



SUCCESS STORY

**Bloomin' Brands Inc.**

**Industry**

- Food services

**Solution**

- OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions

**Results**

-  **Eliminated** offshore accounts payable resource, reduced in-house staffing by half
-  **Enhanced** financial visibility and accuracy
-  **Accelerated** cycle time for corporate payments



# Restaurant enterprise transforms corporate invoicing

**Bloomin' Brands accelerates cycle time with OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions**

*“With Vendor Invoice Management, we see where any invoice is at any given time.”*

**Becky Quaranda**  
Senior Accountant  
Bloomin' Brands





Having sold well over a billion dollars of “Bloomin’ Onions” and other signature dishes, one of the largest casual dining restaurant companies in the world fine-tuned corporate invoicing with OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions. Years later, Bloomin’ Brands Inc. remains efficient and resilient, even during unexpected challenges.

With its flagship Outback Steakhouse restaurant in Florida paving the way to more than 1,000 restaurants in 47 states and 20 countries, Bloomin’ Brands bills itself as a company of restaurants rather than a restaurant company. Though its team has grown to more than 77,000 people, Bloomin’ Brands core values centered on a passion for food and shared hospitality remain as intimate as a dinner with friends.

In the Tampa corporate office, Becky Quaranda, senior accountant in the Accounts Payable department, serves the full portfolio of Bloomin’ Brands concept restaurants, featuring Outback Steakhouse, Carrabba’s Italian Grill, Bonefish Grill and Fleming’s Prime Steakhouse and Wine Bar. Among other responsibilities, Quaranda oversees the vendor set-up team, all invoice and payment processing and—with close to two decades on the payroll herself—she recalls changes to operations, all driven by commitment to the company core values.

For instance, in 2014, Bloomin’ Brands initiated a transition to a new enterprise resource planning system and, within that, more effective resources for the accounts payable team. **“We were looking to move away from decentralized invoicing that we had with all of our corporate invoices,”** Quaranda said. **“At one time, paper invoices were walked from person to person for approval, often stacking**

**up and resulting in delays and a lack of transparency. We didn’t have a lot of visibility into that spend because these invoices could be sitting on anybody’s desk in the company,”** she noted.

Inevitably, when invoices became buried under other paperwork, last-minute demands pilfered productivity from other areas. **“We would have to stop everything to get these invoices entered and get the payment out the door,”** according to Quaranda. **“The process was not efficient.”**

Along with migration to SAP®, Bloomin’ Brands’ consultants recommended OpenText Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions. Fully embedded into SAP, the invoice processing solution includes pre-configured rules, roles and actions to fully automate invoice receipt and posting. It ensures invoices get to the right person for resolution, approval or payment and provides artificial intelligence to simplify the tasks or minimize data entry.

Almost all corporate vendors for Bloomin’ Brands now email invoices to a single address. Though it is possible to automatically transfer invoices, Bloomin’ Brands employees easily drag and drop the files to Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions. Optical character recognition (OCR) scans and digitizes the incoming files, then securely integrates and stores the data with SAP transactions and processes.

Following implementation of Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions, Bloomin’ Brands now processes 3,000 invoices per month through a centralized, automated system. Even better, the enterprise does so with fewer staff members than previously required for the business-critical operation.

**“Our accruals are much more accurate now. Even if invoices are out for approval, we can account for it.”**

**Becky Quaranda**  
Senior Accountant  
Bloomin’ Brands



During paper-based management, Bloomin' Brands employed 18 in-house employees within the Accounts Payable department as well as an offshore team of up to 25 more people through a business process vendor. With automated processing and other improvements, the restaurant enterprise now maintains a leaner team of eight to 10 in-house professionals and no offshore counterparts. ***“Along with OpenText, we re-evaluated other processes when we brought them back in house to make them more efficient,”*** Quaranda said.

Bloomin' Brands attained other areas of efficiency through its digital transformation of invoices with Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions:

### **Increased visibility of documentation, payment status**

Rather than floating in through team members across the company, invoices arrive directly from vendors to the central OpenText system. ***“With Vendor Invoice Management, we see where any invoice is, at any given time,”*** Quaranda related. Enhanced visibility eases auditing responsibilities as well: ***“We have everything in OpenText—all the images are right there at our fingertips.”*** The convenience stands in contrast to difficulties gathering copies of invoices when the paper files were scattered across multiple locations.

### **Reduced cycle time and last-minute scrambles**

Quaranda also reported the cycle time for processing invoices is faster compared to former methods. When invoices arrive for team members to code, the image is already in the system with header fields and necessary data. The invoices are easier to handle immediately rather than put aside. ***“We may still receive some last-minute things,”*** Quaranda noted, ***“but definitely not as many as we did back in the day.”***

Having experienced enhanced automation and collaboration for financial processes for several years, Quaranda expressed sympathy for organizations still mailing copies of invoices. ***“It just takes so long to get the things you need,”*** she said. ***“I don't know how they do it.”***

### **Increased accuracy of accruals**

Handy information within Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions also helps Bloomin' Brands improve its expense accruals during its month-end processes, according to Quaranda. ***“Our accruals are more accurate now,”*** she said. ***“Even if invoices are still out for approval, we can account for them. Whereas before, if it was just paper sitting on somebody's desk, we might not know the invoice existed.”***



## Saved office space and supplies

Physically maintaining close to 50,000 invoices per year required a substantial amount of folders, filing cabinets and office space. Now that all corporate invoices are processed digitally, there is no need to store paper documents. Quaranda: ***“The invoices are all housed and easily accessible within OpenText.”***

## Reduced duplicate payments

Though rare, duplicate payments occasionally occurred when Bloomin’ Brands team members processed invoices manually. All invoices now arrive via one point of contact and invoice numbering is more consistent, Quaranda said, noting Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions also checks against pre-configured rules set by the Bloomin’ Brands team: ***“We can now catch most of duplicates up front.”***

## Maintained resilience amid challenges

Efficiencies proved especially helpful during the worldwide COVID-19 pandemic. As many restaurants faced lockdowns, they needed agility to keep the doors open even as people worked from home. ***“For invoicing, it was very easy for us to just continue on like normal,”*** Quaranda said, expressing gratitude that the system was already in place for employees to complete approvals via remote log-in. ***“We still received the same volume of invoices and processed everything within the same timelines.”***

During a pandemic or not, digital transformation continues to be a priority for Bloomin’ Brands. Going forward, the company plans to expand invoice automation to its restaurant locations to realize productivity and profitability improvements already in place at the corporate office.



## About OpenText

OpenText, The Information Company, enables organizations to gain insight through market leading information management solutions, on-premises or in the cloud. For more information about OpenText (NASDAQ: OTEX, TSX: OTEX) visit [opentext.com](https://www.opentext.com).

Customer stories [↗](#)

[opentext.com/contact](https://www.opentext.com/contact)

[Twitter](#) | [LinkedIn](#)