# The Catholic Diocese of Wollongong Implements Accounts Payable Automation

The Catholic Diocese of Wollongong partnered with Xcellerate IT to deploy a fast, accurate, Accounts Payable automation solution built on the Kofax TotalAgilty platform and integrated with their ERP system, TechnologyOne Ci Anywhere in the cloud. This was setup as a shared services model, enabling the Diocese to support their 38 Catholic schools. The solution has enabled them to centralise the processing of 45,000 paper and electronic supplier invoices per year. The Diocese has digitally transformed manual processes, saved costs, gained visibility, improved customer engagement and enhanced productivity.

## Challenge

The Accounts Payable team was searching for more efficient ways to centralise and handle the end-to-end Accounts Payable workflow process within the head office and across their network of Catholic schools in the Diocese of Wollongong. They were preparing for the centralisation of accounts payable for all of their 38 schools and a 550% increase in volume at the end of the centralisation project.

The current process was heavily paper-based and labour intensive, resulting in high staffing costs for data collection, validation and input. This volume increase would not be manageable using the current process. The high volume of incoming invoices, some containing multiple pages, often made it difficult to locate and retrieve them quickly and easily for reference, approval or distribution. Manually entering and verifying large volumes of supplier invoices resulted in long invoice processing cycle times, workflow bottlenecks, excessive and tedious workloads, lack of visibility and slow customer service. Something had to change.

## Solution

The Diocese of Wollongong underwent a lengthy needs assessment and concluded that an automated process was now a necessity. They evaluated the various vendors in the market and determined that Xcellerate IT's offering using the Kofax TotalAgility platform was the best solution for their needs.

## Diocese of Wollongong

The Diocese covers 29 Catholic parish primary schools, 8 Catholic co-educational secondary schools and 1 K-12 Catholic school from the south–western Sydney suburbs of Camden and Campbelltown and down the coast of the Illawarra and Shoalhaven regions, with Milton-Ulladulla at the southern edge. The Southern Highlands region, including the townships of Bowral, Moss Vale and Mittagong, are also included in their Diocese.

These schools are served by the Catholic Education Office which is located in the Wollongong City area. The Finance Team at Head Office has a team of approximately 22 who provide a wide range of leadership and Finance support services to the schools.

## Product in Use
Kofax TotalAgility Platform
Xcellerate IT AP Framework

## Focus
Accounts Payable Automation

## Invoice Volume
45,000 per year

## Year Solution Deployed
February 2020

The Diocese of Wollongong implemented Xcellerate IT's invoice processing solution built on the Kofax TotalAgility platform and went live in February 2020.

Kofax TotalAgility is a comprehensive digital workflow management platform that provides the Diocese of Wollongong with the technology needed to standardise and manage their ongoing requirements for automated document processing.

The Diocese of Wollongong now benefits from an efficient, centralised, end-to-end Accounts Payable process that automatically extracts invoice data and uploads it to TechnologyOne Ci Anywhere via a standard web browser.

"We are loving the new paperless process" said Emily. "Our workflow is much more efficient and we now have full visibility over invoices across all our centralised schools".

## Benefits

Since implementing the solution, the Diocese of Wollongong has condensed invoice processing times, enhanced spend visibility and governance, and substantially reduced the amount of manual work required when processing invoices.

The solution provides the following benefits:

- By centralising disparate operations amongst head office and schools, along with implementing universally standardised corporate processes, operational gaps, redundancies, bottlenecks and other such inefficiencies have been minimised;

- The solution delivers the right work to the right person at the right time, enabling staff to engage in process execution in a manner appropriate to their role;
- Reduced reliance on paper and minimised lost invoices;
- Vastly improved visibility on spend with the ability to understand accruals in real time;
- Reduced staff workload across the Accounts Payable team, allowing resources to be re-allocated to more valuable tasks such as reconciliation, exception handling and complex query management;
- Email attachments are now automatically captured directly into TotalAgility with no touch. The auto classification and separation of documents means that the Accounts Payable team no longer has to print out, separate and rescan email attachments;
- A streamlined process for the management of 'Request for Payment without Invoice' forms;
- A full audit trail detailing all process activities as well as user activities which are performed on a particular job;
- As Kofax TotalAgility is a fully integrated digital transformation platform and not just an Accounts Payable automation solution, the Diocese of Wollongong has the opportunity to extend the platform with additional modules to support more workflows, business intelligence (analytics) and robotic process automation (RPA) if required.

"The solution has allowed invoices to be centrally stored and easily retrieved. We now have the tools and methodology in place to track invoices and settle accounts much more efficiently" said Emily. "Xcellerate IT provided an automation solution that has already demonstrated a clear return on investment. The solution has completely transformed the Accounts Payable department and can also be scaled to other areas of the business in the future".