Canal Barge

Transforms financial operations by eliminating manual processing and boosting visibility

THE CHALLENGE

Canal Barge was consumed with paper. With its accounts payable (AP) department generating the most — between 300,000 to 500,000 sheets annually — the transportation company needed to make a change. Supporting its growing business would require either moving to accommodate the paper or finding a technology solution that eliminated it.

"We had years of document storage in our building," said Carl Fravel, director of information systems and knowledge management at Canal Barge. "It was occupying a very real amount of real estate. We knew we were out of space and needed to either move or remodel the building for better capacity."

That's when Fravel and his team discovered OnBase by Hyland. "We saw the alignment and realized that just the real estate savings alone would probably pay for this project," he said.

THE SOLUTION

Working with DataBank, an authorized OnBase solution provider, Canal Barge implemented OnBase in 2013 to streamline financial operations.

Gain efficiency, improve operations and increase visibility for AP

Before OnBase, manual, paper-based processing was the standard for AP. As the company received invoices, AP staff put a code on each invoice for tracking purposes and made a copy for their records. They then routed the invoices for approval via inter-office mail. The approvals could take days and offered no visibility — invoices often sat in the mail or on someone's desk without anyone's insight into their status. When the approvals were complete, the invoices were routed back to AP for payment.

By implementing OnBase, Canal Barge transformed its invoice approval process — it no longer depends on manual processing and has eliminated paper copies. Now, OnBase automatically captures needed invoice data as soon as it arrives.

The integration of OnBase with Canal Barge's ERP, Infor Lawson, allows vendor lookups and validations to quickly take place and for invoices to keep moving along for approvals. OnBase automatically notifies reviewers when they have an invoice to approve, and they can do so now from their desktop or mobile device. Once approved, it's extracted for payment and posted to Infor Lawson.

INDUSTRY	LOCATION	ONBASE INTEGRATIONS	DEPARTMENTS USING ONBASE	DEPLOYMENT METHOD	
Transportation	Headquartered in New Orleans, LA	Infor Lawson IBM Notes Android	Accounts Payable Accounts Receivable — Billing	Hyland Cloud	CANAL C BARGE

> "There's a lot better ability for management to observe what's going on in AP. They can just go into OnBase and look. They can see if an invoice has been paid or not, and they can get some statistics about the turnaround time and the average pay time for invoices."
>
> Carl Fravel, Director of Information Systems and Knowledge Management, Canal Barge

Getting rid of paper was the largest benefit brought about by OnBase. Canal Barge no longer had to make the costly decision to renovate or relocate to a larger building. In fact, the company continued to grow its business without needing additional resources. After signing its largest contract — which caused its billing to grow by 20 percent — no additional AP staff was needed to maintain operations.

Increased visibility was another benefit of OnBase. Staff can now see the status of work no matter where it is in the approval process.

"There's a lot better ability for management to observe what's going on in AP," Fravel said. "They can just go into OnBase and look. They can see if an invoice has been paid or not, and they can get some statistics about the turnaround time and the average pay time for invoices."

Eliminate manual processing and improve billing accuracy

As a transportation service provider, Canal Barge generates many invoices for payment and bills for receivables, with the potential to attach a number of evidentiary documents to each bill. Before OnBase, ensuring customers received the right information attached to each bill was laborious and paper-based, Fravel said. Billing staff would manually gather up all of the evidentiary materials that needed to be attached to the bill. The manual process for gathering and filtering the evidentiary material was laborious and error prone.

Now, almost the entire billing process is managed in OnBase. Staff collect and assemble all of the materials and the bill itself directly in the enterprise information platform, eliminating what was once a manual process.

Overall, the transition from paper to OnBase has been successful.

"Our OnBase system has assisted with getting better billing accuracy," Fravel said. "Before OnBase, our billing process was manual and complicated. Our workflows are now simpler and more accurate. They're less error-prone, too."

THE DIFFERENCE

Increases process visibility:
In AP, staff easily monitor where invoices are in the approval process. "There's no loss of knowledge wondering whose desk an invoice is on," Fravel said. "Now, you can see it in the workflow — you just go into OnBase and see whose queue it's in."

Provides self-service access:
"Our AP and accounts receivable (AR) teams love the fact that when auditors come in, they simply give them account logins to OnBase," Fravel said. "The auditors don't come in and say, 'Can you give us access to this invoice?' They simply go look for themselves."

Ensures security of content:
Canal Barge finds hosting its OnBase solution in the Hyland Cloud to be more beneficial than an on-premise deployment. "It's more secure from downtime and loss of data or theft than it is in our own system," Fravel said.

Learn more at **Hyland.com**

DataBank
A KYOCERA GROUP COMPANY

Hyland®