



15 MINUTE
READ TIME



AMAZING ESKER LAUNCHES

ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AUTOMATION
STORIES *with awe-inspiring results!*

UP, UP AND AWAY!

Moving On from Manual Accounts Payable Processing

Every business wants to cut costs, improve efficiencies and gain competitive advantages, right? Right. Yet for decades, few understood the strategic value that could be achieved by modernizing “second tier” business functions, specifically, accounts payable (AP).

But times are changing. More organizations are waking up to the potential benefits of AP invoicing automation solutions. Instead of dealing with the errors, slowdowns and limited visibility associated with manual AP processing they’re going paperless and not looking back.

Our customers say **Esker is a game-changer**. Using one flexible and ERP-compatible platform, Esker provides them a solution for automating every critical phase of AP operations — from the capturing and submitting to the approving and fulfilling of vendor invoices.

In this eBook, a few of those Esker customers share their stories.



AMAZING ESKER LAUNCHES

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FARMLAND

Enjoying new levels of business process efficiency with AP invoicing automation

2

ALBEMARLE

Gaining worldwide automated AP capability with SAP®-certified partner, Esker

3

SAN BENEDETTO

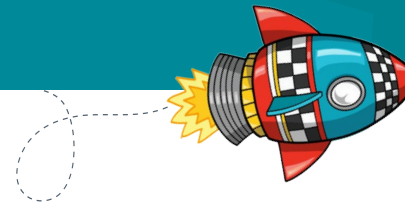
Achieving paperless AP operations and beyond

4

AUSTIN POWDER

Centralizing AP operations with automated invoicing in a global SAP® environment





INDUSTRY: Food & Beverage
COMPANY SIZE: 6,123 Employees
ERP: SAP



ACROSS THE
BOARD, **ESKER**
DELIVERED
BASICALLY
EVERYTHING WE
WERE LOOKING
FOR IN TERMS OF
AUTOMATED AP
FUNCTIONALITY
AND **SEAMLESS**
INTEGRATION
WITH SAP.

- ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANAGER,
FARMLAND

FARMLAND:

Enjoying new levels of business process efficiency with AP invoicing automation

Esker enables the automated process of purchase order (PO), non-PO and freight invoices into the Farmland Food's existing SAP® environment.

THE CHALLENGE

As a renowned international pork processing company with expanding operations, Farmland Foods processes approximately 30,000 invoices per month. Farmland recognized the importance of minimizing costs, staff requirements and labor-intensive duties to accommodate its growing volumes without adding headcount.

Another top priority for the company was to increase the speed, accuracy and visibility of their accounts payable (AP) operations by eliminating outdated manual methods. For example, Farmland had been using a file room to store invoices which made it very challenging to track down documents in a timely fashion. In addition, emailed invoices were not linked to Farmland's SAP system, creating extra work for staff such as printing the invoice and re-keying it into SAP.

"One of the biggest drivers of change was finding a solution to eliminate all of the paper-filing," said the Accounts Payable Manager at Farmland. "This was a big issue when trying to collect invoices for audits that were several years old. The whole process was overwhelming."



THERE WAS A LOT OF PLANNING AND RE-PLANNING ON ESKER'S PART TO MAKE SURE **EVERYTHING FELL INTO PLACE EXACTLY HOW WE WANTED IT TO.**

- ACCOUNTS PAYABLE MANAGER, FARMLAND

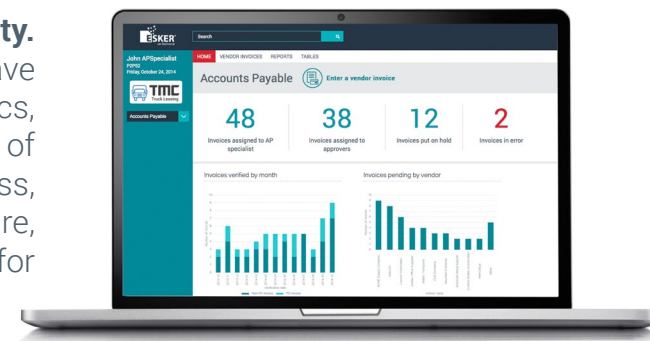
THE SOLUTION

After weighing its options and exploring a number of vendors, Farmland selected Esker's Accounts Payable automation solution because of the robust processing, workflow and archiving capabilities, as well as the high level of certified integration Esker offered with SAP. Another deciding factor in the decision was that Smithfield Packing Company, Farmland's sister company, was already utilizing Esker with successful results.

"Across the board, Esker delivered basically everything we were looking for in terms of automated AP functionality and seamless integration with SAP," said the Accounts Payable Manager. "Users can now access copies of invoices instantly at the touch of a button. The way that the solution was implemented, you could tell there was a lot of planning and re-planning on Esker's part to make sure everything fell into place exactly how we wanted it to."

THE RESULTS

- Improved visibility.** Managers now have access to key metrics, such as number of invoices to process, how far out they are, payment terms for discounts, etc.
- Easier access to invoices.** Instead of tracking down invoices in a file room, Esker allows users to access them via document numbers to easily email/print a copy online.
- Faster freight processing.** Esker helped Farmland reduce its "out period" for freight invoices from a deadline-pushing 14 days to just two days.
- Cost savings.** Fewer manual processing tasks allowed Farmland to save on costs equal to three FTEs, and reallocate current staff to projects offering greater value.

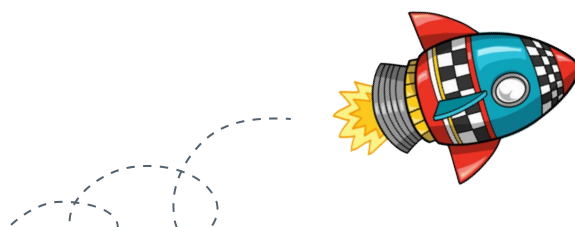


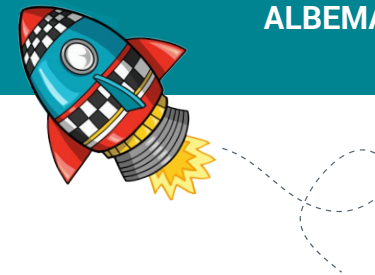
- **Faster invoice entry time.** Where the invoice entry goal for Farmland's AP staff used to be 150-200 invoices per day, with Esker, they are achieving over 400 invoices per day.
- **Fewer outstanding accruals.** Faster invoice entry times have enabled Farmland to reduce the number of outstanding AP accruals by \$8 million.
- **Increased discounts.** When comparing the last six months to the six months prior to Esker, Farmland estimates it has gained an additional \$29,815 in discounts.

ABOUT FARMLAND

Since 1959, Farmland has maintained a proud heritage of working side-by-side with American farm families, using time-honored traditions to make great-tasting bacon, fresh pork, ham, sausage, hot dogs and lunch meat. Acquired from Smithfield Foods in 2003, Farmland has a large and growing international business, exporting products to more than 60 countries across six continents.

www.farmlandfoods.com





INDUSTRY: Chemical
COMPANY SIZE: 4,231 Employees
ERP: SAP



ESKER FILLED A
NEED WITH AN
**ON-DEMAND AP
SOLUTION** WITH
SAP INTEGRATION
THAT COULD BE
**IMPLEMENTED
QUICKLY.**

- DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL MRO
PURCHASING, ALBEMARLE

ALBEMARLE:

Gaining worldwide automated AP capability with SAP®-certified partner, Esker

Seeking a cloud-based automation solution that could easily integrate with its existing SAP® interface, Albemarle, a leading developer and manufacturer of specialty chemicals, leveraged the Esker's cloud-based Accounts Payable automation solution to bring improved visibility, increased productivity and significant cost-savings to its worldwide invoice processing operation.

THE CHALLENGE

Albemarle's global invoice processing largely takes place at two shared service centers (SSCs) in Dalian and Budapest. These efforts were previously supported by an aging, four-line fax server. Manually processing approximately 13,000 invoices per month in multiple languages had a negative impact on visibility and productivity, and caused a number of other performance issues.

"We were expending a lot of time and resources manually processing our invoices," said the Director of Global MRO Purchasing at Albemarle. "It was very limiting. Staff had to manually type in the invoice number, due date and amount, and getting visibility on invoices without a PO was nearly impossible. Our goal has always been to pay our suppliers in a timely fashion. But it was very challenging."

Due to an antiquated fax system, state-of-the-art functional capability was also a challenge and was a requirement for any new AP solution. Albemarle's current fax server wasn't equipped to be used on a worldwide scale, provide OCR, or create invoices in SAP. "Esker filled a need with an on-demand AP solution with SAP integration that could be implemented quickly," said the Director of Global MRO Purchasing.



HAVING FULL OCR AND THE ABILITY TO POST INVOICES IN SAP, AND SEE THEM WITH 100% VISIBILITY, HAS **HAD A SIGNIFICANT IMPACT ON OUR COMPANY'S OVERALL SUCCESS.**

- DIRECTOR OF GLOBAL MRO PURCHASING, ALBEMARLE

THE SOLUTION

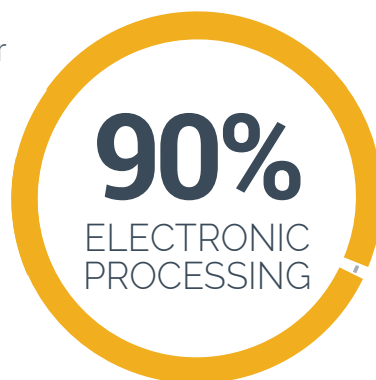
Albemarle initially considered a “quick fix” approach, consisting of replacing the existing fax system but retaining the current process, as well as an outsourced solution where faxes would be delivered to an independent location. Albemarle looked into 4-5 different suppliers but selected Esker because it delivered the functionality they required at competitive pricing.

“We considered in-house development, but our expertise to provide a quick solution was limited,” said the Director of Global MRO Purchasing. “We ultimately chose Esker because we liked the technology and price, and it fit perfectly with what we needed it for — to act as a gateway for our fax invoices, improve productivity and support email invoices.”

THE RESULTS

Albemarle has achieved a number of benefits since implementing Esker, including:

- **90% electronic processing rate.** Utilizing email capability has allowed Albemarle to reduce the number of paper invoices received by mail from 60% to 10%.



- **Higher productivity levels.** Albemarle went from running an average of 60 invoice transactions per day per AP processor, to 85 per day per processor (the top processor has reached as high as 200 invoices in a single day).
- **Improved employee efficiency.** With better visibility and fewer manual tasks, less employees are required to process the same amount of invoices.
- **Increased supplier satisfaction.** With more time and resources available to dedicate to suppliers, satisfaction levels have improved, which has an effect on cost savings (e.g., ability to negotiate better pricing, etc.).
- **Electronic archiving and anytime-access.** Esker helps with the electronic archiving of invoices for Albemarle’s 8,500 suppliers globally, freeing up offices and warehouses, and allowing Albemarle to easily access those invoices from the same platform.

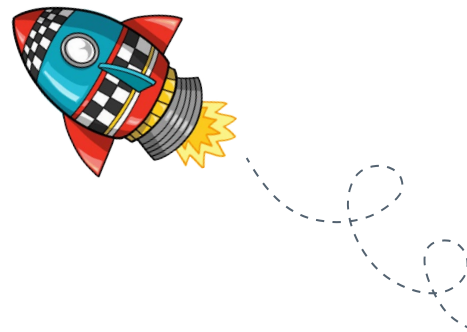
“Our implementation of Esker represents a step forward for our company as we continue our drive for global process improvement,” said the Director of Global MRO Purchasing. “Having full OCR and the ability to post invoices in SAP, and see them with 100% visibility, has had a significant impact on our overall success.”

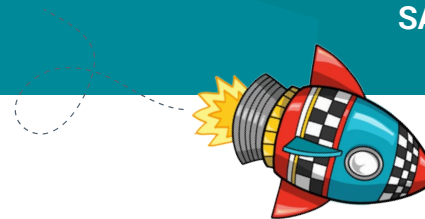
ABOUT ALBEMARLE

With a history that extends back to 1887, Albemarle is a leading global producer of polymer solutions, fine chemistry and catalysts. Albemarle's products are used as additives to, or intermediates for, a wide range of products manufactured by pharmaceutical companies, cleaning product manufacturers, water treatment companies, electronic goods manufacturers, refineries, and paper and photographic companies.

Headquartered in Baton Rouge, LA, Albemarle operates on a global scale, employing approximately 4,000 people and serving customers in approximately 100 countries.

www.albemarle.com





INDUSTRY: Food & Beverage
COMPANY SIZE: 1,069 Employees
ERP: Microsoft Dynamics

 **AUTOMATING
WITH ESKE
HELPS SATISFY
OUR CUSTOMERS,
AND, AS WE
CONSERVE TREES
AND CONTRIBUTE
TO THE REDUCTION
IN CO2 EMISSIONS,
HELPS PRESERVE
THE ENVIRONMENT.**

- DIRECTOR OF IT, SAN BENEDETTO

SAN BENEDETTO

Achieving paperless AP operations and beyond

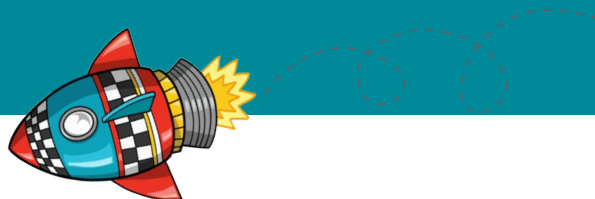
Spanish-based Agua Mineral San Benedetto, an early adopter of document automation technology, set out to eliminate paper from its operations. After first addressing order processing and accounts receivable with Esker, the company automated its AP invoicing process with great results.

THE CHALLENGE

Once its order-to-cash document processes were automated, Agua Mineral San Benedetto decided to focus on the procure-to-pay cycle, specifically, on automating vendor invoices. Confronted with multiple steps in the invoicing process (invoice data capture, verification and approval, including the particularity of ensuring that the invoice be verified with data from multiple systems or databases), Agua Mineral San Benedetto required a solution to facilitate and speed up the vendor invoice process.

THE SOLUTION

Esker's Accounts Payable automation solution addressed this complexity with its proprietary image recognition technology and three-way match verification (against the sales order and delivery note), leading to an automatic validation workflow and data capture into Agua Mineral San Benedetto's Microsoft Dynamics (MS) management software. Esker scans original copies of received paper invoices into the system and electronically archives them for easy retrieval.



IT IS IMPORTANT TO LOOK FOR EFFICIENCIES WHENEVER POSSIBLE, PARTICULARLY IN DIFFICULT ECONOMIC TIMES. **AUTOMATING BUSINESS PROCESSES IMPROVES PROFITABILITY AND DELIVERS A CLEAR BUSINESS ADVANTAGE.**

– DIRECTOR OF IT, SAN BENEDETTO

THE RESULTS

- **Time saved during invoice data capture and archiving** thanks to the automatic document transfer in MS Dynamics
- **Time saved in the physical search for invoices** as each invoice is now associated with an accounting record in the ERP system
- **Physical space gained** in terms of storage areas, filing cabinets, offices, etc.
- **Fewer human errors** due to automated data capture, which also saved time and money
- **Less investment in hardware and consumables** as documents are sent and received by fax — printing and copying are no longer necessary



- **Increased supply chain efficiency** thanks to improved vendor relations and service, with faster and more accurate information on outstanding invoices

FUTURE PLANS

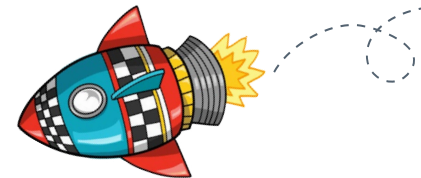
Agua Mineral San Benedetto continues to look for ways to optimize its document processes; for example, the management of delivery notes could easily be automated and signed before they are attached to customer invoices as proof of order delivery.

By extending automation to other document processes (beyond just AP), Agua Mineral San Benedetto is close to reaching its goal of becoming the company of reference in the food and beverage industry for a paper-free environment, as well as one of the first companies in the world to have achieved 100% paperless operations — all with the help of Esker technology.

ABOUT AGUA MINERAL SAN BENEDETTO

Agua Mineral San Benedetto was created in June 1995 with the support of its parent company, Acqua Minerale San Benedetto SPA, the leading Italian manufacturer and distributor of bottled water and non-alcoholic beverages for over 25 years. Agua Mineral San Benedetto, S.A.U. uses its own technology to develop bottles in PET, high-quality material specifically used in the manufacturing of water and other beverage bottles. In addition to reducing its paper consumption through the use of Esker, Agua Mineral San Benedetto also invests in environmental research, development and innovation, and has perfected the lightweight “eco-design” bottles.

www.sanbenedetto.es





INDUSTRY: Manufacturing
COMPANY SIZE: 1,200 Employees
ERP: SAP



WE STARTED OUT
THINKING A BASIC
SCAN-AND-FILE
TOOL WOULD BE
OUR BEST BET.
BUT AFTER SEEING
WHAT ESKER
COULD DO IN
**TERMS OF SHARED
SERVICES AND OCR,
WE KNEW THERE
WAS NO OTHER
SOLUTION.**

- CFO, AUSTIN POWDER

AUSTIN POWDER



Centralizing AP operations with automated invoicing in a global SAP® environment

With over 180 years of experience as an established provider of blasting products and services, Austin Powder Argentina looked to Esker to modernize its AP business model.

THE CHALLENGE

When Austin Powder Argentina sought to improve the way it processed vendor invoices, the goal was to find a tool that could create electronic versions of the documents and securely store them. As a growing organization, Austin Powder Argentina wanted to ensure it was equipped to handle larger invoice volumes efficiently and effectively without adding more staff.

According to the CFO of Austin Powder Argentina, the initial strategy to adopt a one-dimensional archiving system quickly changed once Esker gave a demo for its cloud-based Accounts Payable solution. "We started out thinking a basic scan-and-file tool would be our best bet," said the CFO. "But after seeing what Esker could do in terms of shared services support and OCR, we knew there was no other solution."

THE SOLUTION

A major factor in Austin Powder Argentina's decision to go with Esker centered on the fact that the solution could be leveraged on-demand to transform its location in Rafaela, Argentina, into a SSC with AP automation capabilities such as workflow and OCR.



OUR MAIN GOAL WAS TO **KEEP GROWING WITHOUT ADDING INFRASTRUCTURE OR STAFF**, AND ESKER HELPED US ACCOMPLISH THAT.

– CFO, AUSTIN POWDER

“We have remote offices throughout the country that also receive payables, so Esker’s ability to standardize the whole process was a big deal for us,” said the CFO. “Even with invoices coming in from all over the country and locations worldwide, everything behaves as one office.”

Benefits of AP automation in a shared services model:

- Electronic workflow for a more visible, efficient process
- Real-time tracking and reporting capabilities
- Country code management; cross boarder support
- Ability to leverage automation across multiple processes

Integration with SAP

Esker’s ability to coexist with Austin Powder Argentina’s newly implemented SAP system was also a driving factor. Seidor, a global information technology/services provider and Esker partner, made the decision-making process easier. “The fact that Seidor is one of the leading SAP partners out there and Esker has a strong business relationship with them was a huge plus,” said the CFO. “It gave us a lot of confidence knowing we were dealing with a highly reputable company.”

The CFO was also impressed by the commitment and proficiency of Esker’s Professional Services team, saying: “Not only was everything done quickly, Esker’s team was totally engaged during the process and absolutely committed to delivering us the best possible solution. The execution exceeded my expectations.”

THE RESULTS

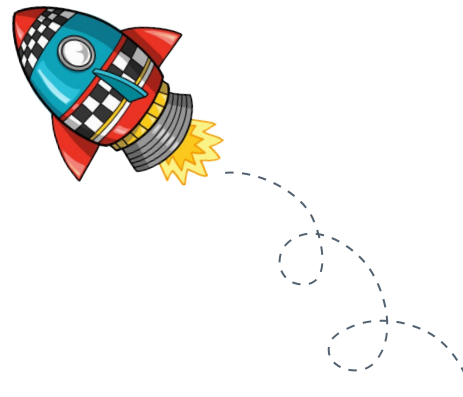
Today, Austin Powder Argentina continues to demand more payables and transactions as its business continues to grow. But unlike before, when its dedicated AP staff was overworked with manual tasks and often requiring additional help, managing the workload is now easier and more efficient with everything electronic.

“Our main goal was to keep growing without adding infrastructure or staff, and Esker helped us accomplish that,” said the CFO. “The great thing about Esker is, you don’t have to be a gigantic company to benefit from it. Our footprint is relatively small and we’ve gained enormous value already ... with more to come.”

ABOUT AUSTIN POWDER

Based out of Cleveland, OH, with subsidiaries worldwide, Austin Powder was founded in 1833 as a manufacturer of black powder used to blast rocks, mine coal and create canals. Today, Austin Powder's commercial explosives are primarily used for construction, mining, quarrying and seismic exploration.

www.austinpowder.com



READY FOR TAKEOFF?

Learn How Your Company Can Be Our Next Success Story

Well, there you have it. Four different companies each facing their own unique AP invoicing challenges, yet all achieving awesome results.

That's the great thing about Esker: Whatever your company's size, industry or technical nuances, our Accounts Payable automation solution can seamlessly accommodate to propel your process to greater heights.

If you think you're ready to be Esker's next success story, you can either call us toll-free at **1-800-368-5283** or send an email to [**info@esker.com**](mailto:info@esker.com).

We are Esker.

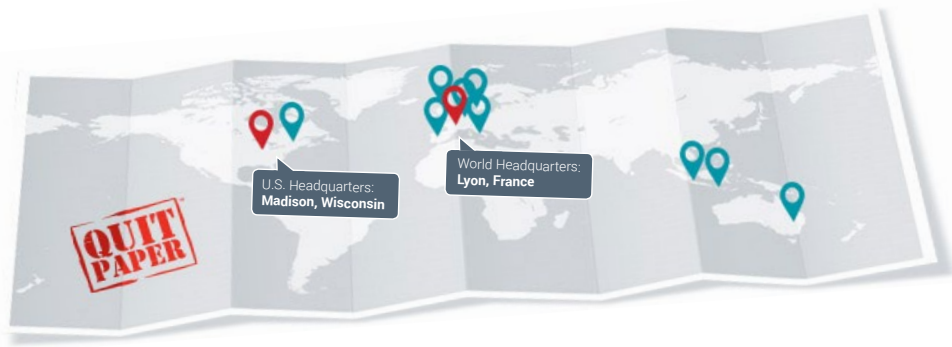
Esker is a worldwide leader in document process automation.

Forward-thinking businesses use our solutions to **Quit Paper™** and streamline their inbound and outbound communications.

After 30 years of field experience, Esker has over 80,000+ customers and millions of licensed users worldwide.

Our headquarters are in Lyon, France, but we're located just about everywhere paper needs quitting.

Learn more online at
www.esker.com.



WHEN YOU'RE READY TO LEARN MORE ...

Buyer's Guide:

Accounts Payable Buyer's Guide: 15 Questions to Differentiate Vendor Invoicing Automation Solutions

Video:

Esker Customer Testimonial: Farmland

Solution Summary:

Making Accounts Payable Automation a Reality

Plus, be sure to check out the **Esker Blog**, your connection to everything newsworthy in the world of automation.

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