



Automated invoice processing enhances efficiency at Wollongong City Council

For a council that aims to be a “city of innovation”, it is no real surprise that Wollongong City Council is one of the first councils in Australia to have an automated paper-driven business process solution.

The Client

With a population approaching 200,000, Wollongong City Council is Australia’s ninth largest city Council. Wollongong is located 80km south of Sydney, the gateway to the South Coast of NSW and renowned for its economic and community initiatives.

With continuous growth of new businesses and population in the Illawarra region, so was the pressure of the Council and its employees to maintain a high level of customer services. The accounts payable

(AP) department is one of the more labour-intensive areas, processing an average of 50,000 supplier invoices per year.

To increase efficiency, Wollongong City Council commenced a project with Xcellerate IT and went live with a solution for AP Automation in May 2008.

The Challenges

“Our invoice processing procedure was quite time consuming and prone to human error due to the manual input of data” said Emanuel Sarkhosh, Systems Accounting Officer. The processing lag had the potential to create budgetary implications when the recognition of expenditure was significantly delayed. The issues were not limited to invoice processing but were affecting the compliance with other procurement processes.

The accounts payable staff was often in constant under pressure, handling increasing amounts of paperwork. Invoices were manually handled and manually routed around the organisation for approval.

“As a growing council, the objectives were to adopt a solution that was able to reduce the manual keying, integrate with our financial system and provide us with a more efficient use of employee resources” added Emanuel.

The Solution

The AP Automation solution adopted by Wollongong City Council is the Kofax Capture platform, integrated with TechnologyOne Financials and its purchasing module.

The invoices are scanned in a centralised environment, processed through the recognition module and validated by AP personnel for exceptions. The validated extracted information is then passed to the Release Module where it is uploaded to TechnologyOne Financials with the images stored into SharePoint.

Wollongong City Council’s invoice processing solution is based on the key elements of the Kofax Capture platform, including:

- Kofax Capture, which automates data capture from scanned paper or imported documents.



Industry

- Local Government

Organisation

- Wollongong City Council

State

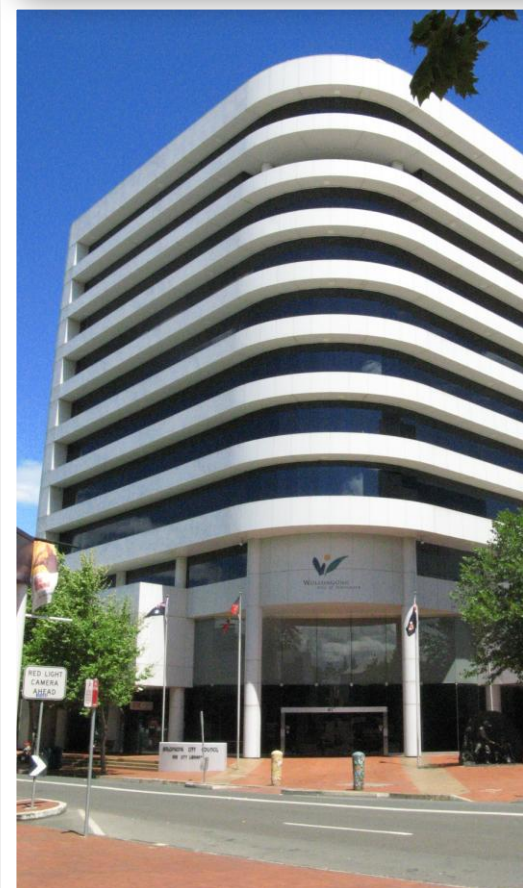
- New South Wales

Solution

- Kofax Capture
- Kofax KTM
- Kofax VRS

Date solution deployed

- May 2008





- Kofax VirtualReScan (VRS), used to enhance the quality of digital images produced.
- Kofax Transformation Modules (KTM), which streamlines the transformation of business documents into structured electronic information by automating the processes of document classification and data extraction.

The Benefit - “A more efficient use of employee resources”

By switching from manual processing to an electronic solution, accounts payable personnel are now able to spend their time on more valuable tasks.

The introduction of the latest functionalities from Technology One has led to a reduction of work hours dedicated in handling invoices, with all the exceptions dealt with in the Technology One application.

“The solution added value to our AP functions by providing us with a more efficient use of employee resources. The suppliers are paid now on time and we reduced significantly the processing times by eliminating data entry” said Sarkhosh.

Howard Boretsky, Managing Director from Xcellerate IT said “Wollongong City Council was one of our first major local council projects and we are proud of our successful relationship. It is an ongoing partnership, as we continue to work closely with the accounts payable department providing support and upgrades to improve the way they streamline their processes”.

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Emanuel Sarkosh,
Systems Accounting Officer

Xcellerate IT

With over 16 years of experience in the document delivery and capture marketplace, Xcellerate IT is a leading Australian provider of business process automation solutions.

Xcellerate IT’s solution provides an essential link between enterprise applications “Systems of Records” and the way in which your customers and suppliers engage with your business “System of Engagement” resulting in an optimised customer experience and greatly reduced operational costs.

Xcellerate IT’s solutions are widely used across multiple industries in manufacturing, finance, local and state government, healthcare and a wide range of companies that require the capture of critical information from paper, electronic documents and forms.

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