

E H Booth & Co Ltd

Food Retail



Booths achieves 50% productivity gain with Canon invoice processing solution.

Company Name

E H Booth & Co Ltd

Founded

1847

Location

29 stores in the North of England

Services

Food Retail

Website

www.booths.co.uk

Products

Canon Invoice Processing Software Solution and High Speed Document Scanners

Overview

An expanding, regional supermarket chain founded in Blackpool, England, in 1847 by Edwin Henry Booth, Booths today employs over 3,000 people in 29 stores across the North-West of the country. With its own manufacturing, distribution and maintenance facilities and an award-winning Central Office building in Lancashire, the company is proud of its Northern heritage and holds true to its founder's philosophy to 'sell the best goods available, in attractive stores, staffed with first class assistants'. To realise that vision, the company also works hard to engage with the communities within which it trades and to develop own label product ranges in partnership with local suppliers and producers. While both Booths and the many local suppliers and producers with which it trades have benefited from this symbiotic relationship, the fledgling nature of many of its trading partners means that, as part of their operational processes, many submit invoices that vary considerably in type and quality.

Looking to achieve more efficient operating methods, Booths decided to acquire a solution that would streamline the process by drastically reducing the time spent handling invoices manually. After considering a number of options, Booths adopted Canon's Invoice Processing solution, which has delivered time savings and greatly improved productivity in the two years since installation.

Improved efficiencies required to support business expansion

For a business to expand yet remain profitable, it needs to ensure that, as well as increasing its revenues, it optimises internal processes by adopting the most efficient operating methods. Booths identified the manual processing of its invoices as one area of the business in which operational changes could deliver significant benefits. Booths's Financial Controller, Steve Sumner explains the challenge they faced: "We have 3,500 suppliers, of which 2,000 are 'expense suppliers', who submit invoices for capital or repair items - the 'Goods Not for Resale' that we procure to enable us to function as a business. As a result of our policy to work where possible with local suppliers whose own businesses vary enormously in size, the range and format of the invoices they submit to our stores varies similarly- from hand-written ones to multipage, paper invoices to electronic invoices. This meant that we had to process the majority of the invoices manually, which was very time-intensive, especially if an invoice was hand-written and not clearly legible or was missing some of the data we required.

"We therefore decided to invest in a software-based, invoice processing solution that would improve data input accuracy, while reducing manual payment data entry time, queries and the number of invoices lost. Looking to reduce our payment processing costs and also to improve our supplier relations, we reviewed two solutions, but were swayed by the level of Canon's commitment to support us throughout the project."

The Canon Invoice Processing solution, with full integration into Microsoft SharePoint, has really increased productivity. The speed of retrieval of invoices is significantly quicker as they are now stored as electronic images, so that what used to be a time-consuming manual task is now completed in seconds."

Michelle Barnett,
Purchase and Sales Ledger Manager

Canon

“We can now present a far more accurate picture of the business, as we know exactly where any invoice is being held up.”

Steve Sumner, Financial Controller



Canon delivers business process consultancy, solution, and training

The implementation of the project began with a consultation day, during which Steve and Michelle Barnett, Purchase and Sales Ledger Manager at Booths, confirmed with Canon exactly what they wanted from the solution – to be able to process 250 invoices accurately every 3 hours – and how its components would be tailored to exactly fit into Booths’s Accounts Payable (AP) operations.

The installation of the invoice processing solution and the training of Booths’s finance team were completed by Canon within a week. Michelle recalls: “As the new system has its own dedicated PCs that run specialised automation software, Canon was able to set it up and test it without any negative impact on our ongoing operations.”

The new Canon Invoice Processing solution, which also comprises Canon document scanning hardware, features powerful software that digitises and then smartly extracts, processes and digitally archives the invoice data - all now seamlessly integrated with Microsoft SharePoint and Booths’s Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) platform. Previously a supplier would post a paper invoice to Booths’s Accounts Payable department, who would forward it on to the relevant budget holder for authorisation. That person would then sign and code the invoice and send it back to the AP department, who would then manually enter the data on the invoice into Booth’s ERP system.

With the new invoice processing system in place, when paper invoices are now received by the AP department, they are scanned and indexed as pdfs at up to 60 pages per minute in batches of 20. The intelligent document recognition capabilities of the Canon solution also recognise and capture key accounting information, such as invoice number and VAT Number, and automatically populate the relevant fields within the template. As part of the same process, key invoice data is automatically exported, validated, and matched against suppliers’ data held in the ERP system. The resulting pdfs are saved in Microsoft SharePoint, from where the relevant budget holders can access and authorise them. Finance employees can then quickly and easily access each recorded invoice for a oneclick validation, which then imports the data, ready for payment, into Booths’s ERP software.

Productivity and supplier relationships hit new high

The benefits to Booths of the new solution have been numerous and significant as Michelle explains: “The Canon Invoice Processing solution, with full integration into Microsoft SharePoint, has really increased productivity. The speed of retrieval of invoices is significantly quicker as they are now stored as electronic images, so that what used to be a time-consuming manual task is now completed in seconds. And because we’re now able to bring up an invoice to check on the screen, the payment query time per invoice during BACs payment runs has been reduced from the minutes it took to dig out the paper invoice from a manual filing system to seconds.

“The new process automation solution has also contributed to the reduction in time in compiling management accounts at the end of a quarter. In summary, the new system gives Booths greater functionality with regards to processing the invoices and greater knowledge of the invoices that are circulating within the business. We can now present a far more accurate picture of the business, as we know exactly where any invoice is being held up.”

Steve is full of praise for the solution installed and the support provided by Canon: “I’m delighted with the results we’re now achieving, thanks to the increased speed of invoice data capture and entry enabled by the Canon system. We had our teething issues earlier in the project, but I can’t fault the excellent level of support provided by Canon, who went far beyond our expectations. Every time an issue arose, they got straight onto it and pulled out all the stops to sort it out.”

Canon Europe Ltd

3 The Square
Stockley Park
Uxbridge
Middlesex
United Kingdom
UB11 1ET
Tel: +44 208 588 8000
Fax: +44 208 588 8001
www.canon-europe.com

Canon (UK) Ltd

Woodhatch
Reigate
Surrey
United Kingdom
RH2 8BF
Tel: +44 1737 220 000
Fax: +44 1737 220 022
www.canon.co.uk

Canon Ireland

3006 Lake Drive
Citywest
Saggart
Co Dublin
Ireland
Tel: +353 1205 2400
Fax: +353 1205 2525
www.canon.ie

