

# Automated Invoice Processing: Wien-Süd is Now 'Ephesofting' with adesso Austria

Last year, increasing customer requirements, more complex structures and changing legal regulations meant Wien-Süd needed a new digitization initiative. The company's objective was to increase efficiency, relieve pressure on employees and reduce error rates in supplier invoices. In doing so, the company aspires to ideally position itself for growth, both now and in the future. To accomplish this, the housing cooperative decided to introduce a solution that improves and digitizes the existing elements of invoice processing.

adesso Austria won a competitive selection process between different providers to be the implementation partner with the Ephesoft Transact solution. adesso Austria was awarded the contract because of their long-standing experience in digitization, solid expertise in implementation and the recommended solution itself – Ephesoft Transact. The solution comprehensively fulfills all the required criteria and offers a modern platform fit for future developments.

"We offer solutions that are individually tailored to the respective requirements while always keeping a focus on added value for the customer. Together with Wien-Süd, we successfully implemented the first use cases for digital process optimization with an adesso implementation team," said Reto Pazderka, CEO adesso Austria, describing the start of this joint digital journey.



## Client:

Wien-Süd

## Partner:

adesso Austria

## Industry:

Residential Construction, Real Estate

## Applications:

- Invoice receipt – Real estate management
- Auditing – Real estate management
- Invoice processing – Real estate management
- Construction invoices (in progress)
- Incoming mail (in planning)

## Results:

- Digitization of invoice receipt processing
- Reduction of processing time from 3 minutes to 42.6 seconds
- 86% of all invoices processed with Ephesoft Transact in the first half year
- 93% straight-through processing for Ephesoft Transact achieved within 6 months
- Successful change project for 250 satisfied employees

## The Challenge

Wien-Süd, founded in 1910, is one of the longest-established and most traditional construction companies for residential properties in Austria. With total assets of around €1.4 billion in the 2019 financial year and a construction turnover of €130 million, Wien-Süd is one of Austria's leading non-profit developers. The Group manages around 22,000 apartments, 400 business premises and approximately 20,000 parking spaces from its headquarters in Vienna-Liesing.

Experience, tradition, economic performance, innovation, sustainability and customer proximity are among the core competencies that set Wien-Süd apart from its competition. Customers and partners also benefit from an all-round service package, because the company is a one-stop shop for various project processes, including project development, construction management, real estate development and property management.

The team at Wien-Süd processes more than 50,000 incoming invoices every year from numerous different suppliers and partners. These need to be checked to make sure they are correct in all aspects; a process that was done entirely manually until the beginning of 2018. But even after switching to a scanning process and assigning barcodes to link the invoices to the respective process in the ERP system, this provides only limited relief to employees' workloads. Wien-Süd is growing steadily – whereas twenty years ago they dealt with about 40 companies, today there are 140 with more being added every year. This increasing complexity indicated it was time for innovative digitization to prepare the Group for its future challenges.

## The Strategy

Wien-Süd committed itself to comprehensive digitization in the second quarter of 2018 and began the search for a suitable partner for the project. The first presentations of three providers took place in summer. By November, after a proof of concept, the decision had been made in favor of adesso Austria with Ephesoft Transact.

The strategy was convincing: the entire formal invoice verification process would be automated using Ephesoft Transact. This would reduce the error rate in the current barcode process, relieve workload pressure from employees and improve the efficiency of the entire invoice processing workflow. The solution resulted in a considerable relief of employees' workloads and increased productivity, because almost every incoming invoice needed to be corrected at one point or another – whether because of changed bank details, incorrect address information or other relevant details. Robust, error-free master data maintenance was the key to success.

After the team from Wien-Süd, adesso Austria and Ephesoft had drawn up the roadmap for the transformation project at the beginning of February 2019 and got to work on it. 'Go Live' was scheduled for February 2019 after successful completion. Every employee that touched the invoicing process was notified and trained if they were going to use the system. Throughout the entire digitization project, Wien-Süd was careful to use professional change management techniques and transparent communication, active employee involvement and the necessary sensitivity in implementing all necessary changes.

“Our employees are so delighted with the new solution that they can no longer picture a working life without the efficient processes and support that Ephesoft Transact offers!”

– Beate Braun, Assistant Director FIBU at Wien-Süd



# The Solution

The original process had no fewer than four manual steps before the document in question even got into the actual workflow: the initial manual review of the incoming invoice, entering essential information into the ERP system, assigning a barcode and scanning the invoice. Ephesoft Transact reduces this effort to a single task: scanning the invoice. From this moment on, the software automatically reads all the relevant information via OCR, transfers it to the ERP system via a technical interface and records it correctly so it can be processed further. After the content has been approved by the respective department directly in the system, the invoice is automatically posted and the responsible person receives a payment advice when it is due, which they can confirm and execute with just a click.

Even after the barcode process had been modified, what used to take about three minutes to enter an invoice now has dropped to an average of 42.6 seconds! Employees scan all documents with a CANON ImageFormula DR-6030c and Ephesoft

Transact then classifies each invoice into the correct batch class, uses OCR identification and smart capture technologies to extract the necessary data and communicates automatically with the ERP system. In the first six months, Wien-Süd had already been able to increase the straight-through processing to 93 % by using Ephesoft Transact – 85.81% of all invoices already run through the new process. Just a few exceptions have to be processed manually.

But the team is still working to improve exceptions and errors: in the future, suppliers will be required to submit their invoices digitally as PDF documents, dispensing with the scanning step. In the meantime, all incoming invoices will be processed automatically. Ephesoft Transact will be rolled out in the next project for construction documents and incoming mail areas at Wien-Süd so they can also benefit from the many benefits that have already been demonstrated in incoming invoice processing.

**The new solution meant Wien-Süd could seamlessly continue to efficiently handle the invoice receipt process during the Coronavirus lockdown. Thanks to the new, location-independent process, they only need one employee at headquarters to scan the invoices. The entire process can then be completed by colleagues working from home via web access to Ephesoft Transact.**

“We now have a new expression in the Group for processing invoices – our employees now just say: ‘Let’s do some ephesofting!’”

– **Beate Braun, Assistant Director FIBU at Wien-Süd**

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