

EAST LANCASHIRE FINANCIAL SERVICES (ELFS)

AUTOMATING ACCOUNTS PAYABLE HELPS ELFS DELIVER AN ENHANCED SERVICE AND COST SAVINGS TO NHS TRUSTS

«The partnership with SPS will enable us to implement best practices for our clients, using key performance indicators and detailed reporting, and having rapid and up to date access to accurate invoice processing will improve decision making for ELFS employees and enhance the service they provide to clients.»

– Graham Gornall, Director, ELFS Shared Services

When ELFS decided to extend its service offering to NHS Trusts throughout the UK, they needed a scalable, flexible and powerful solution that would enhance the savings and service levels they could offer their clients.

SPS now processes over 700,000 invoices every year for ELFS enabling them to offer an enhanced service that has seen their client base grow from 5 to 12 different Trusts.

The process automation that SPS has introduced means that each member of the Accounts Payable team at ELFS can now process almost twice as many invoices as before (25,000 up from 13,000) and with visibility over the end-to-end process, bottle necks and issues can be resolved in a fraction of the time previously possible.

The Challenge

Service delivery in the NHS is increasingly competitive and it's essential that any service providers working with the NHS offer efficiency, transparency and continuous improvement.



700,000

invoices processed per year

In order to meet the challenge ELFS constantly seeks out ways to improve the quality



About ELFS

ELFS provides National Health Service (NHS) client organisations with a suite of business shared service processes. These include accounting to reporting, purchase to pay, income to cash, VAT services, treasury and cash management, capital assets and reporting, finance and business systems development, payroll, pensions and automated expenses. Since ELFS was set up in 2002, it has transformed itself from a cost centre to a profit centre and now services 17 client organisations.

Learn more about our solutions:



SPS 
Swiss Post Solutions

of the services it delivers to the NHS by focusing on the accessibility, cost effectiveness and operational excellence of its offerings.

With five NHS client organisations relying on the ELFS accounts payables service it's team had to manually process around 30,000 invoices each month – and the volume was constantly increasing. ELFS wanted to improve efficiency by:

- Removing manual data entry
- Automating the transfer of invoices to approvers
- Increasing the availability of audit information
- Creating a more transparent process

Most importantly, ELFS wanted to improve its service delivery to customers and ensure an effective, accessible, and value added process for all parties.

The Solution

When ELFS decided to move towards a paperless and automated invoice processing service it chose SPS as its partner. "We were very impressed by SPS' technical knowledge and practical experience. We particularly liked the scalability of their solution which would enable us to respond effectively to our client's requirements now and in the future" says Graham Gornall, Director ELFS Shared Services.



lower

cost and maximised efficiency

SPS automated purchase-to-pay solution now captures around 60,000 invoices each month in a variety of formats and delivers the output to a fully hosted, matching and approval platform that can integrate with practically any client side ERP system. The process includes receiving, opening, preparing, scanning, capturing, enriching and

validating the specified the data from the invoices. The scanned invoice data is captured using leading OCR (optical character recognition) technology, images, and data is hosted for the client on SPS' servers, where invoices are routed for approval (using workflow) and then into specific category query queues for each NHS client organisation. "The move to paperless processing is a key stage in our development" says Gornall. "The partnership with SPS enables us to implement best practices for our clients, using key performance indicators and detailed reporting" he explains, "and having rapid and up to date access to accurate invoice data will improve decision making for ELFS employees and enhance the service they provide to clients"

The Benefits

- Eliminates sorting and handling of inbound invoices and manual data keying
- Faster processing – ELFS staff can rapidly access accurate and up to date information from any location



exact

up-to-date information from any location

- Detailed management information is delivered to NHS client organisations in a user friendly, flexible format
- Automation and better workflow management has resulted in improved staff productivity at ELFS – the invoices processed per individual has risen from 13,000 to 25,000
- Full audit trail means that the invoice processing service is more transparent.
- Faster query resolution and improved decision making – by having the right information, in the right place at the right time
- Improved record keeping and less hard copy archiving mean reduced storage space and costs

- Simplified accounts process and scalability, allowing ELFS to support more clients.

"SPS showed a very clear understanding of our particular business needs at ELFS and their experience has helped us to strengthen our own offering to existing clients and helped us to build the foundation for future growth and success" says Gornall.



more

transparency resulting in improved customer service

"We are delivering to our clients a world class service driven by leading edge technology with a partner who is a key player in business process outsourcing within the public sector – and that can only be a benefit to us and our clients. Because of our relationship with SPS we are now in an even stronger position to promote the excellence of our high quality shared services."