



The global e-Invoicing network

DEPARTMENT OF VETERANS AFFAIRS MAKES MOVE TO ELECTRONIC INVOICING WITH OB10, A&T SYSTEMS

Second Largest Federal Agency Embraces E-Invoicing's Efficiency, Security

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WASHINGTON, D.C. – The U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs (VA) is leaving paper invoices behind and moving to electronic invoicing, contracting with A&T Systems and OB10 to enable that transition, the two companies announced today.

OB10 operates the leading global e-Invoicing network, and A&T Systems as the prime contractor is a provider of technology and other solutions to the federal government. Jointly, they will enroll the department's hundreds of thousands of suppliers on the OB10 network, allowing them to submit their invoices to the VA in any electronic format. The network does all the data mapping and translation, and presents the VA with the invoice in its desired format.

The Department of Veterans Affairs is responsible for providing federal benefits to veterans and their families. It is the second largest of the 15 Cabinet departments and operates nationwide programs for health care, financial assistance, and burial benefits.

The VA operates in a shared services environment, with a central site that processes invoices for all the hospitals and other facilities. Currently, the VA handles some 450,000 invoices annually.

“Going electronic with the VA's invoices from suppliers, like our recent computerization of patient records, is another step in enabling the VA to perform its mission better and more efficiently,” said Secretary of Veterans Affairs Jim Nicholson. “We are looking to eliminate invoice errors, reduce or eliminate late payment penalties, and make this department's accounts payable process a model for other federal agencies.”

By going electronic, the VA will gain significant efficiencies in its invoice handling. Not only will it require less staff time to open mail and deal with the mountain of paper involved with nearly 9,000 invoices arriving each week, but security will be enhanced as well.

Currently, the VA must perform a security check on each invoice as it arrives by mail, which slows the process considerably. Because the OB10 network delivers a finished invoice, no additional security review is needed. The electronic delivery also eliminates manual errors that occur as VA staffers type paper invoice data into its payment system.

Also, the fact that invoices are delivered instantly helps the VA comply with Prompt Payment guidelines that require Executive Branch departments and agencies to pay their commercial obligations within certain defined time periods or pay interest penalties when the payments are late.

E-Invoicing is also a “green” technology that yields environmental benefits, thanks to its elimination of paper. If all 450,000 of the VA's paper invoices were replaced by e-Invoices, that would save 160 trees, as well as 27,000 kilowatts of electricity and 400 pounds of air pollutants involved in paper manufacturing, along with 22 cubic yards of eventual landfill space.

The VA has charged OB10 and A&T Systems with converting 70 percent of its annual invoice total from paper to electronic within 12 months, and Peter Watson, Senior Vice President of OB10, is confident the company can meet that goal.

“OB10 is unparalleled in its ability to bring suppliers onto the network quickly and effectively,” Watson said. “The fact that they can submit invoices in any format makes it easier for them to make the transition, and our supplier conversion teams work closely with them to overcome any challenges.”

Fred Sanders, Vice President of Strategic Relationships for A&T Systems, said that when A&T and OB10 began closely working together a year ago, he knew that the e-Invoicing solution would appeal to A&T Systems' clients in the federal government.

“E-Invoicing is the wave of the future, and is a great addition to the range of solutions that A&T Systems offers to government agencies. It is all about making government operate more efficiently and effectively, and we anticipate that more agencies, at all levels of government, will be making the e-Invoicing migration before long,” Sanders said.

The OB10 global e-Invoicing network, which has members in 70 countries and across six continents, is distinguished by the fact that it allows suppliers to submit invoices in any electronic format, from sophisticated ERP systems such as SAP and Oracle all the way down to small-business QuickBooks-generated invoices. Its ability to translate these invoices and present them to the buyer company in its preferred format is key to achieving high rates of supplier compliance.

About A&T Systems

A&T Systems Inc., based in Silver Spring, Maryland, has specialized in Information Technology Solutions, Telecom and e-Solutions, Professional Services and Healthcare Solutions since its founding in 1984. A&T Systems provides Managed Applications, Managed Business Continuity, Managed Infrastructure & Datacenter Support. Customers include the Department of Veterans Affairs and most of the agencies of the Federal Government, State and Local Governments, as well as commercial enterprises. For more information, visit www.ats.com.

About OB10

OB10 (www.ob10.com) is the leading global B2B e-Invoicing network. OB10 allows A/P departments to receive invoices electronically from suppliers, thereby: 1) eliminating manual scanning and data entry, and 2) enabling dramatic process improvements to reduce exceptions and increase early pay discounts. OB10 is an ideal solution for companies that have struggled to expand EDI beyond their top strategic suppliers due to the associated costs and complexity. OB10 is format independent, so suppliers are not required to implement any hardware or software. Furthermore, OB10 enrolls suppliers on behalf of each client, using a proven process and guaranteeing results. Operational across North America, Europe and Asia, OB10 is compliant with the requirements of tax and supports multiple languages. Customers include: HP, General Motors, Sara Lee, Kellogg's, GSK (GlaxoSmithKline), Agilent Technologies, Tyco, Barclays, Cargill, Mohawk Industries, Greif, Eaton, and Fisher Scientific.