

Automated System Streamlines Decades-Old Invoice and Expense Process

Keste Delivers Oracle WebCenter Imaging and PeopleSoft Solution Leveraging Oracle SOA Suite

CASE STUDY HIGHLIGHTS

Customer: Government Agency
Industry: Public Sector

Business Challenges

- Modernize 60+ year-old manual expense reporting process
- Offer online expense reporting and tracking capabilities
- Reduce data entry errors
- Improve expense team and staff productivity
- Enable digital document storage

Keste Solution & Innovation

- Leverage existing PeopleSoft Financials solution to avoid migration risks
- Use Oracle WebCenter Imaging solution directly inside of PeopleSoft leveraging Oracle SOA
- Leverage Keste Optical Forms Recognition for Peoplesoft to speed data entry and exception handling
- Automate data capture, storage, & workflows to streamline processes
- Implement SSO for security, ease-of-use of the new expense system

Business Benefits

- Reduced process costs by 30%
- Cut postage fees by 20% with email capabilities
- Saved 90% on document storage fees
- Improved expense payment cycle times by 60-80%

Oracle Products Leveraged

- Oracle SOA Suite
- Oracle WebCenter Capture
- Oracle WebCenter Imaging
- Oracle Access Management Suite
- PeopleSoft Adapter

Business Challenges

This government agency processes approximately 200,000 expense reports and contractor invoices each year. Employees have been using a manual process that was put in place during the FDR-era dating back to the 1940s. The current workload took at least 18 people—two in-take clerks to receive expense reports and invoices, six data entry analysts to enter expenses into the organization’s PeopleSoft Financial solution, eight auditors to manage rules compliance, and an additional eight counselors to review data for accuracy and sign-off on payouts.

The cumbersome manual process was fraught with errors, which added to the already-high labor costs. If expense receipts or signatures were missing, someone had to track down the misplaced document or the approval signature. Similarly, if questions arose about miscalculated totals or unacceptable expenses, back and forth phone calls and emails added days to the process. It was very common for flawed expense reports to be kicked out of the system, only to be re-entered when issues were resolved.

Since agency staff, who submitted expenses, weren’t able to monitor the status of reports as they progressed through the system, they had no way of knowing if there were errors or when disbursements would be paid. In addition, the agency is required to maintain the paper copies of the records for seven years, which led to additional costs for document storage.

Focusing on efficiency and automation, the agency’s administrative team wanted to streamline the out-dated manual process to improve productivity and reduce costs. With a modernized system, the organization could reduce errors and pay expenses much more quickly—a major efficiency boost for both the expense-reporting team and agency personnel. The organization could also begin to maintain expense records digitally and shift away from hard-copy storage, helping to cut physical document management costs.

Keste Delivers—Solution and Innovation

Keste’s vast experience with Oracle SOA, Oracle’s WebCenter Imaging, as well as its PeopleSoft knowledge made them an ideal vendor to manage this automation project. The agency originally considered an IBM FileNet solution. However, Keste recommended that the organization leverage its existing PeopleSoft solution to eliminate the risks of migrating data to another system. In addition, Keste was able to utilize out-of-the-box functionality from Oracle instead of creating a custom application.



When the project kicked off in the summer of 2012, Keste used the PeopleSoft Quick Invoice functionality as the basis for building screens for the new process. This enabled many of the users to leverage the same familiar screens they were already using to speed their learning time as well. Then using an Oracle SOA platform to manage Oracle-to-PeopleSoft integrations and data flows, Keste created an automated data capture and imaging solution with the following components:

- **Oracle WebCenter Capture**—integrated with document scanners and the agency’s email system, it collects submitter email addresses and images of paper expenses.
- **Keste Optical Forms Recognition for Peoplesoft**—as expense documents are accepted into the system, it extracts header and line data and verifies submitter information with the PeopleSoft application, a reusable technology component that only Keste delivers today as Oracle plans to make similar functionality part of their product offering in the future.
- **Oracle WebCenter Imaging**—using a SOA interface, it delivers data to the PeopleSoft solution and stores expense images and metadata.
- **Oracle Access Management Suite**—providing system security, it allows single sign-on access to the Oracle imaging solution and the PeopleSoft application without requiring users to login multiple times.
- **Oracle WebCenter PeopleSoft Adapter**—creating a seamless integration so employees can view expense documents within the familiar PeopleSoft application but retrieve information from the WebCenter imaging solution.

“Keste’s solution has brought us into the 21st century. We have been able to automate a manual process that has been in place for more than 60 years. Our employees are thrilled.”

— Director of IT
Government Agency

To accommodate all employee preferences, the agency still allows staff to submit expenses and invoices in hardcopy. Employees can also email expenses to a general submission mailbox or use the new online system. While the expense entry methods are slightly different, the processes converge with the auditors using the new automated expense management system.

Documents submitted by hardcopy or email enter the process via the expense in-take team, as they capture or scan documents into the system. When users submit expenses via the new online system, employees input expenses directly into the PeopleSoft Financial application where they are automatically routed to the auditing team.

Business Benefits

Now, the agency no longer needs a team of six data entry analysts to manually input expense information. The much more efficient team of two expense in-take clerks import hardcopy or email documents directly into the PeopleSoft Financial system. Employees can manage approvals with automated workflows instead of tracking down actual signatures, and workers can follow expense reports throughout the process to help manage payouts. Should an employee need to find an old expense report or invoice, they can easily retrieve documents in the PeopleSoft system. When exceptions occur, the expense team can handle them much more efficiently, so they don’t become bottlenecks. The agency also has a formalized process to “rush” expenses if necessary.

Since the organization began using the new automated expense and invoice management system, it has realized significant cost reductions and improvements, including:

- 30% cost savings to process expenses and invoices
- 20% savings in postage and shipping costs by emailing expense reports
- 90% savings in document storage fees and costs to retrieve old documents
- 60-80% improvement in cycle times to process expense reports in 1-3 days instead of 5 days

With the new automated process, the agency has achieved its goals of streamlining, creating efficiencies, and reducing costs.

Keste is an award-winning software solutions and development company that develops solutions to help companies automate and optimize complex business processes. The 2013 Oracle Specialized Partner of the Year in Middleware and a Salesforce Cloud Alliance Partner, Keste also delivers cloud platforms and cloud integration services, providing efficient solutions that create business value for our customers.