

Case Study

Invoice Processing



Corporate Express Leverages Kofax Intelligent Capture & Exchange to Automate and Streamline Accounts Payable Solution

Kofax Solution Enables One of World's Largest Office and Computer Products and Services Companies to Process a Million-Plus Invoices Annually

Situation

Corporate Express US Inc. is one of the world's largest business-to-business suppliers of office and computer products and services with annual sales of more than \$4.9 billion in North America. Headquartered in Broomfield, Colorado, Corporate Express offers office and computer supplies, office furniture, facility supplies, document and print management, promotional items, and other similar products. On average, Corporate Express processes in excess of 1 million invoices annually.

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The organization is a wholly-owned subsidiary of Dutch-based Corporate Express NV, which operates throughout North America, Europe and Australia, has close to 19,000 employees in 21 countries, and does more than \$8 billion in global sales annually.

Challenge

Corporate Express needed a solution to automate and streamline its accounts payable practices and system, which required heavy paper-based processing, labor-intensive invoice management, and high staffing costs for data collection, documentation and input.

The high volume of incoming invoices, some more than three pages in length, and the complexity of the forms often made it difficult to locate and retrieve them quickly and easily for reference, approval or distribution. With more than 35,000 active vendors and various invoice formats, accounts payable coordinators were spending up to 12 hours each week to process and route documents to the appropriate people and locations for approval and payment.

In addition, Corporate Express coordinators had to spend many hours in the field collecting and documenting new and outstanding invoices from various distribution centers. Once completed, they would then perform extensive data entry and documentation of each invoice, detailing any specified changes, directions or required approvals.

Solution

Corporate Express underwent an extensive, multi-month needs assessment followed by a vendor review and evaluation. The findings demonstrated that the company was suffering from slow access to information, a labor-intensive invoice management system, real-time exposure to liabilities, high accounts payable coordinator expenses, and above average processing time and costs.

After completing this in-depth discernment process, Corporate Express selected Kofax Certified Solution Provider Dataimage to implement a Kofax Intelligent Capture & Exchange solution, the centerpiece of Kofax's strategy to help organizations streamline business processes.

"Corporate Express was very thorough in its selection process, requesting a highly advanced proof of concept," said Dan Dillingham, vice president of corporate sales and marketing at Dataimage. "After developing and presenting evidence that our Kofax-based solution would provide significant ROI, we knew we had earned the business."

To meet its needs, Corporate Express used a full complement of Kofax solutions to automate key accounts payable processes and significantly refine workflows. Key elements initially employed were:

Kofax Capture, the world's leading information capture platform, which automates data capture from scanned paper or imported documents.

VirtualReScan, the de facto standard for scanning productivity that dramatically improves image quality, making even difficult-to-read or damaged documents legible.

Kofax Transformation modules, which intelligently automate the classification, sorting and separation of paper and electronic documents, then extract and validate the information they contain.

Results

With the installation of Kofax Intelligent Capture & Exchange, Corporate Express has seen significant improvements in productivity, efficiency, accuracy and cost savings across its accounts payable system. On a peak day, the company can now process as many as 10,000 invoices.

The Kofax solution has enabled Corporate Express' invoices – totaling more than 3.5 million in total annual paper volume – to be centrally stored, easily retrievable, and properly versioned. By automating invoice

management workflows, Corporate Express has reduced the time necessary for accounts payable coordinators and processors to track invoices, seek approvals, and settle accounts. As a result, the company has been able to grow its business while maintaining the same size workforce, and has ensured that invoicing records are accurate, accessible, and in compliance with financial regulations.

"The accounts payable imaging project for Corporate Express contributed to an overall reduction in annual invoice processing costs of \$1 million," said Bill Morey, director of document control at Corporate Express.

"It also greatly shortened the time required to process invoices, and improved processing accuracy."

According to Dillingham, the automation of purchase order-based invoices is so efficient that it is referred to as their "Lights Out Application." Once it was implemented, they just turned off the lights and let it run.

Corporate Express sees Kofax Intelligent Capture & Exchange as a long-term solution because of its unlimited customization, scalability and pricing structure.

"Corporate Express wanted a robust automated invoice processing system that would clearly demonstrate a return on investment in the short term, but also offer scalability for future application and efficiencies over the long run," said Dillingham. "The Kofax solution has delivered on both counts."

The application has been implemented into numerous other areas of Corporate Express' business, including contract management, shipping and driver reports, and company building leases.

"Building a strong functionality with a broad suite of Kofax products really put the infrastructure in place, which enabled us to leverage the solution into various departments," said Morey. "By having the right tools and methodology in place from the initial accounts payable solution, we can better recognize areas for improvement and shorten the time frame for executing future applications."

Morey added that at any given time, Corporate Express is working on four to five new projects to roll out the solution to additional areas of the company.

For more detailed product information, visit us at: www.kofax.com, or call us today at: (949) 727-1733.