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Coca-Cola packaging company proves value of paperless office

By Rodney Appleyard

Jul 13, 2005: Visy Industries, an Australian company that specialises in packaging, including container production for dairy farms and Coca-Cola Amatil, has embraced a paperless office system to help it process its invoices more efficiently than ever before.

The company has incorporated Esker Software's DeliveryWare solution to reduce the use of paper within business processes, by automating the exchange of critical business documents between customers, business partners and suppliers, regardless of the source, format or destination.

Visy claims that it has saved 250 hours a week that used to be spent on handling paper, and the cost of delivering invoices has been reduced by half because it is now done by email. It has also managed to reduce debts that used to mount up due to lost dockets and invoices, resulting in money not being paid.

James Elkington, the managing director of Esker Software in the Asia Pacific, explained how the solution has helped Visy with its invoice processing.

"Drivers used to collect paper dockets when they delivered containers to the customers. But sometimes those dockets that proved delivery would get lost. In fact, 20 percent used to go missing. However, the system is now changed because of our solution. A signature is recorded onto a PDA when the containers are delivered and then a docket with the signature on is electronically sent to a central database.

"Our system then automatically sends an invoice, with these delivery details, to the customer, when the invoice is due. It also sends the invoice in the most preferred format for the customers. This is usually

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done via email. This automated process ensures that all the documents are in the database all the time, and sends the information to the customers, electronically, prompting them to pay as soon as possible."

Elkington outlined that customers used to make excuses for not paying on time by claiming that they did not receive the invoice or docket delivery form. This meant that staff at Visy would have to chase up the information from different departments, which would be time consuming in itself, but they would also have to wait for the customer to receive the information and respond to them.

However, with the DeliveryWare Platform, this takes the manual process out of it, because customers are automatically chased up and the information is kept safe so that it can be easily sent to the client to encourage payment.

Elkington has been waiting for the paperless office to become a reality for 18 years, but he believes this system proves that it really is on the verge of happening now.

Visy Industries is also committed to recycling and the environment and was voted Australia's leading company for environmental performance in the Sydney Morning Herald and Age newspapers' annual corporate reputation index in both 2000 and 2001.

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