ESKER

ACCELERATING INVOICE PROCESSING & FACILITATING THE MOVE TO E-INVOICING WITH ITS OWN AR AUTOMATION SOLUTION

70%
OF INVOICE VOLUME IS ELECTRONIC

100%
WORLDWIDE E-INVOICE COMPLIANCE

50%
SAVINGS ON INVOICE PROCESSING COSTS

BACKGROUND

Esker is a worldwide leader in cloud-based document process automation software that, over the years, has helped a wide range of companies automate their accounts receivable (AR) processes. Ironically, as Esker grew as a company, it realised its own AR department could use an update in order to reduce paper, accelerate invoice delivery speeds and meet the e-invoicing needs of its customers.

In just five years, Esker's invoice volume increased by over 200% and Esker sales admins across all subsidiaries were spending more and more time handling paper invoices. In addition to the inefficient manual processing, sales admins also faced daily challenges, including: limited process visibility, lack of invoice tracking, ineffective reporting and status updates, lengthy cash collection delays, increased workload at the end of each month, and subsequent pressure on the team.

SOLUTION

Esker implemented its own cloud-based AR automation solution internally across eight subsidiaries (Australia, France, Germany, Italy, Singapore, Spain, U.K. and U.S.). The solution rollout was done in two phases, and today, over 3,000 invoices are processed each month.

Phase one: Automate the processing and delivery of invoices in every Esker office. Esker's cloud-based mail processing service, Esker Mail Services (part of Esker's Accounts Receivable solution) takes the paper out of sending postal mail, making invoices completely electronic for the sender. Invoices are electronically submitted from Esker's SAP® application to one of its worldwide mail production facilities, where they are printed, folded, stuffed into envelopes and handed-off to the local postal services within 24 hours of creation.

With its network of mail production facilities and partnerships with local postal services, Esker benefits from least-cost routing via the facility nearest to the recipient, as well as a significant reduction in mail delivery time.

With no minimum volume requirements, the solution delivered the flexibility Esker required during both high and low invoice volume periods. Individual letters or batch mailings are processed immediately and peak-volume mail jobs are efficiently handled. For a growing company with fluctuating needs, this was key.

Phase two: Put in place an e-invoicing solution compliant with all international regulations. The move to e-invoicing was done progressively — France was the first country to implement; it was then rolled out at the other Esker subsidiaries.

As not all of Esker's customers were ready to move to e-invoicing, Esker's solution allows the company to send invoices 100% electronic on their end without requiring change on the part of their customers (who can still receive their invoices in paper format if they prefer). Esker's customers can then move to e-invoicing at their own pace. As their customers adopt e-invoicing, Esker can easily tailor invoice delivery to each customer. Esker makes e-invoices available to its customers in any file format (e.g., PDF, XML, etc.), and sends it via any electronic media (e.g., email, publishing on a web portal or EDI).

Increase e-invoicing adoption: In order to boost e-invoice adoption rates, Esker put in place strategies to facilitate the process and developed a best practices' guide and the tools (e.g., web portal, welcome letter, guidebook, deployment kits, legal advice, etc.) to help its customers successfully implement an e-invoicing solution.

For all new customers, Esker includes an e-invoicing clause in the T&C of all contracts and agreements: new customers must accept e-invoicing and provide email address for their AP department. As a result, all new customers automatically receive e-invoices. However, for existing customers, it was not so straightforward. E-invoicing opt-in and opt-out strategies were put in place depending on the different markets. In the U.S. and Australia, for example, the opt-out method is often used. By setting the default method to e-invoicing, customers actively have to switch to paper — increasing the likelihood that they will just remain with the default setting. For others subs, the opt-in method is used, where customers are given the option to accept e-invoices. Some markets achieved 100% e-invoicing, while others are more resistant to change (Europe).

To comply with European legislation on e-invoice archiving, Esker archives both the supplier's and the customer's original invoice, thereby removing the archiving burden from the customer. Esker offers online archiving compliant with the EU E-invoicing Directive and regulatory frameworks like Sarbanes-Oxley.

Enhance collaboration and visibility with dashboards and web portal:

Esker's convenient interface monitors the progress of all mail and email jobs and provides sales admins with 100% visibility on invoice delivery for both paper and e-invoices. With online 24/7 real-time tracking and reporting, every sent document is tracked and the data is stored in an online archive. Each invoice is available to customers in the web portal and can easily be resent on request via any media. Additionally, customers can exchange information and chat directly with Esker's sales admins to ask any invoice-related questions or clear up any discrepancies.

"Esker's customer portal allows for smarter AR interaction, strengthens customer relations and increases our team's productivity. Thanks to the open line of communication with our customers, sales admins reduce emails and phone calls and can focus on higher value tasks."

Sophie Rolland-Moritz | CFO | Esker

BENEFITS

Since the implementation of its own Accounts Receivable solution in 2009, Esker has seen a number of benefits, including:

- **Faster invoice processing and delivery**
- **Improved DSO** by shortening invoice delivery time
- **Enhanced visibility** on important invoice information and reporting thanks to dashboards
- **Time saved** and **productivity gained** for sales admins who can now focus on higher value tasks
- **Improved invoice tracking** and sending guarantees
- **70%** of total invoice volume is e-invoices

"Before implementing our solution, I spent lots of time tracking down and resending lost invoices with no way of verifying where the invoices were and when they had been delivered. Today, I can't imagine my job without the solution. It has simplified my work life and enabled me to focus on more interesting and higher value tasks."

Sales Administration Manager | Esker

ABOUT ESKER

Esker is a worldwide leader in cloud-based document process automation software. Esker solutions help organisations of all sizes to improve efficiencies, accuracy, visibility and costs associated with business processes. Esker provides on-demand and on-premises software to automate accounts payable, order processing, accounts receivable, purchasing and more. 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. Last year Esker generated 58.5 million euros in total sales revenue.

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