



DRIVING EFFICIENCY GAINS AND A CULTURAL SHIFT TO DRIVE GROWTH AND ACQUISITIONS – A SUCCESS STORY OF ACCOUNTS PAYABLE AUTOMATION.

One of Australia's leading diversified food and agribusiness companies, the Craig Mostyn Group supplies customers both domestically and internationally with fresh pork, seafood, protein meal, tallow and fruit products. Operating state-of-the art processing facilities throughout Australia, Craig Mostyn Group turned over 350 million dollars in 2014 and is positioning itself for a significant leap in growth and new acquisitions.

The Challenge

Craig Mostyn Group has different business divisions in different industries scattered across Australia. After reviewing many of its internal processes, the company thought that several processes could be further optimised to increase efficiency. Long-term, the company is looking at streamlining all its processes to set itself up for significant growth and future acquisitions.

For Group Financial Controller Scott Seville, the Accounts Payable process was the starting point.

"We felt our current processes were effective, but there was a space to get some efficiency gains. What cropped up was that all our invoice processing was done at the various sites, and then invoices were sent to our centralised shared service team here in Fremantle, Western Australia. The fact that one invoice gets handled by numerous people before it makes its way to head office for payment just didn't make sense anymore."

The Solution

A year ago, the team presented its business case to the CFO Mark Wray and the Division GMs. It was decided that a pilot be implemented at head office in Fremantle to demonstrate the capability of an Accounts Payable automation solution.

"Our CFO decided to focus on our Accounts Payable process and from then, it was a joint effort between the accounts payable team, myself (as Group Financial Controller) and the Project Accountant Matt Brehany."

"Everyone was keen on the concept, but essentially said, prove it, so we set up a pilot at our head office, to show how the technology could help us, to show that the solution worked, that it was a good idea."

After reviewing several solutions, Craig Mostyn Group selected the Esker Accounts Payable solution on Premises with its mobile application for business approvers.

"The small investment required to get this in place seemed like a no-brainer." The pilot at head office provided the evidence that new technology can drive cultural change in the company. "Everyone could see the solution working. No more paper getting manually handled through the business, a completely digitalised process....the benefits flowed from there."

Since then, and over the past 9 months, the Esker Accounts Payable solution has been rolled out to every business in the Craig Mostyn Group.

The Esker Accounts Payable (AP) automation solution is integrated with the company's ERP system called Adept. It eliminates the need to manually process paper based documents by digitalising the invoice approval workflow and by automating the posting of the invoice key data into Adept. Additionally, the solution also includes digital archiving so that AP officers can easily retrieve invoice images with a couple of clicks.



When people use technology correctly, and they see it working, they start to question other parts of the business, and they start reviewing other processes.

Willy Piquer – Group Financial Controller



How it works

"For me, usability was important. It had to work for everyone. So the Accounts Payable team, the people involved in entering the data, they had to like it first and foremost. The other critical point was the approvers, it can't take more time than the current process did, so it had to be as quick as them grabbing a pen, and signing a piece of paper."

The team did thorough research and reviewed and met with all the competing solution providers in the Australian marketplace.

"We spent time doing our research because you only get one shot at this and we wanted to make sure we were getting the right solution from a proven solution provider."

"The reason we chose Esker was first and foremost usability for everyone." «It's so much easier to use."

The other important factor singled out by the team is "the fact that the Esker software solution was an all-in-one solution (as opposed to other solutions which are made of several software products)."

Clearly the Esker AP automation solution includes all the required functionality and capability required in one fully integrated solution with the OCR engine, workflow engine, archive, mobile application for approvers.

"Even during a recent business trip to the United States, I was able to stay in the loop and authorise any business critical invoices using the Esker iPhone technology" says Mark Wray, CFO of the Craig Mostyn Group.

The Benefits

While efficiency and cost-savings were direct benefits of the implementation of the Esker AP automation solution, Scott Seville singles out the cultural shift that is helping propel the group forward in its growth and acquisitions phase.

"The time savings have exceeded our expectations, we calculated around 4 minutes per invoice potentially and that's only in head office." "We have cut costs, operating costs, paper costs, printing costs, postage costs, and storage costs. But we really wanted to make it a cultural change project. We positioned it internally as a shift in people's time from non-value added to value-added activities, that way everyone could get behind it and support it."

Significant intangible benefits were also achieved with this project. According to Scott Seville, "it easily exceeded our expectations... We can see the change it's had in terms of people's morale."... "It helps build the cultural change, it gives us credibility, it helps give us momentum."

The team is now busy rolling out the technology throughout all the different business groups.

"Everyone wants it, which speaks volume about what a success the project has been."...

"Matt Brehany, our project accountant, is now fully booked, rolling this business out to all our business units."

Exceptional Esker project team

The Craig Mostyn Group team speaks highly of the project delivered by Esker Australia.

"I thought the Esker team and the project delivery were excellent, thoroughly professional. That really gave us a lot of confidence that we made the right call." "They travelled to Fremantle and spent time in the business, to fully understand what was going on. It wasn't just a case of someone signing the contract and someone else delivering it. We were really happy and we felt that they really understood the business."

Future Plans with Esker

Craig Mostyn Group is now looking at implementing the same cultural shift and lift in efficiency to other processes in the business.

"The reason we chose Esker was first and foremost usability for everyone as well as the other solutions Esker could offer. We see opportunities to streamline our Orders to Cash processes."

"When people use technology correctly, and they see it working, they start to question other parts of the business, and they start reviewing other processes" says Scott Seville.

The Craig Mostyn Group is now looking at leveraging its initial investment in Esker to further digitalise and automate its key business processes.

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