Automating P2P for Small to Medium Enterprises
Leveling the Playing Field for Business Process Automation

Q4 2014 Featuring Insights on...

Current SME P2P Automation Trends
Misconceptions of P2P Software Among SMEs
P2P Functionality for SMEs
P2P Solution Adoption Best Practices for SMEs

Underwritten in part by coupa
Introduction

A few decades ago, as P2P automation emerged in the business world, the technology was used primarily by big corporate players. Large companies with miles of paperwork and complicated business processes jumped on these electronic invoicing and workflow technologies and launched toward into processing efficiency and speed. However, for businesses with fewer resources, tighter budgets, and more consolidated operations, these solutions were seen as a luxury rather than a necessity. With the high implementation costs and the lengthy implementation time, the loss of capital and the delays caused by the system transitions were not worth the initial investment for small to medium-sized enterprises (SME)—those with annual revenues under $250 million.

The same processing pains that plagued large businesses also drove down productivity and drove up costs for SMEs, but these companies had fewer places to turn for help. However, with the advancements in technology in the last several years, the market for financial automation has been transforming, and the doors are opening for new uses and new users. These new adopters are game-changers, not only in a modern business environment built upon entrepreneurship and innovation, but also in a recovering economy dependent on the success of SMEs.

AP and P2P solution providers have recognized the relevance of small businesses in the global economy, and are now developing software that is affordable and tailored to fit within the budgets and unique needs of SMEs. With the increase in cloud-based technology and the option to leverage different providers’ offerings, SMEs are reaping the benefits of automation tools that were previously only affordable for bigger corporations. These solutions provide high levels of customization at a low cost, bringing SMEs great value along with efficiency.
Executive Summary

Despite the changing market and greater possibilities for SMEs, there is still a majority of the sector that does not realize the accessibility or advantage of these solutions. PayStream asked a group of business and finance professionals from small to medium sized business where they stood in the process of implementing an automation system. Many SMEs reported they had no plans to use a solution, see Figure 1.

PayStream believes the reluctance to adopt these solutions comes from long-standing misconceptions regarding the affordability and relevance of financial software for SMEs. The high cost and extensive installation necessary for these systems excluded smaller companies from the market for quite some time, and that conceived exclusion carried over and kept SMEs from investigating modern options. However, today’s technology developments have changed the dynamics of the financial automation market. PayStream Advisors has developed this technology insight report, P2P for SMEs, to provide small and medium-sized enterprises with the education and tools they need to take advantage of the new generation of business process solutions.

This report includes the latest P2P automation adoption statistics, current thinking, best practices, strategies, and key performance indicators for evaluating and selecting the solution that meets the needs of SMEs. In addition to highlighting trends and analysis of the latest survey data, this report profiles leading solution providers that offer technology geared towards smaller companies.
Key research findings in this report show:

» SMEs' greatest pains are due to the high costs of long procedures, and decentralized processes.
» SMEs seek benefits related to lowering these costs, speeding up processes, and building revenue.
» SMEs have a low level of automation and integration.
» SMEs have a low level of supplier adoption, and they desire better supplier relationships.
» SMEs are interested in front-end and workflow tools because they seek fully-integrated P2P processes.
» SMEs believe they have no need for a solution because of inaccurate perceptions of automation (e.g., high costs, no ROI, meant for larger companies).

Most SMEs feel they have no need for an automated P2P system. It is the purpose of this report to prove otherwise, and to show the benefits as well as the value of these solutions for SMEs—value that will be easily implemented and quickly realized.

Based on the number of survey respondents, PayStream believes that the survey used in this report has a confidence level of +/- 5 percent.
P2P Problems for Today’s SMEs

PayStream Advisors’ research indicates many trends within P2P departments of small and medium-sized businesses. Many of these companies share the same pains and process inefficiencies, and many share the same motivations and goals. These research findings have provided valuable insights into which parts of SMEs’ processes can be best aided by P2P software.

Most of the problems that plague SMEs revolve around processing pains, lengthy processes, and consequential lost revenue. Many of these processing pains come from low automation and a lack of integration. AP automation in general is not common among SMEs—when asked what percentage of POs they sent electronically, the majority of survey respondents from SMEs (35 percent) reported they sent no POs electronically, see Figure 2.

Similar findings held true for invoices SMEs received electronically: the majority of survey respondents reported they received no electronic invoices whatsoever (33 percent) and 27 percent reported they only received 1-10 percent electronically, see Figure 3. These findings point not only to a low level of automation among SMEs, but also a lack of supplier participation in electronic systems.
Further highlighting the low levels of automation among SMEs, research reveals that many processing pains for SMEs revolve around manual front-end processes. SME survey respondents reported that one of their greatest AP pains—and causes for lost revenue—is the manual routing of invoices, and the other leading pains are also closely related to manual processing.

Figure 3
SMEs Receive Few Electronic Invoices

“What percentage of invoices do you receive electronically?”

Figure 4
SMEs Experience Most Trouble from Manual Front-End Processes

“Please rate the prevalence of the following problems that lead to late payments and missed discounts at your organization.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Problem</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Decentralized invoice receipt</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lost invoices</td>
<td>22%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lengthy approval cycles</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Large number of exceptions</td>
<td>32%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Missing information on invoices</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manual routing of invoices</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
This is no great surprise, as PayStream’s research has found this part of the process to be a leading pain for companies of all sizes. For SMEs however, the size of the company may prevent them from investing in an electronic invoicing system due to the perceived costs of the technology.

When asked what they are looking to gain from AP automation, SME survey respondents were most focused on speeding up and smoothing out processes and reducing costs. The top motivations to automate (52 percent) were fewer lost or missing invoices and reduction in process costs, followed by increased on-time payments (48 percent) and quicker approval times (38 percent), see Figure 5. All of these problems stem from lack of automation and decentralized processes, which could be remedied with an efficient and integrated P2P system.

![Figure 5](image)

SMEs Want to Speed Up Processes and Increase Savings

“What key benefits have you achieved or do you expect to achieve from an eInvoicing solution?”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Benefit</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Fewer duplicate invoices</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in exceptions / discrepancies</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fewer supplier inquiries</td>
<td>19%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Better visibility across the transaction lifecycle</td>
<td>29%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reduction in FTE / processing costs</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased ability to capture discounts</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improved vendor satisfaction</td>
<td>33%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quicker approval cycles</td>
<td>38%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Increased on-time payments</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The advantage of today’s solutions is their integrated nature—with electronic invoicing implemented, automated approval workflow is only a small step away, providing a centralized process at a good value. While SMEs often fall behind in P2P automation, their business models are naturally positioned to work well with even the smallest amount of process automation. This is why the business models and development strategies of software companies are increasingly based on meeting the needs of SMEs.
P2P Made for SMEs

Today’s AP solutions offer a variety of perks for smaller businesses, not least of which is their ability to be leveraged with other solutions and existing ERPs. The emergence of cloud-based technology allows for a much tighter technological integration, as well as greater levels of mobility and customization for small companies with more diverse structures. The software has had proven success for large enterprises, but now that there are fewer barriers to adoption and more opportunities for customization, SMEs can gain those same benefits. Some of the ways in which today’s P2P automation is working for SMEs include:

**Reduced Costs** – Cost is no longer a barrier. With cloud-based and SaaS technology booming, and competitive solutions continuing to enter the market, SME’s are realizing shorter times to ROI.

**Easily Accessible** – Most of the solutions offered to the SME market are hosted (SaaS) and operate in a cloud environment. This eliminates the need for IT resources to implement and maintain automation tools. SaaS solutions can be quickly accessed via any web browser. In addition, most solution providers now provide mobile functionality to keep invoices moving through the system while users are out of the office.

**Easy to Use** – Today’s turnkey solutions eliminate disparate legacy solutions, simplifying the approval process and moving documents along with clear rules, permissions, and escalations to ensure that invoices get to the right people, arrive on schedule, and get paid on time. The powerful functionality and usability of today’s automation solutions allow for widespread adoption in companies of all sizes, including SME’s.

**Wide Variety of Solutions Available** – There are a lot of components to AP automation, and there are a host of vendors with solutions that address the different subsets thereof (e.g., financial service firms providing ePayments and P-Cards, software vendors delivering imaging and workflow, and networks providing portals for electronic data exchange).

**Leveraging Capabilities** – Today’s solutions can be leveraged with other software and existing ERPs. This provides flexibility, customization, and value optimization. It also allows for greater scalability and control in diverse business environments.
SMEs Made for P2P

Today’s modern SME is usually more than ready to adopt a P2P system, but is often held back from adoption by a lack of education in the available offerings. The changes in modern financial automation are in many ways inspired and driven by the structure and business needs of smaller companies. PayStream’s research indentifies some prevailing characteristics in SMEs that make them perfect for modern AP automation solutions. The majority of SMEs:

» **Have a small number of full-time AP department staff** – Most SME respondents reported 1-10 full time AP employees, see Figure 6. This usually corresponds with tighter budgets and more roles stretched between fewer employees. P2P technology that eliminates more tedious processes can reduce the work load of small AP departments. An inexpensive solution or even leveraging a single solution module (such as an Approval Workflow application) will be an investment that will greatly increase the overall productivity of staff.

» **Have a centralized AP process but do not utilize a shared services center** – Most SME respondents reported they had a centralized AP department, see Figure 7, but do not use a shared services center, see Figure 8. SMEs are naturally centralized due to more consolidated business operations and fewer locations, but this smaller scope prevents many companies from using a shared service center and gaining its benefits of cost reduction. Modern financial solutions are, in many ways, built to provide a virtual shared services center: through the connection of several P2P technologies, or even the leveraging of a few, this software can bring the same results of a shared services center at a lower long-term cost.

*Figure 6
SMEs Have Small AP Departments

“What is the approximate number of full-time employees in your AP department?”*
Figures 7 & 8
SMEs Are Not Able To Take Advantage of Shared Services

“What is the nature of your AP department?”

“Does your organization utilize a shared services center?”

25%
75%

25% of organizations have a partly centralized AP department, where invoices are received at multiple facilities but paid centrally.

Decentralized – Invoices are received, approved, and paid at different locations (0%)
Partly Centralized – Invoices are received at multiple facilities but paid centrally
Centralized – Invoices are approved and paid centrally
We outsource our invoice receipt and payment process (0%)

81%
11%

81% of organizations do not utilize a shared services center, while 11% are unsure and 9% are using the service.

Yes
No
Unsure
» **Do not measure processing costs** – Over half of SME respondents surveyed reported they did not measure processing costs, see Figure 9. Organizations who do not measure their costs are missing out on valuable opportunities and power in their business process. A lack of visibility into spend and other business activities can lead to a host of other problems. One of the most fundamental components—and benefits—of a P2P solution is the full process transparency they provide. Additionally, reporting and analytics technology gives companies the advantage of strategic analysis and self-improvement.

![Figure 9](image-url)

**SMEs Do Not Have Great Process Transparency**

“What is your average full-loaded cost to process an invoice?”

- 56% Under $1 (0%)
- 23% $1 - $5
- 9% $6 – 10
- 5% $11 - $15
- 7% Over $15
- 5% We do not measure processing costs

» **Are not familiar with and do not utilize Dynamic Discounting and Supply Chain Finance** – Respondents reported low knowledge of and/or plans to implement Dynamic Discounting and Supply Chain Finance solutions, see Figures 10 and 11. Most SMEs don’t have easy access to capital and are often unable to quickly pay their invoices and take advantage of early payment discounts. This not only causes these companies to miss savings, it also causes them to lose potential easy revenue. However, today’s solution providers have recognized the value of speeding up the supply chain and empowering small businesses—value that can benefit the entire economy. Many P2P solution providers now offer tools that enable SMEs to gain the advantages of quick payments through Dynamic Discount Management (DDM) software and Supply Chain Finance functionality. These applications empower SMEs to pay their bills strategically and in a way that will optimize value for the company. In the modern financial automation market, SMEs are given the tools to gain the same benefits as the rest of the business world.
Figures 10 & 11
SMEs Do Not Use Financing Tools

“Where does your company stand with regards to the use of a dynamic discounting solution?”

&

“Are you familiar with the concept of Supply Chain Finance?”
» **Are ready for integration** – As PayStream’s research has shown major processing pains for SMEs are found in the front-end process. The greatest hopes for improvement are also found in this area. When asked about AP technologies they are planning to implement or have already implemented, SMEs are almost equally interested in OCR/data capture and workflow technology—two solutions that, when used together, fall under the P2P best practices for bringing process efficiency.

![Figure 12](image_url)

**SMEs Want Front-End Process Integration**

"Which of the following technologies do you currently use or are planning to implement within the next 6 months?"

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Technology</th>
<th>Currently Use</th>
<th>Implementing in 6 Months</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Front-end Imaging</td>
<td></td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>OCR / Automated Data Capture</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Automated Workflow</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>14%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Electronic Payments</td>
<td>31%</td>
<td>4%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Purchasing Cards</td>
<td></td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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P2P Opportunities for SMEs

All AP automation solutions share the common goal of improving process management. However, not every solution follows the same approach, or provides similar functionality at each step of the cycle. Some SMEs may have business structures that will draw greater benefit from one type of P2P system or module over another. SME Accounts Payable professionals should understand the different forms that invoice automation solutions can assume in order to decide which methods are suitable for their unique business needs.

Back-End Document Capture and Archival – The simplest form of invoice automation uses scanning technologies for back-end imaging and archival. Operators batch and scan paper documents at the end of the invoice receipt-to-pay process, and AP staff manually indexes and stores document images in an electronic repository for retrieval. There are benefits to this procedure, such as the elimination of physical storage requirements, but in the end, the process continues to follow a manual and paper-intensive course. This method operates as an afterthought and fails to yield any improvement or efficiency in workflow.

Front-End Document and Data Capture – Employing an imaging solution at the front end of the invoice processing cycle is a PayStream P2P Best Practice. In this procedure, invoices are scanned remotely or at a central processing facility upon receipt, those images are enhanced to optimize recognition, and data is extracted using automated image recognition technologies. In addition, validation rules established at the beginning of the process ensure that the data extracted is accurate and can route acceptations, and advanced systems put the responsibility of exception and discrepancy correction back on suppliers. Front-end document and data capture is a massive advancement from back-end imaging, as it facilitating improvements to the invoice receipt-to-pay cycle, especially workflow automation. It offers a vital step in the process of centralization and integration of processes.

Front-End Capture with Matching and Workflow – In a more advanced form, invoice automation solutions combine front-end document and data capture with matching and workflow capabilities to streamline and automate invoice receipt and approval processing. Workflow-enabled invoice automation solutions automate more of the invoice receipt-to-pay cycle than stand-alone document and data capture solutions, and they enable AP departments to define how different types of invoices are processed. PO-based invoices can be automatically matched against the purchase order and receipt documents, while non-PO invoices can be routed to the appropriate approver.

All tasks are routed based on pre-defined business rules and user roles set to match the organization’s existing approval hierarchy. Approvers are typically notified via email when invoices require their approval, and some software allows for direct invoice approval from the emails. Most solutions available today come bundled with reminders, out-of-office delegation rules, and escalation.
Combining Electronic Invoicing with Imaging and Workflow – The most sophisticated invoice automation solutions combine front-end document imaging and data capture with einvoicing and automated workflow. This enables organizations to process all invoices—whether they are submitted in paper or electronic format—through a single, common method. In this scenario, suppliers are transitioned from paper to electronic invoice submission, usually through a stand-alone portal or a shared supplier network. Most solutions offer suppliers multiple options when it comes to submitting electronic invoices, such as direct integration with ERP and billing applications to transmit invoices without manual intervention, flipping purchase orders into invoices, and web forms and templates that can be used to generate electronic invoices. Once invoices have been submitted, they can be subjected to a range of validation criteria based on buyer-defined rules. Invoices that do not meet any of the specified criteria are flagged as exceptions, and suppliers are asked to correct them, while clean invoices are forwarded for further processing. For suppliers that continue to send paper invoices, organizations can use front-end imaging and data capture to extract information from the invoices. After data extraction, the converted invoices are processed using the same matching and workflow rules as the electronic invoices.

T&E Management – Organizations of all sizes can take advantage of the benefits of automating their Travel and Expense (T&E) processes. Automation provides complete end-to-end control of report submission, approval, reimbursement, reporting with data analysis, and integration into back end accounting systems. Having this integration provides more visibility into spend with accurate accounting and detailed reporting for every transaction and expense category. When organizations have this information at their disposal, they are equipped to determine exactly which areas in their travel and expense spend are excessive and can put automated controls in place to reduce runaway cost. Corporate card statements are integrated into today’s T&E systems, granting complete visibility into spend. Not only can expense reports be filed quickly when transactions are readily available, but merchant details accompanying each transaction can make tracking and reporting easier. Statements can be recalled instantaneously and analyzed for company violations or excessive spending.

eProcurement – Electronic procurement solutions streamline the purchasing process by enabling organizations to connect to vendor catalogs, generate requisitions, use sophisticated workflow tools for approval processing, and deliver purchase orders to suppliers electronically. Many mid-sized and smaller companies are also making great strides towards less paper, even paperless environments. These proactive technology adopters have learned that in many cases automation diminishes the procure-to-pay cycle time from weeks to days, and delivers a rapid return on investment. By automating each stage of the procure-to-pay cycle, from electronic procurement to programmed exception handling and matching along with enhanced dispute management and approval workflows, adopters can not only achieve productivity gains and cost reductions, but also obtain traceable Sarbanes-Oxley audit trails.
SME Best Practices

SMEs have a smaller and more diverse business structure, and therefore should focus picking an optimized automation package. SMEs that follow selection process best practices should:

» **Leverage technologies** – If the company budget is tight, SMEs can start slowly by leveraging a simple solution to improve their most problematic process area. This allows for scalability and customization.

» **Pick and choose** – Along those same lines, the company should be careful and analytical when choosing technology, whether it is a whole system or a few applications.

» **Consider outsourcing** – Accounts Payable Outsourcing offers the same benefits of the financial automation but with less investment and maintenance. This can be a valuable alternative to software implementation, and should be considered carefully.

» **Consider consultation** – To ensure that a company makes the best decision possible, it can employ the aid of a financial automation consultant. The consultation process will offer the benefits of personalized evaluation and careful consideration.

» **Use the TCO calculator** – PayStream’s Total Cost of Ownership Calculator is a valuable tool for companies considering business process technology. It allows them to fully analyze their own current and future costs against the offerings of a potential solution provider, and it protects against selecting a system that is too expensive in the long run. This is especially important for SMEs with less protection against economic fluctuations.

» **Get organizational agreement** – When asked about the biggest challenges that prevented them from migrating to AP automation, the majority of SME respondents cite internal change management (67 percent), see Figure 13. This reflects the established opposition to automation processes, one that is preventing companies from taking advantage of SME-appropriate technology. It is important to educate an entire organization about the benefits of P2P software. The professionals who take charge of an automation initiative are the ones that truly effect change in their companies.
Figure 13
SMEs Struggle Against Internal Resistance to P2P Automation

“What challenges do you face in migrating invoices from paper to an electronic format?”

- Gaining supplier adoption: 48%
- Integration with in-house and supplier systems: 67%
- Internal change management: 48%
- Solution does not function as expected: 10%
- Other: 10%
Conclusion

Now that software developers have expanded their offerings to accommodate SMEs, game-changing P2P solutions are no longer only reserved for big players in the corporate world. Smaller companies are able to use the same strategies as their larger competitors, leveling the playing field and widening the possibilities for their future.

PayStream Advisors believes that SMEs should take advantage of today’s business process solutions to become innovators in their business sphere, and in turn, help revitalize an economy dependent on the success of dynamic and diverse business models. The following profiles highlight solution providers who have recognized the need for SMEs to excel in today’s economy—and have developed their software to empower that progress.

About PayStream Advisors

PayStream Advisors is a technology research and consulting firm that improves the way companies plan, evaluate, and select emerging technologies to achieve their business objectives. PayStream Advisors assists clients in sorting through the growing complexities of IT applications related to business process automation with the goal of making objective, analytical, and actionable recommendations. Wherever business process automation technology is an issue, PayStream Advisors is there to help. For more information, call (704) 523-7357 or visit us on the web at www.paystreamadvisors.com.
Coupa

Since 2006, Coupa’s mission has been to deliver software innovations that breed responsible company spending while impacting the company bottom line. Coupa systems are best known for their accessibility, multiple options, and a lack of vendor fees. They also boast of having over 450 customers and a 97+ percent renewal rate. Coupa owes their exceptionally high user and supplier adoption to their strategy of building spend management solutions to mirror how users act in their consumer lives, and to their efforts in streamlining the communication channel between buyers and suppliers.

Coupa constantly strives to improve the procedures of their Innovative Cloud without using revenue increase as an incentive. Instead, their solution design approach is based on clients’ specific needs. They offer simple, leverageable tools and a pricing model that has long-term benefits for smaller corporations more easily affected by economic fluctuations. Coupa integrates with any ERP format and their full configuration model brings a business agility that is often lacking in legacy software and other systems. This agility makes their offerings suited for easy adoption, quick ROI, and high customization.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Website</th>
<th><a href="http://www.coupa.com">www.coupa.com</a></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Founded</td>
<td>February 17, 2006</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Headquarters</td>
<td>San Mateo, CA</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Locations</td>
<td>New York, NY; Chicago, IL; San Diego, CA; Reno, NV; London, United Kingdom; Dublin, Ireland; and Sydney, Australia.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of Customers</td>
<td>450+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Key Clients</td>
<td>Sanofi; Molina Healthcare; Royal Bank of Canada; NEC; Toyota; Rent-a-Center</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Target Verticals</td>
<td>Healthcare / Pharmaceutical; Retail; Financial Services; Food &amp; Beverage; Technology; Manufacturing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Awards / Recognitions</td>
<td>Forrester P2P Leader; Gartner “E-Procurement Market and Vendor Landscape” Report Leader; Best in Biz Awards International; Fastest Growing Company; AlwaysOn OnDemand Top 100; PayStream Advisors P2P Excellence Award in Spend Management; Deloitte Technology Fast 500 Award; 2011 Wall St. Journal Next Big Thing Award; Procurement Leaders Award</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Solution Name</td>
<td>Coupa Spend Optimization Platform</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Solution Functionality**

Coupa is a cloud-based application, which frees clients from the expensive and time-consuming burden of operating and maintaining their own applications and infrastructure. Coupa has partnered with Amazon Web Services to provide the hardware and infrastructure to support Coupa’s scalable platform. Customer instances are configured independently through a user interface and externalized configuration files, and upgrades are all included in the subscription model. Coupa’s security features include high-grade encryption of passwords, state of the art kernel firewalls and intrusion detection software, multi-layered architecture to secure customer sessions and prevent unauthorized data access, and best-in-class disaster recovery protocols that eliminate data loss in the event of system failure.

**Invoice Receipt**

Coupa Invoicing provides organizations with a complete and intelligent solution for managing the accounts payable processes. It supports capture either through a supplier self-service portal or multiple electronic mechanisms. Customers can elect to use Coupa’s partners for scanning and document conversion into Coupa’s system, or they can integrate with other providers for scanning and OCR.

All customer data and image files are stored for the duration of users’ subscription with Coupa, and simple and advanced searches of invoices can be run to gain quick and easy access. Search results return summary data with the ability to drill down into each invoice, which also provides access to any documents attached to the invoice.

**Vendor Portal**

The Coupa Supplier Network, comprised of over 1.3 million suppliers, brings B2B communication and commerce at no cost to vendors. The Supplier Network allows suppliers to create and send invoices in any electronic or manual method (e.g., cXML, EDI, fax, email, paper). They can track electronic invoices on the network, and flip purchase orders into invoices or create invoices without a PO. Suppliers can view the status of an invoice, and disputed or rejected invoices are queued up for manual resolution between buyer and supplier.

**Approval Workflow**

With Coupa’s workflow management, different approval chains can be configured for different purposes (e.g., requisitions, invoices). Tasks are routed via email and/or application display, and auto-notifications are emailed to users to inform them of action items required, status changes, or updates.
Coupa supports 2-way or 3-way matching of invoices against purchase orders and receipts, and the functionality can combine matching with tolerance checks to make sure invoices meet specific tolerance thresholds. Discrepancies are placed on hold for additional review and approval. From configurable operational dashboards, AP teams can easily set up Coupa’s robust invoice approval workflows based on pre-defined validation criteria. This allows them to manage their workloads, drive on-time payment, and ensure invoices with early discount payment terms are paid on-time to benefit from these discounts. Coupa’s workflows can handle multiple approvers or disputes, and users can create customized invoice management views to see different groupings of invoices for workload management and other role-based views.

**Travel & Expense**

Coupa Expenses manages travel expense with a variety of features and integration, including mobile capability, Google Maps integration, and TripIt itinerary import functionality. The Coupa Wallet stores users’ credit card information and photos of receipts (which are emailed to an automated inbox). Credit card transactions are added to expense reports with a drag-and-drop function, and are sorted with the Expense Auto-Classification tool, which automatically defaults to the correct category based on the receipt. Users can set up the system to itemize more general expenses like hotel bills, and travelers can see relevant company rules as they work through the process, as well as stay within budget with the Coupa Frugal Meter. Coupa’s travel expense management tools are simple, accessible, and do not require extensive training.

**Reporting & Benchmarking**

Coupa provides more than 100 pre-built reports to ensure complete spend visibility for any organization. All reports in Coupa are generated through an intuitive web interface, and reporting dashboards can be set up for different business levels and feature real-time graphical views that provide critical insights into spending management performance, supplier performance, liquidity, and more. Users can also build their own custom views and can self-schedule reports.

Coupa’s performance benchmarking capabilities can calculate company performance across 35 key purchasing and expense management KPIs and compare those metrics against a market benchmark that is updated nightly from transactional data pulled from across the Coupa platform. Coupa also provides a spend analytics BI that includes customized dashboards, and all transactions, approvals, and important master data contain an audit trail with date/time stamps throughout the application.

The Coupa Customer Success portal is a help and training tool through which suppliers can find out more information about the Coupa Supplier Network, and where Coupa continually notifies buyers and suppliers of any updates or new trainings. Coupa routinely monitors the regulatory environment to ensure ongoing
compliance in the development and delivery of their product and services.

Implementation

Coupa’s robust implementation methodology is based on best practices and templates that have been refined over the course of 450 Coupa implementations. The typical timeline for a Coupa implementation varies, but deployments range from 3-6 months. Although little training is needed for their system, customers can opt for both online and in-person training, as well as training specific for administrators.

Available for companies after implementation and training is complete, the Coupa Best Practice webinar series runs every Thursday at 11 a.m. PT, giving customers the opportunity to interact with each other and discuss topics that are relevant to their business. Coupa provides customers with three options for pursuing support: phone, email, and the Coupa support portal. Depending on the support package, support technicians are available 24x7 for priority cases.