

CASE STUDY

Giving Manual Processes a Digital Makeover

AVON

How Avon dramatically reduced staffing and operational expenses.

Avon is the world's leading direct seller of beauty and related products, with \$6.8 billion in annual revenues in 2003. Avon markets to women around the world through 4.4 million independent sales Representatives.

Avon's procedure for approving and paying invoices was labor intensive and lacked automation. Their manual approval process often resulted in delays in receiving invoices, wasted time tracking down paper-based invoices and inefficiency in trying to decipher handwritten approval signatures. Domestic accounts

payable functions, centralized in Avon's Rye, New York location, housed over 30 staff members who performed a variety of functions related to invoice processing, data entry, payment and vendor support. Recognizing that the front-end processes were not up to industry best practice standards, Avon sought out improved technology to better streamline their process. What they found was Access and its advancing technology solutions.

The Solution

After conducting a comprehensive technology investigation and evaluation, Avon selected Access and its Web-based, hosted document imaging service, combined with their advanced workflow automation solution. Access' roll-out of a fully customized workflow initiative enables organizations to maintain tighter control of the approval and payable process while providing significant time and cost savings.

Today, Avon directs its vendors to remit all invoices to a central post office box location, which is received by Access. Each day, Access's staff preps, scans and indexes all invoices capturing key data elements such as the Avon point of contact, vendor name, invoice number, invoice date, dollar amount and purchase order number. The Access service routinely issues an automated e-mail notification to each approver informing that person that there is an invoice in the system awaiting review. The point of contact then has several action options including approval, routing to another approver, declining or pending for later approval. Approved invoices are then routed to either a higher approval level or to Accounts Payable where a final review is performed. Through constant data transfer, the electronic invoice moves seamlessly through Avon's internal approval system. All invoice data is then imported into Avon's payable software database and payments are scheduled accordingly.

The Web-based imaging and workflow component provides Avon with comprehensive reporting and management tools that enable Avon to maintain tighter control over the entire payable process from invoice

receipt and approver responsiveness through processor productivity and payment. Additionally, Avon's vendors are now provided secure Web-based access to their invoices and payment data online, reducing the need to provide phone-based vendor support. According to Rob DeVincent, Senior Manager in Avon's Shared Services Center, DeVincent, "Access has enabled us to work on business initiative transformations that will bring us closer to our goal of becoming a world class Shared Services Center."

Benefits

By image-enabling Avon's accounts payable documents, Access facilitates real-time customer service. By migrating to the Access DPO Web-based document imaging service Avon realized immediate and ongoing cost savings through staff reduction, time savings and operational expense reduction.



"Other providers of document management services just could not provide the workflow solution we were looking for," said Rob DeVincent, Senior Manager in Avon's Shared Services Center. "Access was able to implement their hosted solution immediately which provided the additional functionality we needed to operate more effectively and efficiently."

About FileBRIDGE

From storage and document handling to on-demand digital file delivery with our FileBRIDGE platform, we offer the services and solutions that enable you to cross the bridge to less paper.

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