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CNB EASI Link Connector - Case Study Questions for CCSA



Cindy Uribe

Director, Accounting & Expense Management
on Finance and Development team at CCSA

Cindy is the Director, Accounting and Expense Management as part of the Finance and Development team at CCSA. She manages accounts payable, including payments to vendors and contractors as well as employee reimbursements. Cindy also processes all cash receipts, assists with month end closing, and governmental reporting requirements including issuance of 1099s.

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How did you first decide to use the CNB EASI Link Connector?

My supervisor and I were looking for some different options for cheque printing. We had considered using outside vendors, but then we found out that CNB had a connector to NetSuite (EASI Link Connector). So, we decided to go that route instead of paying for an outside service.

What features or functionality initially attracted you to the CNB EASI Link Connector?

The two that initially attracted us were Check print and Positive Pay.

What was the best part of the onboarding and installation experience?

At the very beginning, the best part was having easy access to real people who were very helpful during installation. Any time I had an issue or got stuck; it was resolved within 24 hours. Knowing that I wasn't alone and if I ran into issues and someone was available to help, brought me peace of mind. The customer support was the best part of the onboarding and installation experience.

How does the CNB EASI Link Connector installation compare to other connectors you have utilized in your ERP system?

We currently use one other third party integration for employee reimbursements. The biggest difference isn't function, but customer service. The customer experience is not great- if you have an issue, you have to figure it out on your own. If you do get a response, the feedback you'll receive is often not accurate. The customer service has been

the biggest differentiator between the EASI Link Connector and other plugins, apps or connectors I've used.

Since automating your AP payments process with the CNB EASI Link Connector, how much time are you saving on a weekly/monthly basis?

We process weekly and have stuck to our weekly payments processing. It's hard to gauge exactly depending on the volume of AP, but I would say we save about 1-5 hours on a weekly basis.

How many people were involved in your AP process before? And how many now?


Before we started using the EASI Link Connector, there were 3 people. It's still the same now (only because of our approval routing workflow for our internal controls). I process it, then my supervisor reviews and approves, and anything that's over \$10,000, the CFO approves.

How often did you pay vendor bills before using the Connector? How long did it take each time?


We paid our vendor bills weekly, and depending on the volume, it could take anywhere between 3-7 hours. Usually, when I processed it, it would take up the majority of my day.

Since you've had the connector, how has the above changed?

The time has been cut down markedly. Now, it will take a couple of



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hours, maybe between 2-4 hours depending on the volume, versus taking up my entire day.

Can you quantify these advantages in time or money savings?

I don't know exactly how much it would be in terms of dollar savings, but I would quantify it by mine and my supervisor's time. Before, our process was physical and involved paper exchanging hands, and we'd have to physically file everything for our own recordkeeping. It got to the point where it was so time consuming that we actually hired a temp, so we ended up spending an extra \$1000 just to get the filing done.

Using the EASI Link Connector has really pushed us to do all of our filing electronically. With the combination of NetSuite and EASI Link, we get the option to attach an invoice to an email. This has allowed us to move away from our old physical paper processes. It's been especially helpful during the pandemic, when going into the office is just not an option.

Do you process vendor bills more or less frequently now?

It's about the same, but it's so much easier now, because if things come up in between our regular weekly process, we can just add it at the last minute, instead of starting the old tedious weekly process from scratch.

How has the bi-directional connectivity between your ERP system and CNB reduced manual errors during the AP/reconciliation process?

The main area where I've noticed a reduction in errors has been cheques. Before, I didn't even have time to stop and check all of the addresses to see if they'd changed, because I was so rushed. The connector has reduced mailing errors and the need to void or reissue payments. Checks aren't getting lost in the mail anymore.

How has the CNB EASI Link Connector improved your internal workflow/processes?

The biggest improvement has been Positive Pay. I was just reflecting on this with my supervisor, he loves that we don't have to manually pull reports and upload them to the bank anymore. For me specifically, I don't have to physically print and stuff checks, take them to the post office, or file them anymore- so a lot of that physical, repetitive work has been removed from the process.

From a review standpoint, I think my old process of preparing AP serves as a good example. Back then, I worked directly with the CFO and I would physically go into her office and handover the details of what we were paying each week. But then I had a role change, and my new

supervisor was based in San Diego (I am based in LA) and I had to scan everything and create packets in order to share anything with him. I had to get really creative in order to share all of the invoices digitally — that added an extra layer of work for me.

Now, we receive everything through email so it's easy to drag and drop into NetSuite as attachments. All NetSuite attachments also have their own backup documentation, so it's now so much more convenient for us to review, versus having to pore over emails with large PDFs, and having to track down and cross reference between emails and accounting systems. It's helped us streamline things, and in terms of approvals you can approve one at a time. Before, we approved in batch, which could get messy. Now, we have more control over that process.

Are there new features would you like to see supported by the CNB EASI Link Connector?

Something that I think would be useful to my team would be the ability to set the Connector to default to a certain subsidiary. We have two subsidiaries, but we only use the connector for one, so I have to make sure I filter the other one out to ensure that I don't accidentally make payments to the wrong subsidiary while issuing payments. The other would be to have access to check copies after they are mailed or released to us.

How would you explain the value of the CNB EASI Link Connector to another finance professional who wasn't familiar with it?

I would start by explaining everything that it's helped us do. It's a great

option for outsourcing check printing as I mentioned, but it's also helped us to prevent and protect against fraud, and it facilitates ACH and wire payments. Before, we avoided wire payments at all costs because of the hassle of the token process, but the Connector eliminates all of that.

How likely would you be to recommend this solution to another CNB client? (scale of 1 (unlikely) -10 (extremely likely))

I would say 10!

Can you quantify or comment on how impactful this has been on your team/business/department?

The tool has been a major time saver, and it has also turned out to be a huge asset during COVID because of the reality of remote work. Our auditors were happy to learn that I'm not printing checks at home! Overall, it has really helped us to rethink and streamline our AP process. When we first had the idea to use it, we had to think hard about what

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How has the Connector enhanced your overall banking experience and relationship with CNB?

It has greatly enhanced the relationship. I feel more connected to them since our interactions and touchpoints have increased. It has really helped in getting more familiar with the team since typically, you wouldn't really be that connected to your bank. It's been great to gain more familiarity and have deeper connections with the people at the bank- I really enjoy working with them.

What advice would you give other organizations facing similar pains that you faced?

I would tell them that it is definitely worth looking into. It's important to take a step back and reassess your processes and if something is not working for you- change it. It might feel painful or seem like a lot of work to make a switch at first, but at the end of the day, it's completely worth it because it'll make your life easier, and you'll reap the benefits on a daily basis.

More About CCSA (California Charter Schools Association)

The California Charter Schools Association supports and advocates for high-quality non-profit charter schools. Our Vision: building great public schools of joy and rigor that prepare all California students for success in college, career, community, and life.

Website: ccsa.org

Industry: Education Management

Company size: 51-200 employees

Headquarters: Los Angeles, California

Founded: 2002

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FISPAN

www.fispan.com

info@fispan.com

604.424.9090

255- 350 Burrard Street,
Vancouver, BC V6C 2GB

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