Rocket®software

Private U.S. University automates invoice processing with Rocket® Content Services (Mobius)

Accounts Payable department streamlines invoicing to reduce costs, improve service and reach compliance

Challenge

One of the United States' top 10 private Universities faced considerable challenges with its Accounts Payable (AP) Department. It was tasked with serving not only the core University, but also its sizable health system, including the School of Medicine, School of Nursing and three hospitals. Each month, the University generated 80,000 invoices—40 percent paper and 60 percent electronic data interchanges (EDIs). The AP Department had to process all paper invoices manually. This required keying them into the University's SAP system, searching through file cabinets with hundreds of thousands of invoices and then scanning and burning them onto CDs for long-term retention. Completing invoices took 10-14 days. With nearly one million invoices to process each year, the AP Department had to hire additional staff and still worked overtime and on weekends. In addition, the University had an extensive sponsored research program, which meant its grants, contracts and invoicing were subject to stringent federal compliance rules. To avoid fines, it required records management and discovery capabilities to produce an audit trail. In an increasingly paperless world, the school and its health system needed to cohesively transition the AP Department and its IT core to a more digital-friendly environment. It sought a solution that would integrate with the existing SAP ERP Financials system. By streamlining these processes, the University aimed to cut expenses in AP staffing, reduce time-consuming tasks and improve real-time visibility. The solution also needed to:

- Provide long-term storage and fast retrieval for compliance and discovery
- Offer superior document redaction to protect confidential information
- Reduce overhead costs associated with manually processing invoices

> With nearly **one million invoices to process** each year, the AP Department had to hire additional staff and still worked overtime and on weekends.

Solution

After evaluating several competing systems, the University selected Rocket® Content Services, which included industry-leading Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software along with Norikkon APay Center integration. The IT team launched a two phase implementation. In phase one, the team focused on implementing the core technologies and internal AP processes. In doing so, users were able to:

- Scan with OCR and verify paper invoices within 24 hours of receipt
- Redact the scan for sensitive information
- Store the invoice in the ASG Content Services repository to eliminate paper use
- Automatically extract critical invoice data from the document image
- Feed extracted data into the SAP system for immediate access for all financial personnel

In phase two, the University's IT team designed and implemented workflows in SAP that would automate processes for resolving invoice issues. Within these workflows:

- Rocket® Content Services captured the scanned invoice image and fed the extracted data to both APay and SAP
- APay then compared the extracted data and identified exceptions, triggering an automated workflow from SAP
- Finally, the University could look into the Mobius content repository and Norrikon APay dashboard for a real-time view of the status of each invoice

Seeing invoices through the SAP portal at any time was a major time saver for the University's financial community. Users were able to simply type the name of the vendor or invoice number into the SAP portal and the invoice appeared. When issues arose, AP personnel could send an email directly from SAP to the invoice owner with the invoice image attached. Responses with the attachments were stored in the Mobius repository, creating a complete record for every problem invoice. These records could be easily searched and retrieved through SAP via Mobius.

Mobius also solved the University's regulatory challenges by providing the needed audit trail and on-demand availability so users could quickly fulfill audit requests. By ensuring complete transparency into invoice management, the University was able to mitigate risk for their research grants and contracts.

Results

By implementing Rocket® Content Services, the University was able to transition its AP activity from keeping the lights on to delivering real value to the school and its health system. Automating processes enabled the AP Department to reduce staffing by 25 percent. As a result, the school reallocated its resources to support the University's mission of education, research and patient care.

Real-time visibility and access to information helped ensure compliance with federal regulations, allowing the University to pursue and win new research projects. New processes for paper invoices, also significantly reduced printing and storage costs in the AP and related customer departments. With optimized content management, the University was empowered to provide faster, more strategic service to its vendors and patrons-reinforcing its foothold as a world-class academic and health care system.

Business benefits

Automation

Reduced invoice backlog from 10-12 days to 1-2 days by automating processes for extracting critical data and resolving invoice issues.

Digital Access

Scanned and made all paper invoices available to internal clients within 24 hours of receipt.

Compliance

Reduced time-consuming audit requests by providing direct access to key data, which can be downloaded and emailed to auditors.

The future won't wait—modernize today.

Visit RocketSoftware.com ›

Book a demo