

Automated Invoice Processing

Case Study - Notcutts

Notcutts is a family-owned group of 19 individual garden centres. The company started in 1897 and stands for - excellence in gardening, the best products and advice to customers. Notcutts is distinguished by their horticultural expertise and excellent service standards through their garden centres and online shop.



The Challenge

Notcutts receives over 100,000 invoices per annum, from more than 2,000 active suppliers. With garden centres spread across the country Notcutts required a centralised and more efficient solution to manage their invoices. They were looking for a solution to streamline the process of capturing, distributing and approval of invoices.

Key challenges faced were:

- Capturing invoices from different suppliers - a mixture of paper and electronic formats
- Absence of a centralised document repository
- Delays in circulating the invoices thus affecting supplier relations
- Higher cost base as the use of the legacy system required more resources.

There was an incoherent process in place for managing invoices as the scanning process was outsourced to a third party. The isolated

Notcutts
Helping gardeners since 1897

Streamlined invoice processing with end-to-end visibility improves efficiency and benefits supplier relationships

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document management system did not interact with its financial systems or other incumbent applications used by Notcutts.

The Solution

There was definite need for a system that would address the discrepancies in the established invoicing process. The engagement started with an initial consultation and analysis of the clients existing systems. Following this, DCS suggested a hybrid solution that would bridge the gaps between the disintegrated invoice scanning processes and the distributed approval route. The solution has been designed to manage invoice processing of all active suppliers and is formed of two integrated elements:

Outsourced Invoice Capture Services

DCS now acts as a central receiving point for all supplier invoices, both electronic and physical.

All invoices are processed on a daily basis, with the header and line (in some situations) information being captured, before a supplier validation takes place.

On completion the data and images are uploaded to a secure site for transfer to Notcutts' internal infrastructure.

The hybrid solution from DCS enables Notcutts to generate the highest possible return for their money. Notcutts is able to benefit from DCS's vast experience in handling invoices, whilst still maintaining control on the approval system.



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File Storage and Invoice Approval System

DCS has implemented its proprietary file storage and management system - FileStore - to address the issue of a distributed and manually intensive invoicing process.

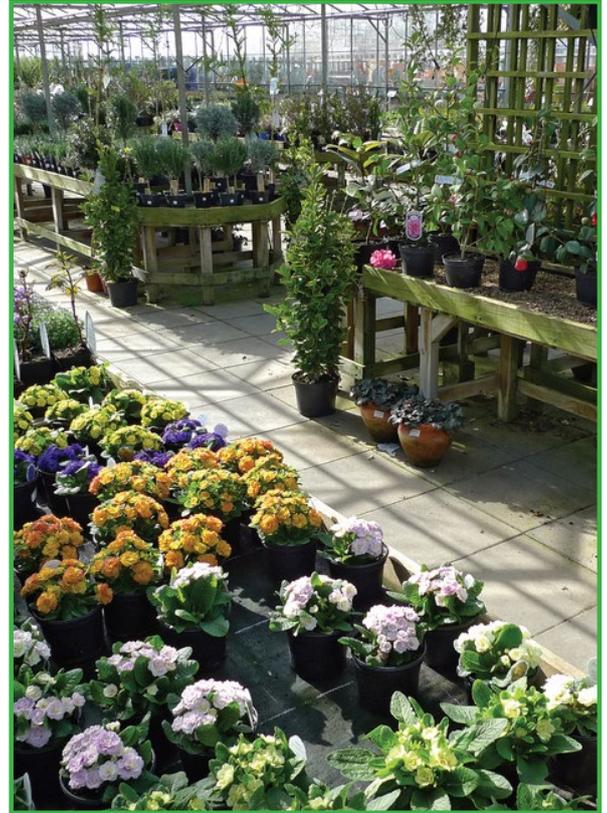
FileStore's core technology meets the requirements of allowing distributed management of the invoices, enabling users to view the outstanding invoices and approve them.

The system is configured to store the invoices for seven years, in accordance with HMRC regulations.

DCS also provided professional services to extract images and data from various different document management systems and upload them to the central FileStore solution.

The Benefits

- Streamlined invoice processing - End to end visibility of the invoice approval system.
- Rationalisation of the finance department through natural wastage with direct impact on the bottom line.
- Cost benefits - The project is estimated to be self fulfilling in a time line of 18 months.
- Improved supplier relationships by reducing the invoice processing time by 60% per supplier.
- Reduction of risk - the scanning services and centralised storage system helps reduce risk of losing documents.



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Working closely with DCS has enabled us to implement a straight forward solution which is easy to work and maintain. As well as helping us, realize cost savings it has enabled our staff to focus and add value in important areas of the business by taking away the previous heavily manual process.

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**Kevin Pryke, Financial Controller,
Notcutts**



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