



From Radomsko to Deeside – Accountants at Ball Packaging Europe Use Consistent Processes



Ball Packaging Europe is a leading European beverage can producer headquartered in Zurich, Switzerland. Ball Packaging Europe employs a staff of 2,800 and operates twelve production sites in Germany, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Poland, and Serbia. The company is a member of the Ball Corporation.

In late 2008, the European beverage can producer standardized its accounts payable invoice processes across all its European companies based on a workflow solution developed by xSuite. All twelve production sites in Germany, France, Great Britain, the Netherlands, Poland, and Serbia as well as the Business Center Europe (located in Bonn and Ratingen, Germany) started using xSuite Invoice workflow solution in 2011. This allowed the group to set up a consistent process. Each site has about 300 creditors, who send a total of about 120,000 incoming invoice documents each year – in different languages and in compliance with the respective country's invoicing standard. Given this vast number of documents and versions, the accounting department had a hard time processing the invoices and keeping track of the current invoice status.

Steadily Increasing Compliance Regulations Call for Transparent Invoice Processing

„We were looking for an IT solution“, stated Ralf Weidenbach, Manager Strategic Initiatives at Ball Packaging Europe, „with which we could provide more transparency in our international processes for incoming invoices and improve reporting, especially because of the increasing compliance requirements. The locations distributed throughout Europe were a great challenge here.“ The group chose a solution combining the Kofax Capture scanning product and the Kofax Transformation Module for invoice capture, xSuite Interface for SAP integration, and xSuite Invoice, which provides an SAP-based workflow. The SAP system archives documents using the SAP Content Server and is operated by an external data center provider.

Company

Web: ball-europe.com
Sector: Industrial Sector
Location: Zurich, Switzerland

xSuite Solution

SAP integrated invoice processing
(xSuite Invoice)

Why xSuite

- Strong international references
- Significant time savings thanks to accelerated invoice processing

Systems integration

- SAP ERP

Image source: Ball Packaging



From Serbia to Poland all the Way to Great Britain – Twelve Sites in Six Countries Use the Same System

The international project team comprising xSuite, Ball Packaging Europe, and IBM, the former SAP hosting partner and service provider, initially developed a best-practice solution at the Polish site in November 2008. This solution went live in September 2009 and was then rolled out across Europe. First Great Britain was added in June 2010 with the help of partner companies Mandant and Image Integrators. Next came the two production sites at Bierne and La Ciotat in France. Germany, the Netherlands, and Serbia were finally connected to the workflow in 2011.

Today, the regional Ball Packaging Europe companies scan incoming invoices in their country and transfer the information to the data center, where Kofax Transformation Module performs an OCR process and automatically validates the files. Remote Desktop is used to supply the accounting teams of the respective countries with the scanned documents and captured data for manual verification. The validated data is then delivered to the corresponding company codes in the SAP system.

The xSuite Interface Prism, an SAP-certified system interface from xSuite, takes care of integrating the solution into the SAP NetWeaver process. It transfers invoice data and scans to SAP, validates the data, and checks for completeness. A special monitoring function keeps users up to date on the status of all invoices and also enables editing.

Incoming Invoice with or without Purchase Order Reference

Ball Packaging Europe uses an automatic procedure to release order-related invoices from SAP MM, provided the order, delivery, and invoice match. If deviations are detected, the invoices are transferred to authorized employees for release. As regards invoices with no order reference (SAP FI), the xSuite Invoice release workflow automatically forwards the documents to the designated releaser in the respective country and also sends this person an e-mail notification.

„xSuite Invoice is a Best Practice solution, which will help tremendously in standardising the processes of incoming invoice workflows. It was important for us to have a system within SAP that will keep the process control as the core software component“, explained Ralf Weidenbach as the reason for choosing the xSuite product. In addition, Ball Packaging Europe wanted a flexible workflow that can be managed from a central location. “xSuite Invoice can be adjusted very quickly and easily, allowing staff to make the necessary changes whenever a cost center, supplier, or internal order master data changes,” says Ralf Weidenbach. The international project experience of xSuite and relevant references provided additional strong incentives for choosing this provider.

Today, Ball Packaging Europe benefits from the solution's various features, including simple rollout, usability in an international network, highly improved process transparency, as well as significantly faster invoice processing.