

BEST

It's SAP, reconciled

CLIENT CASE STUDY

HOW AFRISAM OPTIMISED VENDOR RECONCILIATIONS IN SAP WITH BEST



Interview with Shamima Ranchod, AP Manager at AfriSam by Suresan Ellary, BEST Vendor Recons Product Manager on 11 August 2022.

ABOUT AFRISAM AND THE AP TEAM

AfriSam was established in 1934. As a company, we are committed to building a positive African future. It is this passion and commitment that we are most proud of, not the products that we make, but rather of what our products make possible. We create concrete possibilities.

The Accounts Payable (AP) team falls under the Finance Department and we are continuously looking to develop, improve and maintain our accounts payable processes. We ensure an optimal payment solution to our suppliers and contribute to the overall working capital and a positive cash flow.

WHY BEST VENDOR RECONS?

BEST Vendor Recons was selected 9 years ago following a review and comparison to other products in the market place.

We needed to find the best solution for our reconciliations in our drive to become paperless. The main focus was to improve and enhance processes as well as reduce reconciliation time. Everybody in our team had their own unique filing system in the AP department. We needed to make sure everything was centralised and easy to access.

The reasons BEST Vendor Recons were selected was firstly being SAP certified and when we approached our SAP team internally, they were very impressed with the system.

In addition, when the BEST team gave a demonstration of their solution, the team's professionalism and knowledge of SAP were evident.

IMPLEMENTATION PROJECT

The implementation of BEST at AfriSam was done 'extremely efficiently'. The BEST team listened to our requirements and they knew exactly what they were doing. Being experts on SAP made it so much easier. Regular project feedback sessions were set- up and nothing was too difficult for the BEST team. Every issue we brought to the table, BEST found a solution for us. The implementation process took place smoothly, within the delivery time and to the project's fixed budget.

An enhancement to note was the ability to integrate with AfriSam's scanning solution, SAP OCR (Optical Character Recognition) process to receive and create the statement in BEST as well as attach the original PDF statement from the vendor. Our internal SAP team approached BEST to find a way to bring these documents into SAP OCR. BEST quickly identified the solution for the requirement i.e. attach the statement to the BEST statement key so that the AP Clerk was then able to quickly find the statement. The solution BEST brought to the table was quick and efficient with massive time savings.



BENEFITS

Prior to BEST, AfriSam followed a manual process, which was time consuming. Following the implementation of BEST's solution, our workflow is now automated. The clerks no longer need to look for papers or physical statements, all they need to do is ensure that they load the statement in BEST. Once the statement is loaded, they run the reconciliation report. This is an automatic process, as automatic matching was already completed. It provides the reconciliation with our pre-defined categories and according to our specific requirements.

The clerks are now able to focus and concentrate on true problems or discrepancies. Another benefit of BEST is that our query system, which we call the ZM15, is also considered in the reconciliation. We are able to see what is outstanding from the supplier and it shows on the GRIR (Goods receipt/Invoice receipt) which invoices still need to be submitted. So all manual processes to identify which documents are missing and where to find it is now fully automated and it is just a click of a button once the statement is loaded.

What impressed our management team the most was the overall time saved and the improvement in efficiencies. They now have more confidence in my team and our reconciliation process.

ADOPTION

The auditors also approve of the system: they were extremely happy when we showed them what the BEST Recon system can provide for us, especially with recons no longer being a manual process and that they can now view reconciliations online.

Introducing change to a team is never an easy task. Hesitant at the start of the project, the AP team quickly experienced the benefits of the solution. After six months, we asked the team if they wanted to revert back to their old way of working and the answer was a resounding 'NO!'. The BEST system is saving them time and contributing to a more effective and efficient team.

Before BEST we were not able to accommodate credit notes in our system. With BEST we developed the report ZM17, which then incorporates all our missing credit notes.

We now have the benefit of a full process flow and reconciliation from statement right through to payment.

TIME SAVING AND FOCUS

<p>TIME SAVING WITH BEST 4 hours to 15 minutes</p> 	<p>STATEMENT LOAD IN BEST 26,000 lines over 3 months</p> 	<p>AUTOMATIC MATCHING BY BEST</p> 
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- Reduction in reconciliation time is phenomenal. As an example we have reduced the processing time of a 100-page statement from 3 or 4 hours to 15 minutes (load, matching and recon).
- The focus is now on what is actually outstanding, the invoices needing to be requested from the supplier and making sure queries are resolved.
- 90% of our accounts and majority of our reconciliations are done through the BEST system. We only have a few suppliers that we don't use BEST for e.g. our rental and utility suppliers as they don't issue statements and our transport vendors. Over 26000 statement lines were loaded April to June 2022 into BEST.
- There is room for improvement in our internal processes to get more statements through EDI load or Excel spreadsheets.
- Automatic matching is what we are striving for with BEST and are achieving for the majority of statements (93%). Suggested matches are minimal, so the system is really operating at the efficiency we require it to operate at.

EFFICIENCIES

Internal and external auditors have their own SAP Profile and Recons are available in SAP in the format they require. They can view all supporting documents and drill down to invoices as needed. This takes a lot of pressure off the AP team during audits.

With the COVID pandemic the AP team was the first to be able to work remotely given that everything is driven by the system and is electronic.

RETURN ON INVESTMENT



Return on investment was achieved within **2 YEARS** of implementing the BEST Vendor Recons module. The rest of AfriSam followed the AP team with BEST and implemented the BEST GL Recons, GL Clearing and Debtors Remit modules. A win-win for both AfriSam and BEST.

TRUST & FOCUS

There is no question about trust on the BEST recon system. My focus during the approval process is on invoices previously paid but not allocated, because that shows that the supplier has not allocated our payments, along with invoices under query. That's very important for us because this shows outstanding liability to the company and what's possibly due to the supplier.

It's important for the AP Clerk to ensure they follow up with the suppliers. Where there are credit notes outstanding, that's money due to us. If there are credit notes outstanding or unmatched credit notes, the AP Clerk needs to ensure they follow up with the supplier, gets the credit note and makes sure it's allocated correctly. Settlement discounts are also very important to us to make sure we are taking the settlement discounts due to the company.

The AP Clerk must follow up with the supplier on all queries highlighted in BEST.

IN CONCLUSION

We've created a concrete relationship between BEST and AfriSam. It's been a pleasure working with such a professional company that knows what they're doing. You get very few companies that actually know their own product as well as BEST does. Being SAP experts, BEST even showed us some helpful hints on our side that we've implemented and taken into consideration. Thank you for the professional way you've handled this entire project and the nine years of relationship with AfriSam to date. Together we will continue to grow from strength to strength.

Thank you Shamima for taking the time to meet and provide this Case Study input!



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If you would like further information regarding BEST Products, please contact us via email on reconcile@bestsapcbi.com

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