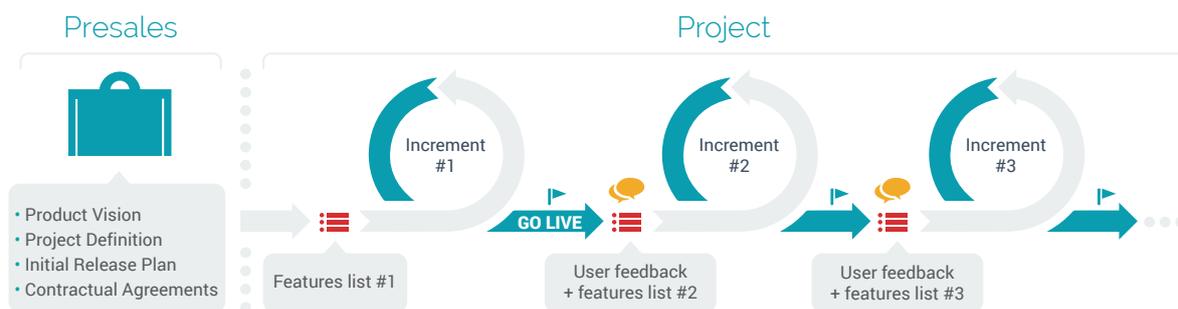
On-premises: Esker DeliveryWare makes it easy to integrate a best-practice vendor invoice processing solution with SAP applications. AP specialists benefit from end-to-end capabilities for receiving, entering and tracking vendor invoices – encompassing automated capture and posting, routing for exceptions handling, and detailed reporting.

In the cloud: Requiring no additional hardware, software or maintenance investments, Esker on Demand is a cloud-based service designed to help customers achieve the benefits of AP invoicing automation while avoiding lengthy deployment cycles. All the functionality is built into a single platform, making interfacing and support minimal.

Expert Consultancy and Project Methodology

Esker’s use of agile methodology creates an adaptive environment of self-service and enhanced process insight so that customers, business partners and their key stakeholders are actively involved throughout and achieve maximum value in every phase of solution delivery.

As opposed to the traditional “waterfall” approach, agile methodology enables decisions to be made with context, invests resources in the most value-added features, and allows solution features to be tested and used in a short amount of time.



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