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Powerful Workflows

Optimized Incoming Invoice Processing



f.l.t.r. – Susanne Oppel-Burns (Managing Shareholder),
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Autohaus Oppel GmbH

Autohaus Oppel GmbH chose the powerful ECM solution *ELOprofessional* to digitize and automate their incoming invoice process. The combined use of a Web portal solution designed by the ELO business partner and the ELO DocXtractor classification module further introduced transparent processes and streamlined, optimized workflows. Employees can access the information they require with a single click of the mouse across company sites. Benefits for Autohaus Oppel include savings in terms of time, space, reduced costs, and maximum discount leverage throughout all sites.

Today's Oppel Group goes back more than 80 years. On 1 July 1928, the company was founded in the town of Ansbach by Walburga and Johann Oppel. Transport services using motor vehicles and subsequent expansion of the business to include trade with used vehicles form the foundation of the successful, long-established company.

The Solution

More Real-World Value



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Automated Invoice Receipt

Overview

Country: Germany
Industry: Automotive

The Company

Autohaus Oppel GmbH (Mercedes-Benz representative of Daimler AG) has several company sites throughout Germany. The service spectrum of Autohaus Oppel includes vehicle trade and repair services.

The Challenge

The automotive company wanted to optimize their processing workflows with a focus on incoming invoice processing. Manual receipt capture was to be replaced with reliable workflows throughout all departments and sites.

Solution

Use of **ELOprofessional**, **ELO DocXtractor** and the web-based incoming invoice processing solution of the ELO business partner in charge of the project. Now an average of 120 invoices (98%) are digitally processed each day in a largely automated manner throughout the company. The system can autonomously check, for example, whether invoices comply with the provisions of Section 14 of the German Turnover Tax Law.

Benefits

Processing time was significantly reduced, and the company can now benefit from the transparent auditability of its processes. Time-consuming posting via traditional mail has become entirely obsolete. Maximum leverage of discounts is guaranteed throughout all sites.

In addition to continuously expanding its truck fleet, Oppel started building up a truck repair shop business in the fifties, which, a decade later, also included repair services for other motor vehicles. Today the Oppel Group has sites in Ansbach, Heilsbronn, Aue, Ellefeld, and Plauen, and is a Mercedes-Benz partner for Chrysler, Dodge, and Jeep.

ECM Fuel for Processes

Owing to the high standard of quality and service maintained at Autohaus Oppel, the company introduced **ELOprofessional** ECM as early as 2007 at all sites. The next stage was to optimize the processing workflows of the accounting departments throughout the entire group. One of the goals was to completely do away with manual receipt archiving – not least to save precious space. For this reason, the management decided to further expand the **ELO** platform by adding complementing modules.

Smooth Workflows Across All Sites

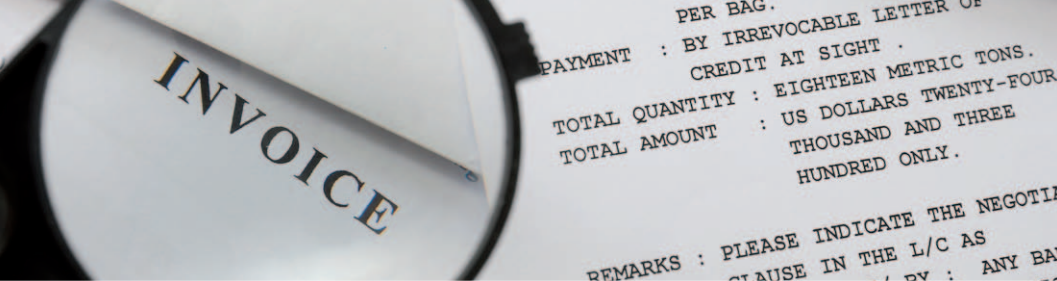
The first step was to draft a preliminary concept that precisely captured the incoming invoice processing needs of the automotive business. As a result, the company decided to use the incoming invoice portal solution offered by the **ELO business partner** in charge of the project. The solution, which had already been successfully used in several projects, ideally met the customer's requirements. At a later time, the decision was made to also introduce the **ELO DocXtractor** classification module for automatic incoming invoice capture. The portal solution was launched in July 2008.



Optimization and Introduction of the New Incoming Invoice Processing System

The portal module provides Autohaus Oppel with a workflow-based incoming invoice application that can check an average of 100 invoices per day. Right after introducing the solution, invoice data was still captured manually. After digitizing the invoice, the scanned document is displayed on the screen together with the fields required for manually capturing header and footer data. The captured data is then automatically passed on to the **ELO** archive. This is where all incoming invoices are archived in an audit-compliant format and are assigned read permissions.

Following data capture, the digitized invoices are delivered to the responsible employee, who compares them with the order data. The department head then performs a final check to confirm the invoice line items are correct. Next, the payments are allocated and distributed to the corresponding accounts and cost centers. After the department check, the invoice is forwarded to accounting (inspection unit) to ensure the assigned account is correct. After this final check, payment of the invoice is approved. Even at this early stage, the company benefits from more efficient processes and increased transparency.



In the long run, the processes are to be optimized even further. Says Commercial Director at Autohaus Oppel GmbH Sascha Dürreleder: "This useful consolidation not only results in beneficial synergies and significant cost savings, but it also means that we now have a central location within the company group that can provide competent information related to controlling and reporting for all sites. As far as process optimization is concerned, we are planning to fully process incoming invoices in the corresponding specialist department (e.g., service, sales, warehouse) in the near future, which will make the 'inspection unit' workflow stage obsolete."

Transfer to DATEV

After release, the portal module data is processed further to create a booking record for DATEV financial accounting. An interface file is used to import the records into DATEV on a daily basis. Sascha Dürreleder is excited: "After an introductory stage of about two months, the process has been fully implemented, and we are already achieving the goals we set ourselves regarding transparent accounting. Because of the present need to save both time and money, commercial issues are being increasingly discussed within the company, which has led to increased awareness among the workforce. Individual adjustments that were identified after several weeks of actual operation are promptly implemented, even though the introduction stage is already over. In its present state, we can recommend the software without any reservations."

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Sascha Dürreleder,
Commercial Director, Autohaus Oppel GmbH



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Shifting into High Gear

Further Automation Using ELO DocXtractor

In 2009, the **ELO DocXtractor** classification module was implemented as planned, introducing a new level of automation to the incoming invoice checking process. The module facilitates fully automatic processing of large volumes of receipts. **ELO DocXtractor** autonomously analyzes digital documents or scanned paper-based receipts and automatically extracts content required in downstream processes. In other words, thanks to intelligent information processing, the entire incoming invoice processing stage including downstream booking is performed in an automated manner in the Web portal. The system automatically extracts important receipt data such as invoice numbers, etc., and learns over time how to process different information. One key benefit is that manual entry of invoice data into the purchase ledger is no longer needed, resulting in extensive savings in terms of time and costs.

All in all, manual data capture or manual verification of proper detection and allocation of the captured fields for the approximately 1,600 suppliers has been reduced to a minimum. Automatic processing is performed for an average of 120 invoices each day and includes at least 98% of all invoices. In addition to processing domestic and international invoices, the system supports various VAT rates and languages. It also autonomously checks whether invoices comply with the provisions of Section 14 of the German Turnover Tax Law. The dramatic time savings gained by using the Web portal solution in combination with **ELO DocXtractor** ensure a rapid return on investment.



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Synergies and Cost Savings

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Benefits Galore

At present, more than 100 workstations benefit from the new incoming invoice processing solution and the ELO archive. The accounting processing workflows have become much more efficient. Processing times have been drastically reduced, and users can see at a glance who processed which invoice at what stage. Time-consuming posting via traditional mail has become entirely obsolete. Thanks to rapid processing, valuable discounts for fast payments are ensured across the entire group. An option for storing discount conditions of every single supplier and reconciliation with invoice data allow the company to reliably gain discounts. The reporting functions of the portal module allow for any invoice details to be presented to managers and accountants in various views.