

100% Electronic Invoicing in 90 Days

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1. Introduction & Situational Overview
2. Improving Supplier Engagement with Onboarding Automation
3. New Business Models and Product Offerings
4. Conclusion / For More Information

Introduction & Situational Overview: Supplier Onboarding & Delivery

In the ever-evolving world of supplier / buyer relations, technology is changing how relationships are managed. The ways in which customers communicate and transact with their supplier partners is at the forefront of this evolution. Many large buying entities are re-evaluating the practices and systems they have engaged with and are turning to advances in technology, software and even entirely new business models to help streamline once complicated, costly processes. Key among these is the onboarding and delivery of suppliers onto e-invoicing platforms.

That said, there remains a large hurdle when adopting such a solution - successfully and rapidly onboarding an entire supplier network onto one platform. Many e-invoicing solutions are plagued with low onboarding and user adoption rates. Overcoming this hurdle is the first step toward successfully implementing an e-invoicing platform and to receiving 100% electronic invoices.

Until very recently the process of onboarding suppliers onto an e-invoicing platform could be best described as manual. Heavily-resourced teams managed outreach campaigns to supplier networks, more specifically, the largest suppliers on the network, to encourage adoption of the platform. Only when adoption was deemed mandatory would any traction on the platform be obtained and even then onboarding rates remained notoriously low.

“E-invoicing is fast becoming the method of choice for buyers when it comes to improving the efficiency of transacting with their supplier network...”

Advancements in contact management and supplier-nurturing techniques have also improved matters. Today, enterprises are leveraging these to automate the process of onboarding suppliers. Examining the details and differentiators in new campaign management technology (as well as new business models and offerings provided by e-invoicing platforms) sheds light on the advancements underway.

When it comes to strategizing a successful supplier onboarding plan, many companies still turn to the same common practices that have been utilized for years. A few of these strategies include engaging the procurement team, enforcing mandatory conversion to the new platform, or dictating penalties to suppliers who do not comply. Surprising or not, these heavy-handed and somewhat aggressive tactics have not proven effective.

Below average supplier onboarding still leads the industry as the number one failpoint of e-invoicing implementation.

Improving Supplier Engagement with Onboarding Automation

In order for an e-invoicing implementation to be successful, suppliers must quickly adopt and engage with the new platform. As mentioned, this process has historically been laborious, expensive and provided mediocre onboarding results at best.

The advent of campaign management and automated supplier engagement tools has changed all that. **So how do these automated campaigns work?**

Just as a sales and marketing campaign will automate its lead nurture process by sending highly targeted and precisely timed emails to businesses and individuals, so should your

supplier engagement strategy. Taking a closer look at Tradeshift's unique toolset provides greater insight into how this intricately engineered, yet easily executable process works.

Every enterprise can select from a menu of email templates, each designed to touch the supplier at a different point in the onboarding process. For example, an initial email may communicate the urgency of supplier onboarding and remind the supplier

“The fact Tradeshift has already enabled over 120,000 suppliers with only seven dedicated resources is nothing short of exceptional and speaks to the level of capability of the toolset.”

that submitting e-invoices via Tradeshift is free and mandatory. A second email template is selected to follow up with those recipients who may not have opened the initial email.

All of these templates have gone through exhaustive A/B testing and a full campaign may include five different emails strategically crafted and timed to promote supplier adoption and engagement with the platform. A recent analysis provided by Spend Matters Pro explains just how effective this Network Engagement Tool is:

“Tradeshift has created a very clever toolset that is fully integrated with their broader platform to enable an automated onboarding process for dozens, hundreds, thousands, tens of thousands and more suppliers.”

While these campaigns begin to run, the self-service model continues and an enterprise may begin to analyze and optimize performance through detailed status updates on Tradeshift's easy-to-read dashboard. Administrators running the campaign can see where suppliers are in the pipeline and quickly adjust the outreach as needed.

When we are looking to actively engage users and prospects, it is no surprise that this new technology, which has been widely accepted in other spheres, would have such success connecting buyers to their suppliers. The most surprising factor is that such engagement strategies have not been more widely adopted until now.

Turning once again to Tradeshift, the industry leader in onboarding, we see just how far this technology drives delivery. One recent Tradeshift onboarding campaign aimed at 2,500 suppliers achieved a remarkable 24% delivery rate in just one week. 100% of those onboarded also started engaging with the system by sending e-invoices. It's no surprise that Tradeshift consistently sees 80% adoption rates within three months of launching an automated onboarding campaign. As noted by Jason Busch of Spend Matters Pro:

"In the real world of supplier onboarding, the toolset is achieving some pretty remarkable levels of adoption."

Conclusion

Comparing the success rates of traditional onboarding strategies with those of more automated, self-service models shows advancements have been made in the ways buyers enable suppliers to utilize an e-invoicing platform. 100% electronic invoicing is now a reality.

Streamlining and automating the onboarding process not only improves delivery rates, it has enabled entire business models to shift. Platform providers no longer need to charge enterprises exorbitant rates to offset the cost of resource-heavy onboarding teams or lock them into long term contracts to secure a continued revenue stream.

Meanwhile, suppliers are spared expensive transaction fees. In addition, the automated campaign management technology is able to address every supplier on the network, not just the largest. The ability to rapidly onboard the long tail of the supplier network has proven to be the greatest value-add from self-service delivery and is remedying the industry's leading fail point of user adoption.

For More Information

For more information on Supplier Onboarding Automation, Tradeshift's Network Engagement Tool and / or Fast Track:

Visit www.tradeshift.com

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