Effortless AP

Best practices for streamlined, automated accounts payable workflows and increased NOI for your enterprise

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People are the heart of your enterprise

Your enterprise thrives when relationships with vendors are strong and you can maintain a healthy, streamlined cash flow. As your organization grows and expands, you need to keep an important question in mind: Is your accounts payable process up to the task?
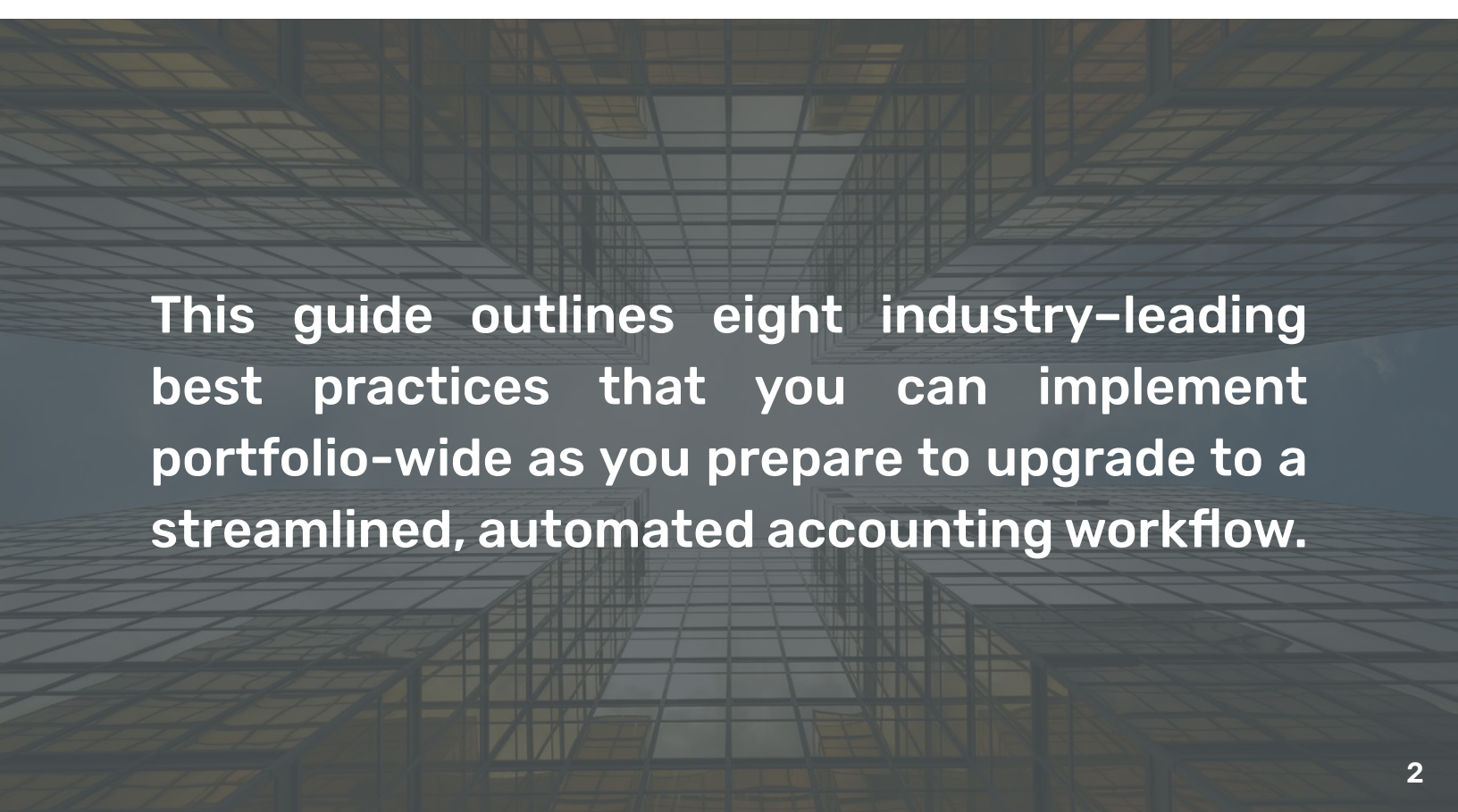
There was a time when traditional AP processes sufficed for most businesses.

Times have changed.

As companies grow and merge, ever-increasing volumes of transactions pass through accounting departments every day. For these expanding enterprises, the challenge is growing as well; organizations require a spectrum of supplies and services from a wide variety of vendors. Managing so many disparate invoices and sources is incredibly taxing on any accounting department's resources.

Manual collection, aggregation, and reporting of invoice data is rooted in the past. There were no alternative processes to remove the manual work, despite the fact that manual workflows can be rife with inefficiencies and introduce opportunities for errors.

The future of these invoice management and accounts payable workflows revolves around the implementation and continued development of technology and automation tools. These advances enable streamlined workflows and result in NOI increases across all types of organizations.

This guide outlines eight industry-leading best practices that you can implement portfolio-wide as you prepare to upgrade to a streamlined, automated accounting workflow.

Best Practices

~~Locations~~, ~~Locations~~, **Location**

Utility bills and vendor invoices come in a variety of formats: some are printed and sent through the mail, some are emailed as attachments, and some are accessed through an online portal. Each invoice format requires its own storage method. Paid paper invoices are filed in cabinets. Paid email invoices are moved to a dedicated folder on a computer or server. What, then, is the best way to keep track of so many invoices in disparate locations?

Utilizing a centralized, cloud-based platform allows everyone on your team to access the data they need, from any location. Centralized data also simplifies and enhances your reporting capabilities, allowing you to report on aggregated data from all invoices at once.

Sooner is better than later

Manual transmissions are cool in cars, not your accounts payable process. Inefficient manual AP workflows cause payment delays, and late payments lead to late fees. These fees can be avoided with streamlined AP processes and institution of best practices that will enable you to pay each invoice early. Examine your workflow. Track a sampling of invoices. Does the process bottleneck or drag? If so, where? Are there redundancies? Is each invoice paid in as few steps as possible? Automating and streamlining manual workflows will set your AP process to cruise control.

The early bird gets the worm

Avoiding late fees is a very good reason to pay bills as soon as possible. But it's not the only upside. Paying bills by a particular date will allow you to take advantage of early payment discounts. According to the Institute of Finance & Management, ~5% of invoices received by most organizations offer early payment discounts. The usual discount is 2%, which translates into considerable savings when applied to all eligible invoices, especially as your organization continues to grow. Given that many enterprises process thousands upon thousands of invoices per month, these discounts are essentially low-hanging fruit; streamlined and automated AP workflows will start providing savings very soon after implementation.

From many, through one

The AP workflow typically begins when an invoice reaches the accounting department, whether via snail mail, email, or from another department. AP automation implements a single, streamlined method for invoice capture. Creating one path for invoices to follow on their journey to the accounting department drastically reduces the chances of an invoice becoming lost in transit, thus mitigating the risk of late fees.
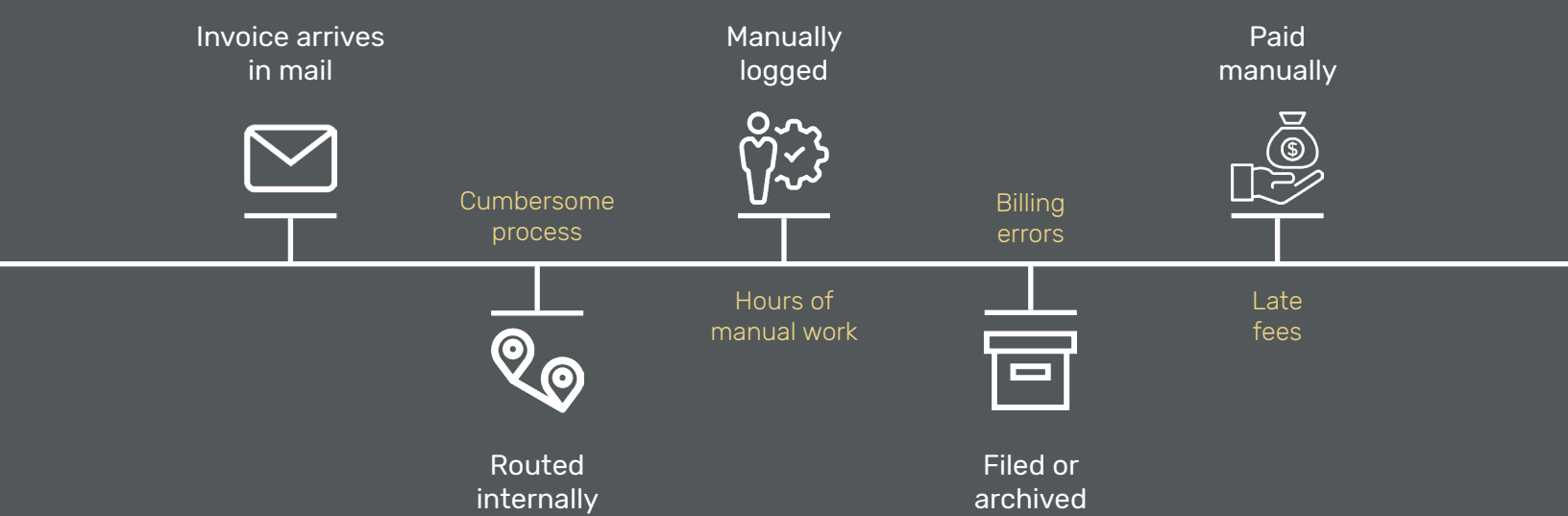
Additionally, modern analytics engines provide state-of-the-art validation algorithms, automatically flagging potential input errors and generating notifications for missing data, which reduces resultant costs and fees.

Save a tree, save some green

The life cycle of a paper invoice is long. It's printed, then it enters the mail stream. Upon being delivered to your building, it gets routed to your accounting department. The internal routing process through an accounts payable workflow can be inefficient and prone to error and therefore lengthy. Your team scans each invoice manually, enters the invoice data into spreadsheets, and moves each invoice to the next step of your AP workflow. Oftentimes, multiple people will manually enter the same invoice data into separate worksheets, creating redundancies and increasing the invoice life cycle even further.

Removing paper reduces inefficiencies. Your team will save time, cut the number of lost invoices, minimize opportunities for human error during data input, prevent redundancies, and lower your AP team's environmental impact.

Traditional Invoice Management

Invoice arrives
in mail

Cumbersome
process

Manually
logged

Billing
errors

Paid
manually

Routed
internally

Hours of
manual work

Filed or
archived

Late
fees

Validation station

Tracking, measuring, and validating the accuracy and integrity of your accounts payable process and data is extremely important. Unfortunately, performing manual validation is also time-consuming, repetitive, and effort-intensive for your team. Implementing an automated validation system in your AP process will drastically cut manual effort and time requirements, reduce opportunities for human error during input, streamline your AP workflow, and free up your team to focus on other departmental tasks.

To AP and beyond

Automation greatly increases the efficiency of your AP workflow. As invoices are processed and paid, relevant data begins to accumulate. As this data accrues, actionable analytics can be extracted and utilized to uncover opportunities for additional streamlining, process improvements, and savings that will enable you to further improve performance. The data provides an in-depth view into the spectrum of how your operations are performing, from top to bottom, on an organization-wide scale. With these snapshots, you can map out how to translate the successful performances & operational changes, then appropriately implement these strategies throughout your organization to boost savings and efficiency across the board. As added benefits, the data you collect simplifies mandatory reporting and data gathering for regulatory compliance and the creation of ESG sustainability reports.

Spread the savings

Your accounts payable and finance departments aren't the only ones that benefit from a streamlined AP process. Automating your workflows will help cut costs and reveal opportunities for savings in other areas and departments company-wide. A reliable, scalable accounting department provides a stable base for consistent, sustainable growth across your organization. Consistent and timely payment processes reflect well on your organization, and your fine reputation engenders better relationships with vendors, service providers, clients, and stakeholders, an upward spiral that expands with greater opportunity. On a practical level, a paperless process saves money on related costs, such as energy to power printers and the paper and ink that supply them.

The Goby Solution

Goby's Accounts Payable Automation solutions streamline utility bill and invoice management processes, mitigate risk of data errors, and simplify accounts payable workflows to reduce administrative work, flag billing issues, and avoid late fees.
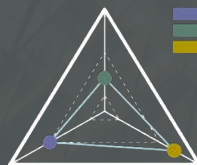
Reveal opportunities, identify trends, and empower users to make confident, strategic decisions backed by powerful analytics and driven by refined, validated blue-chip data.
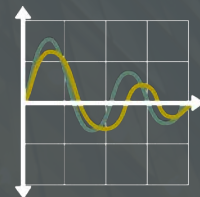
How? It's easy:

ACQUIRE

Reduce costs with intelligent acquisition as invoice data is captured and extracted automatically

VALIDATE

Take action as a powerful validation system identifies and flags billing errors and outliers

APPROVE

Review and approve invoices through a robust workflow and routing engine

Automate your invoice capture and reporting processes, streamline internal collaboration with customizable workflows, identify billing errors with targeted reports, improve resource consumption with enhanced analytics, centralize your invoice data in a single cloud-based platform, and avoid late fees with personalized notifications and alerts, all backed by the power of Goby.

Invoice Automation Features

Invoice Capture

Data is extracted within 24 hours and streamlined to a cloud-based platform

Validation Engine

Goby scans your invoices for billing errors to make sure you don't overpay

Notifications

Customizable push notifications and alerts mitigate the risk of late fees

AP Integration

Data is exported to the AP system of your choice

- Digitize up to 100% of data in a matter of weeks

- Reduce AP-related costs by 50-70%

- Generate huge savings

- Dramatically cut invoice processing time

- Ensure capture of early pay discounts

- ROI payback in 6 - 9 months, on average

Based in the Cloud, Grounded in Performance

Want to learn more?
Contact us today!

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