

ORDER CONFIRMATION SOLUTION

Comet Group



Challenge:

- » Acceleration of digital incoming document processing – without any additional effort for the vendors

Solution:

- » Introduction of the SAP add-on AFI Confirmation with automatic readout, order reconciliation and deviation notes in SAP as well as archiving of order confirmations

Benefit:

- » Faster processing
- » Transparency about processing status
- » Higher data quality



How Comet switches from digital to efficient for incoming order confirmations

At a time when smartphones control heating systems, driving assistants park cars or drones help save lives in danger zones, many things seem possible that were not achievable in the past. Among other modern technologies, semiconductors and sensors form the basis for this new, interconnected world.

As an expert in industrial high-frequency and X-ray technology, Comet is making a growing contribution in an increasingly digitized world of production, communication, and mobility.

Digital does not necessarily equal efficient

Digital technologies create new scenarios to simplify life in many respects. Particularly within corporate processes, they take over time-consuming activities and thereby save time. The prere-

quisite for this is that the information is available digitally, but digital does not necessarily mean efficient. For example, Comet's purchasing department receives 99 percent of all incoming order confirmations digitally as an e-mail with a PDF attachment, but processing used to be very time-consuming.

The company places around 1,500 purchase orders a month. This results in several hundred order confirmations every day, which a full-time person previously had to process at great expense: starting with manual typing, archiving, and then uploading the document to SAP. This is why the Swiss technology company decided to introduce a solution that would bring more efficiency to the process, as Michael Hoekstra, Head of Procurement at Comet, confirms:

"Basically, we already received our order confirmations digitally, but that's

not sufficient for an efficient process. It was important to us to find a solution that reads the PDF, analyzes it, uploads it to SAP and then archives it automatically. For this reason, a direct SAP link was also essential for us."

Ready to go - regardless of vendor
Comet had considered a number of providers for SAP add-ons and finally decided on AFI Confirmation from the manufacturer AFI Solutions. One reason was the ability to streamline the order confirmation process regardless of vendor, as Mr Hoekstra explains: *"One benefit of AFI Confirmation is that we were good to go right away and could process nearly one hundred percent of vendor order confirmations. We didn't have to put any extra effort on a vendor, the effort was clearly on us."*

For this reason, Comet had also ruled out EDI implementation from the very beginning, as this would only have been an option for a small proportion of the vendors.

Acceleration of processes

Comet's priority was to speed up the processing of the incoming documents, which were already digital, through more automation. Mr Hoekstra says that AFI Confirmation succeeded in doing this:

"If I had to estimate, the working time saved with AFI Confirmation is now between a few seconds and two minutes per order confirmation. If we extrapolate this to a day, that is hours we are saving and therefore more efficient."

Another benefit that has been seen in practice is increased data quality, as the procurement manager continues:

"Another improvement is that price differences emerge at an earlier stage. Because now we adjust the prices according to the order confirmation right away and not when the invoice is received."

Employee acceptance included

The new SAP add-on has not replaced the former work process. It is still available - especially for new employees who should learn about the structure of purchase orders and order confirmations via the manual process. In fact, purchasing staff is free to use the new software. However, according to Mr Hoekstra, it is actively used by all team members in purchasing, which definitely speaks for employee acceptance.

Conclusions and outlook

The purchasing department has professionalized its processes with AFI Confirmation and now works more proactively with the information. For example, any schedule or quantity variance is communicated directly to production planning.

The time savings have also allowed the department to take on new areas of responsibility. There is transparency about the receipt and work status of order confirmations, and no e-mail is being missed anymore - not even in hectic times or when employees can only work from home.

Automated approval of order confirmations is being planned for further optimization of the process.





The Comet Group is a globally leading, innovative Swiss technology company focusing on plasma control and X-ray technology. The innovative solutions are used in the semiconductor market, the aerospace and automotive industry as well as in the area of security inspection.

Comet Holding AG is headquartered in Flamatt, Switzerland, and currently represented in all global markets. In addition to production sites in China, Denmark, Germany, Malaysia, Switzerland and the USA, the company has various subsidiaries in Canada, China, Japan, Korea, Taiwan and the USA.

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AFI is a solution provider and leading manufacturer of software for the optimization of paperless, digital document processes around SAP as well as a provider of services for document capture and processing. AFI offers optimal solutions for the entire purchase-to-pay and order-to-cash process.

AFI combines state-of-the-art SAP technology with technical innovation to develop excellent software solutions integrated in SAP for processing a wide range of document types. Routine tasks are replaced by automated and paperless processes.

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