



#### OCR & E-Invoicing: Learn How to Leverage These Key Technologies in AP Automation

Kevin Wilbur Consulting Practice Director April 15, 2008





#### **Does This Sound Like You?**

- Being asked to increase processing throughput without any additional resources
- Required to respond to increased regulations and compliance requirements (SOX, etc.)
- Continually searching for supporting documents or establishing the status of a transaction
- Facing increased pressure from the LoB's, customers and vendors to offer greater quality of service
- Looking for a better way to enhance and enforce consistent processes across your far flung organization







#### Or, Does This Sound More Familiar...

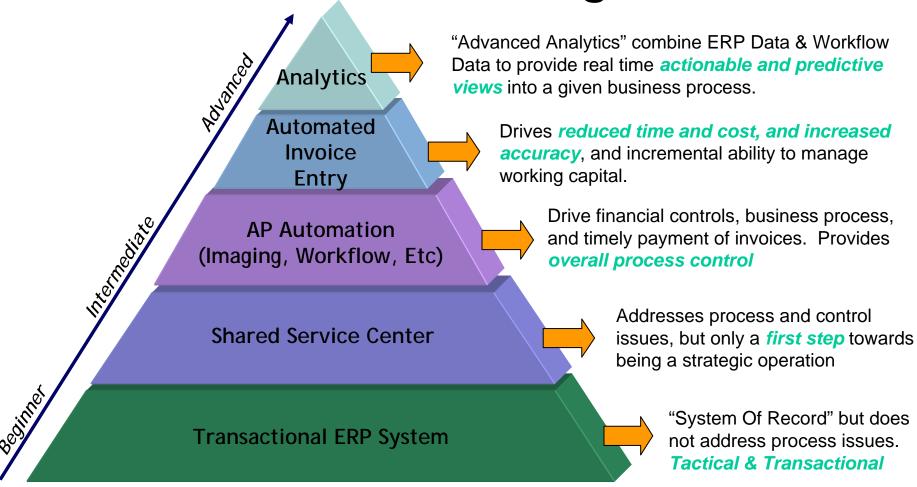
- You have the ERP foundation and a robust workflow solution already. You need to take your Accounts Payable operations to the next level...
- Automating the invoice entry process is an obvious place to look due to cost reduction and error reduction...
- You hear stories of amazing success as well as equally amazing failures related to implementations of OCR, Electronic Invoicing, and Supplier Portals...
- How can these technologies be so successful for some, and not for others? What's right for you?







#### Some Quick Level Setting...







#### **Our Focus for Today**



Metrics, Analytics, Reporting

#### **ERP & Workflow Environment**

Invoice Capture & Entry

ERP

Exception Mgmt & Coding

Approval

Payment

- Organizations
- Sets of Books
- Hierarchies & Limits
- Vendor Supplier Lists
- Chart of Account Information
- Business Rules





### **Agenda**

- Opportunities & Myths
- Invoice Entry Automation Options
  - Peer-to-Peer
  - Supplier Networks
  - Optical Character Recognition (OCR)
  - Outsourced Scan to Data
  - Putting it All Together
- Leveraging Each Option Appropriately
- Planning <u>Your</u> Strategy







### **Opportunities & Myths**

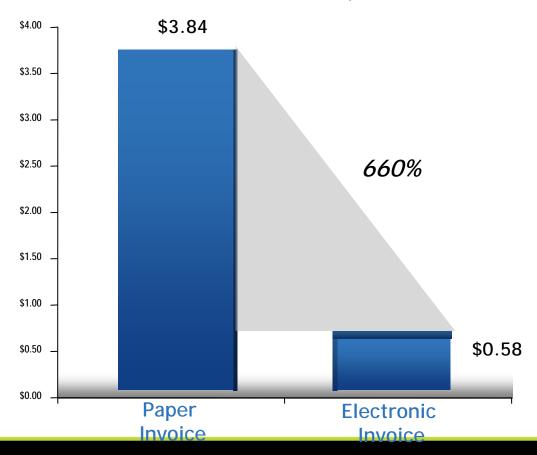




#### What Can e-Invoicing Do For You?

#### **Median Cost to Process** An Invoice Per Line Item

(Source: The Hackett Group)



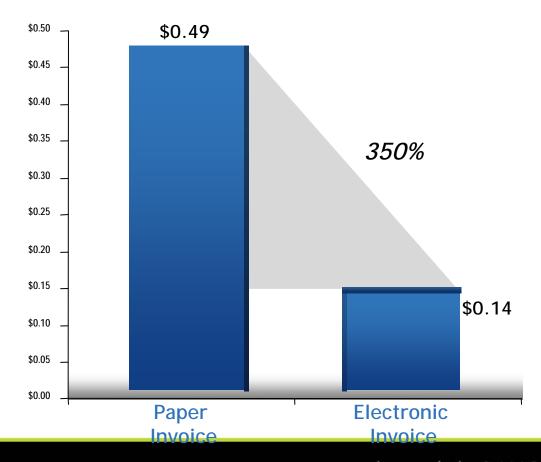




#### What Can e-Invoicing Do For You?

#### **Discrepancy-Resolution** Cost Per Line Item

(Source: The Hackett Group)



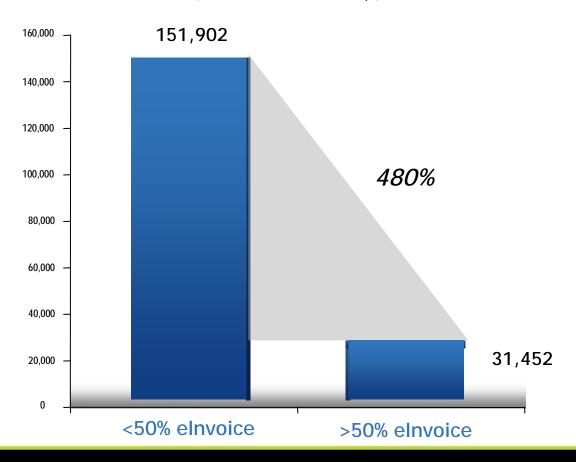




#### What Can e-Invoicing Do For You?

Line Items Processed Per Employee, Per Year

(Source: The Hackett Group)

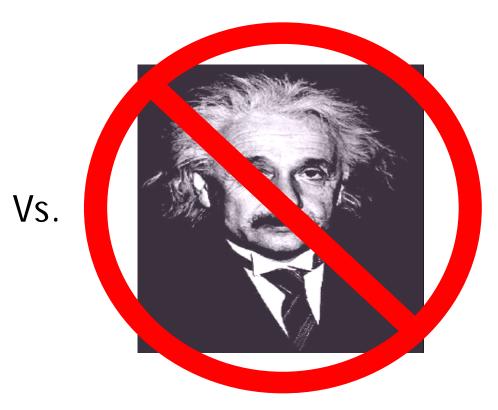






#### **Guiding Principles**





Myth #1: It's Just invoice entry... This should be straightforward stuff, right?





#### **Guiding Principles**

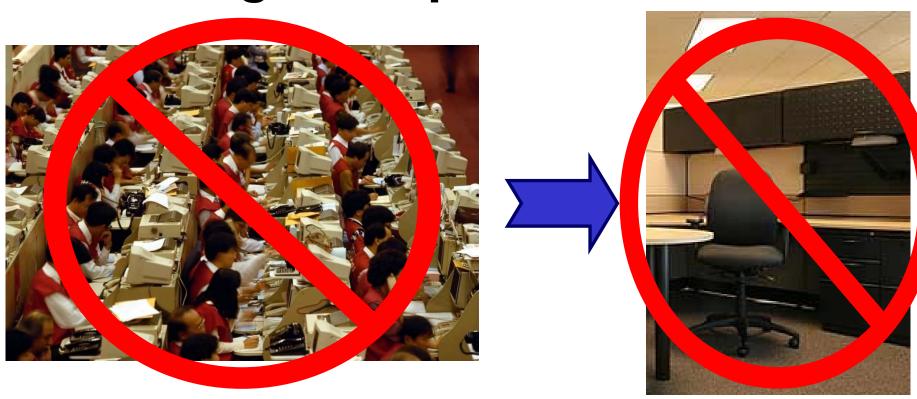


Myth #2: Companies should standardize on one entry automation solution...





### **Guiding Principles**



Myth #3: Invoice entry automation means a "lights-out" AP department...



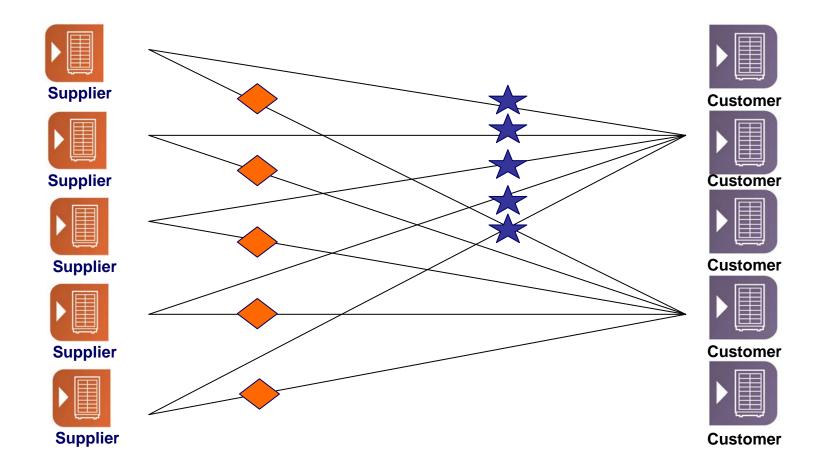


## Invoice Entry Automation Options: Peer-to-Peer Electronic Invoicing





### Peer-to-Peer e-Invoicing







#### **Peer-to-Peer Connections**

- Highly successful and time-proven model
- Relatively high start-up costs (> \$15k per supplier)
- Relatively low ongoing costs for high-volume suppliers
- Initial set up process is time- and resource-intensive for both supplier and buyer
- Controlled by supplier and buyer, allowing for relationship-specific processes and/or custom ERP validations
- Financial Process Solution: Invoice Rendering



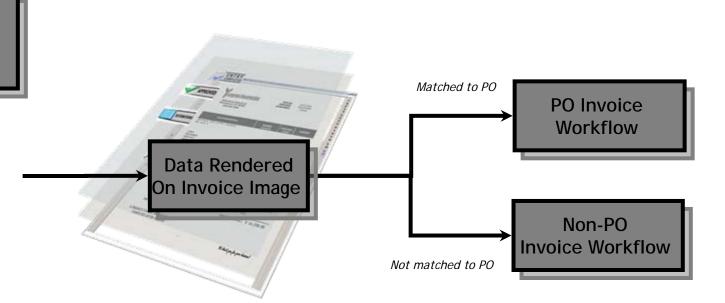




#### **Invoice Rendering**

Invoice Data Entered in ERP via source feed

- SOURCE
- VENDOR\_NAME
- •VENDOR\_ID
- INVOICE\_NUM
- INVOICE\_DATE
- INVOICE\_AMOUNT
- CREATION\_DATE
- •FREIGHT AMOUNT
- (...)
- •DISTRIBUTION LINE 1
- •DISTRIBUTION LINE 2







#### **Invoice Rendering**

Rendered Invoice Source A

Supplier: AUTO HAUS (5108)

Supplier Site: AUTO HAUS
Invoice Number: EDICDCPO001

Invoice Amount: 50.00 Invoice Date:

Freight Amount: .00

Line Count: 1

 No. Type
 Line Description
 Qty
 Price
 Amount

 1 ITEM
 Vision Pad - Bronze (PO Number 4300, Line 1)
 1 50.00
 50.00

Total: 50.00

Creation Date:

30-JUL-2005

13-FEB-2006



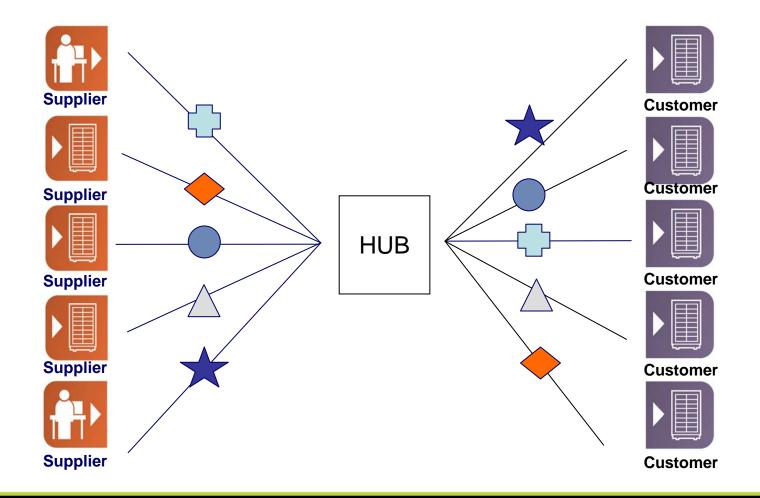


## Invoice Entry Automation Options: Network-Based Electronic Invoicing





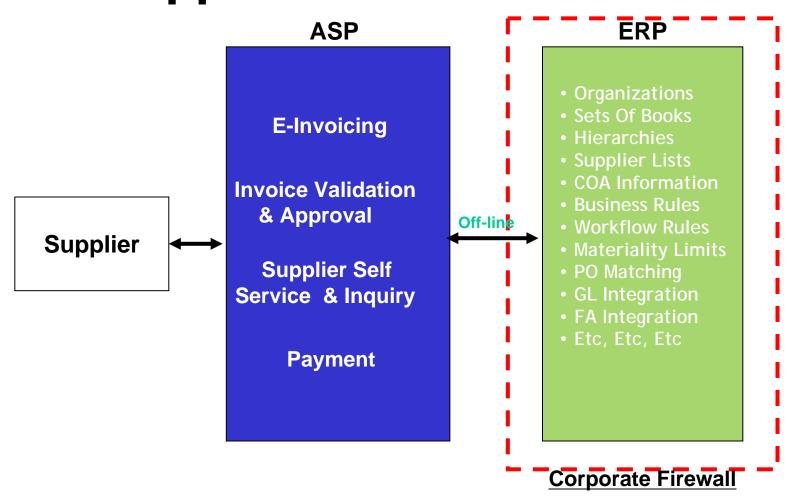
#### **Networked Connections**







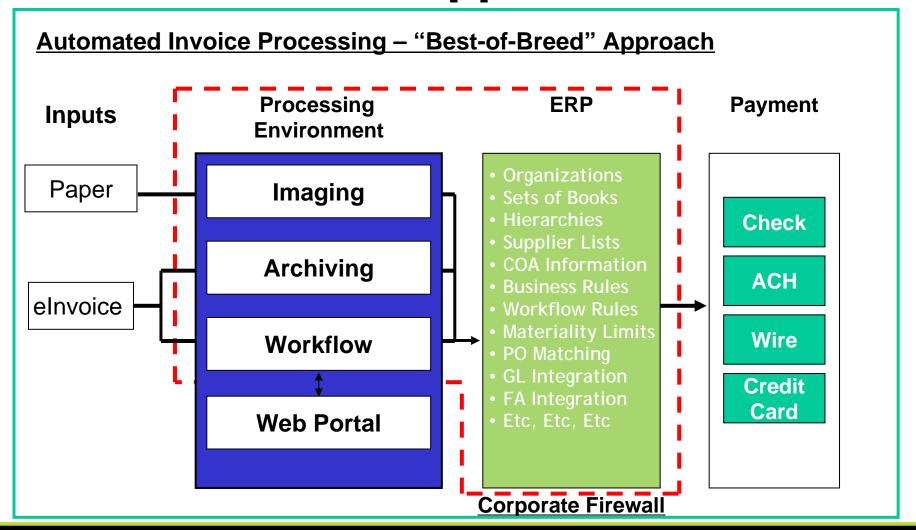
#### **EIPP Approach**







#### **Best-of-Breed Approach**







#### Pro's & Con's

#### **EIPP Model**

#### **Best Of Breed Model**

### Pro's

- Relatively easy to implement
- Requires relatively limited IT resources
- Solution is available relatively "out-of-the-box"
- Tightly integrated with the ERP
- Source agnostic (paper v. electronic)
- Software platform is independent of marketplace
- Ability to select best components for the job
- Ability to leverage existing investments

### Con's

- Not integrated with the ERP system
- Designed specifically for e-Invoices, not ALL Invoices
- AP platform tied to a proprietary electronic marketplace
- Suppliers must conform to spec's
- Supplier enrollment is not a primary focus

- Potentially requires more extensive IT support
- Not always an "out-of-the-box" solution, although some exist





#### **Network-Based Invoicing**

- Still relatively young... Mixed results to-date, but analysts are clearly optimistic
- Broad range of capabilities in the marketplace
  - Global Presence & Process (VAT, Certifications, etc)
  - Barriers & Time To Supplier Entry
  - Suppliers "Truly" In Network Vs. Key To Portal For Critical Customer
- Upfront validations can be included, allowing for relationshipspecific processes and/or custom ERP validations
- Financial Process Solution: ERP connection technology







# Invoice Entry Automation Options: Optical Character Recognition





#### From Hackett...

"Ideally, businesses would receive all invoices electronically, as this allows the invoices to be most cost effectively processed. However, for a majority of companies, most invoices will still be generated and received on paper for the foreseeable future.

"The processing of paper invoices can be vastly improved through the use of Optical Character Recognition (OCR) Technology. This has greatly matured in recent years..."

> Kurt Albertson & Kai Zabel The Hackett Group "Using OCR To Improve Invoice Processing"







#### **Optical Character Recognition**



**ERP & Workflow Environment** 





#### **Optical Character Recognition**

- Significant improvements in recent years
  - General Recognition Rates... Focus on keystrokes not percentages
  - Templates Vs. Rules Based Engines
  - Knowledge Bases still require some ongoing management efforts
- Minimal, if any, change management with suppliers
- Data input is limited to what can be reliably included on an invoice. This presents potential barriers to "touch-less" and relationship-specific processes
- Financial Process Solution: ERP connection technology





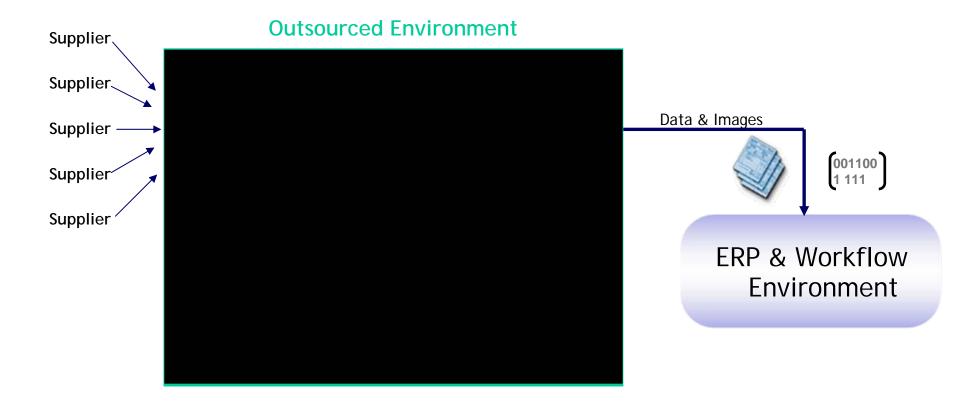


## **Invoice Entry Automation Options:**Outsourced Scan To Data





#### **Outsourced Scan to Data**







#### **Outsourced Scan to Data**

- Same Technology Pro's & Con's As OCR
- Workflow components aimed primarily at smaller organizations that lack premier ERP
- Generally viewed as an alternative to inhouse OCR
- Financial Process Solution: ERP connection technology



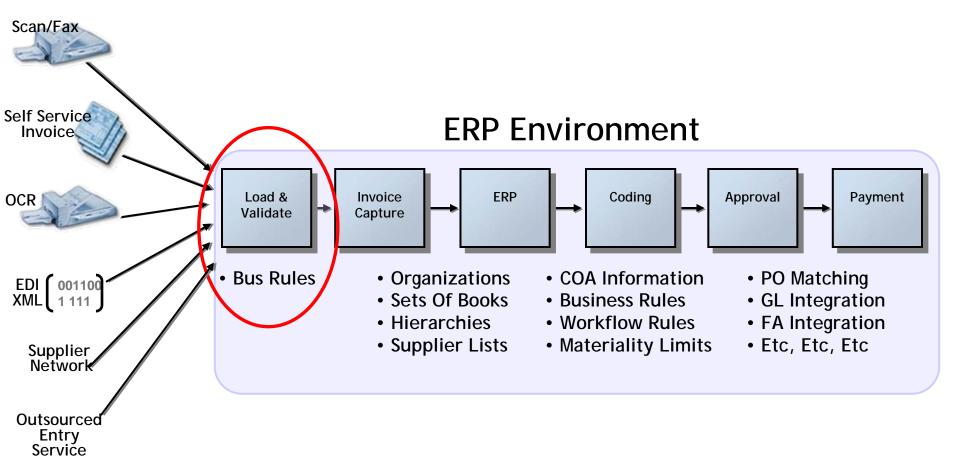


## Putting It All Together... Invoice Entry & Workflow Processes





### Integrate with Existing Systems



Leverage The Investment You've Made In Your ERP







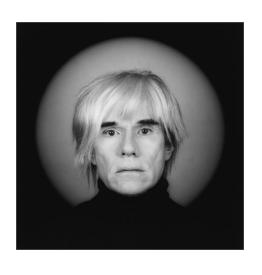
## Moving Forward... Segmenting the Supplier Base





#### Reminder...

Strategy is important, but don't loose sight of the goals...







...To automate invoice entry in <u>any</u> reasonable fashion, & leverage a single set of business processes & controls





#### Hackett's Strategic Approach...

#### ....To Technology Driven Optimization:

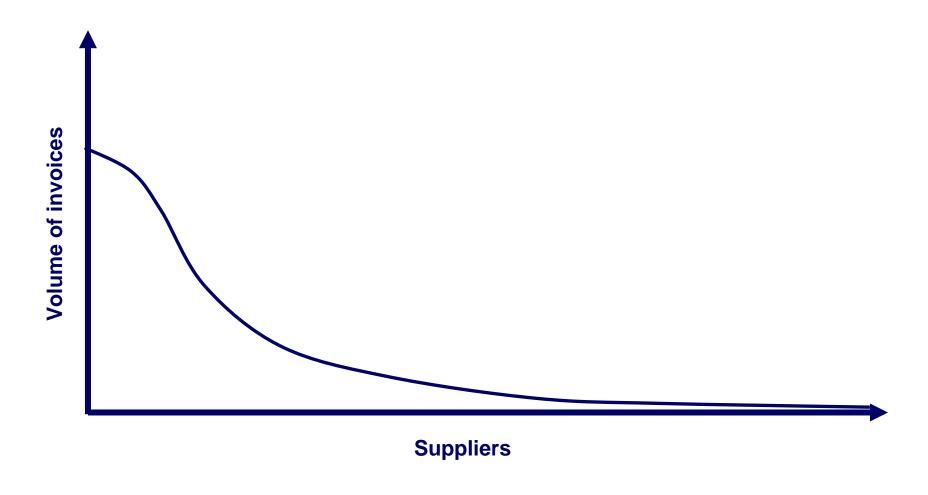
- Set up end-to-end strategy focusing on supplier base optimization, means of invoice receipt, and a risk/control balanced processing approach.
- 2. Implement a workflow tool for routings and approvals.
- 3. Move as many transactions as possible to electronic transmission
- 4. Implement an OCR application based on the remaining invoice volume.







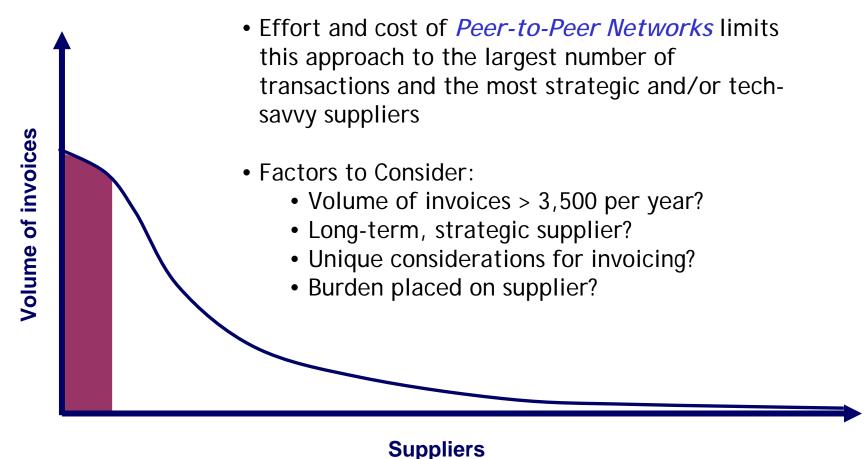
## **Invoice Distribution Curve**







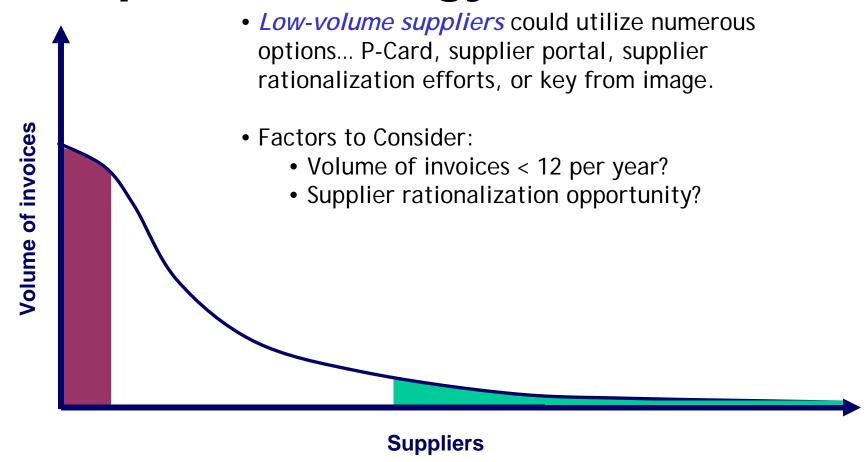
# **Proposed Strategy**







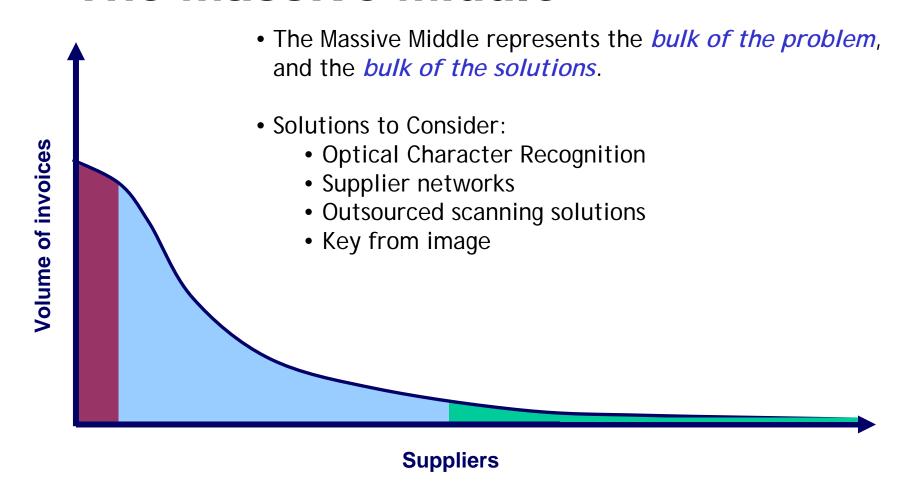
## **Proposed Strategy**







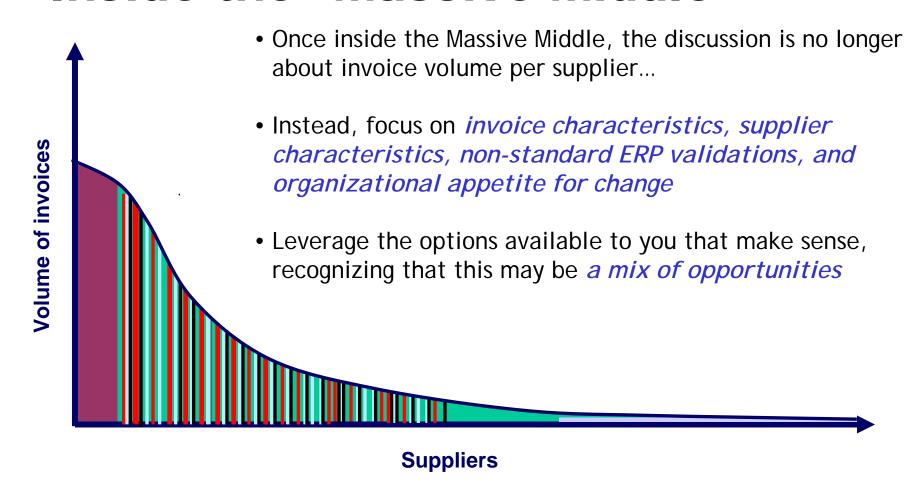
### "The Massive Middle"







## Inside the "Massive Middle"







### Review "Massive Middle" Solutions

- Supplier Networks
  - Best Fit: Long term suppliers that don't warrant Peer-to-Peer
  - Look for ease of supplier adoption and number of suppliers beyond the manual web portal interface
- Optical Character Recognition
  - Has improved dramatically in recent years, but no magic bullet
  - Lesson Learned: Evaluate custom ERP validations & data elements
  - Lesson Learned: Line items for PO-invoice only
- Outsourced Scanning
  - For large organizations, a solid way to round out a program
  - For smaller organizations, perhaps a single solution
  - Similar "Lessons Learned" to OCR
- Don't Ignore The Other Things...







## **Organizational Considerations**

- Annual invoice volumes (this presentation aimed at large companies with 1MM+ Inv/Yr)
- Time required to meet certain goals
- Availability of low-cost labor to key from paper or image
- Strength/availability/flexibility of technical team
- Mix Of PO-based invoices vs. Non-PO
- Degree of change within vendor list





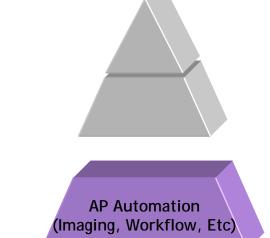


## Planning **Your** Strategy





## Start With The Fundamentals...



**Transactional ERP System** 

**Shared Service Center** 

- Strong Transactional ERP System
  - Full procure-to-pay process
  - Hierarchies, limits, tolerances, etc.
- Organizational Unit Accountable For AP
  - Entry, resolution, project mgmt, etc.
- Robust Imaging & Workflow Tool
  - Business process defined
  - Exception handling defined
  - Strong controls in place
- Ensure a SINGLE process for ALL invoices
- Identify required data fields & validations

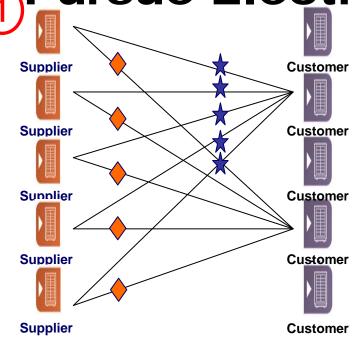
... Then Look To Further Automate

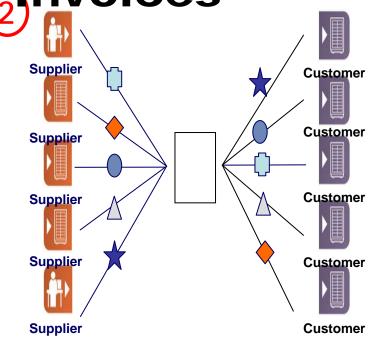






Pursue Electronic Invoices





#### Use Peer-to-Peer Where Warranted...

- High-volume, long-term supplier
- Technical proficiency at both parties

#### Look Supplier Network Options Next...

- Barriers associated with supplier adoption
- Solutions for duplicate invoices
- Identify opportunities for ERP-specific requirements







## **Round Out With OCR**



Template-Based Solution
Identify Required Data Validations
Understand Appropriate Expectations

Bring in house for long-term solution Outsource for short-term or low-volume solutions







# **(4)**

## **Ensure A Single Set Of Processes**



Metrics, Analytics, Reporting







Supplier Network

Outsourced Entry Service

#### **ERP & Workflow Environment**

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ERP

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### **Thank You!**

Questions?





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