

ABOUT BARBER

AJ & RG Barber Ltd, is a family-owned business located in the heart of Somerset, England, has long been a cornerstone of the local dairy industry.

Recognised for its traditional methods and exceptional cheddar, Barber has been crafting cheese since 1833, making it one of the oldest cheese producers in the UK. However, with the company enduring exponential growth in recent years across its customer base and product ranges, together with significant expansion to its operations (now including partnerships with over 150 farmer milk suppliers in the UK), managing the financial intricacies of accounts payable (AP) became increasingly challenging. There are over 3,000 suppliers covering three entities in the Barber's Group with 16,000 invoices received annually.



CHALLENGES IN ACCOUNTS PAYABLE

The accounts payable function at Barber faced numerous challenges, reflective of many legacy food producers, including:



Lack of visibility

Due to the absence of a centralised system, it was difficult to track invoices, monitor outstanding payments, and generate actionable financial insights.



Receipt of multi-format invoices

Paper, email, PDFs created bottlenecks in processing and approvals.



Limited resources in finance function

Contributed to process inefficiencies and lengthy approval cycles. The approval process was dependent on physical signatures, manual routing and reconciliation of Goods Received Notes, leading to delays, missed payment deadlines, and strained supplier relationships.



Efficient scaling

Scaling to challenges as Barber expanded its supplier base, production and planned company acquisitions, the existing AP processes were unable to keep up with the increased volume of transactions.



Data entry errors

Manual input of invoice details into the MS Dynamics Navision financial system was time-consuming and error-prone, leading to discrepancies and inefficiencies.



Previous system distrust

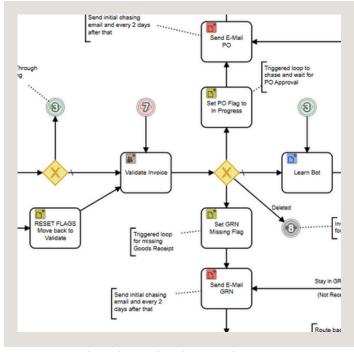
The replacement of non-performing scan and OCR invoice capture software which had not been successful and resulted in distrust of data output and reversion to manual processing.

These issues not only impacted operational efficiency but also risked damaging the Barber reputation as a reliable business partner.



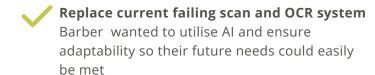
THE TURNING POINT

Recognising the critical need to modernise its accounts payable processes, Barber decided to implement an automated AP solution and improve upon its procedures.



A snapshot of one of Barber's working processes

KEY CHANGE DRIVERS:



- Manual effort and AP capacity
 Reducing existing manual effort and increasing
 capacity in the AP function to streamline invoice
 processing
- Duplication, error and fraud risk
 Potential duplication, payment errors and fraud all increase the cost of invoice processing
- Supplier relationships
 Timely payments improve Barber's
 relationships with suppliers and vendors
- Improve reporting and visibility

 To help financial planning and move suppliers into issuing PO referenced invoices for increased automation

After evaluating several options, the Barber's team chose TCG Process Limited and DocProStar, a cloud-ready process automation platform with a pre-built AP Accelerator.

TECHNICAL HIGHLIGHTS

TCG consultants collaborated with Barber's finance and IT teams to identify automation opportunities within their existing procedures, aligning with the company's operational needs. The agreed outcome was:

- **DocProStar with Accounts Payable Accelerator**: Used to expedite project timelines, improve ROI and leverage proven best practices. This solution is also extensible to provide Barber's specific process enhancements.
- **Cloud-Based Deployment:** The platform is deployed and managed in the TCG Cloud, minimising impact on Barber's IT infrastructure and IT staff.
- **Al-Powered Automation:** The solution combines Al with enhanced grounding and validation for reliable automation and trustworthy data.
- **Composable Architecture:** The Accelerator's independence from the ERP system allowed for a smooth transition from Dynamics NAV to Business Central with minimum disruption, no process change and minor integration alterations.
- Improved Purchasing and Receipting: Automated reminders for business users ensure timely task completion, reducing follow-ups and allowing AP staff to focus on higher-value work.
- **Future-Ready Solution**: The solution is designed for future flexibility, allowing for the interchange or swapping of invoice extraction services as technology advances and costs potentially decrease.



Integrating this solution into our existing MS Dynamics system was seamless. It's user-friendly and has made a noticeable difference in the speed, efficiency and automation of our invoice processing from day one which has helped us increase capacity as we look to onboard other parts of the business.

Adam Elias

Group Financial Director, AI & RG Barbers Ltd

The implementation capabilities and benefits delivered transformative results for Barber, including:



Increased Efficiency

Some invoices typically took 2 weeks to process and this is now reduced to two days, with an overall 85% reduction in processing time



Improved Accuracy

20% improvement in data input accuracy rates



Enhanced Supplier Relationships

Significant drop in supplier inquiries regarding payment status



Better Financial Visibility

Real-time tracking has improved cash flow visibility



Cost Savings

Over 500+ hours of capacity given back to the finance team



Enhanced Internal Procedures and Controls

Approval automation have dramatically improved purchasing and receipting

CONCLUSION

Barber's rise to accounts payable success is a testament to the power of embracing technology to overcome legacy challenges. By automating its AP processes, the Company not only improved operational efficiency but also fortified its supplier relationships and financial positioning. As Barber continues to grow and innovate, its modernised AP system positions it as a forward-thinking leader in the dairy industry, ready to navigate the complexities of today's business landscape.

This case study serves as a compelling example for other organisations, demonstrating that even in traditional industries, technology can be a transformative force for good.





About TCG Process

TCG Process is a global software company with an extensive history in helping organizations automate their content-heavy business processes. The TCG Process platform, OCTO, combines a comprehensive suite of Alpowered automation capabilities, enabling organizations to quickly build and deploy automated process applications. When combined with its purpose-built intelligent document processing solution, DocProStar, enterprises can ensure their business is being driven by precise, accurate information.

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About AJ & RG Barber

Barber is a family-owned business that's been making cheddar cheese for longer than anyone else worldwide, since 1833. Located in the heart of Somerset, England, Barber has long been a cornerstone of the local dairy industry. Since their beginnings almost 200 years ago, Barber has embraced new technology and innovation, but still relies on the expertise and instincts of their cheesemakers to ensure their cheese is the best it can be.

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