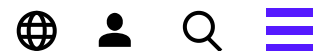ABBYY Expert Talks: Raise your Digital Intelligence

ABBYY

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PepsiCo automates invoice processing with ABBYY FlexiCapture

Food and Beverage | Accounts Payable

Customer Overview   Partner Overview

PepsiCo Imaging Technology

Harrison, New York, USA

Food and Beverage

www.pepsico.com

Criteria First, Inc.

Carrollton, TX, USA

Value-added Reseller

www.criteriafirst.com

CHALLENGE

Slow and error-prone manual invoice processing

SOLUTION

ABBYY FlexiCapture

RESULTS

Lower error rates, reduced processing times, AP staff work far more efficiently

PepsiCo Imaging Technology creates document imaging and management solutions for PepsiCo's worldwide network of business entities. However, the company's four largest European entities were still keying invoice and credit memo data into SAP manually – a labor-intensive process that was time-consuming and error-prone. To alleviate this, PepsiCo sought to automate the entities' AP processes – which Imaging Technology achieved with help from ABBYY FlexiCapture.

"Manual data entry created big inefficiencies," said Jignesh Patel, Sr. Imaging Dept. Manager at PepsiCo Imaging Technology.

SEE HOW ABBYY CAN HELP

over **21,000**
documents for processing

40,000 pages
in a mix of 5 languages

a **3**-month
project for testing a heavy workload

Challenge: Taming a world of paperwork for a world-leading

brand

The PepsiCo family of brands are trusted by households in over 200 countries and enjoyed by millions of people every day. And to help its dozens of regional business entities manage their documentation, PepsiCo created its Imaging Technology department in 1989.

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"This was a forward-looking move. We've been creating custom imaging and content management solutions, well in advance of other companies, for 20 years."

Jordan Clevenger, Project Manager, PepsiCo

Imaging Technology's successes led PepsiCo to engage it in an ambitious project. Code-named "POWER," it would automate Accounts Payable processing for two entities in France, one in Belgium and another in the Netherlands. "All were manual," says Jignesh Patel, Sr. Imaging Dept. Manager of Imaging Technology. "Belgium did basic image capture, but no data capture." As a result, data had to be keyed into PepsiCo's SAP system, with all the drawbacks of slow, costly, and error-prone manual entry.

Have a task? Let's find a solution

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Solution: Seeking a single solution for multiple countries and languages

Patel and his team were tasked with creating an automated capture solution ==capable of supporting multiple languages, multiple currencies, large-volume batch processing and complex data fields==. Along with vendor and customers' names, value added tax (VAT) information had to be captured for both customers and vendors, too – as well as purchase orders, invoice amounts and line items.

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"Manually entering this data created big inefficiencies. Our mandate was to streamline this process so each entity could capture and verify invoice information for export into PepsiCo's ERP system – which also meant the product would require full SAP integration. Fortunately we had gained expertise in all this from an earlier project, where we became acquainted with a solution for automating form capture: ABBYY FlexiCapture."

Jignesh Patel, Sr. Imaging Dept. Manager at PepsiCo Imaging Technology

Previously, Patel's team helped PepsiCo's Russian office with its AP workflow – a complex process involving multiple document types, business processes and languages. "Their documents were not pure invoices," recalls Patel. "Other processes were involved, and we had to work in Cyrillic. They recommended FlexiCapture, so we used it to work with our in-house data repository and workflow solution, Image Vision – which converts captured data to XML then sends it to our SAP backend. FlexiCapture integrated smoothly and worked well right from the start."

To help expedite the POWER Project, PepsiCo leveraged the expertise of Criteria First – an ABBYY partner who helped Imaging Technology with PepsiCo's Russian project. "We did the exploratory work in handling the multiple languages, currencies, and VAT's," explains Russell Kent, Solutions Developer with Criteria First. "For the POWER Project, we configured the software to do the same for France, Belgium, the Netherlands as well as a few German, Italian and Swiss entities – what's known as the PepsiCo Western European Region."

Patel says that Criteria First's initial goal was to create a test pilot for each of the major entities to review. "We wanted to ensure satisfaction from both the standpoint of users and leadership," explains Patel. "And having tested the new solution, they all agreed that it really would reduce their workload."

Once fully implemented, the accounts payable workflow became straightforward, automatic and highly cost effective. The solution is hosted at PepsiCo's North Texas data facility and accessed remotely via the web. This enables the cost of the system to be shared between the business entities and greater consistency in PepsiCo's AP procedures.

The process begins when paper invoices in any of five languages are scanned locally by each of the entities via ABBYY Scan Station. They are then sent into POWER Project, identified with the correct entity, and recognized by FlexiCapture. From there, the new digital documents and data are sent to verification stations – and once verified, forwarded PepsiCo's Image Vision for approval. After that, the data is exported in XML file format to PepsiCo's SAP ERP solution.

Results

Patel describes the new solution as saving time from the start. And he says that FlexiCapture's accuracy means verification time is minimal. "Of course, we do manually verify each index. But this really amounts to correcting the odd character or so. It doesn't take a lot of time – the solution is working extremely accurately."

FlexiCapture's accuracy is also proving stable under a heavy workload. In its first three months the POWER Project solution has processed two thousand batches, over 21,000 documents and nearly 40,000 pages without issues – in a mix of five languages. And it's just the beginning, according to Kent: "This tells us the solution can scale to handle virtually any workload. Since implementation, I have received near-zero questions from PepsiCo. It's going splendidly."

Jignesh Patel concurs: "From an ABBYY perspective, there hasn't been anything that gets me involved. Which tells me we're doing really well. It's running smoothly."

According to Patel, the Imaging Technology team is working on new ways to leverage FlexiCapture. "We are now engaged in creating an AP solution for the entire globe. It will be a common process that will bring the same benefits to everywhere PepsiCo has accounts payable activities. And it's going to integrate ABBYY."

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> "Users and management are very happy. We have cut down processing times significantly for them."
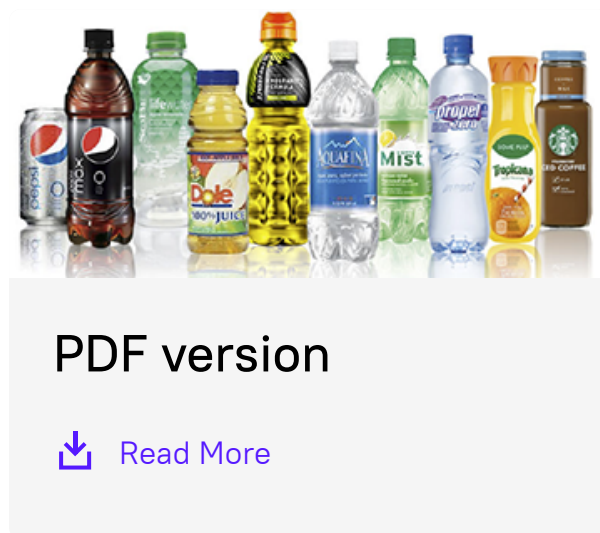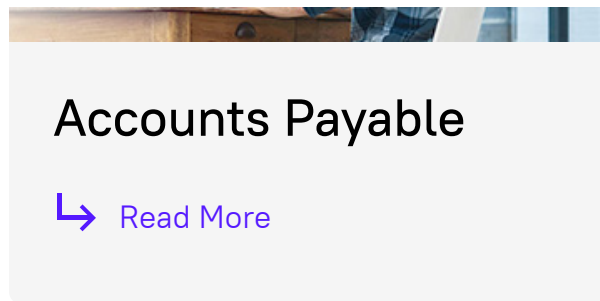>
> Jignesh Patel, Sr.Imaging Dept. Manager at PepsiCo Imaging Technology
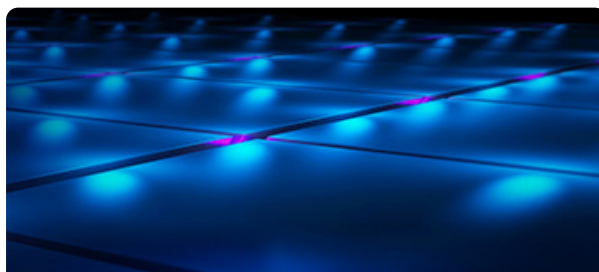
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