

CASE
STUDY

MICROSOFT / EY

EY Teams Reinvent Global Finance Process with Microsoft Power Platform Reducing Lead Times by 95%

EY, a leading global organization with approximately 300,000 professionals, provides services to over 200,000 clients in 150 countries. As part of its digital transformation initiative to enhance operational efficiency, the EY Global Finance team recently took on the challenge of revamping their General Ledger (GL) posting process. The previous semi-manual process was not only labor-intensive, but also varied across regions, resulting in inconsistencies and inefficiencies, especially during the critical month-end financial close periods. By adopting PowerPost, a solution developed on Microsoft Power Platform, EY has seamlessly automated this process within their SAP ERP system, enabling direct source data entry and reducing lead times by an impressive 95%.

The Challenge

Ajith Haripaul, EY Global Controlling Transformation Leader, challenged members of the EY Global Finance team to transform its global finance operations, including streamlining the GL posting

CUSTOMER

EY

INDUSTRY

Professional Services

SIZE

Corporate
(10,000+ employees)

COUNTRY

United States

SOLUTIONS & SERVICES

- Microsoft Dataverse
- Power Apps
- Power Automate
- SharePoint

process. The previous process was prone to errors due to the data transfer steps between different applications and varied significantly from country to country. The legacy third-party tool also incurred substantial licensing, platform and maintenance fees, limiting user adoption due to cost constraints. These factors, coupled with a suboptimal user experience and lengthy processing times, demanded a robust digital overhaul.

The PowerPost Solution

In response to these challenges, EY Global Finance team members developed PowerPost, an automated solution designed to integrate seamlessly with the existing SAP ERP system. This innovation aimed to standardize the GL posting process across the globe, optimizing cost savings and driving efficiencies by dramatically reducing lead times by 95%.

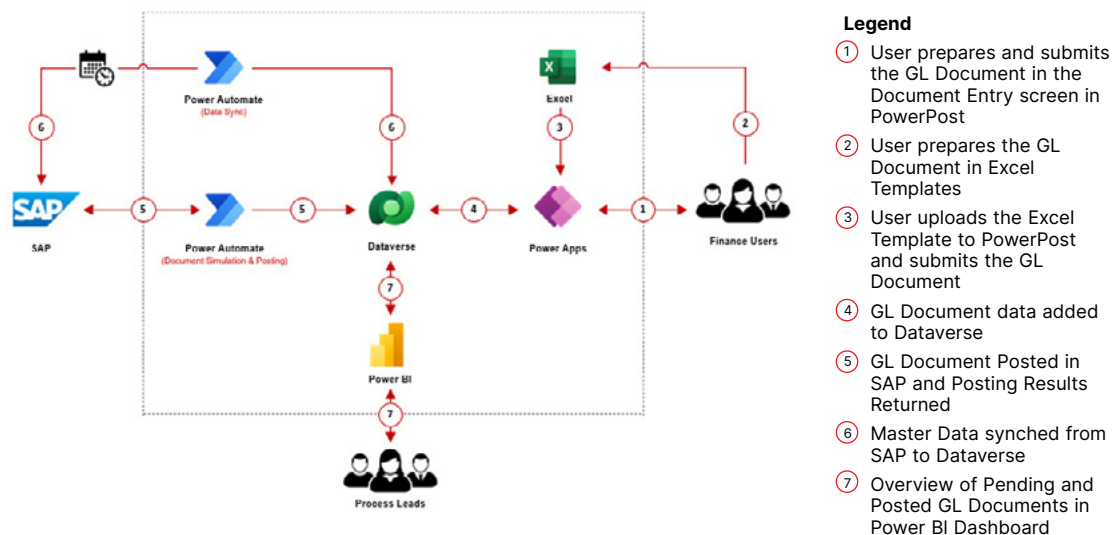
“We are extremely proud of PowerPost, our leading-class GL posting application that is making a difference to EY finance professionals across the globe.”

Stef Pieterse
EY Business Process Lead for
Finance and Accounting

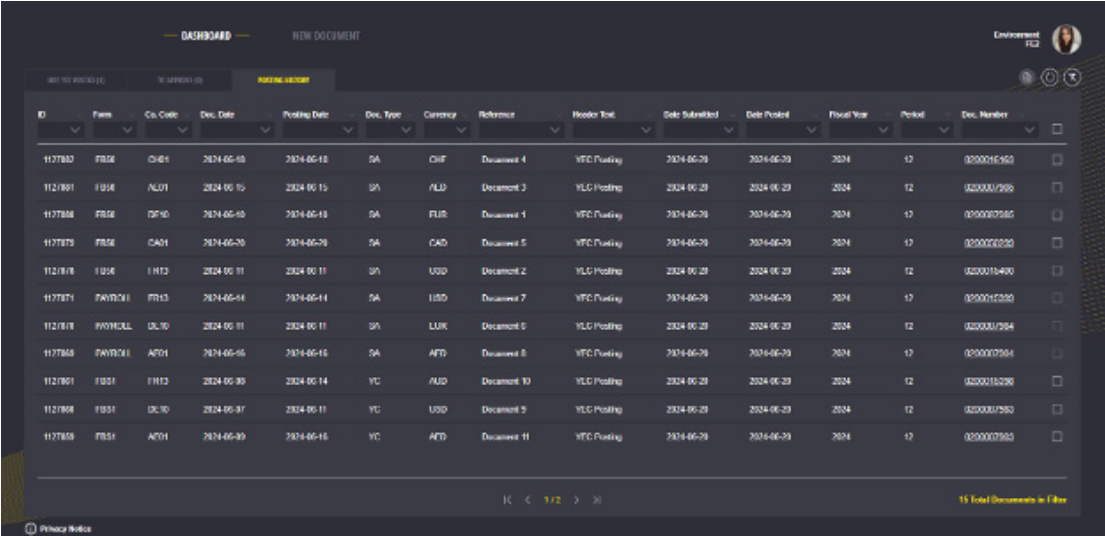
PowerPost is a Canvas App from which Power Automate flows are run using the ‘Call SAP function (V2)’ action to simulate and post GL documents in SAP. Scheduled flows are run using the ‘Read SAP table with parsing’ action to periodically synchronize GL Master Data from SAP to the app. This data is stored in Dataverse. A Power BI dashboard is built on top of Dataverse, which provides Process Leads with an overview of the pending and posted GL documents.

PowerPost has an intuitive user interface with two main screens. The Dashboard screen provides users with an overview of their pending and posted GL documents. From the Dashboard screen, users can trigger a flow to reverse one or more posted GL

EY Powerpost Technical Architecture Diagram Shows how GI Documents are Simulated and Posted using Power Platform



PowerPost Dashboard Screen Showing the User's Posted Documents



ID	Form	Co. Code	Doc. Date	Posting Date	Doc. Type	Currency	Reference	Header Text	Date Submitted	Date Posted	Fiscal Year	Period	Doc. Number
1127882	FBSE	CH01	2024-06-10	2024-06-10	SA	CHF	Document 4	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016562
1127891	FBSE	AL01	2024-06-10	2024-06-10	SA	ALL	Document 3	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016568
1127888	FBSE	DF10	2024-06-10	2024-06-10	SA	EUR	Document 1	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016565
1127879	FBSE	CA01	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	SA	CAD	Document 5	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016563
1127876	FBSE	IM12	2024-06-11	2024-06-11	SA	USD	Document 2	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016400
1127871	FAVTR01	FB13	2024-06-14	2024-06-14	SA	USD	Document 7	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016565
1127878	FAVTR01	DL10	2024-06-11	2024-06-11	SA	EUR	Document 6	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016564
1127869	FAVTR01	AT01	2024-06-16	2024-06-16	SA	ATD	Document 8	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016564
1127861	FBSE	IM12	2024-06-30	2024-06-14	YC	ALL	Document 10	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016566
1127868	FBSE	DL10	2024-06-31	2024-06-11	YC	USD	Document 9	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016563
1127859	FBSE	AT01	2024-06-30	2024-06-16	YC	ATD	Document 11	YFC Posting	2024-06-20	2024-06-20	2024	12	0200016563

documents. The screen also enables users to open the SAP document posted through PowerPost directly in the browser.

The Document Entry screen provides users with two input methods for five different GL-related transaction codes — single document or multiple documents. The single document input method requires users to populate the Header and line-item data in the Document Entry screen. Line-item data can also be imported from an Excel file or from a previously posted GL document, which is often used to post recurring GL documents. The input fields are setup with dropdowns and instant validations making it easy to populate. For less experienced users, there is a feature to search Master Data based on descriptions. A document can also be saved as draft to complete at a later date.

Before sending the GL document for approval, the user has the option to simulate the posting in SAP. This triggers a flow which simulates the posting in SAP and returns the simulated posting result. Posting errors are returned at the document header and line-item level and can be filtered in the app. This is a useful feature for documents with a high number of line items as the user can focus on those line items requiring correction. In the Finalization step, users can add attachments, select the document approvers and add a comment for the approver to read before approving the document. Attachments are also transferred and attached to the posted SAP document using a Dataverse triggered flow.

Through the multiple documents input method, users can upload and submit up to 20 documents simultaneously using a macro-enabled Excel template. This feature is useful for posting documents with a high number of line items. A flow uploads the data from Excel to Dataverse using an Office Script and allows users to directly submit the documents for approval or posting. Any posting errors resulting from these submissions are then resolved in the Document Entry screen.

PowerPost Document Entry Screen Showing a Posting Error Returned by the Simulation Feature

The screenshot displays the PowerPost Document Entry interface. At the top, it shows 'FB50 - ID 1127736 - Draft'. Below this is the 'DOCUMENT HEADER' section with fields for Co. Code (AD01), Document Date (2024-06-20), Posting Date (2024-06-20), Period (12), Doc. Type (SA), Currency (EUR), Reference (Test Doc), Header Text (Test Hdr), Ledger (GL), and Cross Company. The 'LINE ITEMS' table contains two entries:

Line	Co. Code	GL Account	Am. In Doc. Cur.	Profit Center	Cost Center	WBS Element	Item Text	Assignment	Long Text (English)
1	AD01	88003000	100	Profit Center	AD012345	WBS Element	Test Line 1	ABC	
2	AD01	99000000	-100	Profit Center	Cost Center	WBS Element	Test Line 2	DEF	

On the right, the 'MASTER DATA SEARCH' section shows 'Select Attribute' and 'AD01'. The 'VALIDATION' section lists two errors:

- Line 0 - Postings to GL accounts with open item management are not permitted
- Line 1 - Cost center 88003000 does not exist on 20.06.2024.

At the bottom right, there is a 'Simulate Document Posting' checkbox, a 'Filter Errors' button, and 'Validate' and 'Post' buttons. The 'Total Amount' is shown as 0.

“The success of PowerPost lies in its features and ease-of-use, which enable users with different experience levels to collaborate on a complex finance process”, says Stef Pieterse. “With Power Platform, we were able to provide an app which seamlessly integrates with SAP and provides the right level of scalability, efficiency and flexibility for our users to love it”.

The Result

Benefits Realized with Power Apps

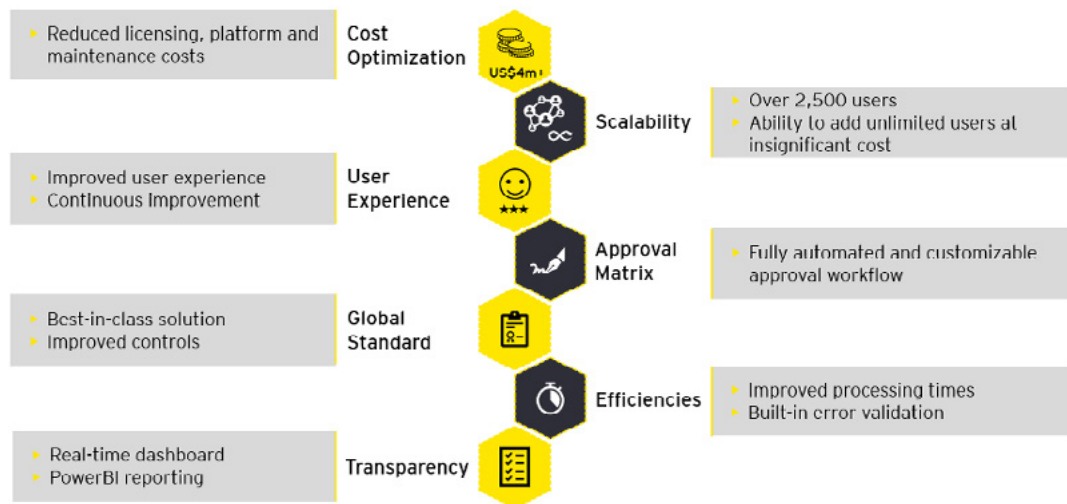
The implementation of PowerPost has led to a significant reduction in processing time, with the average posting now completed in under 38 seconds. The solution has also generated significant cost savings by reducing licensing, platform, and maintenance expenses, as well as transactional processing fees. The removal of licensing limitations has provided an increased number of users to access the system.

PowerPost’s user-friendly design has democratized access to finance operations, allowing non-finance users to post documents without intermediaries. Continuous enhancements have further accelerated processing speeds and introduced new features and functionalities.

The customizable built-in approval workflow allows for tailored approval processes to meet the unique needs of different countries. Enhanced controls help ensure that only authorized personnel can make postings, bolstering the integrity of the process.

Notably, PowerPost has streamlined the GL posting process, particularly for high-volume postings, and its improved validation mechanisms have significantly reduced posting errors. The automation of the submission and approval process has eliminated the need for email correspondence entirely.

PowerPost Benefits Realization



A real-time dashboard, complemented by Power BI reporting, offers immediate insights into the status of documents, fostering more effective reviews and controls during month-end closings. These advancements collectively position PowerPost as a leading-class solution, with a user-centric approach at its core.

Anri Brits, EY Global Process Owner, General Ledger says, "Through PowerPost, we've achieved a transformative leap in our SAP document posting process, establishing a new global standard of excellence. This initiative has provided profound cost savings while also dramatically improving operational efficiency and earning high praise from our Finance Controllers who are the primary beneficiaries of this innovative solution."

Additional projects in pipeline for EY using Power Platform

EY teams have several new projects, both in progress and in pipeline, which are building on logic used in PowerPost. Ajith Haripaul, EY Global Controlling Transformation Leader explains why EY teams are so keen on using the Power Platform: "EY is a large, complex organization with many stakeholders located in many geographies. SAP offers us the degree of rigidity, scalability, governance, and security that we need at a macro level. However, we also need to be flexible, agile and deal with numerous different inputs and scenarios on an ongoing basis. Complementing SAP with the Microsoft Power Platform offers us the ability to be flexible, develop and build applications with a skeleton set of requirements within a short timeframe, yet still meeting our overall stringent security requirements. With continuously changing business needs, we are finding that the Power Platform offers us the ability to build things quickly in a cost-effective manner. We see lots of opportunities on the horizon to leverage Power Platform."

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