

How to Integrate AP Automation into your ERP



Businesses invest lots of time and money into their legacy accounting software and enterprise resource planning (ERP) applications – the financial systems of record for the organization.

AP Automation Integration with ERP Whether a business uses a legacy system from SAP, Oracle, NetSuite, QuickBooks, Sage, Acumatica, or another provider, accounting software and ERPs play a big role in a business.

Accounting software and ERP applications manage general ledger (GL) and supplier data, enforce payment terms and other finance rules, define workflows, streamline financial processes, and more.

The best accounting software and ERPs provide a foundation for agility and robust operations.

But even the best accounting software or ERP application cannot deliver optimum performance across the invoice-to-pay lifecycle if they are not well-integrated with the accounts payable (AP) processes that feed them. That's the reason that more businesses are deploying AP automation solutions or invoice processing software that integrate seamlessly with their legacy applications.

The benefits of automated invoice processing

Automated invoice processing software streamlines AP to deliver better business outcomes.

- **Increased staff productivity:** Automated invoice processing software aggregates all paper and electronic invoices onto a single platform, including those sent via e-mail, supplier portal, or fax. Using a single platform to process all invoices reduces operations overhead, eliminates data silos, accelerates staff training, and improves visibility into invoice information.
- **Lower invoice processing costs:** Automated invoice processing software captures and validates all invoice header and line-item data, including the supplier's name, the remittance address, the invoice total, unit prices, the quantity of goods purchased, and more.
- **Faster invoice approval cycle times:** Automated invoice processing software eliminates the manual steps and opportunities for errors that can delay invoice approvals. Pre-configured business rules digitally route invoices to the right person. There is no chance that invoices will be misrouted, lost, or become "stuck" at the bottom of someone's physical or electronic inbox. Approvers are notified when they receive an invoice that requires approval and alerted when an invoice is approaching its due date. Invoices are automatically escalated to a manager for review if they are not approved in a preset amount of time. And AP managers can see the status of invoices in real-time and re-route invoices to avoid bottlenecks.
- **Fewer duplicate payments and other payment errors:** Eliminating manual keying reduces the possibility of errors that can result in incorrect payments to suppliers. Any discrepancies between the data on invoices and purchase orders (POs) and proof-of-delivery documents are flagged for operator review. And duplicate invoices are detected before they are paid.
- **Enhanced visibility:** Automated invoice processing solutions put smart insights at the fingertips of the decision-makers who need them. Graphical

dashboards display Key Performance Indicators (KPIs), operational metrics, and the status of invoices. Drill-down capabilities enable decision-makers to identify trends in invoice data and uncover the source of cash flow issues. Decision-makers can use their mobile device to access invoice data at any time, from any location. Exports accelerate the delivery of information downstream. And ad hoc reporting makes it easy to keep up with changing business requirements.

Automated invoice processing delivers these benefits with whatever legacy systems a business uses.

What is the difference between AP automation and an ERP?

Legacy accounting software or ERP applications are the financial nerve center of a business.

Centralizing all transactional data and financial rules streamlines accounting decisions and processes. Legacy accounting software and ERP applications help finance and accounting teams perform tasks such as budget and expense planning, core accounting, revenue management, and tax management.

Although they perform some of the same functions, legacy accounting software and ERP applications are not the same as automated invoice processing software or AP automation solutions.

Automated invoice processing software was purpose-built for AP tasks such as gathering invoices, capturing and validating invoice data, routing invoices for approval, and reporting on invoice data.

Some legacy ERPs offer predefined workflows to manage invoice approvals. But automated invoice processing software has configurable workflows to meet the requirements of any business. This distinction is critical as approvals can quickly get bogged down by rigid or inflexible business rules.

Why integrate AP automation with your legacy software?

Automated invoice processing software can integrate with legacy solutions to streamline AP.

Best-in-class invoice processing solutions work with legacy systems to automate AP tasks such as:

- **Invoice gathering:** all invoices aggregated onto a single platform
- **Intelligent data capture:** all invoice header and line-item data is captured and validated
- **Dynamic workflow routing:** digital routing of invoices based on pre-defined rules
- **Invoice posting:** direct uploads of approved invoices to any legacy system
- **Supplier payments:** electronic payment of suppliers using ACH, vCard, and P-card
- **Reporting and analytics:** real-time visibility into invoice data and AP information

Leading invoice processing software works with an extensive list of top-tier ERP providers. No business should be forced to change its legacy software for the sake of an AP automation system.

The best AP automation solutions can easily integrate with ERPs from providers such as SAP, Oracle, NetSuite, Sage, Infor, Microsoft, JD Edwards, PeopleSoft, Advantage, and more. These automated invoice processing solutions can be deployed fast without disrupting existing rules.

When seamlessly integrated with legacy accounting software or ERP applications, automated invoice processing software or AP automation delivers improvements across the invoice-to-pay lifecycle.

Businesses in any industry can benefit from seamless integration of automated invoice processing software with their legacy systems, including businesses in media and advertising, property management, pharmaceutical and life sciences, banking and financial services, and manufacturing and distribution.

How to improve the ROI of your legacy systems

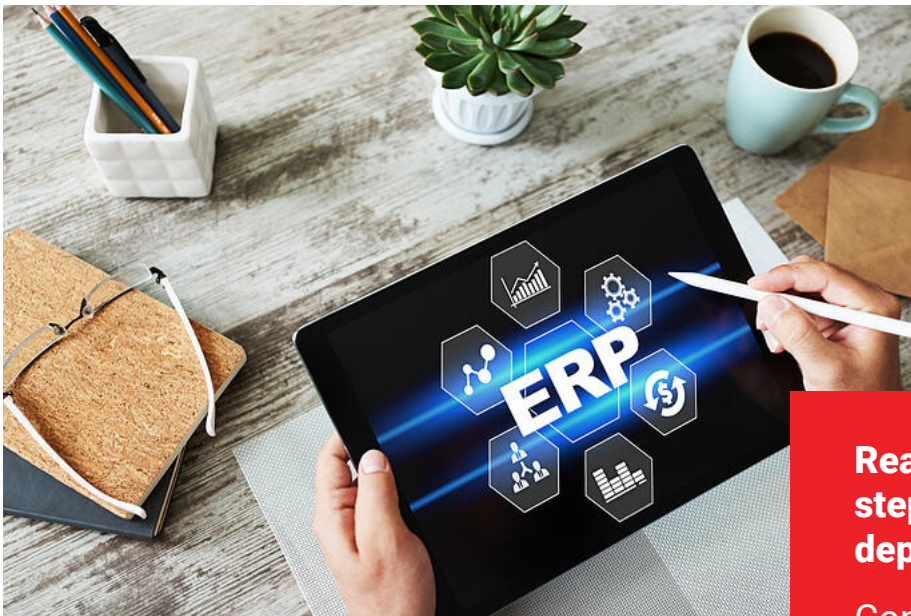
An ERP is one of the largest technology investments that any business will make.

By integrating automated invoice processing software or an accounts payable automation solution with their legacy accounting system or ERP application, businesses of all sizes can be sure that:

- Approved invoice data is uploaded directly without manual keying

- Invoice data in the legacy system is complete, accurate, and timely
- Finance professionals can easily access data to resolve exceptions and other errors
- There's no need to depend on back-and-forth e-mails and calls to track down information
- Vendor master data is synchronized

Seamless integration helps AP departments get to the next level of operational efficiency – a level they may never reach if they must manually process the invoices they receive from suppliers.



Ready to take the next step in automating your AP department?

Contact us to arrange a consultation with one of our solutions experts.