



CASE STUDY

Mitsubishi Chemical Advanced Materials automates invoice and order intake

Infor Document Management (IDM) Capture

Mitsubishi Chemical Advanced Materials (MCAM) is a leading global manufacturer of high-quality thermoplastic materials. With locations in 20 countries, MCAM employs more than 2,800 people. Its engineering plastics and composites have a performance profile that's superior to metals and other materials. And MCAM's top-notch materials are primarily used in the capital goods industry. The company continuously develops new materials for use in close cooperation with market leaders in a wide range of industries.

Even though lots of companies still process, post, and pay invoices from suppliers manually, automating invoice receipt and reconciliation radically increases efficiency. Mitsubishi Chemical Advanced Materials (MCAM) experienced firsthand how Infor Document Management (IDM) Capture speeds up productivity.

The Optical Character Recognition (OCR) software powers scanning paper documents and importing electronic documents. Invoices as well as other structured or unstructured documents on paper are recognized via Infor Document Management (IDM) Capture and stored in the document archive with the appropriate file format as PDF/XML.



Advanced
Materials

Headquarters

Lenzburg, Switzerland

Employees

2,800

Industry

Manufacturing

Infor product

Infor M3®, Infor® Document Management Capture

Website

mcam.com

“ The fact that the documents no longer need to be entered manually into the system means huge time savings for us, especially for invoices and orders of many items.”

NORBERT BENZER

Business Process Manager at MCAM

Then they're linked to the corresponding data record in the ERP system, making the documents visible and accountable at every location. The timesaving convenience of OCR is an advantage when collaborating across office locations, even working from home. And OCR greatly reduces the risk of losing an invoice.

Mitsubishi Chemical Advanced Materials saw the benefits of this process optimization. In 2019 following a pilot phase, the company teamed with Infor to start the Invoice Matching Through Automation project to revamp its invoice and order intake.

Automating invoice processing

The electronic reconciliation of supplier invoices at MCAM was initially carried out at the invoice header level and was extended by the invoice items six months later. IDM Capture is based on Ephesoft's software solution and works like this: A supplier invoice is scanned and checked for relevant data such as items, item numbers or amounts. The software extracts this data, stores the invoice in the archive, and then links it to the dataset in the Infor M3 ERP system. This not only relieves employees from the manual entry of data, but also digitally depicts the entire entry, posting, and approval process throughout.

The in-house staff only have to approve the invoice before making a payment. Thanks to predefined workflows, every process participant can track the current status of the approval of an invoice. Efficiency grows and an organization's processes become more transparent and traceable.

It's also easy to search for documents in the document archive. The IDM Capture software automatically recognizes invoices from new suppliers without having to "map" or create them every time.

“ There is often no home office scanner, QR code printer and sometimes no printer at all. This is why we have made this process completely paperless, which was highly appreciated by the workforce.”

NORBERT BENZER
Business Process Manager at MCAM

Business challenges

MCAM processes an enormous number of invoices every day and confronted:

- High time and error-prone processing due to manual data entry
- Low efficiency due to manual invoice verification
- Lack of transparency in cross-site cooperation
- Missing equipment: often no scanner or printer available at home offices

Creating efficient entry of customer orders

After automating invoice receipt, MCAM needed its incoming orders automated. Orders and order changes are usually communicated by email. However, since an order can consist of up to 100 items, manual entry is often time-consuming and error prone. Based on this initial situation, two processes have been established: One for orders with few items, and one for the entry of orders with many items, the assessment lies with the respective employee.

Orders with few items are still manually recorded in Infor M3 and subsequently emailed to the IDM Capture solution along with all supporting documents. The order number in the subject line of the email serves as a key for linking to the data record in the ERP system and is integrated into the IDM capture solution including all attachments, and stored in the document archive.

The process was rolled out globally in spring 2020, simplifying collaboration as many employees had to work from home due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Before automating the process, the scanned orders were linked to the ERP system via a barcode.

Orders with many items are also sent to IDM Capture via email and then digitalized in the system at header and line level. Sales then only need to check the digitalized order once more and release it for transfer to the ERP system. The order is then automatically created in the ERP system with header and item data analogous to the invoice receipt process and linked to the associated documents such as the email, order or specifications.

MCAM currently records around 5,500 pages of incoming invoices, incoming orders and production orders per day. The production orders that have handwritten notes on them are scanned at the end of the day in the batch and linked to the data record in the ERP system via a printed barcode. In the future, the recording of delivery notes is also planned, so that all incoming documents along the purchase-to-pay process are digitalized at the end of the project.

Cleanly structured processes are crucial

To make receiving invoices more efficient, MCAM had to define workflows for some processes more precisely and introduce rules. So far, it has been possible for orders to be placed without a purchase order having been created. However, this procedure generated increased expenditure in posting and approving the invoice at the end of the process. The new processes ensure that a purchase order must also be created in the system before every order. This means the incoming invoice goes through all steps of the invoice process without having to be approved again at the end.

Business results

IDM Capture helped the company gain:

- Invoice digitalization: Mapping of the entire incoming, posting, and approval processes
- Increased efficiency through process automation
- More transparency: Release status can be tracked
- Elimination of manual data entry to reduce errors and save time
- Improved cross-site collaboration through paperless processes

“Of course, automation means taking the strain off routine activities. Nevertheless, we did not think that the response from our workforce would be so positive.”

NORBERT BENZER
Business Process Manager at MCAM

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INF-2491627-en-US-1222-2