

Wenger Manufacturing Cooks Up Success Through UMB and Bottomline AP Automation



Eliminating the Risk of Paper Checks

Each week, Wenger's AP staff issued around 100 checks completely manually. This process was extremely labor-intensive, as each check needed to be approved, printed, signed, and mailed.

Furthermore, the AP team lost all visibility into the status of the checks once they had been dropped in the mail. There was no way to know if checks would be delayed, lost, or intercepted by fraudsters.

Mitchell Allen, Controller at Wenger Manufacturing, said that "Replacing our manual AP activities with an automated process was paramount, as was moving as many of our customers as possible to electronic payment methods. We wanted to get away from checks as much as we could because of the time and the risks involved."

Security, Efficiency, and More

Wenger looked to UMB Bank, their primary financial institution, for recommendations on how to improve their payments process. After interviewing several potential recommended partners, Wenger selected Bottomline's AP Automation through UMB.

Paymode offered end-to-end AP process automation with a user-friendly, intuitive interface, and the benefit of earning cash-back rebates on every virtual card and premium ACH payment made to suppliers. But the deciding factor was the cutting-edge, multi-layered security and fraud prevention that Paymode brought to the table. Paymode is the largest B2B electronic payment network with over \$425 billion in payments processed annually with zero fraud to over 550,000 suppliers.

Bottomline AP Automation offered Wenger the ability to automate their entire invoice-to-pay process. They could eliminate checks and start paying suppliers via electronic payment types like virtual card and Premium ACH, earning cash-back rebates in the process.

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Wenger Manufacturing, a global leader in extrusion cooking systems, has provided complete process solutions for plant-based proteins, pet foods, and aquatic feed for more than 80 years. The company is committed to ground-breaking innovation. With this legacy and heritage, it was natural for the company to challenge the status quo within their own Accounts Payable (AP) department when frustrations started to boil over.



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Michelle Allen, Controller,
Wenger Manufacturing

Wenger also appreciated the multi-layered fraud prevention capabilities of the Bottomline solution, which uses more than 300 data points to validate vendors and make sure they are who they claim to be before issuing a single payment. In fact, Bottomline processes \$425 billion in payments annually with zero fraud.

Allen explains, "What really separated Bottomline and UMB from the other programs we looked at was the fact that our suppliers would be inputting all their data and bank account information into Paymode. Not only did we not have to shoulder the burden of data entry, but we would not have to retain any vendor banking information within our ERP system."

"From a security perspective, not having this sensitive data in our system was crucial. We won't be in the situation where we need to reach out to our vendors and tell them that their information had been compromised."

- Mitchell Allen, Controller at Wenger Manufacturing

"It took less than 60 days to implement Paymode through UMB. "The Bottomline implementation team was very helpful," affirms Allen. "They interacted directly with our staff and built a custom export file for our ERP system. The QA testing and staff training was comprehensive, and they made sure that we fully understood and were comfortable with the new process. Additionally, Bottomline's ongoing support has been superb: their representatives and experts are excellent to work with and very responsive."

Effortless Expansion

Bottomline and UMB have more than met Wenger's goals. Manual AP processing is now a thing of the past. Swift, seamless automation is the order of the day, giving valuable time back to the AP staff.

Allen notes, "We are able to upload one file to pay our vendors by check, ACH, or credit card, whereas in the past we would have had to do check runs, enter ACH payments manually, etc. Now, we have a single download out of our ERP system and all payments are loaded within a few minutes, ready and waiting to be paid."

Wenger's vendors have appreciated the change. More and more suppliers are taking advantage of the opportunity to select digital payment options, enjoy complete transparency into payment status, and gain rich remittance data to support their Accounts Receivable (AR) functions. The corollary to this vendor shift is that the cash-back dividend payments Wenger is receiving have far exceeded their expectations.

Looking ahead, Allen states, "We are currently putting in place invoice automation to complement the payment automation we have already implemented. With a fully-automated invoice-to-pay AP process, we will be well-positioned to handle the increased workload we anticipate as our business continues to expand."



"With Paymode, we now have a fully-automated invoice-to-pay AP process and are well-positioned to handle the anticipated increase in AP throughput as our business continues to expand."

Michelle Allen, Controller,
Wenger Manufacturing



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REV US091124KV

Corporate Headquarters

100 International Drive, Suite 200
Portsmouth, NH 03801
United States of America

Phone: +1 603-436-0700
Toll-free: +1 800-243-2528
info@bottomline.com