ALBA Group standardizes Workflow Processes with xSuite

ALBA Group

As one of the globally leading groups of companies providing environmental services and raw materials, ALBA Group already implemented automated invoice processing in 2006. The workflow solution that had been used up to that point was no longer capable of meeting everyday requirements — a constantly growing volume of data and an increasing number of users accessing it. At the end of 2012, the recycling specialist made the switch to the xSuite Invoice solution. Since then, the solution has been installed throughout the group.

Through its brands ALBA and Interseroh, the ALBA Group is active with around 200 subsidiaries and associated companies in Germany and the rest of Europe, as well as in Asia and the U.S.A.. Approximately 9,000 employees generate an annual revenue of about €2.9 billion.

It became clear that the group's previous invoice processing system was no longer meeting the ever-growing demands of modern management. "For this reason, our main objective in the year 2012 was to develop a workflow process for the entire group that was standardized but could also be dynamically scaled," explains Max-Christian Zehner, Corporate IT / Corporate Performance Management at ALBA Group.

This workflow was to digitalize the processes that were still paper-based for all company codes of the brands ALBA and Interseroh, allowing usage independent of location. The existing invoice overview was to be replaced with a stable, efficient overall solution which could also be rolled out in standardized form in the future. "The main consideration we had when making our selection was an establishing optimal overall connection between our business processes and a supporting software," says Zehner.

Company
Web: www.albagroup.com
Sector: Recycling
Location: Berlin, Deutschland

xSuite sSolution
Invoice processing with SAP
(xSuite Invoice)

Why xSuite
Optimal overall connection between the business processes of ALBA Group and xSuite

Systems integration
SAP ERP

xSuite
It's simple. It's digital.

Image source: Alba Group

KPI Reporting for Workflow Process

With xSuite Invoice, the xSuite Group was clearly in the lead in its fulfillment of these requirements. Visits to reference clients further convinced ALBA of the technical capabilities of the solution. As a generic solution, xSuite Invoice maps and automates any document-based process within SAP.

"The automatic workflow process with xSuite Invoice supports our users both in the subsidiaries and in the shared services centers. Besides, the solution offers KPI reporting on the workflow process, which is important to us. We can use it whenever we want to generate up-to-the-minute analyses of different organizational structures, invoice statuses, agents involved in the process, and the process history," continues Zehner.

This kind of reporting should be set apart from central SAP reporting issues such as liquidity management in the area of treasury.

Integrating Diverse Upstream Systems

The main challenge in the implementation has been to integrate different upstream systems in the overall SAP solution. This requirement is a result of the fact that, in some of ALBA Group's associated companies, vendor invoices are not processed in SAP after scanning and archiving, but rather are transferred to the primary upstream logistic system connected to SAP. These documents are not transferred to SAP accounting until after they have been processed. At this point, the release of the documents has already taken place. For this reason, the release interface must support not only the invoices transferred to SAP but also those of other systems (including ORACLE ebs, ALBIS, RONA, and NAVISION).

This issue has been resolved through the integration and adaption of the workflow component xSuite Interface, which manages the pre-approval and release of these invoices and, after this has been completed, reassembles workflow data and the SAP accounting documents originating from the upstream system. If necessary, yet another workflow for payment release can be triggered.

A Total of over 1,000 Users Planned

Over 1,000 users will have access to the invoice workflow in the ALBA Group once implementation is completed. In the future, around 800,000 invoices will be processed annually with xSuite Invoice.

xSuite

It's simple. It's digital.