

INVOICE SOLUTION

# Hengstenberg



**Challenge:**

- » Digital processing of vendor invoices
- » Introduction in a narrow timeframe
- » Workload reduction for the accounting department

**Solution:**

- » Central mailroom for digital recording of all incoming invoices
- » Integration of SAP Content Server
- » Rollout at three locations

**Benefits:**

- » Transparent overview of the processing status of all vendor invoices
- » Much faster processing
- » Compliance with cash discount periods
- » Reduction of paper consumption
- » Avoidance of input errors during document entry



# Economic pleasure experiences in financial accounting

»Making good things even better. Since 1876.« This is Hengstenberg's slogan, which applies to all business areas of the food processing company. Therefore, it was also necessary to get the best out of the well-functioning financial accounting: processing of vendor invoices was to become more economical. After all, Hengstenberg has made the careful use of natural, economic, and social resources a top priority. In order to protect staff, finances, and the environment, as well as to gain time and transparency, AFI Invoice was introduced by AFI Solutions GmbH.

## Obtaining an overview

In addition to settling liabilities on time, it was important for Hengstenberg to have an overview of all vendor invoices at any time. Before the introduction of electronic invoice processing, invoices

were received at three locations: Esslingen, Bad Friedrichshall and Fritzlar. Paper-intensive, lossy, and non-transparent invoice verification was done via »circulation slips«. The staff in the financial accounting department did their job well, but no one could immediately make a binding statement on the number, status, and total volume of vendor invoices in circulation.

## Numerous options and benefits

Horst Redlich, Head of Financial Accounting at Hengstenberg, first came into contact with the software manufacturer AFI Solutions in 2007. At an AFI info day, he was able to take a live look at AFI Invoice and immediately realized that the solution for automated processing of incoming invoices could reduce the workload of the financial accounting department. He also identified other advantages

that come with electronic processing: gaining transparency and responding quickly to all issues related to the incoming invoice.

*„I was impressed with the numerous options AFI Invoice provides. That was the inspiration to start looking for other solutions on the market. I realized that day that I wanted software to process our vendor invoices! Even though it was not yet clear with which manufacturer and at what time this project would be implemented,“* Horst Redlich describes the „beginning of process improvement“ at Hengstenberg.

## New challenges in financial accounting provide a boost

Without haste, the market was scoured for suppliers and the pre-selection was kept for resubmission. Unfortunately, the day arrived when the personnel

situation in Horst Redlich's team changed. After one specialist left, it was clear that the workload of the other team members would increase accordingly. With additional and increased financial accounting challenges, the pros and cons of an automated solution for incoming invoices were being considered. As a result, the management decided to introduce software to optimize processes and increase efficiency.



## **E**mphasis on work ethic and philosophy

The selection process began. All short-listed manufacturers were invited to the company headquarters to present their product in its current release status. AFI Solutions was the most convincing. Horst Redlich explains:

*„The responsible sales representative has always accompanied us over the years and convinced us once again in the last presentation.“*

## **I**n-depth but flexible integration into SAP

In addition to these aspects, the integration of the AFI software into SAP was also heavily weighted. The solution is integrated deeply but flexibly into SAP. If necessary, the connection to a shared service center would be possible without further ado.

Another advantage is that with AFI's own Invoice Plus Object, documents can be modified until they are posted in SAP. If a document with purchase order reference is accidentally created as one without purchase order reference or if, for example, an incorrect company code is specified, this can only be corrected with great effort in the SAP standard: this is not the case with AFI Invoice. *„Corrections are quite simple,“* says the Head of Financial Accounting.

## **S**eason kick-off sets the pace

In a short time frame, the software for automated processing of incoming invoices was implemented in just over three months at the seasonally driven food processing company. The vendor invoices were processed electronically just in time for the season kick-off.

*„It was pure stress. But we managed to work productively with the software during the ongoing business process and before our busy period,“* Horst Redlich says delightedly.

## **P**roFi.Assistance. Help. Process. Optimize

Hengstenberg has taken advantage of an AFI service in several respects: ProFi.Assistance. This is a person-independent all-round carefree support during productive operation. AFI specialists provide support to staff during the settling-in period or to the specialist department during vacation and illness.

*„This is one of AFI's outstanding services. I've never seen anything like it from any other company. We are impressed. The tips and tricks that you get as a newcomer in dealing with the software are priceless. And being able to access competent support in*





the event of staff shortages in the specialist area is very valuable! ProFi.Assistance from AFI is not only familiar with AFI Invoice, but also with the technical background of accounting and taxes," affirms Horst Redlich.

## Multifunction tool

Manual work is a thing of the past. »Circulation slips« and »ledgers« on paper have been replaced by an electronic workflow. The manual entry of invoice documents and the input errors that could result are avoided by scanning and reading out the data. Since the introduction of the central mailroom in Esslingen, backup copies are no longer sent back and forth between locations. Document management and searching has also been simplified thanks to the storage of digitized documents in the SAP Content Server.

Esslingen, Bad Friedrichshall and Fritzlar now process incoming invoices uniformly and transparently with the solution AFI Invoice. When asked about the greatest benefit, Horst Redlich doesn't think twice:

*„It's a multitude of different factors that make our work easier. Thanks to the electronic archive, we have a consistent filing system that everyone can access, regardless of location. There are no data entry errors, cash discount periods are no longer omitted, and the electronic incoming invoice ledger, »the Monitor«, has become our multifunction tool in day-to-day business as well as for the monthly and annual financial statement.“*

## E-Invoice: conservation of natural and economic resources

From the point of view of the award-winning branded goods manufacturer, the company's own principles of »conservation of economic and social resources« are already optimally compatible with AFI's software-supported invoice processing. The company is also considering an increased use of electronic invoices to ensure the conservation of natural resources.

Considering that just 1 kilogram of paper requires 2.2 kilograms of wood, the ecological advantage is obvious.

With AFI Invoice's three e-invoice modules, Mailbox, File and EDI, invoices are received electronically and processed directly. Preparation and scanning of paper invoices is eliminated without replacement.

*„We are already taking this approach with our foreign vendors. In addition to the ecological aspects, the economic ones are also becoming apparent again. With e-invoices, we are experiencing a further reduction in workload,“* says the Head of Financial Accounting.



The name of Hengstenberg has been a synonym for fine taste, real enjoyment and the very best in quality for more than 140 years. In addition to vinegar, sauerkraut, red cabbage and gherkins, mustard and fine sour as well as tomato products are also manufactured at the German plants in Bad Friedrichshall and Fritzlar.

The best-known brands include Altmeister, Mildessa, Knax and ORO di Parma. Today, the entire range includes around 140 different items that can be found in around 40 countries. Organic and delicatessen quality, as well as country-specific merchandise, are also included in the product portfolio.

[www.hengstenberg.com](http://www.hengstenberg.com)



AFI Solutions GmbH is a leading solution provider for the digitization and optimization of document processes around SAP. The solutions cover the entire purchase-to-pay and order-to-cash process.

AFI is the only software manufacturer on the market that offers everything from a single source: With the RedPaperCenter as a managed service, companies can easily outsource the digitization of a wide variety of paper documents. In process optimization, AFI scores with SAP-integrated software solutions. The cloud-based DocumentHub as software as a service (= SaaS) completes the unique product portfolio.

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