

# Electronic Invoicing For North West Wales NHS Trust Supplier Network

## Making the Switch from Paper to Electronic

The North West Wales NHS Trust is a dynamic and progressive organisation that provides services of the highest quality for the counties of Gwynedd, Ynys Môn and parts of Conwy. It serves a population of about 225,000 people as well as large numbers of holidaymakers who are attracted to the area every year. Managing the Trust's financial supply chain is a complex and time-consuming task. The Trust has an annual operating budget in excess of £190 million and over 4,000 separate suppliers. It procures supplies across a range of goods and services spanning medical equipment, office furniture and stationary, fuel, drugs and food. The Trust's suppliers include organisations of many sizes from large multi-national corporations to Small and Medium Sized Enterprises across the UK.

Before Accountis, the Trust had already explored and introduced various methods of electronic document delivery to reduce manual input and improve overall efficiency within the department. However, to fully enjoy the benefits of an automated system they wanted to find a solution that could bring together their existing processes and provide an end-to-end solution.

"We wanted a more effective procurement and supply management process and offer a faster, more efficient service to our suppliers," said Nigel McCann, Assistant Director of Finance at North West Wales NHS Trust. "With Accountis we discovered a secure, scalable solution that was compatible with our legacy system. We were impressed by the technology and amazed that such a powerful solution was flexible enough to work with all our suppliers. Accountis was an exact match for our needs - they offered an easy-to-use solution that could be delivered within our timescales and budget."

## Easy Integration with Oracle e-Business Suite

With the ultimate aim of rolling out e-invoicing across the entire supply chain, the Trust decided to segment their adoption programme into phases. In Phase I of the project the Trust worked with Accountis to bring its food suppliers on board.

Implementation of Accountis' Enterprise AP (Accounts Payable) Managed Service with ebPrinter® was straightforward. Accountis set-up a secure Hub for the Trust, which was hosted within Accountis' secure data centre facilities. The Accountis API (Application Programming Interface) acted as a bridge between the Hub and Oracle e-Business Suite, the Trust's back-end system. The Accountis ebPrinter was installed on the Trust's existing server and a Supplier Portal was created where the Trust and its suppliers can view, manage and archive all e-documents. The Trust was then able to create purchase orders using Oracle but present them electronically to suppliers using the Accountis System. With Accountis Enterprise AP the Trust can;

- Generate and send digitally sign e-purchase orders
- Present e-purchase orders to suppliers online
- Offer e-purchase orders in multiple formats
- Receive digitally signed e-invoices from suppliers
- Access a secure online area to view all AP documents in real-time

The Managed Service was an ideal choice for the Trust who wished to keep set-up costs to a minimum. With no hardware purchases or software licence to pay for, deployment of the Accountis service required no capital expenditure. The Managed Service provides industry-leading hosting and management using the very latest resilient servers and the latest security policies. By outsourcing system architecture to technology experts, the Trust had more time and resources to focus on more important issues including supplier adoption. The Managed Service is also an "always on" backup for the system, acting as a disaster recovery system if needed.

"By further automating our AP function with Accountis, we have been able improve efficiencies throughout the finance department. Purchase orders are delivered instantly and queries can be settled much quicker online. With real-time access to our AP documents we know the status of our supplier accounts at all times," said Nigel McCann.

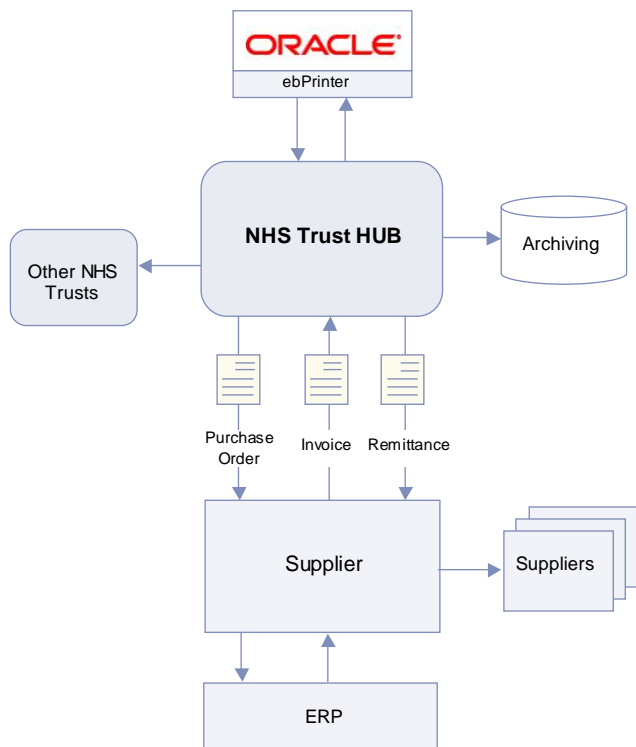


FIG 1. NWW NHS Trust E-Invoicing Solution

### Simple Adoption For Trust's Supplier Network

Instead of receiving paper purchase orders from the Trust, suppliers can now access the Supplier Portal to securely view, query and approve purchase orders online. All data is available in universally recognised formats, so once approved, the purchase order data can be imported directly into the supplier's finance system or accounting package. This saves time and eliminates errors caused by the manual data-entry process. Using this data, the supplier can then create an invoice in their usual way, but send it electronically to the Trust using the Accountis ebPrinter installed on their PC. From the Supplier Portal, suppliers also have the option to "flip" purchase order data to create an e-invoice, which they can send direct to the Trust in an instant. Using the Trust's Supplier Portal, suppliers can:

- Receive digitally signed e-purchase orders
- Instantly "flip" e-purchase order information
- Send digitally-signed e-invoices from existing solution
- Have real-time access to a secure online area to view and process documents

"We worked in partnership with our suppliers to bring them on board. Accountis provided us with Supplier Adoption Packs and a dedicated team managed the adoption process for us. The simple sign-up procedure and easy-to-use system definitely helped to encourage participation - all suppliers need to do is register with Accountis and install the ebPrinter." said Nigel McCann.

Rhys Jones, Managing Director of Accountis added, "We understand that 100% trading network adoption is critical to the success of any e-invoicing project. The Accountis system uses open standards to ensure interoperability between supplier and buyer software. With this project we have demonstrated the flexibility of our Managed Service and its ability to be deployed across a range of suppliers of all sizes."

### Flexible, Reliable System For Future Roll Out

As a forward thinking, progressive NHS organisation, the North West Wales NHS Trust endeavours to utilise the very latest technologies to improve efficiencies and simplify internal processes. By introducing an electronic invoicing process with Accountis the Trust has successfully streamlined the management of its AP process and improved the performance of the supply chain. The Accountis system works seamlessly alongside the Trust's Oracle solution, which made implementation cost-effective, and using the Managed Service will ensure that maintenance and future development costs are kept to a minimum.

"Automating our Accounts Payable function has proved to be very beneficial and we hope to extend the Accountis service across our Accounts Receivable process in the near future. We have been able to streamline the purchase-to-pay process and improve our service to suppliers, which can only result in better working relationships. Our next step is to extend this service to other supplier sectors and once it has been proven within this Trust, then to roll it out to other Trusts and Public Sector Bodies in our region and beyond, where possible" concluded Nigel McCann.

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NIGEL McCANN, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR OF FINANCE, NWW NHS TRUST