

Spendtelligence

5 ways to improve control over spend

Better manage cash flow and make
smarter spending decisions.



By automating your expense process with Concur, you've already taken the first step to controlling cash flow and spend. But what about the others ways your business spends money, such as vendor invoices? Do you have the same level of control and visibility in accounts payable?

When you're in the driver's seat of the business, you need to have a complete handle on company-wide spend. Only then can you better manage cash flow and make smarter spending decisions.

Take a look at the guide below which sets out five ways you can gain better visibility and improve control of your total spend.

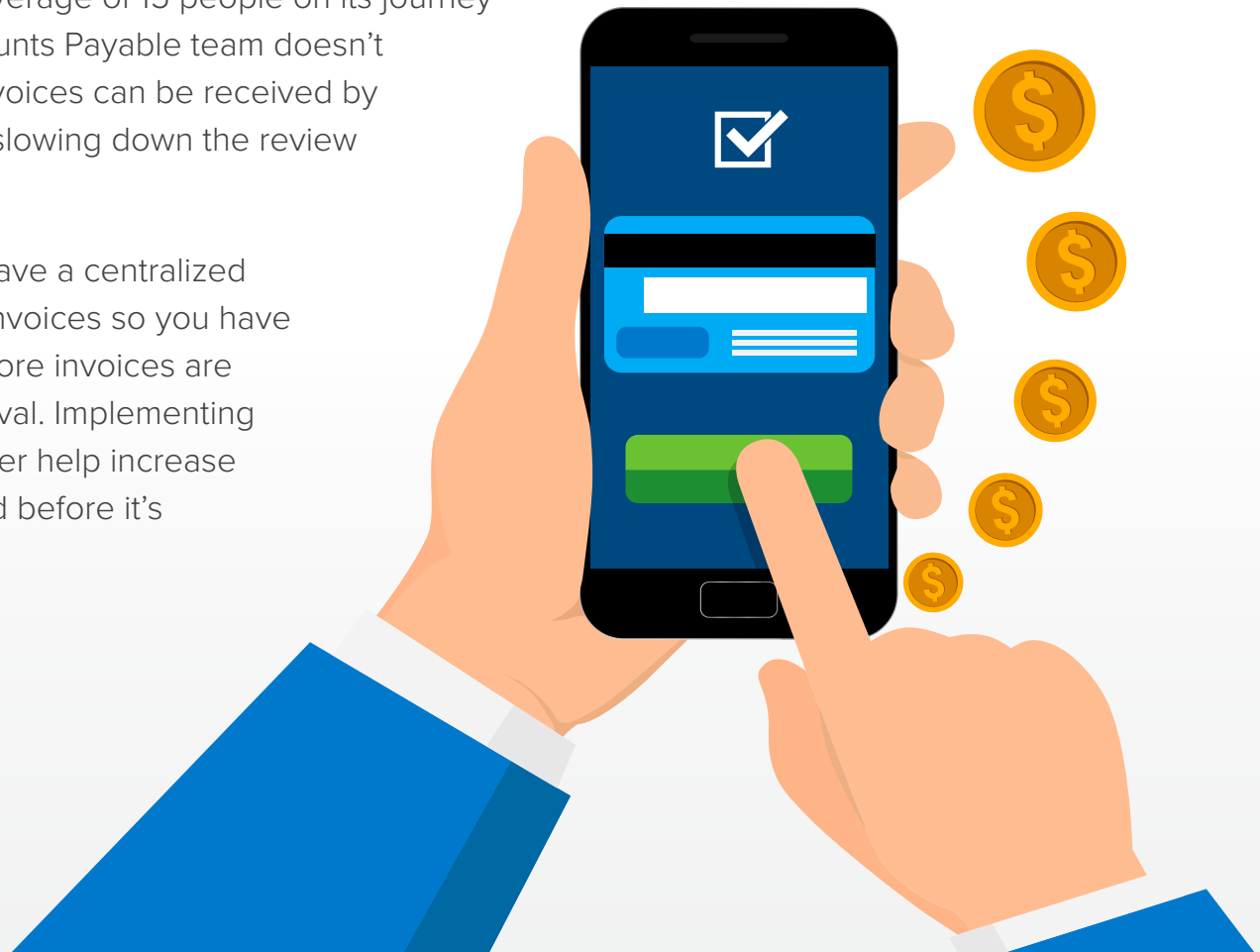


NUMBER 1

Track everything and capture spend as early as possible

A single supplier invoice can touch an average of 15 people on its journey across the business, and often the Accounts Payable team doesn't have visibility until the invoice is due. Invoices can be received by multiple people on paper and by email, slowing down the review and approval process.

To capture spend as early as possible, have a centralized place where suppliers can submit their invoices so you have a clearer picture of upcoming spend before invoices are dispersed across the business for approval. Implementing a Purchase Order (PO) process can further help increase visibility by allowing you to project spend before it's been committed.



NUMBER 2

Reduce errors and duplications

Ever get the sneaking suspicion an invoice has already been paid? With the amount of documentation the average finance team manages, it's common for duplicate invoices to slip in and be paid twice.

An automated system stops duplicate payments by cross-checking every invoice and instantly flagging when the same copy is received. Managers can reject claims before they get to the finance department, saving you time—and of course—money.



According to Concur data, the average small to medium size business **processes approximately 450 invoices in a busy month**, and experiences an invoice duplication rate of 1.29 percent, or about six duplicate invoices monthly.

The average value of a duplicate invoice received is \$2,034—for a total potential outlay of more than \$12,000 per month, if each duplicate invoice were to be paid in error.

NUMBER 3

Focus on analysis, not entry

According to a new survey conducted by Wakefield Research and Concur, 84 percent of small and medium size businesses (SMBs) have yet to fully automate their accounts payable process, meaning employees are manually entering data and tracking invoices via spreadsheets, paper folders, online storage, etc.

Technology like Optical Character Recognition (OCR), can save time and prevent human error by automatically reading and inputting data into finance systems with a high degree of accuracy. OCR technology is a part of Concur Expense, and the same technology is streamlining invoice data capture, saving your team time for more value-added tasks like reviewing supplier invoices for inaccuracies or digging into how to optimize company spend.

According to a survey by Wakefield Research and Concur:



69% of SMBs use spreadsheets like Excel to track budgets and spend



60% store important data in file cabinets



49% use handwritten records to track, manage and analyze spend

Human error can lead to costly mistakes



47% report delays in processing vendor invoices



42% report errors in matching invoices to projects or clients



42% report errors in reconciling invoices



41% report getting hit with late fees from vendors

NUMBER 4

Use spend data to drive better decision-making



Thirty-four percent of businesses surveyed by Ardent Partners identified their top accounts payable challenge to be a lack of visibility into invoice and payment data. If you are still relying on paper-based systems to manage spend, it can be hard to get the visibility you need.

Without clear visibility, you could be missing out on valuable information that can help you negotiate vendor rates, take advantage of early payment discounts, and see where in your process you can optimize.



According to an IOFM Special Report, the top priority for senior finance execs is cash flow analysis. Yet **only 22 percent of all businesses can forecast their mid-term cash flow with 5 percent accuracy**, according to Aberdeen Group.

NUMBER 5

Compile data into a single system

In the spirit of efficiency and visibility, it makes sense to connect all of the ways your company is spending into a single platform.

Consider a big company event like an annual sales kick-off. The flights, ground transportation, hotels, venue, refreshments and incidentals could come out your budget in a number of ways—through your travel department, on invoices, through corporate cards and employee expenses. Can you easily identify the total event spend to understand the return on investment?

By consolidating the above financial data in one tool, you get accurate visibility and insight into how your company spends. If this information is spread across multiple sources and locations, the ability to make data-driven decisions is very difficult. Knowledge is power, but only if you can easily access it and understand it.



Cut costs. Save time. It's common sense.
Concur gives you

Spendtelligence

Spendtelligence is being able to
proactively manage how your company spends money.
Having the right tools make it easier and set you
and your company up for success.

Learn more about Concur Invoice and contact
your Client Sales Executive.

For more than two decades, Concur, an SAP company, has taken companies of all sizes and stages beyond automation to a completely connected spend management solution encompassing travel, expense, invoice, compliance and risk. Our global expertise and industry-leading innovation keep our customers a step ahead with time-saving tools, leading-edge technology and connected data, in a dynamic ecosystem of diverse partners and applications. User-friendly and business-ready, Concur unlocks powerful insights that help businesses reduce complexity and see spending clearly, so they can manage it proactively. Learn more at concur.com or the Concur blog.



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