



Image source: Die Bremer Stadtreinigung AöR, Fotoetage/Tristan Vankann

A Clear View on Accounts Payable

Bremer Stadtreinigung AöR has been using an SAP S/4HANA system since early 2022. As part of this migration project, the city cleaning agency also introduced electronic invoice processing with xSuite

Die Bremer Stadtreinigung (DBS) was founded as a new municipal company of the City of Bremen in January 2018. It acts as a central point of contact for strong municipal involvement and responsibility in all matters relating to waste management and urban cleanliness. The public institution has approximately 260 employees.

Familiar and proven partner: xSuite

As an institution under public law, DBS has their central information system operated by data center service provider Dataport. The switch to SAP S/4HANA took place in January 2022, and a move to electronic invoice processing was planned for the same year. The company preceding DBS had already been using the xSuite solution for several years; however, this tool was not transferred to the new organization as part of the corporate restructuring. For this reason, invoices were once again processed in paper-based format for some time. This put a temporary end to transparency of the processing status and duration.

After the migration to S/4HANA, the IT team worked hard to quickly re-introduce xSuite Invoice to remedy this situation. The workflow went live at the end of 2022.



Company:

Web: www.die-bremer-stadtreinigung.de

Sector: Public Sector

Headquarters: Bremen, Germany

xSuite® solution

- SAP integrated solution for accounts payable invoice processing; in paper, PDF, and structured format (German ZUGFeRD format)

Decisive arguments for xSuite

- Familiar and proven solution
- Transparency of the processing status and duration

Systems integration

- SAP S/4HANA

“We very much appreciated the collaboration with xSuite in the implementation project,” comments Conny Pawelz, Application Manager for IT, Digitization and Processes at DBS. “Our highly experienced and charismatic technical consultant from xSuite was able to provide a helpful answer to each and every of our questions, and we received a concept that met our requirements to the tee.”

Data center operator manages solution

The municipal cleaning agency receives roughly 6,000 incoming invoices per year from just under 600 creditors, either in paper format or as PDFs and, to a lesser extent, in the fully electronic ZUGFeRD format. Around one third of these have an associated purchase order. At the company's central entry point for incoming invoices, the documents are captured using xSuite's capture solution (paper invoices are first scanned). This step is performed by service provider Dataport, so DBS is not involved in the OCR process.

Around 70 people participate in the downstream workflow at the municipal cleaning agency. Anyone tasked with approval or release of an invoice receives it in the SAP Fiori app “My In-box”. This is where the work items are delivered and displayed, including all account assignment specifications. The archived invoice can be accessed in PDF format, for example, via the work item itself. This means that users have all tasks and workflows in a single inbox.

New dimension of traceability

Thanks to this system, the invoice flow has been accelerated substantially and delivers better transparency than before. When all goes smoothly, documents are back in accounts payable for final posting or clearing a mere 3-4 days after they were received.

In the past, when no electronic workflow was in place, this could take up to two weeks. Of course, there are always exceptions to the rule: Whenever a workflow participant takes a long time to review a document, this impacts the overall performance. But even this procedural weakness can be effectively addressed by configuring notification functions in the workflow. xSuite Invoice makes a major difference in that it provides a vastly improved level of transparency.

“The xSuite solution allows us to track with pin-point precision whether an invoice has been received, where it is, who has processed it and what comments have been posted for it,” says Conny Pawelz.

In addition, the parties involved can later research each invoice in the archive connected to SAP. Previously, the process generated a cost center document that did not allow users to track who was involved in processing the invoice or what items the invoice document included with just a few clicks in SAP.

Each receipt can be assigned to a person

Conny Pawelz: “We have much greater control over key processes today. For example, we configured an information e-mail that is dispatched twice a day in an automated manner. These mails enable us to specifically target individuals regarding pending tasks. And we can now clearly assign each invoice to a person in charge.”

In the past, if a processor was absent or ill, it was not always clear who needed to step in and do the approval or release of an invoice. Now, clear substitute rules can be set up in the software, and the system automatically takes care of correctly delivering work items. “That’s exactly what we need,” concludes the IT specialist.