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Choosing An Expense Management System

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About Us



systems@work assists organisations around the world to streamline and improve their Expense Management Processes.

We work with Public and Private Sector companies ranging in size from 25 to many '000's of employees and have implemented Expense Management Solutions at organisations such as Brit Insurance, Lloyds, The Premier League, The Irish Central Bank and The RFU.

Following the MP's Expenses Scandal in 2010, our Expense Management Solution, expense@work was chosen by the Independent Parliamentary Standards Authority (IPSA) as the new system for managing MP's expenses.

You can learn more about systems@work and expense@work at www.systemsatwork.co.uk.

About This Guide



This document has been produced as a product independent reference guide to assist organisations wishing to improve and streamline the management of their employee expenses.

The guide covers the key factors that organisations should consider when choosing an Expense Management Solution and provides details on best practices for managing employee expenses.

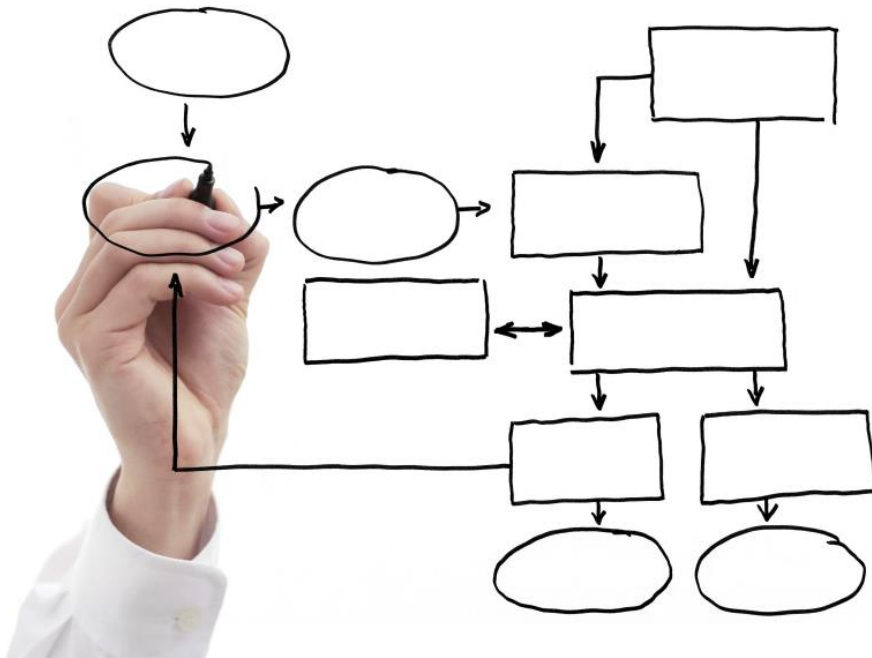


1. Why Change Current Processes?

Before you begin the process of changing your current expense management processes, the most important question that must be asked is “Why?”.

Typically, organisations we deal with chose to change their processes and implement an automated Expense Solution for 1 of 4 reasons:

1. Efficiency Improvements - “Eliminate paper and the rekeying of data”
2. Spend Control - “Reduce expense costs through enforcement”
3. Compliance - “Ensure that Company Policy & HMRC Guidelines are enforced”
4. Reporting - “Produce management reports showing who is spending and why”





A properly implemented Expense Management Solution should deliver a 100% ROI within 8 months of go live.





2. Automated or Manual Systems?

The decision about whether to implement an automated system or to maintain and revise an existing manual process (paper or spreadsheets) typically comes down to cost and by extension the Return on Investment (ROI) that is being anticipated.

As a general rule, organisations with less than **20 claimants** will find that a simple and properly managed spreadsheet or paper based system will be sufficient for their needs.

Organisations of this size are typically able to enforce policies and maintain control of the claims process manually. This is because approval authority generally rests with one or two individuals and the complexity and nature of the expense claims does not necessitate the enforcement, tax compliance and workflow rules that an automated solution will deliver.

For organisations with more than 20 claimants the benefits to be realised from implementing an Automated Expense Management Solution are compelling. Our solution, expense@work is designed for organisations of between **25 and 5,000 claimants**.

In the next section we will review the criteria that these organisations should use when deciding which solution to implement.



3. Understanding Your Needs

Expense Management Solutions such as expense@work have extensive and highly sophisticated functionality that enables organisations to manage their expense claims process.

Before selecting a preferred solution its important that you fully understand your specific requirements so that you can ensure that there is a functional match and that the system is capable of achieving immediate goals and also adapting as the organisation grows.

The following questions should be discussed internally and with any potential supplier:



Hosted or Internal

Consider where your data will reside and the financial and security implications. Expense Management Solutions can be provided as a hosted “Cloud” offering or can be configured to run on your own network.

Many government and financial sector organisations prefer the security and robustness of internally hosted solutions.

For smaller organisations, a cloud based solution may provide flexibility and eliminate infrastructure costs.



Software License Model

Do you want to purchase the software outright or rent/lease on a “per user per month basis”? The former is typically more cost effective beyond 24 months whilst the latter avoids upfront capital expenditure.



Browser Based

Will your users require specific software to be installed on their machines or will they access the system through a browser?

Its important to understand that this question applies irrespective of whether you opt for a Hosted/Cloud solution or an internally managed system.



Remote Access

Will you require the system to be accessible from any location even if installed on your local network?

Additionally, how will remote access be managed? For example over VPN, Terminal Services or Citrix.



Multi Company

Do you have employees in multiple locations (perhaps different legal entities) with different policies, tax treatment and language requirements?

This requirement is often overlooked by users and potential suppliers. For many organisations its important to ensure that your chosen system can cater for diverse international organisational requirements.



Multi Currency

Will employees incur expenses in multiple currencies and will employees in different locations require reimbursement in different base currencies?



Finance Integration

Will your chosen solution be required to populate your finance (or other systems such as payroll) with expense transactions?




Recharge Expenses

Do you recharge expenses to clients or internal departments? Will your employees be required to indicate this on their claim form or will you want a system that can manage this automatically?




 HMRC Compliance

Do you require a system that can manage VAT & P11D requirements? Can Staff and Client Entertainment policies be managed so that you capture the information you need in the event of a HMRC audit?

 Policy Enforcement

Do you have spend limits and category policies for Employee Expenses that your chosen system must manage?

 Credit Card Imports

Can the chosen system import transactions from the leading Credit Card providers and present employees with an individual Credit Card Statement?

 Project Costing

Do you require employees to record expenses against Projects, Jobs or other entities?

 Receipt Attachment

Do you want employees to attach electronic copies of their receipts to their claim?



4. Implementing Your Chosen System



Plan The System Design

Ensure that:

- (a) The system is easy for employees to use. As a general rule avoid long and complex forms.
- (b) The forms capture all necessary information for internal and external compliance.



Acceptance Testing

Ensure that:

- (a) Sufficient time is allocated to carry out end to end testing of the system.
- (b) Ordinary end users are included as part of the testing team so that the system can be stress tested in a live environment.



Communication

Ensure that:

- (a) All interested parties, (Finance, IT, Compliance and End Users) are represented during the System Design Phase so that all view points and requirements are taken into consideration.

- (b) Employees and management are given plenty of notice about the go live date. Also ensure that the benefits of the new system are properly explained.

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World Have Chosen Us!**

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