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Streamlining Order-to-Cash Processes: E-Invoicing and Oracle Receipting at Experian Marketing Services

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ABSTRACT

This technical report details an operational study conducted at the Account Receivable department of Experian Marketing Services (M) Sdn. Bhd., specifically within the Order to Cash (O2C) team. The study focuses on streamlining billing and cash application processes through the implementation of electronic invoicing (e-invoicing) and digital receipting. The e-invoicing task involved processing both Purchase Order (PO) and non-PO invoices for the Asia-Pacific (APAC) market utilizing various portals such as Ariba, Coupa, Vendor@SG, and Tradeshift. In parallel, cash application procedures for the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region were managed by extracting bank statements from the HSBCnet portal, referencing AR14 reports for open invoices, and utilizing Java Oracle software to generate official receipts. The findings indicate that digitizing the invoicing workflow significantly reduces manual data entry and minimizes human error, ensuring compliance within the strict Workday 3 (WD3) to Workday 6 (WD6) timelines. Overall, the integration of these standardized digital systems enhances financial accuracy, improves stakeholder communication, and accelerates the cash inflow cycle for global information services.

Keywords: Account Receivable, E-invoicing, Experian, Oracle software, Order to Cash (O2C).

INTRODUCTION

Experian Marketing Services (M) Sdn. Bhd. is a global information services company located in Cyberjaya, Malaysia. The organization assists individuals and businesses in taking financial control and accessing financial services, such as providing credit reports required by lenders for housing loans. Furthermore, the company is supported by a robust Information Technology (IT) team dedicated to ensuring consumers' data and privacy safety. Operating on a hybrid mode, Experian Malaysia emphasizes a people-first approach, prioritizing employee well-being and experience.

The Account Receivable department at Experian is responsible for managing all cash inflows and receiving funds on behalf of the company. This division is known as the Order to Cash (O2C) team, which is structurally divided into three specialized groups: the billing team, the collection team, and the cash application team. The billing team handles purchase order confirmations and dispatches invoices to customers. Subsequently, the collection team pursues the payments, and finally, the cash application team applies the received funds to close the corresponding invoices. To ensure the efficiency of these financial operations, analytical tasks involving e-invoicing and receipting software were conducted and evaluated.

THE PROPOSED METHOD

E-Invoicing Process for the APAC Region

E-invoicing involves presenting invoices to customers in an electronic format, a method that eliminates manual data entry and saves time, shipping, and personnel costs. The e-invoicing implementation targeted the Asia-Pacific (APAC) region, specifically Singapore and Malaysia. Portals utilized included Ariba, Coupa, Vendor@SG, Stream, and Taulia for Singapore, and Ariba, Tradeshift, RHB portal, and Zycus for Malaysia.

The process is divided into two distinct invoice types:

- **PO Invoice:** Requires the buyer to confirm the purchase order via the portal. The corresponding PO number is matched with the system-generated invoice before details are inserted and uploaded (See Figure 1).

- **Non-PO Invoice:** Represents an indirect purchase order that bypasses the buyer confirmation step, though the subsequent uploading and notification steps remain identical (See Figure 2).

After submission, the collection team is notified via email, and a shared spreadsheet is updated for departmental reference.

Figure 1

Flowchart of the e-invoicing process for PO invoices

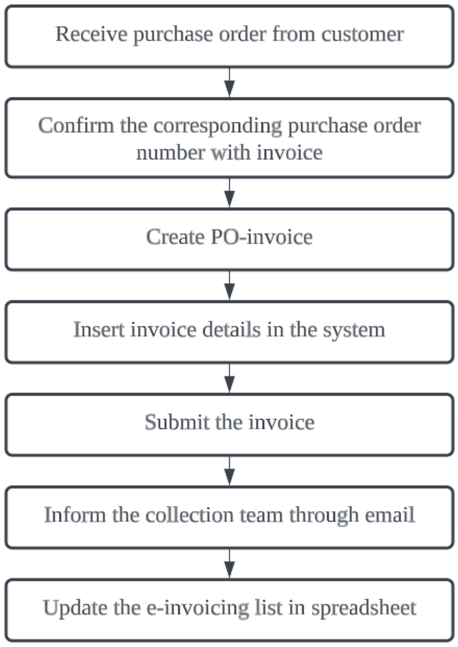
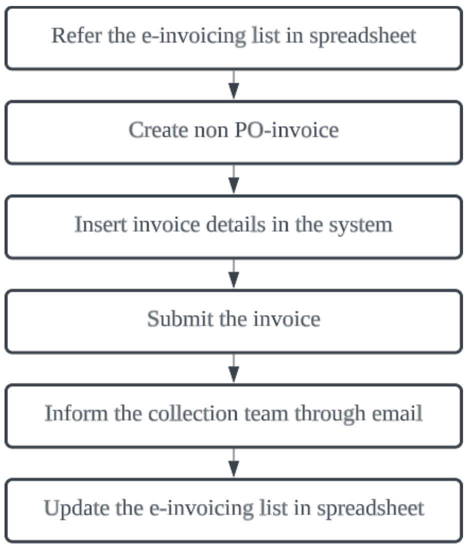


Figure 2

Flowchart of the e-invoicing process for non-PO invoices

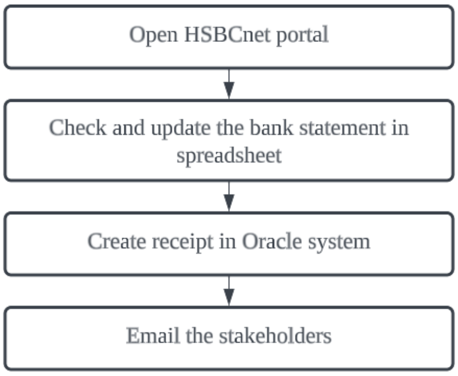


Receipt Creation in Oracle for the EMEA Region

Receipting is the process of issuing a document to the buyer post-payment, managed by the cash application team. This task was localized to the Europe, Middle East, and Africa (EMEA) region, covering Austria, Bulgaria, Monaco, Switzerland, Turkey, and Poland, averaging fewer than ten transactions daily (See Figure 3).

Figure 3

Flowchart of the receipting process



The workflow begins by logging into the HSBCnet portal to verify transactions from the preceding day. Upon identifying a payment, the AR14 report is consulted to locate the open invoices for the region. The receipt is then generated in the Java Oracle software by inputting the receipt number, customer Oracle number, paid amount, and transaction number. Finally, stakeholders are informed via email once the receipt is successfully posted.

EVALUATION AND RESULTS

Efficiency of E-Invoicing

The implementation of the e-invoicing workflow yielded significant operational improvements for the billing team. By utilizing digital portals, the organization successfully bypassed manual data transcription, which inherently reduced human error rates. E-invoicing operations strictly adhered to the corporate timeline of Workday 3 (WD3) to Workday 6 (WD6). Maintaining this precise schedule proved crucial, as it established a reliable foundation for the subsequent collection team to execute their duties without delays.

Accuracy in Digital Receipting

The cash application process demonstrated that cross-referencing HSBCnet bank statements with AR14 open invoice reports is vital for financial accuracy. Operating the Java Oracle software required meticulous attention to detail to ensure the exact matching of customer Oracle numbers and transaction amounts. This structured methodology significantly minimized discrepancy errors. Furthermore, managing the EMEA receipting workflow fostered excellent communication skills, as the timely resolution of mismatched payments required direct and professional interaction with regional stakeholders.

CONCLUSION

The analytical and administrative tasks executed within the Account Receivable department at Experian Marketing Services underscore the critical role of specialized financial software in modern corporate environments. The deployment of digital e-invoicing portals for the APAC market and the utilization of Java Oracle systems for the EMEA market effectively eliminated redundant manual processes and safeguarded data integrity. Navigating these systems highlighted the necessity of possessing strong analytical skills and proficiency in tools such as Microsoft Excel, particularly in organizations centered around data and information services. Ultimately, the structured, fast-paced nature of the Order to Cash (O2C) workflow not only advances the organization's financial goals but also serves as an excellent platform for developing high-quality, competitive professionals.

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Conflict of Interest
The authors have no conflicts of interest to declare.

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