



How EnerCare Empowered its Team by Innovating with OCR

Customer Overview



Name

Enercare

Location

North York, Ontario, Canada

Industry

Service and protection for HVAC systems and plumbing

Web

www.enercare.ca

Challenge

Reduce invoice processing times and improve accuracy and efficiency for EnerCare, by using automated capture to replace tedious, manual and error-prone entry of invoice data.

Results

ABBYY FlexiCapture automated the capture and entry of invoice data — speeding invoice processing, raising efficiency and improving accuracy and revenue recovery for EnerCare.

If you live in a condominium, turning on the lights and having them work properly is something you should be able to take for granted. Processing the payment of such utilities, however, is not nearly as easily as flipping a switch. In some cases, the approach organizations take can mean the difference between business growth and lost revenue, as well as posing the risk of a team wasting time that could be better spent elsewhere.

“Process Fusion was perfect... They were very accommodating. To be honest, I think they were on site once and then we were able to work with them remotely. And at the end of the day, we got a good product.”

— Kevin Neild, Director, Revenue Assurance & Customer Care Operations, Enercare

The Customer

EnerCare Connections Inc. is a leading sub-meter provider, with metering contracts for condominiums and apartment suites in Ontario, Alberta and elsewhere in Canada. It is a part of EnerCare and EnerCare Solutions, which employs 900 people and serves more than 1.1 million customers in areas such as water heaters, furnaces, air conditioners and other HVAC products.

The Challenge

On average, EnerCare Connections processes approximately 1,200 utility bills for payment each month on behalf of its clients. The data from those invoices, however, is needed across several departments in the organization. This includes Finance, which enters the necessary information into the accounting system, for example, but others use it to backbill other tenants, while a third group might use the data to calculate the appropriate rates.

Until recently, however, all invoice data was manually entered into spreadsheets, which took an inordinate amount of time and created the risk of error, according to Kevin Neild, Director, Revenue Assurance at EnerCare Connections Inc.



Process Fusion Inc.

Process Fusion Inc. (PFI) is a managed services and cloud application provider of Secure Information Exchange (SIX) and Business Process Automation (BPA).

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"It would be on the shared drive, then three different people would come in and grab what they wanted," he says.

The existing process also meant the organization was failing to capture additional data that could offer value to the business, including verification of consumption patterns, Neild added.

"It came down to inefficiencies, duplication of effort and a lack of controls," he said.

The Solution

EnerCare engaged Process Fusion Inc. to deploy ABBYY FlexiCapture, a turnkey OCR solution designed with such challenges in mind. More specifically, Process Fusion offered critical assistance in setting up EnerCare with business rules for ABBYY FlexiCapture that ensured the digitized process was aligned with its needs.

"They built in a lot of the logic to help verify the invoices as well," Neild. One major template alone offered coverage of about 75% of the company's invoices, he added. Five others have been added since then.

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The Results

According to Neild, the return on investment was achieved in less than six months. Some of the highlights included:

Streamlined Efficiency: Whereas multiple departments needed to get hands-on with invoice data in the past, Neild said Finance is no longer involved but gets an automatic upload for file payment.

Improved Accuracy and Revenue Recovery: It was easy to miss details, with some of the large, expensive invoices EnerCare Connections handles. But no longer. "If you find one error, the solution almost pays for itself," Neild says.

More Actionable Data: "When it was done manually, we made concessions," Neild says. "We would say, 'We just want these three pieces of information.' Now we're picking off every little piece of information that's relevant. Everyone's happy. We can really understand our customers."

Strong Team Morale: Moving to a digital process was not an insignificant change at EnerCare, but Neild says the key was involving those affected as early and as often as possible. "We've saved them weeks and weeks of detail, and recording more detail than before," he says. "They're happy -- they get better analytics. They can understand building profiles and everything else."

Next Steps

Having developed six templates initially, EnerCare is now working with Process Fusion to get up to 14. Having a strong partner gives the organization flexibility and on-demand expertise it doesn't have to develop in-house, something the team appreciates.

"That product is a very specialized skill set, so we've decided strategically not to fully understand it," says Neild. "I'll probably always have to engage Process Fusion. It's a question of 'Make Versus Buy', and I'm just going to buy it."

About ABBYY

ABBYY is a leading global provider of technologies and solutions that help businesses effectively action information.

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