

## Nova Southeastern University

### Tech-Savvy Nova Southeastern University Streamlines Payments with Bottomline's PayBase Solution

#### Quick Facts

*Platform*  
PayBase

*Modules*  
Laser Check Printing  
Electronic Payments  
Electronic Remittance Delivery  
Check Fraud Avoidance

*Industry*  
Higher Education



***"Bottomline's PayBase was especially attractive because it offered a full range of features that could add efficiency and provide substantial savings to the university. What's more, it didn't lock the university into using specific check stock or other paper products, which would have ended a long-standing relationship with our reliable local vendor, who can get checks to us overnight, if necessary."***

- Kavet Walters, Assistant Manager of Accounts Payable

#### **Single solution provides paper checks and direct deposit with e-mail notification of remittance advice to save time, resources, and money for busy accounts payable department**

Headquartered in Ft. Lauderdale, Florida, Nova Southeastern University (NSU) comprises four campuses in South Florida, and offers degree, non-degree, and certificate programs to 31,000 full and part-time students at more than 150 national and international sites. Undergraduate courses of study include education, business, health, science, and nursing. The university also offers a wide variety of graduate studies in fields such as business; computer and information sciences; social sciences; law; marine and environmental sciences; and public health and medical sciences. NSU operates field-based programs in 27 cities throughout Florida, in 24 states, and in the Bahamas, Canada, China, Dominican Republic, Greece, Israel, Jamaica, Panama, Puerto Rico, and Venezuela.

Responsibility for processing all of the university's check requests, purchase orders, travel and expense payments, vendor payments and student refunds rests on NSU's Accounts Payable office, located at its main campus in Ft. Lauderdale. Over the past fiscal year, the school counted many hundreds of active vendors in its database. The volume of student refund checks issued is cyclical, coinciding with the school calendar. On average, the office processes 300 to 400 checks daily, but in peak times it can range from 500 to 600 daily.

#### **Early Adopter of Electronic Payments Seeks to Retain High Level of Service and Payables Options**

Long a technology innovator, NSU had implemented electronic payments in 1996 using Automated Clearing House (ACH) within an internally-developed Information Technology (IT) system, which made direct deposit available to anyone with a university e-mail address. When NSU contemplated a migration from Systems & Computer Technology Corporation's (SCT) Financial Records System (FRS) to SCT Banner® software to manage student information, human resources, financial aid and finance, the university began a thorough evaluation of compatible payment solutions that would maintain or exceed its current capabilities to support direct deposit.



NSU's Assistant Manager of Accounts Payable, Kavet Walters, says, "Although the university will always be saddled with outputting a certain volume of paper checks, we wanted to eliminate as much paper as possible, increase efficiency and security, and reduce resource and processing expenses. We like the simplicity, economics, and security of e-mail notification. Our students appreciate the speed and convenience of direct-deposit refunds, which gives them immediate access to their money, instead of waiting to receive a check in the mail, then depositing and waiting again for it to clear before the funds are available. We required a solution that would enable us to continue using ACH and provide electronic remittance advice."

Of the solutions evaluated, only Bottomline Technologies offered the ability to print checks as well as format payments for direct deposit with e-mail and fax notification of the remittance advice. Walters says, "Bottomline's PayBase® was especially attractive because it offered a full range of features that could add efficiency and provide substantial savings to the university. What's more, it didn't lock the university into using specific check stock or other paper products, which would have ended a long-standing relationship with our reliable local vendor, who can get checks to us overnight, if necessary."

### Thorough Preparation Leads to Smooth Implementation

NSU thoroughly investigated solutions far in advance of the project, and after selecting Bottomline, was equally methodical in preparing for its simultaneous implementation of the Bottomline PayBase and a new computer system. Throughout the implementation process, Bottomline worked closely with the university for several months of testing and fine-tuning, including ongoing testing of the MICR toner line. This was

*"We could clearly see the return-on-investment potential from implementing PayBase. One example is the beauty of Bottomline's Electronic Remittance Delivery system, which frees us from having to mail paper pay stubs to confirm electronic deposits. With numerous payments issued via direct deposit every day, over the course of a year it delivers savings of time, money, and resources."*

- Kavet Walters, Assistant Manager of Accounts Payable

the largest hurdle that NSU had to overcome with its bank prior to simultaneously going live with PayBase and SCT's Banner system on the first day of the university's fiscal year.

"Bottomline trained five staff members in the Accounts Payable Department on PayBase, and had NSU ready for its first multi-output check run, simultaneously producing print and electronic payments without interruption to the fiscal year-end schedule," Walters notes. "Bottomline worked closely with our staff over the first weeks to make sure that everyone was comfortable with the system and that the interface between PayBase and the new computer system was working smoothly. As a result, we felt very safe and confident with Bottomline and the PayBase system."




### PayBase Streamlines Check Output, Frees Up Internal Resources

Implementing Bottomline enabled the university to relocate the check printing process from its Office of Information Technology into the Accounts Payable department. The move freed up technology resources and gave the Accounts Payable department more control over the output process. Now, PayBase makes issuing payments a single, simple process, either by direct deposit or laser/MICR output on blank check stock embossed with the university's logo. All checks are processed within 48 hours of receiving payment requests.

Bottomline's 'superlauncher' capability enables the user to simplify the sequential initiation of scripted activities, such as pulling the right file from the network, processing it, producing checks and overflow according to our requirements, building a positive pay file, and automatically sending it off to our bank. By programming these activities into 'superlauncher' buttons, users can automate the entire process so that the end user doesn't have to know how the system works or what activities need to be done. Walters stated, "Once we've downloaded all Accounts Payable data from SCT's Banner system, we hit three little 'superlaunchers' to run and process our payments - and it only takes approximately twenty minutes."

PayBase sorts the checks based on pre-set rules, first printing the checks above a set amount that require two hand signatures, then printing Z-fold checks and normal reimbursements. "Bottomline streamlines the check output process," notes Walters. "PayBase prints chronological check numbers coinciding with the rules-based print run, so it knows that if the first five payments were ACH, payment six would be the first paper check output."



PayBase automatically sends e-mail or fax notifications to those signed up for direct deposit, so the university circumvents all manual tasks, as well as paper and postage expenses typically associated with supporting the direct deposit function. Walters notes, "By implementing

Bottomline's PayBase with the Electronic Remittance Delivery function, we gained both e-mail and fax-back notification capabilities, so that we could put our vendors on direct deposit as well. Bottomline's direct deposit with fax-back notification capability would enable the university to process student refund checks and vendor payments faster, while eliminating the expense of processing and mailing the paper stubs."

Walters continues, "We could clearly see the return-on-investment potential from implementing PayBase. One example is the beauty of Bottomline's Electronic Remittance Delivery system, which frees us from having to mail paper pay stubs to confirm electronic deposits. With numerous payments issued via direct deposit every day, over the course of a year it delivers savings of time, money, and resources."

#### **Check Fraud Avoidance Adds Security and Savings**

Once the checks are processed, PayBase automatically transmits the Check Fraud Avoidance (CFA) file to the University's bank, providing a complete record of the check numbers and amounts. "If a check gets presented with an amount that doesn't agree with the CFA file, the bank immediately calls us," says Walters. "Prior to implementing Bottomline's PayBase solution, the university hadn't used CFA, so when fraudulent checks were honored, we didn't find out until it was too late."

An added benefit of implementing Bottomline's CFA solution, notes Walters, is a reduction in the number of stop payments processed. "Before, we would process anywhere between three to five stop payments a day at \$15 to \$20 per item. Now, with the PayBase system, we barely have to issue one per week on the vendor payments and reimbursements." That reduction, in conjunction with incorporating certain bank products, such as corporate Visa and purchasing cards, enabled the bank to waive stop payment fees, resulting in further savings for the university.

#### **A Higher Level of Service**

By providing the university with the ability to output paper and electronic checks, backed by PayBase's e-mail and fax remittance notification capability, Bottomline has helped the university reduce paper output, and increase efficiency and security, while lowering its resource and processing expenses. "Bottomline's PayBase has helped NSU's Accounts Payable department provide a high level of service to the university community and our vendors," says Walters. "With the increased efficiency and resulting savings, it has been a win-win solution for all."





**Bottomline**  
*Technologies*

**Corporate Headquarters**

325 Corporate Drive  
Portsmouth, NH 03801 USA  
tel 1.800.472.1321, +1.603.436.0700  
fax + 1.603.436.0300  
email [info@bottomline.com](mailto:info@bottomline.com)

**Europe, Middle East, Africa**

115 Chatham Street  
Reading, Berkshire RG17JX UK  
tel +44.118.925.8250  
fax +44.870.081.8280  
email [info@bottomline.co.uk](mailto:info@bottomline.co.uk)

[www.bottomline.com](http://www.bottomline.com)