PepsiCo Automates Invoice Processing with ABBYY Document AI

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 the Imaging Technology team achieved with help from ABBYY Document AI.

Challenge

Taming a world of paperwork for a world-leading brand

PepsiCo products are enjoyed by consumers more than one billion times a day in more than 200 countries and territories around the world. And to help its dozens of regional business entities manage their documentation, PepsiCo created its Imaging Technology department in 1989. "This was a forward-looking move," says Jordan Clevenger, Project Manager, PepsiCo. "We've been creating custom imaging and content management solutions, well in advance of other companies, for 20 years."

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.

CHALLENGE

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.

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

"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."

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 ABBYY, 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. ABBYY's Document AI solution integrated smoothly and worked well right from the start."

Moving to automated AP with ABBYY Document AI

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, and 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 ABBYY Document AI. From there, the new digital documents and data are sent to verification—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.

Value

Patel describes the new solution as saving time from the start. And he says that the technology's accuracy means verification time is minimal.

ABBYY'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. 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."

> "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.

> "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,**
> **Sr. Imaging Dept. Manager,**
> **PepsiCo Imaging Technology**

According to Patel, the Imaging Technology team is working on new ways to leverage ABBYY Document AI. "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."

21,000
AP documents

5
languages

Extremely
accurate results

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