



Success story

Linde Schweisstechnik GmbH

Industry

- Manufacturing

Solutions

- OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions
- OpenText™ Intelligent Capture for SAP® Solutions
- OpenText™ Archiving for SAP® Solutions

Services

- OpenText Professional Services

Results



Reduced cost of invoice processing



Increased efficiency with automatic invoice posting and purchase order matching



Eliminated reliance on individuals for invoice approvals



Improved transparency with ease of access to invoices for auditors, along with complete audit trail



Linde Schweisstechnik automates vendor invoice processing with OpenText

Manufacturer cuts costs, improves efficiency and increases transparency with OpenText Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions

"The OpenText solution has met the objectives we set to reduce costs and improve efficiency. We're able to handle all invoices faster, more accurately and with fewer staff."

Andrea Leva

Regional Process Owner and Systems Finance EMEA
Linde Schweisstechnik GmbH



Linde plc is a leading industrial gases and engineering company employing approximately 80,000 globally. The business has customers in more than 100 countries and revenue of approximately \$28 billion USD in 2018. Linde Schweisstechnik GmbH, a subsidiary of Linde plc, headquartered in Pullach in the district of Munich in Bavaria, Germany, has grown both organically and through acquisition, with branches throughout Germany.

With a growing network of branches, many using legacy systems, the task of processing, matching to purchase orders and approving vendor invoices had become a challenge. Approval of invoices was often reliant on a single point of contact at a branch, with a physical signature required on a paper copy of an invoice. This would then be scanned and attached to an email for processing and posting in SAP, an inefficient process, prone to delays and errors. Linde Schweisstechnik, like other companies in the group, used SAP as its central finance platform and so the decision was made to seek a solution that would streamline the processing of vendor invoices.

“Our main driver in seeking a solution was to improve efficiency, whilst also considering our compliance responsibilities,” explained Andrea Leva, Regional Process Owner and Systems Finance EMEA at Linde. “We wanted a solution that would allow us to automate the capture of supplier invoices, whether they were received in paper form or as email attachments. Once captured, the solution had to be capable of automatically recognizing the invoice content and matching it to the correct purchase order. If successfully matched, the invoice would be posted and passed for payment, without the need for any intervention. In the case of queries, the invoice needed to be routed to a team, not an individual, for further processing.”

Linde Schweisstechnik had, for some time, been using OpenText™ Archiving for SAP® Solutions to securely archive its SAP business documents and data, keeping them accessible from within SAP and audit ready.

“We had experience using OpenText™ Vendor Invoice Management for SAP® Solutions at other group companies, notably Linde Gas, and having considered other options, came to the conclusion that the OpenText solution was best suited to our needs,” added Leva.

A select team was assembled to drive the project forward. It kicked off with a team consisting of representatives from finance management, project management and IT, as well as OpenText Professional Services.

“Our preference was for a rapid deployment, less than three months from start to go live. This was made possible thanks to the close cooperation of our team and the OpenText Professional Services team, who worked tirelessly to ensure there were no delays. We attribute the success of the project and its fast implementation to the open dialogue and fast decision making made possible by working so closely with OpenText,” said Leva.

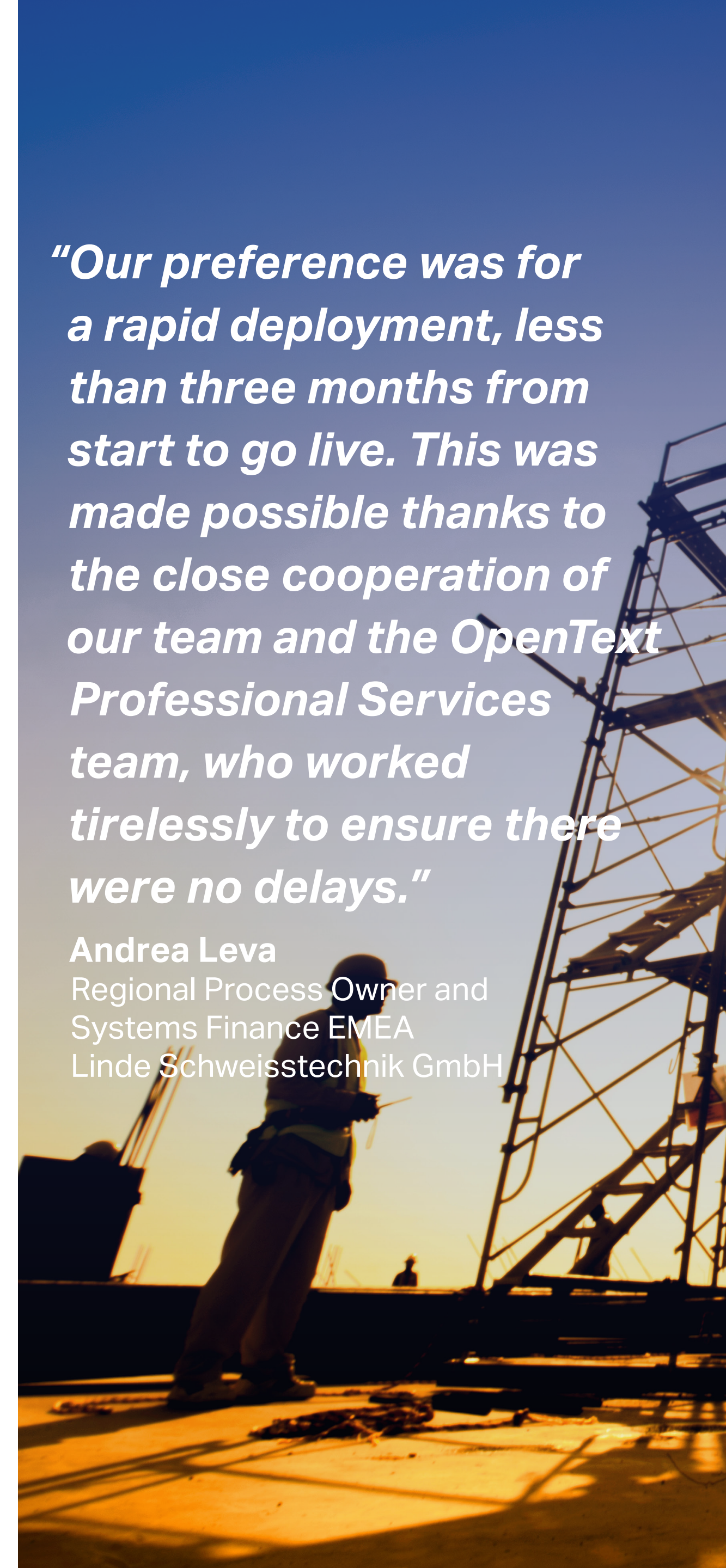
Vendor Invoice Management for SAP Solutions was deployed largely ‘out of the box,’ with only minor changes to process structures to meet the needs of Linde Schweisstechnik. This avoids delays by ensuring that groups are responsible for invoice approval and never a single individual.

Invoices are now captured and archived upon receipt, whether from paper or as email attachments, using the optical character recognition (OCR) capabilities of OpenText™ Intelligent Capture for SAP® Solutions that automatically extracts all header and line item details. From this point, the invoice can be viewed within SAP and there is no further reliance on paper.

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“Our staff have responded very positively to the OpenText solution. Frankly, we expected some teething problems, but it has been a very smooth transition. Importantly for us, there was no disruption to relationships with our suppliers. Staff no longer have to ask, phone or email their colleagues when looking for a particular invoice. They can quickly access it from their familiar on-screen environment,” explained Leva.

All invoices, once captured, are stored in a single, central archive. This means that queries can be made from any Linde Schweisstechnik location, providing further efficiency gains. Where invoices are not automatically matched to a purchase order, the individual handling the exception can easily see the invoice, purchase order and other relevant information. They can then take prompt action to move the process forward, whether they originally posted the invoice or not.

“With supplier invoices captured promptly, this has a positive effect on reporting, too. For example, at month or quarter-end accruals, we no longer have to call around to the various branches to ask if they have any unprocessed, high value invoices that we need to post accruals for,” said Leva.

Auditors can also quickly access invoices when required, rather than searching branches, filing cabinets or an individual’s desk. Also, all approvals are tracked and a full audit trail of who did what and when is always maintained.

“The OpenText solution has met the objectives we set to reduce costs and improve efficiency. We’re able to handle all invoices faster, more accurately and with fewer staff. We are now actively deploying the solution to additional branches in the coming months in addition to the nine we have successfully completed to date,” concluded Leva.

linde-schweisstechnik.de



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