opentext™

Success story

Bidco Africa Ltd

Industry
• FMCG

Solutions
• OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions
• OpenText™ Invoice Capture Center
• OpenText™ Document Access for SAP® Solutions

Results

⤓ **Invoice processing time reduced** by 75%–85% through automation

📄 55% of **invoices processed automatically**

🔍 **Instant visibility into current liabilities** and identification of bottlenecks

Bidco Africa tackle accounts payable challenges with OpenText

OpenText Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions provides process automation, greater visibility and the ability to handle growth

"After just four months in production we're already automatically processing 55 percent of our invoices, massively reducing the workload on our AP team. The efficiency of the solution also means we're now processing invoices in one to two days, down by 75-85 percent of the seven days it used to take us."

Alkane Patel
Head of IT
Bidco Africa Ltd

Bidco Africa Ltd is the largest and fastest growing manufacturer and marketer of consumer products in the Eastern, Central and Southern regions of Africa. Headquartered in Kenya, the company produces, markets and distributes a broad range of products, including edible oils, cooking fats, margarine, baking products, hygiene products, detergents, laundry bars and animal feeds.

From its roots in garment manufacturing in the 1970s, the company has continually innovated and moved with the times. In 2015, Bidco celebrated 30 years of owning and operating its own oil refineries to support its growing manufacturing base.

Today, Bidco reaches 350 million consumers across Africa, supported by its factories in Kenya, Tanzania, Rwanda and Uganda, and by distribution operations in 12 more countries.

As its portfolio of products and geographical presence has grown, so has the volume of vendor invoices that Bidco receives and needs to process. Using a Shared Service Center model, invoices are received in both paper and electronic form for processing by the accounts payable (AP) team, supported by the use of its SAP® financial system.

However, keeping track of tens of thousands of invoices every year is a considerable challenge. The company was also heavily reliant on paper documents to handle queries. This all led to difficulties with reporting, making it hard to have a clear understanding of the company's overall liabilities at any given point in time. Handling inbound or internal queries, would often involve first tracking down the paper invoices, which could be sitting on an individual's desk.

Bidco recognized that to improve its processes, increase efficiency, visibility and to be able to identify bottlenecks, the company needed a solution that would provide automation, reporting and be tightly integrated to SAP.

OpenText: The perfect solution, working in harmony with SAP

Bidco's IT department worked with business stakeholders to establish clear requirements for the new solution.
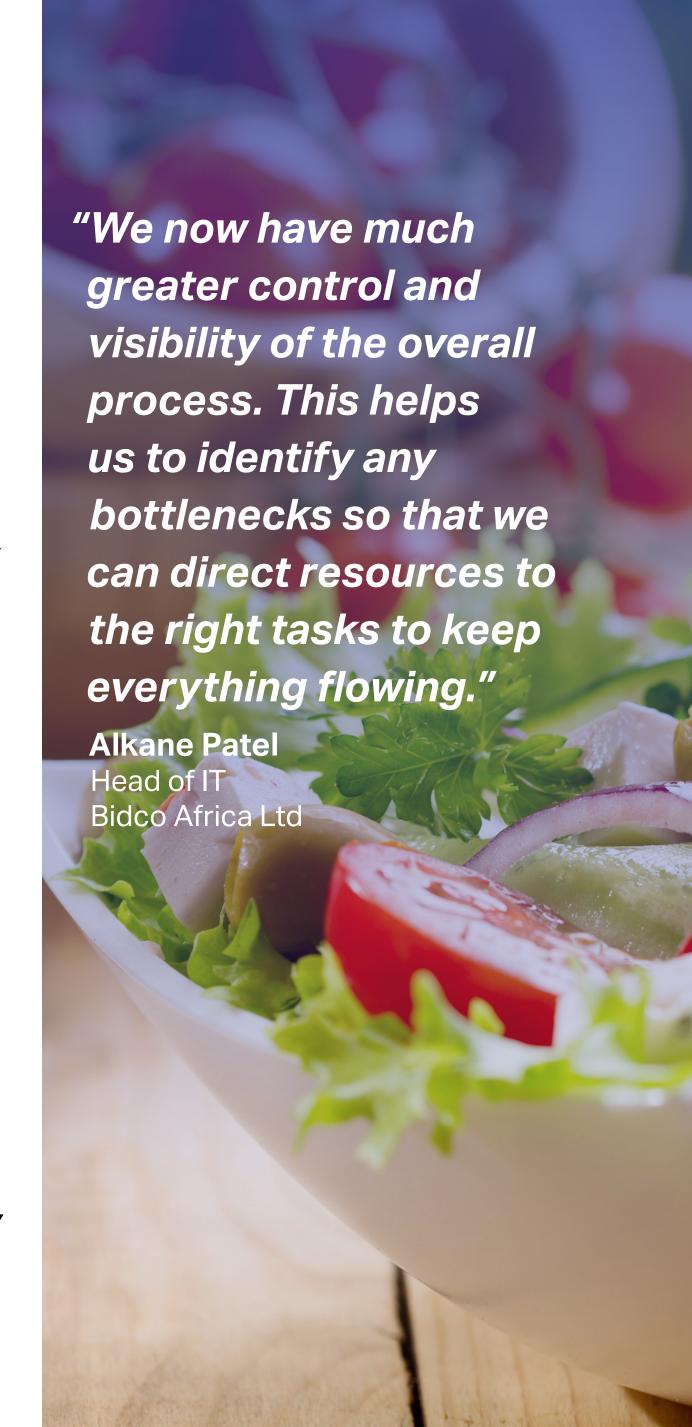
Alkane Patel, head of IT at Bidco Africa Ltd explained: *"Our Shared Service Center has seen tremendous growth in recent years, including processing vendor invoices. Invoices, approvals and other related documents were not available to our team from within SAP, so this was clearly a key objective when implementing a new solution."*

Bidco, working with OpenText partner Avaali Solutions, conducted detailed workshops to establish the full scope of the project and requirements. Based on the workshop outputs, IT and the business team at Bidco were unanimous in selecting OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions as the best fit.

"In order to improve our ability to automatically process invoices, with three-way matching, we also selected OpenText™ Invoice Capture Center," added Patel. *"This allows us to scan and automatically extract numerous data points from invoices. The system can then automatically match an invoice to an order, and if all automated checks are in order, the invoice can be passed for payment without any need for human intervention."*

Avaali undertook the implementation and training with Bidco, and the solution was ready to go live in less than four months.

"With the solution live, after just four months in production, we're already automatically processing 55 percent of our invoices, massively reducing the workload on our AP team. The efficiency of the solution also means we're now processing invoices in one to two days, down by 75-85 percent of the seven days it used to take us," said Patel.

"We now have much greater control and visibility of the overall process. This helps us to identify any bottlenecks so that we can direct resources to the right tasks to keep everything flowing."

Alkane Patel
Head of IT
Bidco Africa Ltd

Reliable visibility of liabilities and improved reporting

Dealing with enquiries is now a much faster process, too. OpenText™ Document Access for SAP® Solutions is providing complete visibility of any document associated to an order, invoice or approval, from within SAP. Users no longer have to spend considerable time locating the documents they need to solve a query. They simply access everything from one, familiar user interface in SAP.

"The system takes care of much more than just capturing and matching an invoice. The approval matrix feature takes care of automating the routing of approvals and handles exceptions, too. We can instantly see our current liabilities and periodic reporting is now a painless task compared to the old way of working," said Patel.

Thanks to OpenText, approving invoices for payment is now possible for the first time via mobile devices or the web. This means that approvals or refusals can be gained much quicker, contributing further to the streamlining of the overall purchase to pay lifecycle.

"We now have much greater control and visibility of the overall process. This helps us to identify any bottlenecks so that we can direct resources to the right tasks to keep everything flowing," added Patel.

Built for future growth with built-in compliance

As Bidco continues to grow and bring additional facilities on-stream, the foundations that have been laid with OpenText and SAP mean the company is ready to quickly integrate those new facilities to its financial processes. Bidco is already processing around 30,000 invoices per year with the solution, but know that as volume increases it will be able to handle the demand without additional staff.

"We now have a truly complete audit trail for the lifecycle of our accounts payable processes, with every related document and action visible instantaneously in SAP. The solution even helps us to fight fraud with the checks and matching that it undertakes, immediately alerting us when something isn't right," added Patel. *"We know we've made the right choice in selecting OpenText."*

About Avaali Solutions Pvt. Ltd

Avaali Solutions (avaali.com) is a company that enables enterprises to drive and deliver business results by leveraging digital technologies.

Avaali has strength in providing Enterprise Information Management (EIM) solutions. Avaali's advisory, consulting and implementation services have enabled enterprises to transform their business processes and engage better with their stakeholders, including customers, employees, partners, vendors and shareholders.

About OpenText

OpenText, The Information Company, enables organizations to gain insight through market leading information management solutions, on-premises or in the cloud. For more information about OpenText (NASDAQ: OTEX, TSX: OTEX) visit opentext.com.

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