



CASE STUDY



Royal Flying Doctor Service



About RFDS: The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS, informally known as The Flying Doctor) is an air medical service based in Australia.

Website: www.flyingdoctor.org.au

ERP Used: TechnologyOne

Revenue: \$450 million AUD

Industry: Healthcare

Situation prior to automation: RFDS processed invoices manually and received almost all its invoices by post, incurring significant costs and involving time-consuming processes.

Background

The Royal Flying Doctor Service of Australia (RFDS) is one of the largest and most comprehensive aeromedical organisations in the world. Using the latest in aviation, medical, and communications technology, it delivers extensive primary health care and 24-hour emergency services to those who live, work, and travel throughout Australia.

The RFDS is a not-for-profit organisation. While supported by the Commonwealth, State, and Territory Governments, the RFDS relies heavily on fundraising and donations from the community to purchase and medically equip its aircraft, and to finance other major capital initiatives.

Today, the RFDS has a fleet of 60 aircraft operating from 21 bases located across the nation and provides medical assistance to over 270,000 people every year.

Situated in Brisbane, the RFDS Qld Accounts Payable Department at the Corporate Office (CO) receives invoices from various locations throughout Queensland. The Department processes invoices for both Royal Flying Doctor Service and RFDS Services Limited (QLD).

Invoices are required to be authorised before processing and posting for payment. Accounts Payable currently utilises TechnologyOne Financials as the financial application for processing invoices.

Results After Automation

- In five years, RFDS went from 1,000 invoices to 4,000 without the need to hire extra AP staff.
- Complete Audit Trail of invoice lifecycle
- Drastic reduction in time enabling fast and critical payments.





"Now, invoices are sent to various coders for approval based on the invoice's code. Thanks to Efficiency Leaders solution, we have shortened this task from taking two weeks to a day!"

-Maree Quizon, Senior Accountant, Royal Flying Doctor Service.

Business Needs

In 2016, RFDS was manually processing 1000 invoices a month, 80% of which were sent by post and 20% sent to numerous email addresses. Invoices were often lost, and some invoices required more than six different approvals which could take two weeks just to gather all signatures. The process incurred significant costs and involved time-consuming tasks in order to print, send, and approve invoices.

Paper-Based Process & Multiple Bases

Due to its unique service, RFDS works from multiple bases with some of them being in very remote locations. Prior to automation, invoices were sent by post to these locations for approval, before being approved for payment. More complex invoices, requiring approval from multiple parties, could take more than two weeks. Since RFDS is commonly buying medical supplies or rare craft parts, having a fast process in place was essential and their processes required automating.

Solution

As around 80% of invoices were sent by post and only 20% by email, the solution agreed between RFDS and Efficiency Leaders has been to manually scan paper-based invoices to be processed by RapidAP (Efficiency Leaders' solution) while the remaining 20% of invoices sent by email would be automatically processed by the solution as already in a digital format.



Automated Processes & Important Time Reduction

The most obvious benefit of using the RapidAP solution for RFDS has been an important decrease in time-consuming tasks. The solution enables RFDS to track any invoices along the automation process as well as creating flexible workflows to ease the approval process. Instant messages are now notifying users to approve particular invoices, and multi-signature invoices, previously extremely time-consuming, are now handled easily. Before, RFDS had to manually scan the same invoice six or seven times for the different parties, losing more and more image quality each time and sometimes losing track of the invoice completely. The new solution enables specific invoices to be sent to the desired coder for approval before getting back to be signed, all this in a single system. This control, coupled with the flexible workflows, has been essential to shorten payment times and allow RFDS to pay critical invoices for urgent medical supplies on time.

Audit Track & Control

Shifting from a manual and paper-based process to an automated and almost paperless process has given RFDS a clear vision of their invoice life cycle. The solution, along with the automation, creates a copy of all invoices against transactions, which not only makes proof of payment easy to access but also gives a complete track of the entire expense for annual finance reviews. The solution also provides an easy-to-use task list with instant notification where invoices are marked with their current stage giving a good understanding of each team member's responsibilities. This has been greatly beneficial as it provided RFDS with a centralised system for its decentralised structure, of which some bases are in very remote locations.

Evolving to RapidAP: Efficiency Leaders' SaaS Model within the RapidP2P Suite

After five years with Efficiency Leaders, RFDS is going to migrate to RapidAP's latest version, Efficiency Leaders' new SaaS solution, which will empower RFDS to access a complete configurable solution. This will make this institution self-reliant and capable of making configuration changes as the business needs dictate. In the future, RFDS will also be able to leverage the platform beyond another business process apart from AP such as Vendor Onboarding, Purchase Requisition, and Vendor Portal.



"At the time, we were looking to take the paper out of our process as it was starting to become a nightmare and we were searching for a digital solution that could reduce these time-consuming processes. Our ERP provider, TechnologyOne, recommended Efficiency Leaders and it has been great so far."

-Maree Quizon, Senior Accountant, Royal Flying Doctor Service





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