



IMPROVED EFFICIENCY AT **DUNEDIN CITY COUNCIL**



key benefits...

- Increased efficiency
- Improved control
- Reduced costs
- Improved supplier relationships
- Quick online access to invoice information
- Minimal staff training required
- Decreased paperwork
- Transparency at every step
- Comprehensive view of invoice status
- Accrual provides accountability
- Integrates with most financial systems



For more information about ApprovalPlus please visit www.approval-plus.com or contact us on 04 473 4552 or 09 379 0525

Dunedin is geographically the largest city in New Zealand and stretches from rural farmland to the sandy coastlines of the Pacific Ocean. DCC employs 700 staff and has an operating revenue of approximately \$300 Million annually.

Dunedin City Council (DCC) contributes significantly to the Dunedin community and is responsible for the maintenance and improvement of public facilities and amenities such as footpaths and parks and also for local events and festivals.

The challenge

Keeping one of New Zealand's largest cities running involves dealing with many suppliers and in turn a large volume of invoices, at times over 3,500 per month. Processing such a large number of invoices is a very time consuming and labour intensive process.

Prior to implementing Fusion5's ApprovalPlus solution, DCC's approval process required that invoices be entered into DCC's finance system by data entry staff before physically being sent to each department for approval prior to being returned to the finance department for payment and filing. As Graeme Souter DCC's Expenditure Manager explains "the council was looking at ways to considerably speed up approvals and monthly processing of invoices as well as clear desks of paper invoices that seemed to be ever present".

The solution

After evaluating several solutions, a DCC finance team member read about ApprovalPlus, Fusion5's Accounts Payable Electronic Approval System, and "it sounded just like what we needed" Graeme says. This has proven to be true.

Impressive results

DCC's impressive results speak for themselves. The Council's target of an eight day turnaround for their invoice approval process prior to implementing ApprovalPlus, (which typically became eight to ten days per month) has been dramatically reduced to just three days per month.

FUSION5 CASE STUDY

Added benefits

The benefits of ApprovalPlus for DCC are many including the ability for the finance team to extend their monthly approval cut off date. This has allowed DCC departments a bigger window for approvals, enabling larger volumes of supplier invoices to be processed each month, ensuring suppliers are paid on time.

DCC's Accounts Payable users are really enjoying ApprovalPlus. Invoice and processing back-logs are now a thing of the past and all invoices are now scanned and entered on the same day they are received.

ApprovalPlus has reduced DCC's data entry staffing requirement by 1.5 people, allowing these staff to move to alternative roles.

User feedback

User acceptance has been exceptionally high. At the follow up user meeting six weeks after go live there were no un-expected issues identified. Graeme says that he "was delighted and surprised that the reaction from users was so unanimous and positive".

In each department, those responsible for coding and approving invoices greatly appreciate the new ability for them to view current and historical invoices online enabling them to answer enquires immediately. There is no longer a delay as copies of old invoices are requested from Finance, a task that had historically been a real issue. Due to the sheer volume of invoices being processed, no more than 12 months of invoices could be stored on site at any one time. The time and resources that were once required to locate old invoices is no longer a problem and the reduced paper clutter is not missed at all.

Ease of use

With everything at their finger tips, DCC has found ApprovalPlus fantastic for answering supplier and general enquires. ApprovalPlus has meant a huge leap forward with enquiries now able to be answered immediately with no need to search and locate old invoices or transactions. "ApprovalPlus has moved us forward another step into the 21st Century" says Graeme.

DCC has found ApprovalPlus to be intuitive and easy to learn. Training was surprisingly easy, says Graeme who on the advice of Fusion5, kept training simple. Department team leaders were given just 40 minutes each of one-on-one instruction. This training provided them with the knowledge they required to train the users in their respective departments and was all the training DCC needed for their staff to be using ApprovalPlus proficiently.

Rewarding results

The ApprovalPlus implementation at DCC was such a success that the Council is seriously considering the implementation of the Purchase Order module, which had previously been thought impossible by Graeme.

As the Project Manager for the implementation, Graeme found it very rewarding to see the success of the project. The Council found their benefits were immediate and substantial with across the board acceptance from all users who all speak very highly of the solution.

Graeme says he has had nothing but praise from Council staff for the Fusion5 Team who says he "really enjoyed working with". The icing on the cake for DCC was the extremely cost competitive pricing at one third the cost of other solutions DCC had considered Graeme says.