

PROCURE-TO-PAY

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UNIVERSITY OF  
TECHNOLOGY

# SWINBURNE SARAWAK CREATES SOCIAL & ECONOMIC IMPACTS BY TRANSFORMING ITS PROCURE-TO- PAY PROCESS

Boosting staff morale and vendor satisfaction through increased process visibility, efficiency and collaboration with Esker's Procure-to-Pay solution



## AT A GLANCE

# Swinburne University of Technology



Education



Founded in 1908 by the  
Honourable George & Ethel  
Swinburne



Australia: Melbourne, Victoria  
Malaysia: Kuching, Sarawak



SAP® ERP

## CHALLENGES

### Manual & paper-based purchasing procedures jeopardise vendor satisfaction

As a 21st century Institution of Higher Learning (IHL) at the cutting edge of technology, innovation and entrepreneurship, Swinburne University of Technology has an ambitious vision to become the prototype of a new and different next-generation university. With a century-long history of providing students with high-quality, career-oriented education and training as well as its strong links to industry and the community, it aims to bring people and technology together to create a better world.

Swinburne's global campus in Sarawak, Malaysia was looking for ways to improve its procure-to-pay operations and, correspondingly, its vendor relationships. Many of the processes were manual and paper-based, made even more complex by multiple cost centres. Obtaining manual approval for a purchase request was time-intensive, as was the fact that each line item on a purchase order had to be manually entered into the system by the Procurement Team. Getting the right documents and information to the right people resulted in long delays.

Once the goods or services were delivered, supporting documents and invoices were generated on paper. These were then attached to the previous documents and passed on to the Finance Team for further processing. The lack of tracking and visibility over pending invoices involved in this process resulted in overdue vendor invoices and discrepancies.

All these challenges led to poor vendor satisfaction and low team morale within the P2P team.

## OBJECTIVES



Eliminate manual practices



Increase data accuracy



Facilitate the approval process



Boost vendor satisfaction



Redeem time for higher-value tasks







**Esker's Procure-to-Pay solution allows users to experience paperless and transparent process flows, which helped us save time and costs.**

**Doris Ulau Mering**

Procurement Officer, Finance and Business Analysis (FBA), Swinburne Sarawak

# SOLUTION

## Gaining flexibility while fostering collaboration

Swinburne had to establish a more collaborative environment, with the goals of creating end-to-end visibility and an efficiently functioning P2P team. The overhaul of the P2P process that Swinburne Sarawak envisioned was first and foremost the automation and optimisation of workflows. The manual handling of the procurement process had to go, to be replaced by a solution that would also facilitate easy record retrieval and document flows while providing end-to-end visibility over the process.

Swinburne Sarawak chose Esker because the solution checked all the boxes for streamlining and optimising the school's P2P processes. Despite the difficulties of implementing the solution during the COVID-19 pandemic, the Esker team was able to provide support remotely when needed, throughout all deployment phases. "Esker's great support ecosystem added another layer of value to the implementation of the solution", noted Kok Mei Lan, Assistant Manager, Procurement, FBA at Swinburne Sarawak.

Esker's solution has also provided the ability to function independently of the SAP® ERP. Creating a one-stop place to treat the entire procurement lifecycle simplifies the workflows and creates process visibility through customisable dashboards. The previous manual handling and data entry into Excel was replaced by easy-to-read counters and the ability to quickly create reports reflecting accurate information, enabling budget setting and allocation capacities.

"Esker's solution is truly flexible, which makes it convenient to monitor the status of purchases anywhere and anytime, using one single platform. Users can now handle the procurement efficiently and effectively", said Chua Jia Ni, Biosafety Officer, School of Research (SoR) at Swinburne Sarawak.



**We no longer have to restart the P2P process from the beginning if an error is made, as was the case with the manual process. This is extremely helpful for us.**

**Kok Mei Lan**

Assistant Manager, Procurement, Finance & Business Analysis (FBA), Swinburne Sarawak

# RESULTS

## Suppliers & staff work hand-in-hand, creating a collaborative environment

It did not take long for Swinburne Sarawak to experience the benefits of introducing Esker's Procure-to-Pay solution. The implementation of Esker's user-friendly platform instantly displayed an acceleration of the P2P process and invoice approval flows. This opened up time for the staff to handle higher-value tasks. Aside from promoting the internal collaboration on campus, Swinburne Sarawak's suppliers now have the ability to submit invoices, track their status and make any changes to their vendor profile directly on the Supplier Portal.

Esker's intelligent data capture capabilities not only yielded more visibility over each step in the process, but staff can now also create reports that can then be shared with different departments. This speeds up the validation process by having all supporting documents in one place, and any changes can be made directly without starting from the beginning, which was the case in the past.

The flexibility of Esker's solution plus the easy-to use reporting allowed the department managers to focus on problem-solving tasks, thereby making the entire P2P process smoother. Esker's solution proved essential during the implementation of remote work, where all energy needed to be focused on keeping the university running smoothly. "Esker helped us through a challenging time: the cloud-based solution allowed us to seamlessly work remotely by ensuring that we have all the right tools and documents to work with from outside the office. Team members were able to collaborate on the process flow on a single platform, making things simple, efficient and easy," said Si Yan Eng, Head, Laboratory, Faculty of Engineering, Computing and Science (FECS) at Swinburne Sarawak.



### BENEFITS



75% decrease in processing time



Purchasing request approvals 3x faster



80% cost savings



100% visibility with dashboards & reporting



Simplified workflows in one unified platform



71% employee satisfaction rate since using Esker



Remote work enabled by cloud-based solution



All our P2P processes were in place digitally via Esker's solution before the pandemic, so we were able to transition to a remote working environment without much hassle.

**Aizat Hamizan Johari**

Procurement Officer, Finance and Business Analysis (FBA), Swinburne Sarawak



# Pursue success with Esker's Procure-to-Pay solution

## Our team is at your service

### GET IN TOUCH WITH ESKER

#### ABOUT ESKER

Esker is a global cloud platform built to unlock strategic value for finance and customer service professionals, and strengthen collaboration between companies by automating the cash conversion cycle. 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.

Our customers use our cloud solutions to increase the efficiency, productivity and visibility of their Procure-to-Pay (P2P) and Order-to-Cash (O2C) processes.

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