

CASE STUDY

TOYMASTER

Revolutionizing Toy Store Invoice Processing with Kofax AP Essentials™

Toymaster is a central invoice processor for over 250 independent toy shops in the UK, Republic of Ireland, and Malta. Traditionally, invoices have been processed manually, but new regulations prompted Toymaster to implement Kofax AP Essentials, enabling it to process 30,000 invoices per year while enabling the reallocation of 21 full-time employees.

30,000
INVOICES PROCESSED ANNUALLY

21
WORKERS REALLOCATED

ENABLES
LONG-TERM DATA ANALYSIS

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ABOUT TOYMASTER

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Founded in 1989 and based in Northampton, England, Toymaster is a central invoicing house for over 250 independent toy retailers in the UK, Republic of Ireland, and Malta. Its members maintain full independence, buying the mix of toys appropriate to the locality and personality of their store, whilst enjoying the benefits of national marketing to boost image and sales.

PRODUCTS IN USE

Kofax AP Essentials™

FOCUS

Invoice processing

“The Kofax solution has given us access to much more detailed information on what our member outlets are buying. This means we can more easily drill down into that data, and there’s potential for us to study group-wide business patterns in much greater detail than was previously possible.”

Matthew Dymock, Systems Administrator, Toymaster

CHALLENGE

Toymaster is an essential component of the UK’s independent toy retail market. A central invoice processor for over 250 independent toy shops in the UK, Republic of Ireland and Malta, it handles transactions in excess of £40 million a year.

Matthew Dymock, Systems Administrator at Toymaster, explained: “Toymaster is a national association of independently-owned toy shops. When a new store joins our buying group, we collect every invoice from our suppliers, and process all those transactions centrally. This amounts to tens of thousands of transactions handled every year, so keeping track is a real challenge.”

Before implementing Kofax ReadSoft Invoices™ and then later Kofax AP Essentials, Toymaster processed the majority of its members’ transactions manually.

“Now that we no longer have to keep track of paper invoices, many of our operational costs have disappeared. It used to take 38 staff members to process all of our invoices, and now we can process the same number with just 17 people.”

Matthew Dymock, Systems Administrator, Toymaster

“Our old processes led to a number of operational challenges,” said Matthew Dymock. “To start with, there were the infrastructure costs of separately processing hundreds of members. We had to maintain individual pigeonholes for each of our stores, and mail out invoices twice a week. The flow of paperwork was irregular, with a quiet start to each month followed by a flood of invoices at the end, meaning we weren’t using our staff members’ time efficiently. Additionally, the fact that we were still doing everything on paper made it harder to study long-term purchasing or sales trends, as there was no centralized resource to assess what our members were doing.”

The inefficiencies of the manual system, coupled with the challenge posed by new industry regulations, prompted Toymaster to invest in automatic invoicing technology.

“We knew that automation had the potential to make life easier for us,” said Matthew Dymock. “But it was the introduction of new European Union legislation which really forced us to take action. We now needed to declare what goods were coming into and out of the UK, and that meant capturing every single line item from our members’ invoices, which wasn’t feasible at scale manually. It was that realization that set us down the path to the Kofax solution.”

SOLUTION

Toymaster implemented Kofax AP Essentials as part of a newly centralized web-based invoice processing solution.

“We initially chose Kofax ReadSoft Invoices to automate our invoice processing, as it was the best-in-breed solution for invoice capture,” said Matthew Dymock. “However, we quickly realized that Kofax AP Essentials was better-suited for what we were building. The cloud-based Software as a Service (SaaS) model saved us a great deal on hardware maintenance costs, and we also benefitted from the raft of extra functionality built into Kofax AP Essentials, such as Kofax’s excellent Workflow engine.

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"Now each supplier has access to a web-based app through which they can submit electronic invoices, and we can receive and process them more rapidly than ever before. The details are automatically logged by Kofax AP Essentials, which then automatically processes the transactions and stores the relevant data for compliance purposes."

The Kofax solution also gives Toymaster centralized access to data on both its members' and employees' performance.

"The Kofax solution has given us access to much more detailed information on what our member outlets are buying, and it stores all of that information in one place," said Matthew Dymock. "This means we can more easily drill down into that data, and there's potential for us to study group-wide business patterns in much greater detail than was previously possible. We've been particularly impressed with the Kofax technology's compatibility with Excel and other data analysis tools.

"Kofax AP Essentials also allows us to more closely monitor individual users' interactions with the system. This data is very useful to us internally, as it can flag up who might need extra training or guidance in how to use the system, and helps us make better-informed choices about task assignment for our central office workforce."

RESULTS

Toymaster now processes 30,000 invoices per year using Kofax AP Essentials, and has eliminated many of the operational costs related to invoice processing.

Matthew Dymock elaborated: "Now that we no longer have to keep track of paper invoices, many of our operational costs have disappeared. We have saved around £12,000 a year on postage alone, and staffing costs have been significantly reduced. It used to take 38 staff members to process all of our invoices, and now we can process the same number with just 17 people.

"The response from our members has been great. Kofax AP Essentials is not only convenient for our members, it also makes work more manageable for our staff, and frees up time for them to work on more value-add tasks. Kofax

"Kofax technology is really helping us live up to our mission statement: 'To help our members trade more profitably.'"

Matthew Dymock, Systems Administrator, Toymaster

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Overall, Toymaster is immensely satisfied with its implementation of Kofax AP Essentials.

"Kofax AP Essentials has been quite simply transformative," concluded Matthew Dymock. "It enables us to process our suppliers' invoices more easily and efficiently, and Kofax has cemented itself as a key business driver for us going forward."

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