

# How WP Beverages Transformed Its AP Process Using OnBase

Headquartered in Madison, WI, WP Beverages is a Pepsi-Cola franchisee. WP Beverages has grown rapidly, going from only two warehouse locations in 2004 for eight distribution warehouses as of 2023. The company aims to serve a broad customer base with superior products and exceptional experiences. It remains dedicated to keeping up with its competitors and constantly improving.

## OBJECTIVES

- Eliminate Paper
- Increase Process Efficiency
- Improve Process Visibility

## RESULTS

- 100% Paperless
- Simpler, Faster Processes
- Smoother, More Transparent Customer Service
- Greater Visibility
- Cutting the Invoice Coding and Approval Process Time by 50%

## The Challenge

Before its digital transformation, WP Beverages spent years relying on a manual AP process. First, vendors mailed all invoices to WP-Beverages headquarters. This step alone was inconvenient, as no one from the AP team worked at the location the invoices were mailed to, so they had to commute. Then, employees had to physically open the mail, file, scan, and email each document to route invoices for GL coding and payment approval. As a result, WP Beverages had zero visibility into the status of an invoice in its system.

In 2019, WP Beverages had enough and prioritized the need to update its AP processes. As a result, the accounting department was tasked with reviewing the document flow for the AP process to replace its manual processes. The issue became even more urgent in March 2020 when remote work became mandatory in a global pandemic. At this point, WP Beverages' manual AP operations became nearly impossible to maintain.

## Finding a Solution & Partner

WP Beverages knew that finding a solution to all its AP issues was important. But it also understood the long-term value of a solution that could solve other business problems across the organization. Upon reviewing OnBase, WP Beverages felt it had the most flexibility out of all the solutions on the table. WP Beverages then chose Naviant, a top OnBase reseller to lead them throughout their implementation journey.

**“Once we signed the agreement to go forward, Naviant did a great job of detailing the timeline, letting us know what they would do and when, and everything went according to plan.”**

John Burandt, Finance Manager, WP Beverages

The implementation had a few bumps in the road, but the Naviant team was there every step to help WP Beverages resolve each issue. Then, in October 2021, WP Beverages went live with a digital Accounts Payable process via OnBase. It initially implemented the solution to a small group and then expanded it slowly. By late December 2021, the entire company was using OnBase.

## The Difference

### SAVED TIME

OnBase has decreased the time the sales and operations teams spend coding and approving invoices. It also reduced the time between the invoice receipt and posting the receipt to the financials. According to WP Beverages sales and operations managers, OnBase has allowed them to spend about half the time coding and approving invoices compared to pre-implementation operations.

### INCREASED TRANSPARENCY & SOLUTION VERSATILITY

WP Beverages was able to increase its transparency in the invoice process using OnBase. On the difference the solutions have made, Shawn Montanio, Director of Finance and Accounting at WP Beverages, said:

**“The biggest [efficiency] is transparency. People just understand the processes better, which makes us more efficient, and obviously better with communication. Being able to obtain information quicker is key.”**

*Shawn Montanio, Director of Finance and Accounting at WP Beverages*

OnBase has also proven itself useful as more than just a payment system. Thanks to its keyword function and custom queries, it doubles as a financial reporting tool.

### WORK FROM ANYWHERE

Now that OnBase has automated and digitized the AP process, employees can do their part from anywhere. This benefit has allowed WP Beverages to make hybrid work arrangements without any issues.

### GREATER VISIBILITY

WP Beverages has enjoyed increased visibility into the AP process. Easy access to these insights is convenient when internal customers and external vendors call asking about their invoice statuses. WP Beverages employees simply search in OnBase, and they have all the information they need to determine where their invoice is in the system. This benefit has gone a long way in improving the customer and vendor experience, too.

### FASTER, MORE ACCURATE PROCESSES

With OnBase, WP Beverages no longer depends on its inter-company mail, email, and scan system to route invoices. Instead, OnBase performs the process much faster by automatically routing invoices to the correct people.

The process' increased speed and accuracy has also allowed WP Beverages to reduce its headcount, as the number of people dedicated to the AP process has decreased.

### EASIER AUDITS

OnBase has also made the auditing process much easier by automatically providing a thorough digital trail. As a result, WP Beverages' external auditors have been very enthusiastic about its new solution because all the information they need is in OnBase.

## **100% PAPERLESS**

OnBase has allowed the AP team to eliminate paper, which has made every step of the AP process easier. This gain has made WP Beverages employees' work lives easier. One WP Beverages employee said, "I love this solution. Accounts payable has been transformed from a paper-pushing payment process to a flexible, time-saving solution. We no longer spend time pushing physical paper through the process and filing that paper once we're done with it."

Another employee remarked, "By taking those 'paper shuffling' tasks out of the process, our AP team can now focus on providing good quality information for our internal and external customers. Document retrieval is easy, and all the information we need is at our fingertips."

## **Solution Expansion Plans**

As anticipated, OnBase's flexibility has been very helpful to WP Beverages. It has allowed the company to expand its solution over time, which it plans to continue.

### **NEW VENDOR ONBOARDING**

WP Beverages is building a solution to bring new vendors into its system. There will be an approval process and a document collection process. As a result, the AP department will benefit from having a searchable file to support governmental compliance, particularly for documents like W-9s and 1099s. WP Beverages also plans to move its new vendor setup to a separate approval process within OnBase, which will help it comply with the segregation of duties and improve its cyber security.

### **FRONT-END AP PROCESSES**

Currently, the front end of WP Beverages' AP process still requires manual intervention for Keyword Indexing and Document Separation. It plans to use optical character recognition (OCR) to increase its indexing accuracy, allowing the employee currently dedicated to it to tend to other important tasks.

### **NEW CUSTOMER ONBOARDING**

WP Beverages also plans to replace its current process for onboarding new customers. When it gets a new customer, WP Beverages must collect documents like credit reports, tax ID numbers, and resale certificates. OnBase will simplify this process, which will also enhance compliance with governmental audit compliance. Additionally, the company is looking to use credit reports, allowing the Accounts Receivable team to make better, faster decisions regarding offering credit terms to new customers.

### **ADDING ABBYY TO FURTHER AUTOMATE THE ENTIRE AP PROCESS**

Most recently, WP Beverages has been looking for ways to streamline the front end of their invoice capture process. Since they receive invoices in a variety of different formats and types, this process requires an employee to monitor it for 20+ hours a week. In response, WP Beverages is preparing to implement ABBYY FlexiCapture to drastically reduce that time commitment to allow the employee to pursue more value-added work.

WP Beverages also received the 2023 Innovation Award at the 2023 Naviant Summit for its creative and highly successful uses of its OnBase solution.

OnBase has truly allowed WP Beverages to pursue its goal of continual improvement further, which makes for an exciting future. As one employee stated:

**"The solution is not a static or final solution. Since implementation, we have continually added 'new cool things' that help AP, that help our internal customers, or provide better financial information."**