



Case Study: CIBA Vision



Customer Overview:

CIBA Vision is a global leader in the research, development and manufacturing of contact lenses and lens care products. Headquartered in Atlanta, Georgia, CIBA Vision provides solutions that fit the lifestyles, preferences and needs of people in more than 70 countries around the world.

As the eye care unit of Novartis AG (NYSE: NVS), CIBA Vision benefits from the strengths and resources of one of the largest healthcare companies in the world. Novartis is a world leader in healthcare, with core businesses in pharmaceuticals, consumer health, pediatrics, eye care and animal health.

CIBA Vision Leverages Process360 to Improve Their Imaging and Workflow Initiatives

Challenges

A recent Accounts Payable (AP) Operations Survey found that three of the top five goals were to implement an imaging system, implement workflow, and integrate imaging with the existing AP data entry system. CIBA Vision was centralizing operations from an acquisition that circulated paper invoices through interoffice mail for approval. With the impending increase in transactions, they chose to implement imaging and workflow to address their routing, follow-up and access issues as they had already accomplished using Global 360 solutions in their current operations.

CIBA Vision provides centralized AP support to company operations in Georgia, Illinois and most recently Sweden. Prior to using Global 360 solutions, invoices were taking five to ten days to begin the vouchering process. Invoices requiring cost center approval took even longer, resulting in lost discounts and sometimes lost invoices.

At month and year-end, request turnaround declined further as AP tried to manage incoming work and respond to the spike in requests from cost center financial analysts. Preparing accounting accruals from received but unprocessed invoices was a manual, time intensive process. Cost centers were dissatisfied with response times and AP did not have satisfactory tools to manage their business. They also found it difficult to improve invoice turnaround and meet periodic spikes in demand at the same time, resulting in one or the other suffering. In addition, they did not have a user-friendly method for tracking document volume and status.

Solution

Having implemented Global 360 in other areas of the business, such as procurement and customer service for scanning/imaging, CIBA Vision realized its potential to address their AP issues. CIBA Vision's Global 360 design leveraged SAP functionality as well as an e-mail approval function, an online signature authorization database for appropriate accounting control, and an automated tickler file for invoices pending approval.

Today, an entry point into the workflow occurs when A/P receives vendor invoices from the mail room. A coordinator scans invoices into Global 360 and then an SAP user indexes the image by vendor name and sets a priority flag. Documents are automatically routed to the appropriate AP Administrator's worklist. The Administrator works the invoice from a split screen with the Global 360 image on one side and the SAP purchase order transaction on the other. The AP clerk clicks a button to screen scrape attributes from SAP to Global 360. If the invoice is consistent with the PO and does not require additional approval, the Forward button routes the vouchered invoice to archive. If the invoice cannot be vouchered, the AP Administrator selects the appropriate entry from a reason list and the Hold action.

Challenges

Centralizing operations from an acquisition that circulated paper invoices through interoffice mail for approval, CIBA Vision needed an imaging and workflow solution to improve invoice processing cycle times, eliminate lost invoices and request backlogs, and improve access to processed invoices.

Solution

CIBA Vision deployed Global 360 solutions to integrate with their SAP/AP systems to improve overall cycle times for AP invoice processing and provide visibility and control to AP administrators.

Results

CIBA Vision increased their AP invoice processing by 37%, improved document turnaround from 5 days to less than 24 hours, and is now able to process 6,000 to 8,000 vouchers per month and provide 300 users with self-service for their inquiry requests.



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If approval is required, SAP generates an approval e-mail based on cost center signing authority. The approver may also view the original invoice using a Global 360 web application.

In addition, PBT's (Precision Business Technologies) development of the Global 360 web browser allows you to search for vouchered invoices using one or more attributes to help narrow the search results.

Results

When CIBA Vision's AP transaction volume increased by 37 percent, only one additional position was added. With operations centralized in Georgia, AP used workflow to efficiently manage document routing to the Illinois facility. Document turnaround improved from 5 days to less than 24 hours. Today, 7 AP Administrators process 6,000 to 8,000 vouchers per month and 300 users self-service their requests for inquiry.

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CIBA Vision's workflow implementation eliminated the manual processes limiting productivity and gave AP Administrator's a measure of control over invoice processing. Management now has access to the data they need to make informed resource decisions. Work volumes can be compared to staffing levels and resources redirected as necessary to meet business objectives and key performance indicators. The system also facilitates CIBA Vision's continuous process improvement goals. For CIBA Vision, SAP/AP/Global 360 integration has resulted in benefits to vendors, internal customers, AP and the bottom line.

CIBA Vision considers their SAP/AP/Global 360 project one of their recent successes.