Baldwin
SUPPLY COMPANY

Delivering Added Efficiency, Oversight & Analytics to AP Operations

Using Esker Accounts Payable and Enlighten.Net's ENet Docs, Baldwin Supply Co. has modernized its accounts payable (AP) process — from document storage and AP invoicing to supporting the Office of the CFO.

Here is their story.

ESKER ®

At a glance

Baldwin Supply Co.

Wholesale/distribution

11 subsidiaries

Established in 1920

175 employees

Headquarters in Plymouth, MN

ERP: Epicor Prophet 21

"Esker and ENet Docs made a lot of sense as we moved to a more automated process. In the end, that combination helped us eliminate 98% of the paper."

Paul Bohlsen
CFO, Baldwin Supply Co.

Challenges

Paper, manual tasks & an overall lack of visibility across AP operations

As the Upper Midwest's leading distributor of mechanical power transmission, conveyor belt and electrical control products, Baldwin Supply Co. understands what it takes to maintain a smooth-running operation. So when it noticed inefficiencies within its own accounts payable (AP) process, the company wasted little time in pursuing a more modern and streamlined solution.

A primary concern was the amount of paper and manual tasks AP team members had to work around to perform their jobs — often equating to lost documents, incorrect attachments and invoices failing to be reconciled. "Each morning, someone would have to print out every invoice that came in overnight and go through and sort them manually, directs versus non-directs," said Paul Bohlsen, CFO at Baldwin Supply Co. "Needless to say, with all the back-and-forth and the sheer volume of paper moving around, we were expending a lot of time and effort."

Prior to Esker, accessing key information was also difficult for Baldwin Supply Co. This lack of visibility affected the AP team's ability to locate files and paperwork assigned to purchase orders (POs), as well as Bohlson's ability to perform some of his duties as CFO. "Previously, when invoice issues came up, I didn't have the visibility into what was causing it," he said. "What we needed was something that offered visibility into what's out there, what needs to be processed and where issues arise."

Objectives

Automate AP invoice processing with Esker Accounts Payable to reduce the number of manual touches.

Increase visibility into the AP process with Esker Accounts Payable to better resolve errors and quickly identify discrepancies.

Replace existing document management software with Enlighten.Net's ENet Docs, as maintenance had been discontinued.

Solution

Esker Accounts Payable + Enlighten.Net's ENet Docs

In choosing a replacement solution(s), Baldwin Supply Co. wanted to not only bring more speed and visibility to its AP invoicing operation, it also aimed to replace its existing document management software, as maintenance had been discontinued. The company found the ideal resolution thanks to the complementary business partnership between Esker and Enlighten.net.

With Esker Accounts Payable — an intuitive, cloud solution equipped with AI-driven data capture, touchless processing and electronic workflow — Baldwin Supply Co. was able to eliminate paper and manual tasks from its AP invoicing process while managing every invoice from a centralized, easy-to-user interface. "Esker is way more user-friendly than our previous solution," said Zachary Heil, Assistant Controller at Baldwin Supply Co. "The reporting features were unlike anything we experienced before — creating whatever report you need with any field in Esker. It's incredibly helpful."

Enlighten.Net's ENet Docs solution fills another need on Baldwin Supply Co.'s AP team by working congruently with Esker to modernize its document repository system — enabling employees to find information faster and pass it on to the appropriate parties sooner. "As we were working through the Esker conversations, the partnership with ENet Docs came up," said Bohlsen. "Esker and ENet Docs made a lot of sense as we moved to a more automated process. In the end, that combination helped us eliminate 98% of the paper."

Working with Esker's CX team

Following go-live, Baldwin Supply Co. worked closely with Esker's CX team over the next 90 days to ensure a successful solution onboarding. "It was super helpful having weekly meetings to bounce stuff off the team and get responses," said Heil. "I feel like I learned a lot and filled a lot of gaps around stuff that may not have come up during training or implementation."

"Esker gives us visibility from a billing and forecasting standpoint that we just didn't have previously. It's helped us make decisions faster and keep the entire process moving smoothly."

Paul Bohlsen
CFO, Baldwin Supply Co.

Results

Driving new efficiencies within AP & across the organization

Thanks to Esker Accounts Payable and Enlighten.Net's ENet Docs solution, Baldwin Supply Co. has seen several transformational benefits in terms of time and cost savings, process oversight and analytics, and a new, more strategic perspective within the Office of the CFO.

"What we've done with Esker and ENet Docs — all the AI and data we have access to now — it's really opened our eyes to new possibilities," said Bohlsen. "We're now looking into how we can better leverage technology and data within other areas of our business beyond AP to drive even more efficiencies and other opportunities."

Highlights

Eliminated 98% of paper within the AP department since automating

Achieved touchless processing for 75% of non-direct PO invoices, saving employees considerable time

Improved invoice turnaround time to 3 days

Strengthened supplier relationships thanks to quicker responses on inquiries and faster invoice turnaround

Better employee morale thanks to fewer manual reconciliations and the ability to find information with greater ease and efficiency

Enhanced visibility into essential AP information (which invoices belong to what supplier, which invoices are awaiting approval, etc.)

"One of the 'boxes' Esker checked is allowing us to free up our folks from manual work so they're able to focus on value-added activities and drive other opportunities within the company."

Paul Bohlsen
CFO, Baldwin Supply Co.

Want to transform your AP process like Baldwin Supply Co.?

Our team is at your service.

About Esker

Esker is the global authority in AI-powered business solutions for the Office of the CFO. Leveraging the latest in automation technologies, Esker's Source-to Pay and Order-to-Cash solutions optimize working capital and cashflow, enhance decision-making, and drive better collaboration and human-to-human relationships with customers, suppliers and employees. Esker operates in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific with global headquarters in Lyon, France, and U.S. headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin.

info@esker.com • www.esker.com

About Enlighten.Net, Inc.

Enlighten.Net, Inc. offers easy-to-use yet powerful document management tools designed with an understanding of the unique challenges faced by distributors and manufacturers across North America. Enlighten.Net, Inc. was founded in 2004 by the leadership of DISC — a successful ERP platform targeting the fluid power industry — when it was acquired by Prophet21.

Enlighten. Net's software, ENet Docs, is used daily by thousands for the secure storage and instant retrieval of business-critical documents.

sales@enlighten.net • www.enlighten.net

AP-US-032-A