



Thales Avionics is automating supplier invoice handling with the EMC Captiva solution

Aircraft Industry

THALES

Key figures

#1 in Europe
#3 in the world
Turnover of 2.1 billion Euros
Staff of 12,900 in eight countries
R&D spending amounts to 17% of sales

Solutions

A solution for handling supplier invoices that combines document dematerialisation (Intelligent Document Recognition, automatic data extraction), accounting workflow (reconciling, validating and booking) as well as integration into the ERP system (SAP).

Volume

150,000 supplier invoices every year, a total of more than 300,000 pages.

Configuration

An application server
A server for storing images of current invoices
A Canon 6080 scanner
Storage and viewing supported by a proprietary ECM system

Challenges

A leading supplier of electronic solutions for civil and military aviation applications, the Avionics Division of Thales has become a key partner for the world's airframe makers. The company is a dominant force in the development and production of guidance and navigation equipment for aerospace programs (Airbus), defence programs (guidance, navigation and missile control), as well as for military and civilian fleets.

Approximately 1,000 suppliers send invoices to the Avionics Division of Thales. More than 12,000 invoices are received every month, accompanied by the various accounting information and appendices. The challenge was threefold. Initially, Thales sought a solution that would ensure the traceability of its invoice flow, from receipt at the mail desk to archival. Productivity gains were also sought where retiring staff, who had previously conducted labour intensive tasks, were not replaced. Finally, following the implementation of SAP R/3, Thales looked to facilitate full integration of its accounting workflow into its new ERP system.

The goal is an ambitious one - to automate more than 80% of supplier invoice processing. By automating data entry and checking, reducing the need to handle paper, Thales also sought to expand the circulation and handling of its scanned invoices together with an electronic accounting validation workflow. The challenge being to implement a single platform, able to manage all of the documentation dataflow automatically.

Solution

Thales Avionics' supplier invoices are dematerialised in an SAP environment, based on the use of the EMC Captiva invoice solution. Thanks to the partnership between EMC Captiva and BasWare, an accounting workflow software vendor, Thales has the benefit of an integrated, automated processing and accounts management platform. The platform handles all of the processing and management steps involved, from scanning (using a Canon 6080 scanner) to viewing, and including recognition, automatic data extraction, booking and accounting validation prior to payment and archival.

The EMC Captiva solution is based on the company's Dispatcher module applying innovative Intelligent Document Recognition (IDR) technology. Dispatcher is based on a combination of three document analyses, a graphic and a syntax analysis, as well as an exclusive character string comparison analysis.

Benefits

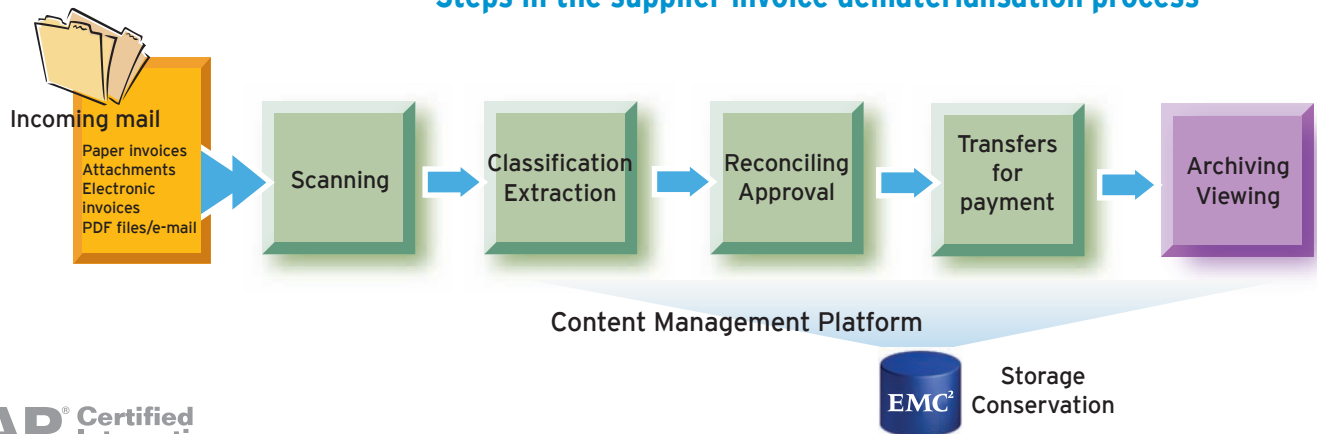
- Significantly increased productivity from automating data entry tasks and performing checks only on invoices rejected by the system
- Same day, or at most 48 hour invoice handling
- Simplified archival
- Considerable reduction in search and retrieval times
- A reduction or, in some cases, elimination of labour intensive manual tasks (data entry, photocopying, stamping, internal mail, etc.)
- Improved quality of service thanks to upstream checks, ensuring the reliability of the data integrated into



SAP R/3 in real-time

- Cash flow benefits (faster VAT refunds)
- All invoices are sent for signing by e-mail or workflow
- Electronic archival of invoice scans (accessible via ECM)
- Improved dispute handling thanks to enhanced traceability
- Improved overall supplier follow-up and an improved invoice handling process

Steps in the supplier invoice dematerialisation process



SAP Certified
Integration

Customer Testimonial

Interview of Jean-Noël Decraene, Projects Director, Thales Avionics

What were the reasons that led you to choose the EMC Captiva solution?

From a functional point of view, we were looking for a single solution able to handle the entire documentation flow, from scanning right up to archival and viewing, something that the EMC Captiva solution provided us with. In addition, the capability to support our project throughout implementation on to follow up turned out to be an essential element in our choice. We also appreciated the high level of reactivity to our needs on the part of the teams and their true commitment.

What conclusions do you draw from automated invoice handling?

The results are rather positive, even if we still have areas that we can improve.

In-house, the EMC Captiva solution has been adopted by all staff members. The organisational approach is essential in such a project. We took the time to properly inform staff of the on-going and future changes. Lastly, the true commitment on the part of the teams at EMC Captiva yielded quality training for flexible adaptation to the application.

What is very important now for management in the Accounts department is that there are no longer any invoices left in a drawer, now they are all in the system!

How do you see the future?

We have now achieved 60% invoice automation with a target of 80% in time. To further improve this level, we would like to extend our use of Dispatcher to achieve its syntax analysis capability. We are also considering a possible deployment of the invoice solution to cover the entire Group, or even the creation of a processing centre with access to data from all subsidiaries.

EMC² | captiva

EMC Captiva
EMC Tower, Great West Road, Brentford,
TW8 9AN
Tel: +44 (0)870 608 7777

www.emc.com/captiva

EMC² and Captiva are registered trademarks
and b-Wise Invoices is a trademark of
EMC Corporation.

All other trademarks used herein are the property
of their respective owners.

© Copyright 2007 EMC Corporation.
All rights reserved.