MEETING THE DEMANDS OF CLIENTS' CUSTOMERS THROUGH A STRATEGIC, MUTUALLY BENEFICIAL PARTNERSHIP

Produce Pro Software, Esker partner of 17+ years, is expanding its solution portfolio to clients and their customers with Esker's AI-driven Accounts Payable automation solution

AT A GLANCE

Produce Pro Software

- Software & solutions provider
- Established: 1990
- Headquarters: Woodridge, IL
- 200+ customers
- 7,000+ end users
- 100+ employees
- 4 U.S. locations

CHALLENGES

Finding new & innovative ways to serve its client base

Produce Pro Software is a leader in ERP software for the produce and perishables industry. Supporting 200+ clients across the globe, Produce Pro is always on the lookout for new tools to enhance its robust solution offerings. However, being a company that primarily builds its own solutions and with a customer base that has been slower to adapt new technologies in the past, accomplishing this via a partnership can be challenging.

But in the eyes of Tony Zuccato, Vice President of Operations at Produce Pro, one company's challenge is another's opportunity. "One of the hallmarks of our system is the customization and flexibility," he said. "Having a staff of developers here, we normally look to build, but sometimes there are key strategic alliances and partnerships that just make sense — we view that as an opportunity."

One of the key factors driving this pursuit of innovation are client expectations. "The majority of our customers are wholesale produce distributors," said Zuccato. "They are experts in produce, not technology, so they look to us to provide the most advanced software technology, industry insights and innovative solutions. That informs our decision to look at what's new and what we can use."

OBJECTIVES

- Build upon existing partnership with Esker to form a more complementary & strategic relationship through AP automation
- Continue to modernize and grow as a company while still supporting "tech-challenged" clients
- Provide customers with digital tools & analytics to optimize their business processes & communications

> Produce is a relationship-based industry. It's how we work with our customers and what we look for in a partner. That's why partnering with Esker has worked.

Tony Zuccato
Vice President of Operations,
Produce Pro Software

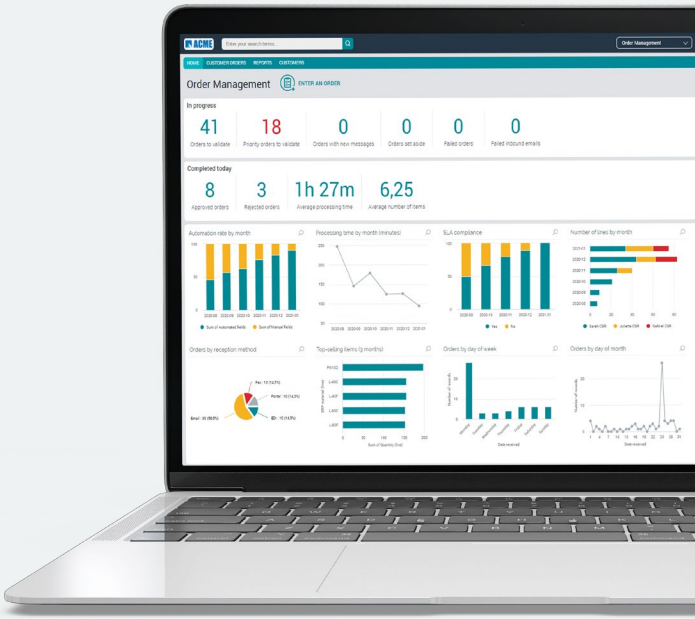
SOLUTION

Expanding its solution offering with accounts payable automation

Produce Pro's current partnership with Esker is, ultimately, a product of relationship building. For nearly two decades, Esker has been Produce Pro's go-to fax provider — starting as a VSI-Fax customer, moving to Esker Fax Services and, more recently, exploring new areas of alliance such as accounts payable (AP) automation.

This long-term trust and stability between the two organizations simplified the decision-making process regarding AP. "We knew there were other products out there, but we wanted to build on our strong relationship with Esker," said Zuccato. "In 17 years, we haven't even looked for a single other fax product partner. It gave us confidence moving forward that Esker was the right AP partner for our company."

According to Zuccato, a big factor in the success of the most recent initiative was Esker's willingness to attend user group events, provide demos and work to build a truly complementary solution. "We knew if there was any sort of problem, Esker would stand behind their product," he said. "They put a lot of time and effort into looking at our solution and what made sense. Even when we had some customers make us go through a few extra hoops, Esker didn't mind working with us."



> Between the two organizations, we're helping our customers modernize through automation and run their businesses that much better.

Kristen Santangelo
Marketing Manager, Produce Pro Software

RESULTS

Transforming a long-standing relationship into a strategic partnership

Through Esker's partnership, Produce Pro now has a powerful automation tool to optimize the AP processes of its clients' customers. The solution works by capturing invoices from emails using intelligent data capture and machine-learning technology to extract data from header and line-level detail. It also provides users with an intuitive interface for invoice review and coding, a workflow engine to handle multi-level approval, reporting with dashboards, and archiving of images with a full audit trail.

Despite the complex nature of the partnership, Zuccato and his team have been impressed by the results. "Esker did a really good job on the account setup and invoicing," he said. "We've had a number of special requests, and Esker's proven that they can handle it. It's been a win-win."

Future Plans
Moving forward, Produce Pro's biggest priority is getting more customers up and running on Esker's digital AP tool. The company anticipates that nearly its entire customer base could ultimately utilize the solution and reap its benefits.

"The partnership with Esker has opened up a lot of doors," added Zuccato. "In the future, we know there's an opportunity to do more of this type of thing and possibly expand to other automation products. We know that Esker isn't going to compete with us and will always find something that works for both companies."

> One of the things our customers look for that Esker provides is gaining additional visibility into their operations — AP included. They're able to see a lot of data and pull it out of the system.

Kristen Santangelo
Marketing Manager, Produce Pro Software

Want to become a strategic partner like Produce Pro Software?
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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