

Invoice Processing solution cultivates increased efficiencies at Van Dillewijn Group.

Van Dillewijn Group

Manufacturing



Van Dillewijn Group – Case Study

Company	Van Dillewijn Group
Founded	1930s
Location	Aalsmeer, Netherlands
Services	Developing, producing and distributing packaging materials for flowers and plants.
Website	www.dillewijn.nl

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Overview

The Van Dillewijn Group is a leading organisation in the development, production and distribution of packaging materials for flowers and plants. Over 75 years the Dutch company has evolved and grown internationally, with five subsidiaries serving all components of the floral industry worldwide. Based in Aalsmeer, the flower capital of the Netherlands, Van Dillewijn employs 120 people across its businesses, generating an annual turnover of €50 million. With a unique design studio Van Dillewijn offers growers, exporters, wholesalers and retail stores a range of bespoke printed and unprinted packaging solutions that include flexible sleeves, buckets and other transport containers.

Despite this continuous expansion, Van Dillewijn’s invoice processing system was becoming an expensive bottleneck and undermining the company’s professionalism. Invoices were manually transferred across departments during the approval process, leading to delayed or even failed payments. This was not only increasing labour costs and affecting relationships with suppliers, but also forcing the company to accrue costly penalty fines from governing bodies.

Recognising the need to rectify this problem, in 2010 the company contacted Canon. After assessing the company’s needs, Canon put forward its Invoice Processing solution. The solution processes and archives all invoices digitally, from scanning to capture, archive

and workflow, offering Van Dillewijn total control over its invoices and enabling complete transparency across the transactional workflow - benefitting staff, suppliers and customers alike.

Outdated system

Bert Rijkmans, Information and Communications Executive of the Van Dillewijn Group, explains the problems Van Dillewijn was having with its old invoicing system, and the pressure it was putting on the company: “The previous system required the receptionist to receive the mail and then pass on the original copy of the invoice to the Finance and Purchasing departments. This meant that there was a continual risk of an invoice going missing due to human error. Even when we started photocopying the documents, the multiple copies were merely adding to the confusion surrounding the status of the invoice. As a result, the stages at which the authorised personnel verify and validate payments weren’t joining up correctly.”

This manual task of filing the invoices absorbed time that could have been better spent elsewhere. Rijkmans comments: “Not only did the manual transfer leave the process susceptible to errors and loss, but it was time consuming. Once filed, the searching and retrieving of an invoice was often lengthy. We worked out that each week across all departments this single process amounted to a whole week of a full-time employee’s time. That’s over 200 working days per year that were being wasted that could have been better channelled into other aspects of the business, such as commercial support.”

“We now have a firm grip on our accounts payable system and are processing the invoices 40% quicker than before. By reducing the processing time by 40 hours, we have saved around €25 – 30,000 a year. With the addition of the money saved from the reduced penalty fines, the Canon solution has resulted in a 30% cost saving overall.”

Bert Rijkmans, Information and Communications Executive.

Furthermore Van Dillewijn's professional integrity was being questioned. Suppliers were naturally concerned with doing business with a company that was inconsistent with its payments. Moreover the penalty fines were costing the company between €2-5,000 a year which was damaging the company's reputation and hindering its profitability. Rijkmans explains: “It became an obvious problem that we knew could be solved, but we needed the right solution. So we contacted a number of vendors, including Canon, and considered our options. We decided to work with Canon not only because its solution offered the best value and was most effective, but also because the company already had an understanding of our business and demonstrated a willingness to learn more.”

Van Dillewijn streamlines as a partnership strengthens

Van Dillewijn was already familiar with Canon and its services because throughout 2008 and 2009 the Dutch company had installed five Canon high speed departmental scanners in order to streamline other internal processes. As Rijkmans explains, they were very satisfied with both the product and the accompanying service: “The Canon scanners work really well for all our scanning needs and the reliability is excellent. If there is ever a problem, the engineers quickly fix it. The machines all work to a high standard and quality. This is how we knew Canon would have the solution to our invoicing problem. Its consultants always look to work through the problem with us in order to find the right solution.”

Rijkmans outlines the fluidity of the solution: “Now, using the Canon Invoice Processing solution along with the Canon scanners, the receptionist simply scans the invoices that arrive by post and email. After the software has transformed the document into a digital file, it is imported and stored in the Invoice Processing solution's archiving module. Authorised personnel from the purchasing department can then access



the invoice simply and efficiently via unique tagging codes before verifying it. It is then passed to the financial director for final approval before the accounts payable department makes the all important payment to the supplier. This gives us total control over the process.”

A fully automated system that benefits everyone

Van Dillewijn now has a completely automated invoicing system that enables instantaneous retrieval of each and every invoice and gives employees the capability to determine its current status. Rijkmans comments: “The solution gives us the ability to locate every invoice with a simple full text search. If there is a problem with an invoice, we can see exactly at what stage this has happened and why it went wrong, and begin addressing the issue instead of it sitting there undiscovered for days on end.”

Customer service has also benefitted from this swift retrieval time. Rijkmans explains: “If a customer has a query about their product or



delivery, we no longer have to hunt around in physical files. Using the solution from Canon, we can efficiently locate the customer's delivery sheet, and we can tell them everything they need to know about their order. This confidence is evident in everything we do now and I believe our customers are feeling the benefit of our new system and our professional communication and service.”

The late payment penalty fines have also reduced substantially. Rijkmans elaborates: “We anticipate that this cost will be fully removed in the near future and, with the help of Canon's solution, we can ensure it never happens again.”

Rijkmans concludes: “Thanks to Canon, we now have a firm grip on our accounts payable system and are processing the invoices 40% quicker than before. By reducing the processing time by 40 hours, we have saved around €25 – 30,000 a year. With the addition of the money saved from the reduced penalty fines, the Canon solution has resulted in a 30% cost saving overall.”

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