

EPICOR Applegreen



Company Facts

Overview

- Location – Dublin, Ireland
- Industry – Gas stations/convenience stores
- Website – www.applegreenstores.com

Challenges

- Automate workflows, eliminate paper processes and storage requirements to scale operations and propel growth

Solution

- Epicor® ECM AP Automation
 - Epicor® ECM Advanced Workflow
 - Epicor® ECM Datalink
- Intelligent Data Capture

Benefits

- Streamlined workflows for improved productivity enterprise-wide
- Seamless integration to ERP and ServiceNow systems to expedite AP and maintenance requests
- Reduced warehouse storage needs and overhead

Epicor and Mosaic Team to Support Digital Transformation for Applegreen

With 85 percent of manual keyboard entry eliminated, processing throughput is up while headcount has been reduced by 50 percent.

Applegreen is a major petrol forecourt retailer with operations in the Republic of Ireland, the United Kingdom and the USA. In recent years, the company has grown its footprint of quick service restaurant and convenience store locations stateside through the acquisition of The Brandi Group, which operates the 42-unit Pitt Stop convenience-store chain. Today, Applegreen's U.S. operations include 151 convenience stores, 24 Burger Kings, 23 Dunkin Donuts, and 15 Subway franchises. The company is also revamping 27 travel centers along a 500-mile stretch of the New York State Thruway between New York City and Buffalo.

Scaling Up to Support Growth

Epicor and partner Mosaic, a business automation consulting vendor, had been working with both Applegreen and Pitt Stop well before the two companies came together. Originally, Epicor ECM technology and Mosaic's support was deployed to support the digitization and archiving of employee HR records – a move that eliminated half the warehouse space previously required for paper-based records storage.

Years later following the acquisition, employees familiar with the technology recommended its continued use as Applegreen looked to scale its U.S. operations via standardized systems and processes, necessitating the move from paper-based handling of documents to digital workflows.

Aside from decades of experience helping companies with efficient automated "paperless" workflows that drive efficiency, lower costs and scale, Mosaic had ample experience with integrating to Applegreen's PDI ERP system – specialized enterprise management software for the convenience retail and petroleum wholesale markets.

“The way processes are set up now, it’s almost error-free – it’s hard to put an ROI on that.”

—Hank Wright, Head of IT for U.S. Operations

Hank Wright, Applegreen’s head of IT for U.S. Operations, has leveraged the scalability and extensibility of Epicor ECM technology and Mosaic expertise to support multiple use cases across the organization, helping support growth.

Streamlining Accounts Payable

With the implementation of Epicor ECM AP Automation, Applegreen is now processing 5,000 invoices per month and using the Intelligent Data Capture solution to import and OCR invoices for improved accuracy, eliminating as much as 85 percent of manual keyboard entry. The company was able to increase processing throughput while reducing the number of Full Time Employees needed to support AP operations by 50 percent.

The AP process has been dramatically streamlined. Previously, once a purchase order was received, it needed to be recorded, then passed along for approval manually. Purchase orders exceeding certain thresholds required higher levels of approval. Now, purchase orders are created on an electronic form and routed for approval online, using programmed business rules, to speed up the purchasing process.

With Epicor ECM, the workflow engine enforces rules-based processes for invoice routing and approval, ensuring the proper General Ledger coding, and then centralizes and pushes invoices electronically to the ERP system for payment. A dashboard view provides updated status of invoices in process for improved cash flow visibility and payables exposure.

As an essential business, Applegreen locations remained open even during the height of the pandemic, but the company had as many employees as possible work remotely, so the cloud-based AP automation solution enabled staff to access necessary documentation remotely, and review and approve invoices so business processes could move forward without interruption.

Streamlining Store Operations

Use of Epicor ECM has virtually eliminated all paperwork across Applegreen’s store locations. Register receipts and deposit slips are scanned and archived within the system, enabling all authorized users to recall and search digitized documents on demand.

Applegreen is also leveraging Epicor ECM to streamline service maintenance within its store fleet so maintenance and repair issues are now resolved more quickly. Previously, requesting maintenance and repair of gas pumps or air conditioning units was a cumbersome process involving an initial request that needed to go to an executive for approval, then generate a purchase order before work could move forward, creating delays throughout the process. Now, an employee only needs to click a button, which generates a purchase order from integration with Applegreen’s ServiceNow platform, and Epicor Advanced Workflow automatically moves the request forward for approval.

Applegreen is also using Epicor ECM to support its new vendor approval process for onboarding and collection of documentation such as W-9s and I-9s, providing easy access to electronic records for audits.



Assessing Return on Investment

By digitizing processes and streamlining workflows, mountains of paperwork and delays are eliminated. So too is the onus and expense of filing, storing, and retrieving documents from offsite locations, Wright said.

“You're not taking up space out in the warehouse; you've eliminated the labor and transportation costs to pick up that paperwork, bring it into the warehouse, store it, and then, seven years later, repeat the process to go through those documents, determine what can be thrown away and what still needs to be kept,” Wright added.

And when documentation and workflow is done manually, human error is inevitable, which requires additional time and effort to find and correct those errors, Wright said. “The way processes are set up now, it's almost error-free – it's hard to put an ROI on that.”

Epicor ECM and Mosaic have provided a glide path for the company's growth as it continues to expand. “When we needed to grow, adding another geographic region took no time at all. Epicor ECM and Mosaic are integral parts of the Applegreen business; they've been there all along the way. They will continue to be there for anything else that we might want to do in the future, and they fully complement everything that we do.”



EPICOR

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