eCMS Connect for Comdata

"The implementation of this integrated eCMS ERP and Comdata solution allows us to pay over 1,000 of our vendors and suppliers on a weekly basis literary with a click of a button. The automation of our vendor payment process has brought our organization significant financial gains through greater and more frequent financial rebates, as well as through the elimination of tedious, labor-intensive administrative tasks."

—Tori Weissenberger, Financial Analyst, J.F. Brennan Company

Company: J.F. Brennan Company
Industry: Specialty Contractor
Construction Services: a Construction, Environmental Services, and Harbor Management company focused on providing quality services to both public and private owners of civil infrastructure.

Corporate Headquarters:
La Crosse, WI

Territory / Locations: offices in the states of Wisconsin and Illinois

Client Information: J.F. Brennan Company, a full service marine construction contractor, employs the latest in systems and equipment technologies while stressing the importance of safety and environmental stewardship. J.F. Brennan Company is intimately familiar with the major inland waterways and has an intense interest in their preservation.
- Founded in 1919
- Annual Revenue $100-120 million
- 400 union and non-union employees
- 400 checks processed per week
- 350 invoices processed per week

Software Applications: eCMS, Account Payable, Accounts Receivable, General Ledger, Human Resources, Payroll, Job Cost, Equipment Accounting, Integration Suite, User-defined Tables, Heavy Bid Project, Content Management, Workflow, Forms Management, Project Collaborator, and Business Intelligence and Analytics

Technology Environment:
on-premise deployment, IBM Power7

Challenge: The administrative process to pay vendors with credit cards was cumbersome, lengthy, tasking and manually extensive. Not to mention that the current providers and the systems that were in place did not return the desired refunds/efficiencies that J.F. Brennan would have hoped or expected.

Solution:

The "Before" process
J.F. Brennan would get an invoice, they would enter it into Accounts Payables, they would track down the vendor via mail, email or phone (in many cases multiple attempts) to find out if they would be willing to accept credit card as a form of payment. During check runs, the vendors that were manually flagged as credit card vendors would then have to be contacted one by one by phone or email to make the payment. Then J.F. Brennan would manually enter the payment into eCMS ERP as an electronic payment and at the end of the month they would manually reconcile each transaction. J.F. Brennan has over 1,000 active vendors of which approximately 550+ vendors are paid by credit card and this would take 2 people and an intern about a day to process an entire check run.

The "Current Comdata" process
Comdata runs a customized campaign for contractors to enroll vendors to program. Updates from the enrollment process is electronically sent to the contractor and requires very little setup in eCMS. When an invoice is submitted it is entered into Accounts Payable. The magic happens during payment processing, the invoice is automatically flagged due to vendor setup as Comdata payment type. When J.F. Brennan selects invoices for payment they have the option to run all of them at once regardless of what form of payment the vendor requires. They select who to pay with credit card and they click a button. A file is created and it is pushed through FTP to Comdata automatically. Comdata generates a unique credit card number and transmits the payment information and card number to the vendor. The CC numbers are not disclosed in fact they are randomly generated altering the main CC number for the contractor so it is fraud proof. They also limit the timeframe that the card number can be used and the transaction amount can only be charged for what is provided by the contractor. These parameters can be adjusted per the contractor. A reconciliation file is automatically pulled back into eCMS from comdata with cleared vendor payments. No more manual payment. No more calling vendors. No more manual reconciliation. Comdata provides extensive reports, real time monitoring of card activity and frequent rebate opportunities. J.F. Brennan knows exactly who was paid, when they were paid, which card was used and the amount that was charged. The process is seamless and automated. The key is the integration between eCMS and Comdata vendor payment module.

Results:
- Higher and more frequent financial rebates from Comdata than previous vendor
- Time savings with the new process is estimated 8 hours per week
- Cost savings and rebates with the new process are estimated to cover one and half full-time accounts payable staff per year depending on volume
- Vendor satisfaction and employee satisfaction are both improved
- More effective and efficient auditing process
- Improved data accuracy for greater financial controls
- Reduction of substantial manual data entry and processing
- Estimated savings (check savings and money back) over a 9-month period are $98,960 with 2,238 transactions.

Total Payments Processed
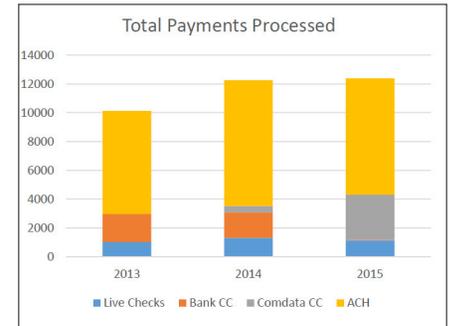
Accounts payable remained same in spite of growth
- # of payments processed increased 20% from 2013
- # of credit card payments processed increased 38% from 2013
- # of invoices processed increased 45% from 2013

A/P Transactions Processed

COMPUTER GUIDANCE CORPORATION
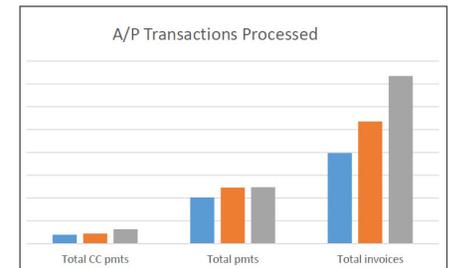
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