E-ORDERING IN ITALY

BUYER'S GUIDE

5 QUESTIONS TO HELP FIND YOUR IDEAL SOLUTION

ESKER®

INTRODUCTION
PURPOSE OF THIS BUYER'S GUIDE

Earlier this year, the Italian government made e-invoicing mandatory for all suppliers and service providers with an Italian VAT number (the first European member state to mandate B2B and B2C e-invoicing). All domestic invoices issued by Italian businesses must be issued in the pre-defined Fattura-PA XML format and sent via the government's IT-platform Sistema di Interscambio (SDI). This mandate put an end to paper invoices.

Less than a year later, Italy is again at the forefront of digitisation within the order-to-cash (O2C) cycle. It's not just e-invoicing that is becoming mandatory. The country is in the process of rolling out its e-ordering mandate within the healthcare sector. As of 1 February, 2020, companies supplying the National Health Services (SSN) will be required to manage the reception of e-orders through the governmental hub platform Nodo Smistamento Ordini (NSO), using the PEPPOL Business Interoperability Specification (BIS) ordering 3.0 format UBL PEPPOL standard. As of this date, public administrations within the health sector will only issue e-orders to their suppliers. PEPPOL is a set of specifications enabling businesses to communicate electronically one common standard EDI format with public buyers and private businesses.

If you have any customers in the Italian public health sector, you need to make sure you comply with these new regulations. But are you ready? Is your company equipped to receive e-orders?

If you are among the many businesses still without a solution or are looking to replace your outdated solution, this buyer's guide is for you. There are many different vendors with many different solutions … so what questions should you be asking to find the right e-ordering solution for your company? Esker has developed 5 essential questions to ask any potential solution provider — and the answers you should expect — to make your decision-making process easier and get your e-ordering project up and running before 1 February, 2020.

INTRODUCTION
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WHY E-ORDERING IS NECESSARY

The local Budget Law (Legge di Bilancio 2018) introduced mandatory electronic ordering with public administrations and companies, starting with the healthcare sector. As Italy's largest budget expenditure, the SSN is the first to adopt the above requirements to control public health spending. All SSN suppliers will be required to receive and process all orders electronically, and optionally send EDI confirmations.

The Italian government's overall goal is to eliminate paper in the workplace and automate business processes, making them more efficient, instantaneous and traceable. Automating the O2C process also offers significant benefits to business, including faster order processing, increased visibility over order flow, reduced invoice-related errors, time and cost savings, and faster payment.

5 QUESTIONS
TO HELP FIND YOUR IDEAL
E-ORDERING SOLUTION

E-ORDERING COMPLIANCE

"CAN YOU SUPPORT ITALIAN E-ORDERING COMPLIANCE REGULATIONS?"

With e-ordering becoming mandatory for National Health Services as of 1 February, 2020, companies must be able to receive e-orders if they want to do business with Italian public hospitals. The directive's main goal is to introduce a single point for exchanging e-orders and, subsequently, to monitor the debts of public administrations through the integration between the NSO and the Piattaforma dei Crediti Commerciali (PCC) platforms.

Keeping up with changing regulations is tricky, and managing new platforms (like NSO) and EDI format standards (like PEPPOL UBL 3.0 BIS) adds even more complexity. Finding the right partner from a legal, process and technical point of view is essential.

WHY ESKER?

Esker delivers compliant, paperless order management on a global scale and provides solutions to easily manage any input format (e.g., PDF, XML, any EDI format, etc.) and generate any output expected format (e.g., PDF, EDI or ERP specific format). Esker provides secured exchanges via any communication transport (e.g., PEPPOL, AS2, SFTP, etc.), and interoperability with any platform from service providers and public administrations (e.g., Chorus, FACe, SDI, PEPPOL, etc.). Esker is also a certified PEPPOL Access Point, which is a way to access the NSO platform as the PEPPOL network and the NSO platform will be interconnected.

Esker has proficient knowledge of the local markets and issues at hand and can adapt its solution to evolving legislative requirements.

Being compliant on 1 February, 2020, is not enough. Esker's agile solution ensures process compliancy as the Italian tax administration and others continues to develop e-ordering mandates. The evolving market trend toward full business automation with the government is on the rise.

DIGITISING THE O2C CYCLE

"I NEED TO BE ABLE TO RECEIVE ORDERS AND SEND E-INVOICES IN COMPLIANCE WITH ITALY'S REGULATIONS — DOES YOUR SOLUTION ENABLE ME TO DO BOTH?"

Following revelations that Italy had one of the largest VAT gaps of any EU member state, the government set about to make a change to not only optimise and control purchasing price on a national level, and prevent tax fraud, but also to simplify administrative processes. Italy decided to move to e-ordering and e-invoicing mandates. All EDI e-invoices are now transmitted through the SDI platform and all EDI orders will be transmitted through the NSO platform interconnected with the PEPPOL platform.

Your solution provider should offer all of the technology, solutions, service, and support needed to respond to your order management and accounts receivable needs. An integrated solution allows you to manage both the receiving of e-orders and the sending of e-invoices, delivering increased efficiency and visibility over your O2C cycle from one interface.

WHY ESKER?

From order management to customer e-invoicing, Esker provides users with an integrated, end-to-end solution to drive added value and efficiency throughout the O2C cycle.

Esker's Order Management solution handles orders using the PEPPOL BIS 3.0 format automatically retrieved from the NSO platform and integrates them in the flow of orders received via other channels. NSO orders can flow through automatically to the ERP system or be validated by a customer service representative before being integrated. A human-readable version of the UBL XML is automatically generated for visibility and comprehension purposes.

Esker's Accounts Receivable solution provides data formatting in the appropriate Fattura-PA XML format, checks required fields, communicates with the SDI platform to send e-invoices, and provides status updates and archiving. Additionally, Esker can ensure the presence of all the fields required by the SDI platform and final customer.

MULTI-FORMAT ORDERS

"IS THERE AN INTERMEDIARY SOLUTION IF THE SSN ARE NOT YET EQUIPPED TO SEND E-ORDERS?"

On top of the standard NSO electronic orders, the government has also defined a specific process using pre-agreed orders ("pre-concordato"). These orders can typically be used in two instances: 1. When the SSN entity has an ordering agreement or a contract with its supplier allowing the supplier to generate orders on its behalf, and 2. For urgent or life-saving medicine orders that need to be expedited. Additionally, as not all public hospitals will be ready to issue e-orders by the 1st of February deadline, they will be able to take advantage of the pre-agreed order process. Hospitals will be able to continue sending orders via fax or email while suppliers will have to create the corresponding e-orders using the PEPPOL format and submit them to the NSO platform. In all scenarios, it is only once the pre-agreed order is validated on the NSO platform that the supplier will be able to take the order.

You need a provider who can handle multi-format orders, convert paper and electronic formats into the right PEPPOL format and connect to the right platforms.

WHY ESKER?

As Esker processes every order received as an electronic transaction, regardless of how it arrives (e.g., fax, email, EDI, etc.), it can support this intermediary solution. Once the fax or email pre-agreed order is transformed in the correct BIS Order Agreement 3.0 PEPPOL format, Esker transmits the e-order to the NSO platform for validation. The e-order is then returned to the supplier for processing and integration in the ERP system. The process is seamless for both the SSN and the supplier: Esker enables the SSN supplier to be connected both to the NSO and PEPPOL platforms, allowing them to receive e-orders via its order management solution.

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DASHBOARDS & METRICS

"IT'S IMPORTANT THAT WE HAVE VISIBILITY OVER OUR ENTIRE O2C PROCESS. WHAT TOOLS DO YOU PROVIDE TO MONITOR PERFORMANCE AND EFFICIENCY?"

Your provider should offer Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and dashboards that provide real-time visibility into the O2C process. This type of enhanced control and monitoring makes it easier for everyone involved to perform daily tasks, analyse areas of improvement, and allocate resources and workloads.

WHY ESKER?

Esker dashboards enable you to monitor performances, facilitate daily tasks, and react quickly to prevent problems or spot opportunities early, even on the go, making every action smarter and more strategic. Esker's Order Management solution is equipped with intelligent dashboards that display live, visual analytics (e.g., how many orders or priority orders are in the queue or set aside, what is the proportion of NSO orders vs. other orders, automation rates, etc.). Esker's SDI-specific dashboard provides users with an overview of all their invoices sent through SDI, including errors, overdue invoices, etc., as well as specifics on invoice status from SDI. The dashboards are fully customisable so that users can choose what they want to see and track.

EXPANDING TO OTHER BUSINESS PROCESSES

"TODAY WE'RE IN THE MARKET FOR AN ORDER MANAGEMENT SOLUTION, BUT TOMORROW WE MAY NEED TO AUTOMATE OTHER BUSINESS PROCESSES — CAN SUPPORT OUR GROWING BUSINESS NEEDS?"

Your solution provider should offer all of the technology, solutions, service and support needed to respond to your expanding needs. That means having the capability to address every aspect of the cash conversion cycle to automate other business processes such as collections management, payment and purchasing.

WHY ESKER?

Esker allows you to control all of your business process improvement efforts in one shared and collaborative platform that spans the entire cash conversion cycle. In addition to automating the O2C process, Esker also automates processes within the purchase-to-pay (P2P) cycle. Using AI technologies, Esker transforms the way customers and suppliers interact with your organisation, while promoting more productive and engaged employees.

WHY ESKER

Selecting the right partner for your orders is not an easy task and one which will impact your business today and in years to come. However, putting in place e-ordering regulatory compliance provides a strategic opportunity to digitally transform your O2C process and reap the benefits of automation.

ESKER'S ORDER MANAGEMENT SOLUTION DELIVERS MANY BENEFITS TO YOUR BUSINESS, ENABLING YOU TO:

- **Process orders faster** with automation technology that optimises staff productivity and reduce costly errors
- **Increase visibility** over entire order flow, regardless of source, enabling users to track, monitor and improve KPIs
- **Improve customer experience** through faster fulfillment, improved transparency, self-service and collaboration tools
- **Enhance bottom line** by reducing operational costs, increasing business agility and generating new revenues

Esker is ready to help you achieve e-ordering compliance in accordance with Italian government mandates — in a sustainable way that is ready to deal with today's and future regulations.

WE ARE ESKER

Esker is a global leader when it comes to driving digital transformation forward with AI-driven automation solutions. We offer technology that promotes greater efficiency in nearly every business process — order management, accounts payable, accounts receivable and more.

Our over 11,000 customers are located around the world and rely on us to help them build more efficient business processes and stronger customer relationships.

WORLDWIDE PRESENCE

Founded in 1985, Esker operates in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific with global headquarters in Lyon, France and U.S. headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin. In 2018, Esker generated 87 million euros in total sales revenue.

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