

INVU:
VERIFY



THE INN COLLECTION
GROUP



Multi-entity automated Accounts Payable for Sage 200

After acquiring new inns to the business, Inn Collection Group were beginning to struggle to identify centrally which entity each paper invoice related to. They decided to automate the process using Invu Verify, saving the Finance Team time and effort.

Introduction



The Inn Collection Group operate boutique inns, pubs that offer accommodation, across the North of England. During 2020 the group acquired 8 properties across the North of England with more planned in 2021.

This rapid scaling up of the business has created a complex corporate structure as well as adding the organic transaction volume increase associated with business growth. To scale the business, they recognised the need to put in place the infrastructure that can cope with increasing growth. For the Accounts Payable process, they recognised the need to implement a system that automates, streamlines and digitizes the process.

As a Sage 200 user, they reviewed relevant Accounts Payable automation providers and chose Innu Verify because it addressed their multi-entity issues and dealt with growth in distributed approvals and the number of supplier invoice transactions.

“The system has been well received by the Senior Managers with no resistance.” - Jeremy Barber, Purchase Ledger Administrator

Multi-Entities working with Sage 200

Each of their inns operate as separate business entities with their own Sage 200 purchase ledgers. All supplier invoices for each inn are sent to one central location. Identifying centrally which inn each invoice relates to is important. One of Inn Collection Group's main requirements was therefore to find an automated Accounts Payable solution that seamlessly handled multiple business entities and integrated directly with Sage 200.

Invoices are received for multiple items and new stock is purchased from new suppliers all the time. Most inns have the same suppliers; however each site may have local suppliers as well. With this in mind, it was also important that adding new suppliers to the system was a quick and easy process.

This was achieved by implementing Invu Verify.

Jeremy Barber, Purchase Ledger Administrator explained that, **“Adding new suppliers and adding new companies to Invu Verify is seamless. I know that if I add a new supplier on Sage 200 today, it will already be sitting on Invu Verify by tomorrow.”**

Inn Collection Group used their Sage partner OneSys to help with the project. OneSys recommended that they review four different systems; one of which was Invu Verify.

The simplicity and modern look and feel of the software were also key elements in the selection of Invu Verify.

Knowing that Invu had knowledge and experience of providing Sage 200 solutions was important in giving Inn Collection Group the confidence to choose Invu Verify as the solution to move forward with.

Barber also found the implementation process simple, stating that it **“Was not without its challenges but the Invu Team were very keen to resolve these issues as soon as possible, which is commendable considering it was during a pandemic.”**

Ultimately, he identified the way that Invu Verify deals with multi-entities as critical to the decision of which solution provider to choose.

All supplier invoices for each entity are now emailed to one central email address, and the key invoice details and correct entity are automatically identified and captured by Invu Verify.

He noted that some of the competitors required each entity to have a separate email address which was not manageable going forward, as Barber found: **“This could cause confusion for suppliers and risked invoices being sent to the wrong email address.”**

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A Fully Automated Process



“I know we will get greater gains of efficiency and control using Invu Verify in the future.”

For the staff in the Accounts Payable function, the work now starts once Invu Verify captures the supplier invoices.

Each site notifies the Finance Team that the goods ordered have been received. The Finance Team then cross-reference this against the invoice and check that the default account coding has been applied automatically, using data from Sage 200 about the supplier, and check the entity is correct. Where required, they can amend the coding for each invoice before the invoice is posted automatically to Sage 200.

Any high-value invoices follow an approval workflow where an email notification is sent to those persons responsible for approval with a link to click, taking them directly to the Invu Verify system to view and simply approve or reject the invoice.

According to Barber, **“The system has been well received by the Senior Managers with no resistance, and there are plans to expand the approval process to key project managers.”**

Implementing an automated invoice processing solution has saved the Finance Team a large amount of time and effort. Barber notes, **“Before month-end, I can get a significant number of invoices posted to Sage 200 the day before in the space of an hour, compared to a whole day’s work beforehand.”**

Reflections- “Why Automate?”



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Before implementing Inuu Verify, invoice processing was a manual, paper-based and time-consuming process. With invoice volumes reaching 25,000 invoices per annum and only expected to increase, the paper-based process was proving extremely inefficient. Additionally, the requirement to manually enter data onto Sage 200 further increased pressure on the Accounts Payable staff.

As the business grew from 10 to 18 inns, the growth in the volume of transactions resulted in the need to recruit staff at a rate that was not scalable.

Complexity was also added to the process by a growing number of sites and suppliers.

The paper-based invoice process was a burden. Invoices would be sent by post to each site, checked off as receipted by the chef, which sometimes took weeks, before being sent off to the Finance Team based in Alnwick for processing. There were also large time delays in getting the invoices processed and paid on time.

This distributed manual processing resulted in invoices going missing at different inns, which increased the risk of incorrect processing and payments not being made as there was no clear visibility of where invoices were in the process.

The above problems are all addressed by automation.

Conclusion



The Inn Collection Group will continue to grow rapidly in the coming months and years with their ambitious growth plans and lockdown restrictions easing. This will only result in higher invoice volumes, new entities, and new suppliers. Luckily, they already have the people, systems and processes in place to help facilitate this growth. Barber stated,

“I know we will get greater gains of efficiency and control using Innu Verify in the future.”

About Innu: Founded in 1997, Innu develops Electronic Document Management (eDM), Accounts Payable (AP) and Purchasing solutions for a range of sectors, particularly those which are highly document dependent or where compliance is important. Innu partners with a range of

software vendors such as ABBYY, a data capture, recognition and extraction tool provider whose FlexiCapture technology sits at the heart of many Innu solutions.

Design by [Hannah Leabon Design](#)