



Guild Group

Servicing pharmacists across Australia, Guild Group manages thousands of invoices every year. Recently Guild Group partnered with Bottomline to transform the business' accounts payable processes in Microsoft D365, achieving new levels of efficiency, visibility and control.



The Challenge

As a large-scale financial services firm servicing pharmacies across Australia, Guild manages an enormous volume of paperwork – receiving up to 6,000 invoices a year that need to be collated, analysed, processed and stored. “Financial document management is the backbone of what we do,” says Michael Bulanan, Guild Group Senior Business Analyst.

Previously, an accounts payable team was responsible for receiving invoices by mail or email, then processing them manually, consuming hundreds of hours of staff time. Even when the company moved their accounting systems online, accounts payable management remained a time-consuming process that involved scanning and uploading documents one by one.

“There was a lot of manual intervention,” Bulanan, says. “We had an incoming paper trail that needed to be coded into the system. And one of the key issues was the documents would get lost in that process.”

Managing a constant flow of documents slowed down payment approval and processing cycles, while increasing the risk of human error and making accurate expense management an ongoing challenge. “Given the manual storage, some people would hold onto those documents for some time. We would lose track of workflow and get incorrect results,” Bulanan says.

The Solution

Bottomline Invoice Automation for Dynamics 365 (D365) enables accounts payable departments to digitise and automate the entire invoicing life cycle – from receiving invoices, through to data capture, matching, coding and approvals. Part of Bottomline's 360-degree financial document automation solution, it has helped Guild achieve new levels of accuracy and visibility in accounts payable, while eliminating time-consuming paper-based processes.



Company Profile

- Guild Group is a one-stop shop for insurance, superannuation and financing solutions tailored specifically to the needs of pharmacists. Owned by the Pharmacy Guild of Australia, Guild Group has been providing quality financial services to Australian pharmacists for almost 40 years.
- Guild Group is comprised of eight companies and nine offices around Australia, servicing a wide range of clients, from small chemist stores to large national franchises.
- Part of Bottomline's 360-degree financial document automation solution for D365 F&O, Invoice Automation has helped Guild Group eliminate manual handling, slash invoice processing times, and increase visibility and control over essential expense management data.

"The difference between the way we did things before and what we do now is like night and day," Bulanan says. "Rather than us sending invoices, printing and scanning them, we have a solution that is entirely digital, which is both much more convenient and much faster." By storing all documents in a centralised, cloud-based repository, Invoice Automation gives the entire team full visibility of essential financial documentation, empowering efficiency and collaboration.

Bulanen explains, "One of the biggest pluses for us is that it makes it easier to store our documents online where the relevant people can access them – including reviewers and approvers who need to make decisions."

Importantly, Bottomline also gives the company control over how and where their data is stored. "As an Australian company, we didn't want our information to go outside of the country. The solution's architecture design gives us the flexibility to save our data in our own cloud environment," Bulanan says. Invoice processing time was significantly reduced, freeing Guild's accountants to control expenses, not shuffle paperwork.



The positive impacts of these efficiency gains are being felt right across the business, from tighter control of company cash flow to faster decision making.

The Results

By eliminating paper invoices and manual processes, Invoice Automation for D365 simplifies and streamlines administration, freeing up the accounts payable team to focus on higher-value, customer-facing activities.

"Our aim has always been to have our accountants doing accounting, rather than dealing with paperwork," Bulanan says. With more defined workflows, the company has achieved a major reduction in the invoicing cycle. Where an invoice would previously take 35–37 minutes to process, the team has reduced processing times to around 11 minutes – all thanks to the greater efficiency and visibility that the software delivers.

Bulanen says, "We're able to track each document from invoicing to approval, making sure that it reaches the right people and they review it on time. Now, rather than have a central team do everything, the responsibility is distributed throughout the company."

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"We're able to actually recognise and plot our expenses, which is a fundamental accounting principle," Bulanan says. "And because we've consolidated our invoices and approvals, decision making has become much easier."

Given their success in using Invoice Automation for D365 to power their back-end processes, the Guild team has their sights set on a rollout of purchase order processing software to compound the benefits of automation.

Bulanen says, "Every time an invoice comes through, it will automatically get checked against a purchase order, giving us full control over the entire process. It will reduce our invoice processing times even further to around five or six minutes. That's basically the pinnacle of efficiency."



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