

# E-INVOICING MADE EASY FOR CONSTRUCTION COMPANIES

TAKING CONTROL OF YOUR AR PROCESS

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# INTRODUCTION

Compared to manual accounts receivable (AR) methods, the advantages of electronic invoicing (e-invoicing) in the construction industry are clear: It's faster, less expensive, more reliable and eliminates inefficiencies caused by handling paper. Making the change to e-invoicing can seem daunting, though. This guidebook addresses those concerns and walks readers through the process to reveal how companies can make the move as seamless as possible.

# WHY AUTOMATE AR?

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**In the competitive construction landscape, producing and delivering invoices via traditional methods is a bottleneck to the cash collection cycle that companies can't afford. What advantages does going paperless offer?**

Below are the five biggest reasons to automate the AR process:

1/

## **Eliminate Inefficiencies**

How much staff time is spent printing off and handling invoices? What about folding and stamping? By eliminating these manual steps, AR automation brings greater efficiency to the entire process.

2/

## **Better Customer Experience**

Making billing and payment easier benefits your company and customers. Being easy to do business with improves the customer experience, encouraging repeat business while cutting out competition.

3/

## **Grow without Growing**

Instead of adding more staff and/or equipment to accommodate growing invoice volumes, AR automation allows businesses to maintain current staff levels while still managing seasonal peaks in volume.

4/

## **Reduce Costs**

Manual AR processing requires a big investment in labour, equipment and consumables. When the delivery and archiving of invoices is automated, operational costs are drastically reduced.

5/

## **Get Paid Faster**

As invoices are processed more efficiently and delivered at a faster rate, the more likely it is they will be paid in a shorter time frame. This not only reduces DSO, but is sure to put a smile on the CFO's face.

**BY ELIMINATING PAPER  
INVOICES, BUSINESSES  
CAN REDUCE PROCESSING  
COSTS BY UP TO**

**90%**

Tax-Compliant Global Electronic Invoice Lifecycle Management. (November, 2017). Trustweaver. PDF file.

# CUSTOMER RESULTS

Companies of all shapes and sizes use Esker's Accounts Receivable solution. **Below are some of the biggest benefits Esker customers in the construction industry have achieved:**



## Temperature Equipment Corp.

- Reduced average DSO by 10 days
- Quickened invoice dispute resolution by 88%
- 50% of all credit applications now arrive electronically



Before, if I wanted to know what my team was doing a daily/weekly basis, I'd have to meet with each one of the individually. With Esker, I literally click a button and the data is in front of me. What used to take 12-15 hours a week can now be done in a matter of minutes.

Ernie Pudliner | Temperature Equipment Corp.



## Crescent Parts & Equipment

- Reduced the amount of accounts with overdue balances by nearly 38%
- More free time for staff to focus on key accounts and new customers
- Improved communication with customers via self-service portal



Using Esker, it was amazing how fast past-due balances, skipped invoices and disputed invoices started getting cleaned up just by sending automated email reminders. In fact, one chronically poor payer actually turned into one of our best four-star customers.

Staci Cima | Crescent Parts & Equipment

# THE COST OF MANUAL AR

Sending customers their invoices via postal mail is a headache, sure, but how detrimental can running a traditional AR/ mailroom operation really be? The problems become clear when you **consider the amount of bottlenecks involved from generating an invoice to mailing it out:**



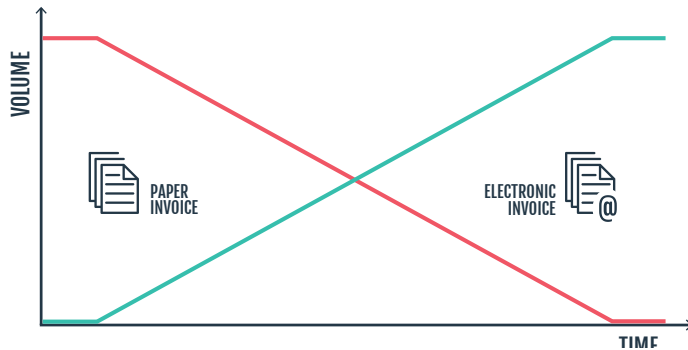
## Streamlined AR Workflow Process

When accounting for all of the various factors associated with running a manual mailing process, it's easy to see why an organisation's time, money and resources become strained:

- Labour
- Hardware and maintenance
- Production equipment
- Printing
- Stuffing and collating
- Stamping or franking
- Errors and exception handling
- Archiving and storage
- Process quality

# BREAKING THE E-INVOICING DEADLOCK

Delivering AR invoices more rapidly, accurately and efficiently is one thing, but satisfying varying customer preferences for receiving them is another — many are simply not ready to change. **Automated AR solutions give companies an option they never had before:** making billing 100% electronic on their end without requiring change on the part of the customer.



## Step-by-Step Approach

Rather than taking aggressive action on e-invoicing (e.g., forcing customers to opt-in), the step-by-step approach creates a smooth transition between legacy systems and future e-invoicing operations. Companies gain the immediate benefits, while their customers can move to e-invoicing at their own pace.

# APPLYING BEST PRACTICES

The ideal AR automation solution should include all of the necessary technologies to automate the sending and archiving of both paper and e-invoices according to customer preferences. **The result is end-to-end efficiency, from delivery to archival.**



## No Format Restrictions

With the objective of sending every AR invoice electronically, a best-in-class automation solution can produce both paper and electronic formats that match varying customer media preferences. This flexibility helps to avoid disruptions and allows customers to transition to e-invoicing at their own pace.

## ERP Enhancement

An e-invoicing solution can integrate seamlessly with existing systems as well as offer billing capabilities that go beyond what a company's current ERP system can already perform with functions such as auto-bundling of invoices, real-time delivery based on customer preferences, and even read receipt notifications.

## Customer Convenience

Convenience is key to any AR automation solution. A web portal not only allows the company to track and report on invoices, customers can access payment statuses and manage their invoices online. Online payment capabilities provide self-service options and create a positive customer experience.



# ESKER'S APPROACH TO AR AUTOMATION

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Esfer's Accounts Receivable solution **completely automates the sending and archiving of invoices regardless of media type**, all via one universal, ERP-integrated and source-independent automation platform.

## Process Efficiency & Seamless Integration



Using key capabilities such as ERP integration, invoice delivery status notification and automatic routing of invoice copies, Esfer simplifies billing operations and resource management, effectively removing the process inefficiencies associated with handling paper invoices.

## Advanced Analytics & Instant Accessibility



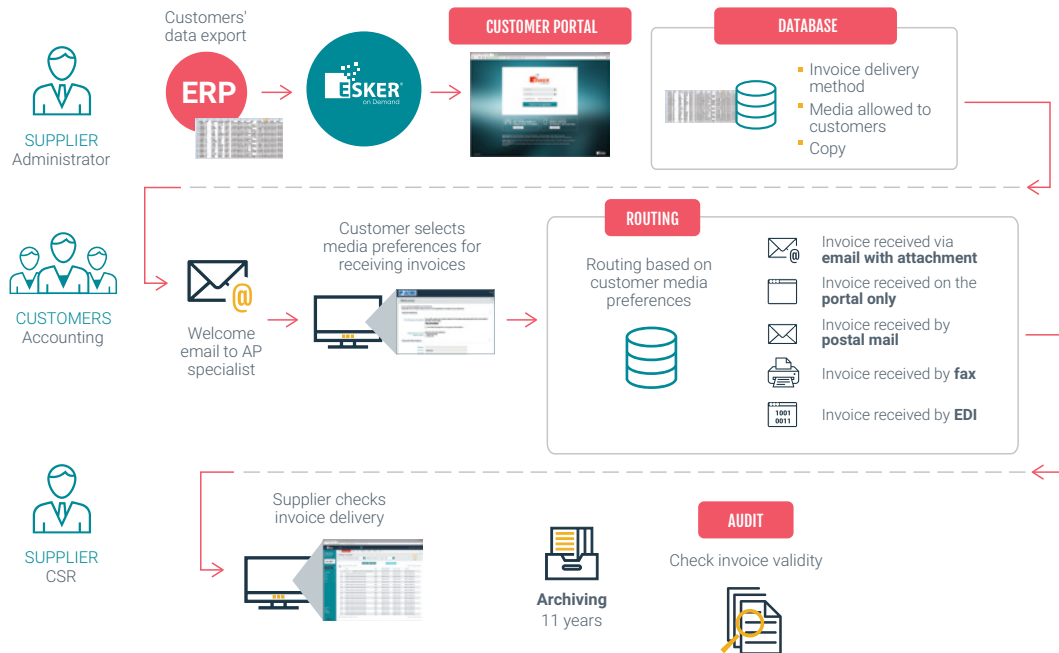
Essential information from each invoice is readily available via Esfer dashboards, which enable custom reporting and analytics and make every daily action smarter and more strategic. A web portal is available for the use of businesses and their customers, giving both parties instant access to all invoices and payment statuses online.

## International Compliance with e-Invoicing Regulations



Data formatting is provided in the suitable format (XML, EDIFACT, ANSI, etc.) as well as secure communication transport (AS2, VPN, SFTP, etc.). From the start, Esfer applies the appropriate e-signatures, time stamps and verifications, then keeps a complete audit trail and electronically archives all documents in a separate, secured infrastructure and web portal.

**As the first SaaS solution to automate the sending and archiving of paper and e-invoices,** Esker's Accounts Receivable solution is implemented in the cloud as an on-demand service. All of the functionality is built into a single platform, optimising AR management in every aspect.

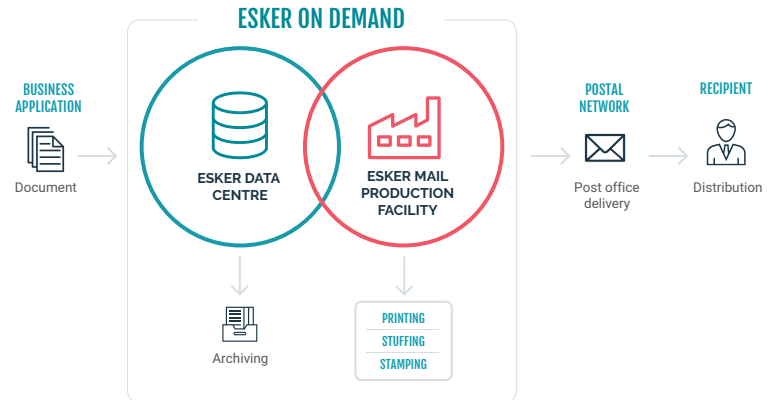


# SATISFYING STUBBORN CUSTOMERS

When dealing with customers like general contractors, not all of them are ready to receive e-invoices. Fortunately, that doesn't mean you're stuck dealing with the paper. Using Esker Mail Services allows companies to make traditional business mail 100% electronic, while still delivering the paper version to customers.

## How Esker Mail Services Works:

Customer documents can be mailed easily and directly from any ERP, desktop or other business application and are automatically routed for delivery within 24 hours of creation. Esker's seven production facilities handling the processing and are able to provide 24/7, year-round service with least-cost routing for worldwide mailing.



**7 MAIL PRODUCTION FACILITIES**



# CONCLUSION

While many customers may prefer to receive their invoices and associated documents via postal mail, construction companies no longer need to worry about manual invoice processing and the consequences that go along with it. With the right solution in place, 100% e-invoicing can be achieved while mutually benefiting the unique interests of everyone involved.

# ABOUT ESKER

Esker is a leader in AI-driven document automation solutions for processes like AR (along with order management, procurement,, accounts payable and more). Operating around the world, Esker enables companies to replace outdated processes with effective solutions that improve the way business information is exchanged. Through its Sovos partnership, Esker supports global compliance in over 60 countries.

Founded in 1985, Esker operates in North America, Latin America, Europe and Asia Pacific with global headquarters in Lyon, France, and U.S. headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin. In 2020, Esker generated 112 million euros in total sales revenue.





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