



SAP Concur 

SAP Concur Case Study | PUBLIC
Concur Invoice® | Concur Expense®

Honda New Zealand transforms spend management with invoice and expense automation

SAP Concur customer journey with Concur Invoice and Concur Expense

Quick Facts

Company Name

Honda New Zealand

Solutions

Concur Invoice® and Concur Expense®

Industry

Automotive

Company Size

240 employees

Location

Auckland, New Zealand

Why SAP Concur?

- Cost savings on mail service and invoice storage
- Improved control over compliance and governance
- Increased accessibility and visibility of spend
- A centralised invoice process supporting a remote workforce

ABOUT HONDA NEW ZEALAND

At Honda New Zealand (NZ), the company celebrates their commitment to research and development, safety, the environment, and everyday New Zealanders. Their local and global initiatives are designed to improve mobility, increase safety and protect the environment for future generations to come.

With nine locations across the North and South Islands of New Zealand, Honda NZ employs 240 people to support Honda owners and operators countrywide.



HONDA

Defining the **business drivers** for an automated solution

For Honda NZ, the business drivers for moving to an automated spend management solution were two-fold; a company-wide directive to improve sustainability, and a desire to address process inefficiencies. Both drivers supported the move to a paperless, automated spend management platform.

Joe Hall, Chief Financial Officer, Honda NZ said, “Honda globally has a blue-sky sustainability focus, and one of the directions from the management team was to be paperless.”

Additionally, the inefficiencies of the company’s paper-based processes had become a pain point.

“The company operates six branches nationwide, as well as a parts delivery centre, service centre, and pre-delivery centre. Because we’re spread around the countryside, the inefficiency of moving paper around the place made life difficult. That was the main driver to begin looking at digitisation and an automated approach to managing employee expenses and supplier invoices,” said Joe Hall.

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Joe Hall, chief financial officer, Honda NZ.



Selecting SAP Concur solutions to support a dispersed workforce

Before engaging SAP Concur, Honda NZ reviewed four providers to determine which was the most suitable for the company's needs. Operating on a legacy accounting system, Honda NZ required a solution that would integrate with its existing system while offering the mobility and flexibility required for a mobile, dispersed workforce.

Honda NZ chose to simplify their expense management with Concur Expense. Concur Expense is an automated expense management tool that captures spend from multiple sources and consolidates spend data in one place. Concur Expense helps control spend policies while simplifying the expense reimbursement process for employees.

Joe Hall explains the decision to select Concur Expense, "We needed something that was mobile and flexible, and SAP Concur's mobile app really suited us."

Honda NZ chose to automate their accounts payable process with Concur Invoice. Concur Invoice simplifies and speeds up capture and payment of invoices while providing greater visibility into every step of the invoice management process.

"SAP Concur solutions seemed to be better suited to our environment and to our requirements than the other potential partners that we looked at. SAP Concur wasn't the cheapest option available to us, but it was certainly the best value," recalled Joe Hall.

Navigating the implementation process after 25 years of paper

Honda NZ's implementation strategy took into account both the company's legacy ERP system and the requirement for change management buy-in from management.

"It was a deliberate decision for us to implement Concur Expense before Concur Invoice because there was a lot less involved in integrating Concur Expense with our legacy ERP system," explained Joe Hall. "It was important that if we were going to change from a 25-year-old paper system to an automated system, we needed management buy-in. It's the managers who are approving expense claims so if we could get them comfortable with the new expense process, we knew that the uptake of Concur Invoice would be more successful, and that proved to be the case."

Following learnings from the initial implementation of Concur Expense, Honda NZ took a strategic approach with Concur Invoice, and had the benefit of an SAP Concur project manager who proactively drove the process from the vendor side and provided valuable advice.

"When it came to implementing Concur Invoice, we put a team together with a clear deadline on when we wanted to kick-start the invoice process. We had an extremely motivated project manager who'd been assigned to us from SAP Concur.

"Both solutions went off without a hitch.
When we hit the button the solutions started and we were up and running"

Joe Hall, chief financial officer, Honda NZ.



Change management and **the benefit of employee satisfaction**

To prepare Honda NZ staff for the system change, the company conducted training at each branch location prior to going live. The ease of use of Concur Expense had an important effect on employee satisfaction during and after the initial rollout.

“Our change management process involved one-on-one training with our employees. We visited each of our seven or eight locations and we covered them all off in about two or three days. The training that we had was only two days

before we went live. The changeover process was well organised, we were able to stop the old system and start processing with the new system straight away,” explained Joe Hall.

“Concur Expense is quite intuitive, there’s a certain logic, and I think that made it a lot easier for people to understand. Our employees were sick of dealing with paper and chasing paper aimlessly around the branch. The uptake from those users was just fantastic,” continued Hall, “We didn’t have any negative feedback.”

Eliminating costs through invoice automation

As a result of automating invoice management, Honda NZ has achieved a reduction in the cost of mailing documents between locations. The company also eliminated the need to physically file and store the large volume of invoices it processes, equating to approximately six feet of paper storage each month.

“There have definitely been savings,” explains Joe Hall. “We had a contract with a mail provider pushing paper around the countryside. We’ve saved NZD\$17,000 a month because we don’t need that service anymore. We used to average around 2,500 invoices on a monthly basis, which is equivalent to roughly six feet of paper. We no longer need to store those invoices. Those are the two transparent savings for us.”

“With SAP Concur, **our finance team can spend more time looking at where we spend money** instead of chasing paper. It’s more than saving money, it’s making better use of that resource to add value to the company.”

Joe Hall, chief financial officer, Honda NZ.

Improving process efficiencies and decision-making with better visibility

Honda NZ has gained many benefits since automating supplier invoices with Concur Invoice. Increased visibility has led to important time savings with access to information proving to be a valuable soft benefit.

“The biggest efficiency is the time we save by automating these processes. Centralising the process makes everything easier and means that branch staff no longer have to chase paper. We can now process payments for suppliers quicker. The average approval time of an invoice is now around three or four days, so that tells you that people are engaged and they’re pushing the invoices through,” said Joe Hall.

“From a personal perspective (CFO), it’s now really easy if I want to find an invoice. Previously I had to ask the accounts payable person and if the invoice happened to be four or five months old it was in storage somewhere, and it just became a real mission to find that sort of information. I can now go straight into the SAP Concur platform, pull up that supplier, and I can see twelve months of invoices. For me, that’s a huge saving just in terms of transparency and efficiency.”

Improved visibility has provided Honda NZ with the opportunity to save on spend by

renegotiating contracts and make data-driven decisions on procurement.

Joe Hall explains, “When you talk about visibility at the invoice level it’s really being able to say, ‘Did we spend that money wisely and should we do that again in the future?’. With Concur Invoice I’m able to see a lot more. I have much more visibility now than I did twelve months ago. It’s highlighted some opportunities for us to renegotiate contracts which has certainly bought us quite a few savings in the last twelve months because we can see where we’re spending the money.”

The company has also improved supplier management since the implementation of Concur Invoice. The increased efficiencies of automation and centralisation have proven beneficial.

“There’s a big efficiency in supplier management. With the old process we were lucky if the invoice had made it back to head office. Having everything in one place makes it so much easier for everyone’s benefit. It means that people in the branches are no longer having to chase those invoices. We’re able to pay more of our suppliers on time so they end up happier dealing with us,” said Joe Hall.

“The benefits we get, the staff satisfaction, the efficiency, we have supplier satisfaction because they get paid a lot quicker, these are all important things for having a good working environment going forward. **I wouldn’t hesitate to automate.**”

Joe Hall, chief financial officer, Honda NZ.



Improving control and visibility for better compliance and governance

As chief financial officer for Honda NZ, Joe Hall sees improvement in compliance and governance processes playing an important role in the business transformation with SAP Concur solutions.

“Compliance and governance play a big part of what I do and Concur takes care of 95% of that,” explains Joe Hall. “There’s an authority matrix

that is built in, so an invoice has to go through that authority matrix to make it through to final payment. From that point of view, I feel much more comfortable that what we’re spending money on is approved by the right people, and there’s less opportunity for fraud. The platform is flexible enough that we can change the authority matrix when we need to align to our existing process. I sleep a lot better at night now.”

“The SAP Concur solution gives us the surety that each of the 2,500 invoices we process each month is signed off correctly before it can proceed.”

Joe Hall, chief financial officer, Honda NZ.

SAP Concur solutions and navigating the impacts of COVID-19

For Honda NZ, the impact of COVID-19 on the business' spend management processes were mitigated by management's decision to move to the Cloud and implement SAP Concur solutions prior to the pandemic.

Joe Hall explains, "About five years ago we made some really critical decisions about putting information on the Cloud and having access remotely. Then twelve months ago we implemented SAP Concur solutions. This meant that it was just a matter of someone picking up a laptop, taking it home, and they were up and running again. Most of the invoices come in by email, so effectively, it made no difference at all if we were working from home."

The company's ability to enable their remote workforce has also had a lasting effect on providing a supportive and happy environment for staff.

"It's important that we have people in the office, but we also recognise for our staff that it's nice to be able to work from home one or two days a week. Why not allow someone to work from home, they're just as efficient and we end up with much happier staff and a happier workforce," said Joe Hall. "One of the big learnings for me, with Concur Invoice I don't actually need an accounts payable person in the office, so there's no reason I couldn't employ an accounts payable person from anywhere in the country, everything would run just as smoothly."

"Looking back implementing Concur Invoice was by far the best decision we could have made. Going into a COVID-19 environment I would hate to be in a lockdown situation trying to chase bits of paper around the place."

Joe Hall, chief financial officer, Honda NZ.

About SAP Concur

SAP® Concur® is the world's leading brand for integrated travel, expense, and invoice management solutions, driven by a relentless pursuit to simplify and automate these everyday processes. The highly-rated SAP Concur mobile app guides employees through business trips, charges are directly populated into expense reports, and invoice approvals are automated. By integrating near real-time data and using AI to analyze transactions, businesses can see what they're spending and avoid possible blind spots in the budget. SAP Concur solutions help eliminate yesterday's tedious tasks, make today's work easier, and support businesses to run at their best. Learn more at concur.com or the SAP Concur blog.

Learn more at concur.com.au.

About SAP

As the Experience Company powered by the Intelligent Enterprise, SAP is the market leader in enterprise application software, helping companies of all sizes and in all industries run at their best: 77% of the world's transaction revenue touches an SAP system. Our machine learning, Internet of Things (IoT), and advanced analytics technologies help turn customers' businesses into intelligent enterprises. SAP helps give people and organizations deep business insight and fosters collaboration that helps them stay ahead of their competition. We simplify technology for companies so they can consume our software the way they want – without disruption. Our end-to-end suite of applications and services enables more than 437,000 business and public customers to operate profitably, adapt continuously, and make a difference. With a global network of customers, partners, employees, and thought leaders, SAP helps the world run better and improve people's lives.

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