

## CASE STUDY

# Office Depot Europe sharpens its competitive edge with e-invoicing



From carrier bags to coat hangers and specialist papers to promotional products, **Office Depot Europe**, headquartered in the Netherlands, is a supplier of office products to businesses throughout Europe and the Middle East. Operating in a

highly competitive market, Office Depot exploits every advantage it can to sharpen its pitches for new business. E-invoicing is a selling point that makes a difference to potential customers.

## LIFE BEFORE E-INVOICING

Prior to electronic invoicing, Office Depot Europe's manual handling process for invoices was time consuming and expensive. As a consequence the business has long been an advocate of electronic invoicing. It is part of the company's wider e-Business strategy, and is focused on boosting online service levels and improving its customers' cost efficiencies.

More traditional methods of invoicing are cumbersome. "The challenges we have with customers not yet using Tungsten Network are the variety of formats and protocols they require," says Ellen Tosserams, e-Business Specialist Europe at Office Depot Europe. "With EDI, for example, our support team spends time building and testing tailored solutions, and customers spend time defining their requirements and testing the invoice-matching process at their end."

## TUNGSTEN NETWORK

### USING TUNGSTEN NETWORK

Fortunately, this is changing. "More and more of our major customers are choosing to receive their invoices through Tungsten Network, and many of those have selected us as the first supplier to begin their e-invoicing initiatives with because of the high number of orders they have with us and our successful e-procurement implementations to date."

One of the advantages of e-invoicing with Tungsten Network, built on OB10, is the ease with which suppliers, such as Office Depot Europe, can connect to a client on the Tungsten Network. "Tungsten's implementation team contacts our e-Business team," says Ellen. "The buyer's specific requirements are then formatted by Office Depot Europe. We submit a number of dummy invoices so the buyer can test its automated process for two or three-way-matching by comparing the purchase order data with the invoice data. After approval from the buyer, we are ready to go live. In our experience, it is an easy and standard process."

Office Depot Europe currently invoices 27 customers in 13 countries through the Tungsten Network, while its parent company, Office Depot, Inc, based in the US, also uses Tungsten to invoice global accounts.

## CUSTOMER

**ORGANIZATION:** Office Depot Europe B.V.

**SECTOR:** Supplier of office products and solutions

**COUNTRY:** Europe and the Middle East (headquartered in the Netherlands)

## GOALS

- Boost online services and generate customer efficiencies
- Increase productivity
- Reduce errors
- Support a green strategy
- Increase competitiveness

## RESULTS

- Currently invoicing 27 customers in 13 countries through Tungsten Network
- Ranks highly in competitive tenders

## ENJOYING THE BENEFITS

A major benefit for Office Depot Europe is that its e-invoicing capabilities help improve tender ranking positions when pitching for new business. "About 40% of our RFPs now ask about our e-invoicing capabilities, many of which ask if we are connected to Tungsten; being part of the network gives us an advantage. And if they enquire about our e-ordering capabilities we suggest that they complete the P2P cycle with an e-invoicing solution like Tungsten Network."

E-invoicing also enhances Office Depot Europe's online services by speeding up processing and payment cycles. "Automated invoice validation improves cash management and visibility while increasing accuracy, which results in fewer rejected invoices," says Ellen. "Raising productivity also helps improve our customers' cost efficiency."

As part of the e-Business strategy, e-invoicing plays a role in the organisation's green initiatives by saving paper, printing, energy, postage and transportation.

"As a supplier, our goal is to send more invoices electronically," concludes Ellen. "For our customers, paperless invoicing is a trend that reduces scanning and printing, generates savings in cost and time, and creates environmental benefits."



**TUNGSTEN NETWORK**

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