



# Building Business Strength: How Travel, Expense, and Invoice Management Can Help Control Cash Flow, Improve Compliance, and Maximize Cost-Savings

Worldwide AMI-Partners Report and U.S. Country Spotlight



Sponsored by: SAP Concur



# Controlling company spend is critical for businesses strength and resiliency

All businesses face unexpected challenges. When they do, having control over cash flow gives them the flexibility to adapt in times of uncertainty. However, it is challenging to maintain control without the right tools in place. Companies that haven't implemented travel and expense (T&E) or invoice management solutions can experience risk and compliance issues and miss opportunities to save. As the trend towards remote work increases, these challenges grow for companies using a manual approach (e.g. spreadsheets and email) as well as for those that may have started down the path to automation but have not yet fully integrated their expense and invoice management.

AMI connected with key financial decision makers (FDMs) in **500 businesses with fewer than 1,000 employees across 6 regions (Australia, Canada, France, Japan, UK, and U.S.)** to better understand how they are managing their T&E and vendor invoices. What became clear was that manual processes make it difficult to navigate unforeseen challenges, control costs, and keep cash flowing.

This report will show the positive impact of implementing a complete T&E and invoice management solution for businesses globally and within the U.S. It highlights how automated and integrated T&E and invoice management can help firms take control of company spend, improve compliance, and maximize savings.

## Key Findings:

Businesses process **110** expense reports and **217** invoices per month.

**With T&E and invoice solutions, companies can:**

- **Avoid misplacing receipts and invoices** – reduce lost receipts by **60%**
- **Save time** on tracking and approvals – finance employees can save **530 hours** per year
- **Save money** – businesses save **\$31K** and **\$34K** on T&E and invoice respectively

## When using manual processes, businesses faced many challenges

**66%** experienced **incomplete documentation** e.g. lost receipts and invoices

**65%** experienced **delayed reporting** of expenses

**59%** emphasized it was challenging to manage **invoices from non-qualified vendors**

**57%** encountered **duplicate data entries** and inaccuracies

**55%** indicated it was **difficult to track spending** behavior

All of these affect your ability to track cash flow.

## T&E and invoice solutions reduce challenges, cut costs, and improve cash flow visibility

By streamlining expense and invoice reporting, T&E and invoice management solutions help firms in achieving three important goals:



Gaining better control of spend data



Improving internal and external compliance

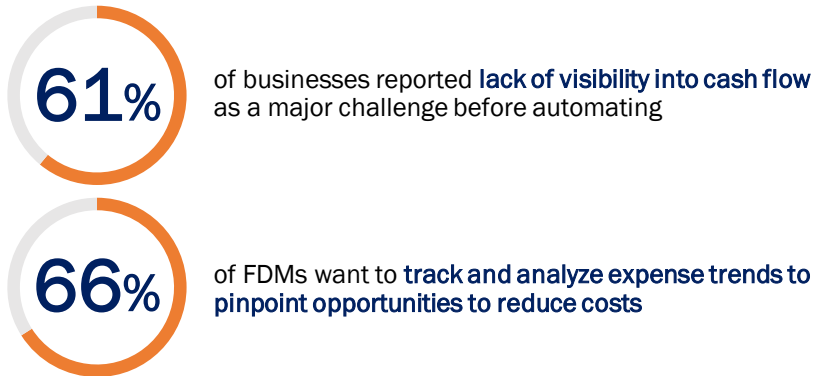


Maximizing savings

We will now explore how T&E and Invoice management solutions facilitate each of these goals.

## Spend control: Improve budgetary decisions with better visibility into company spend data

Manual processes prevent FDMs from having a complete view of cash flow, making it difficult to track and analyze spending accurately.



Automating T&E and invoice management processes helps FDMs make better decisions by making accurate data easy to find and analyze. Better accessibility of company spend data allows finance leaders to get a complete picture of spending, which helps them to quickly spot trends and uncover opportunities for savings.

### After automating:



59%

of financial decision makers indicated **automation allows them to better respond to business challenges due to improved visibility** into company spend data

69%

For SAP Concur users

## Spend control cont'd: Enhance cash flow tracking by integrating company spend and budget data from various sources

Financial decision makers increasingly want to better integrate expense, invoice, and budget data across departments and functions.

**63%** of businesses cited that it is important or very important to integrate how they manage company spend for **better cash flow visibility**

**62%** of businesses agree that it is important or very important to use **software to integrate business processes**

Manual processes rarely offer the flexibility of integration. This can limit financial decision makers' ability to view spend data for the entire company.



**58%** of FDMs agreed **lack of integration with budgets** was a major challenge before using a T&E or Invoice management solution

The right automated solution can integrate spend and budgets throughout the organization, allowing finance leaders to take more control of spending.





## Internal compliance: Improve compliance by reducing non-qualified expense and invoice entries

Unclear company policies can lead to unintentional, non-qualified expense and invoice submissions, which can take up more of your finance teams' time to spot and resolve.



With the right solution, it is easier to put good policies in place and ensure that they are adhered to, thus reducing the risk of overpayments.

### What an SAP Concur user had to say:

“

*For approval workflow, we can build parameters into the system that team members submitting an expense report have to abide by. Flags are triggered if they try to submit an expense report over a certain amount.*

”

- SAP Concur User

*Accounts Payable manager  
Mid-sized financial services firm*

## External compliance: Stay in better compliance with industry regulations

### Businesses faced compliance related challenges before automating:

62% 

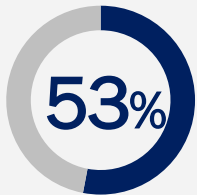
of businesses agree managing **industry specific regulations** was a big challenge

61% 

of businesses found **tax and compliance issues** to be a major challenge

With regulatory policies constantly changing, keeping up to date with industry specific requirements is difficult. This challenge is even greater for companies doing things manually.

T&E and invoice management solutions improve compliance by helping firms keep track of regulatory policies. This greatly reduces the burden on finance teams.



### After implementing a T&E solution:

of FDMs indicated that their **automated travel and expense solution improved compliance** with industry regulations







## **Maximize savings:** Reduce reporting errors and save your finance team's time and effort

The right solution can help businesses accurately capture, itemize, and track key documents, saving employees' time and reducing effort.

Before implementing an automated T&E and/or invoice solution, businesses faced various challenges:



**63%**

of businesses agreed **time wasted during expense audits due to non-compliance** was a major challenge



**59%**

of businesses found it **challenging to pull together materials for audit prep**

### After automating, businesses saw:

Savings of

**530 Hrs.**

**annually per finance employee\***

**60%** reduction in misplaced invoices



**55%** reduction in misplaced receipts



\*Average time saved by firms using an integrated T&E and vendor invoice solutions



## Maximizing savings cont'd: Increase savings with improved employee productivity

A solution that offers automation and integration makes T&E and invoice management more streamlined, so your finance teams have more time to spend on productive work.

Businesses want to achieve better workplace efficiencies:

72% 

want to improve operational efficiency & productivity

67% 

want employees to spend more time on strategic work

64% 

want to achieve better results without over-burdening finance employees

**What a financial decision maker had to say about efficiency:**

“ Our accounting team size has remained the same as we’ve grown. Even after some people retired from the team, we were able to utilize SAP Concur’s feature—Invoice capture—which was more cost-effective than hiring someone new. ”

**- SAP Concur User**

Finance director  
Mid-sized financial services firm



## Maximizing savings cont'd: Reduce expense and invoice processing costs

Managing company spend with manual processes often has implicit costs such as lost staff time, storage/archiving costs, and printing costs, to name a few. About **3 in 5** businesses cited “high costs” as being a challenge of manually processing expenses and invoices.

Average annual **cost savings** after implementing an automated solution:



**64%** of businesses using automated solutions indicated that **time savings due to better efficiency** was a top benefit of automating T&E and invoicing.

Average annual **time savings** after implementing an automated solution:



In the following pages, we will cover our **specific findings for the U.S. market.**





# United States country spotlight: Overcome business challenges and improve decision making with the right solutions

On average, U.S. firms process more reports than their counterparts worldwide.

In an average month, U.S. businesses process:

**115**  
expense reports      *and*      **228**  
invoices

Before switching to a T&E and invoice management solution, U.S. firms faced several challenges:



reported **delayed reporting** of expenses



experienced **incomplete documentation** e.g. lost receipts and invoices



emphasized it was **challenging to manage invoices** from non-qualified vendors

U.S. businesses can overcome cash flow challenges by focusing on three key goals:

- **Controlling spend**
- **Improving compliance**
- **Maximizing savings**

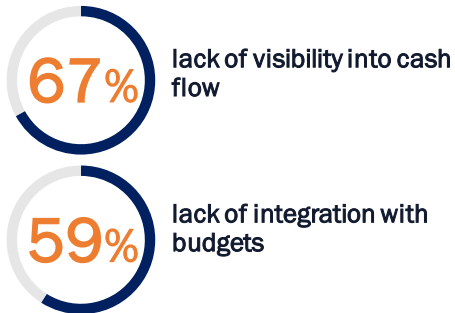
We will explore how the right solutions empower businesses to achieve these goals



## Spend control: Enable improved spend visibility and enhanced tracking of cash flow

Incomplete T&E and invoice solutions often lead to siloed views of business cash flow and spend across various business functions, resulting in data that can be inconsistent and tedious to analyze.

### Challenges with manual processes:

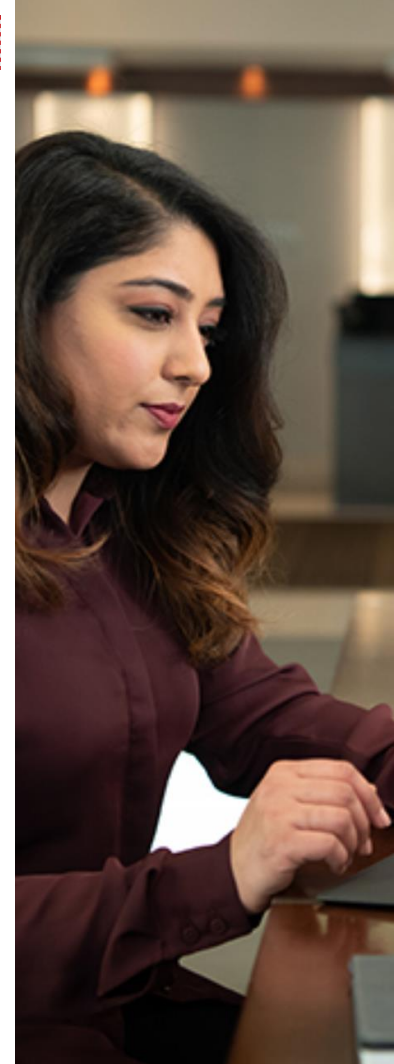


### What is most important to businesses in the U.S.?



Robust T&E and invoice management solutions allow for better visualization of business spend data, enabling decision makers to apply spend-budget integrations and cost cutting measures at all levels of the organization.

### After automating:





## Improve compliance: Stay in compliance with internal policies and industry regulations

Manual expense reporting is prone to human error and leads to unqualified submissions, creating more work for finance teams to spot and correct inaccuracies.

### U.S. firms reported facing several compliance related issues

**62%** reported T&E submission mistakes



**65%** reported employees submitted unqualified expenses



**64%** found it challenging to manage industry specific regulations



**60%** faced tax and compliance issues



Complete T&E and invoice solutions flag out-of-policy submissions, saving significant time for finance staff who would otherwise need to manually locate these inaccuracies.

### After implementing an automated and integrated solution:



of U.S. businesses indicated that T&E and invoice management solutions helped **improve compliance with industry regulations**





## **Maximize savings:** Reduce reporting errors and save time by switching to T&E and invoicing solutions

With the high volume of reports they process on a monthly basis, U.S. businesses that do not use automated solutions are at a higher risk of misplacing documents and facing reporting errors and non-compliance issues, particularly during audits.

**With manual processing,**  
businesses faced several challenges in retrieving and processing precise audit material

**68%** agreed that time wasted during audits due to non-compliance was a major challenge



**63%** agreed it was challenging to pull together materials



**Using T&E/invoice management,**  
businesses can reduce the turn-around time for locating key data thanks to a reduction in misplaced documents

**62%** reduction in misplaced invoices



**57%** reduction in misplaced receipts





## Maximize savings cont'd: Increase savings via improved employee productivity

To realize significant time and cost savings via improved efficiencies, businesses are turning to T&E and invoice management tools to free up employees' time for business-critical tasks. Moreover, fully automated solutions take a significant load off a firm's accounting department - saving teams over 100 hours on a weekly basis, on average!

### U.S. businesses are looking to increase workplace efficiencies

76%



want to improve operational efficiency & productivity

73%



want employees to spend more time on strategic work

69%



want to achieve better results without over-burdening finance employees

### T&E and invoice solutions provide significant cost and time savings

#### U.S. businesses save:

**\$38K**  
yearly

by implementing automated  
T&E management solution

**\$40K**  
yearly

by implementing automated  
invoice management solution

*Among U.S. SMBs with 100-999 employees*

#### Accounting staff at an average U.S. firm saves:

**104 hours**  
weekly

by using automated T&E or vendor invoice  
management solutions





## In conclusion, T&E and invoice management solutions streamline processes, save money, and strengthen business

As work conditions evolve rapidly and unforeseeably, businesses need to be geared with the right tools for better agility and responsiveness. The rising trend of working remotely makes most business processes including financial reporting more challenging than ever. With fully automated and integrated solutions, businesses can become more resilient by optimizing time and cost savings.

In the case of T&E and invoice management, companies wanting to improve compliance yet simplify the reporting process are turning to solutions that can help them achieve their key goals:

### Spend control

Gain visibility into company spending data via:

- Consolidated views of cash flow spend
- Integrations across business processes

### Risk & compliance management

Stay compliant with internal and external regulations by:

- Reduced out-of-policy submissions
- Improved inaccurate submission detection

### Savings

Achieve significant time & cost savings by:

- Improved employee productivity (free up time for strategic work)
- Reduction in misplaced reports during audits



## About the study

This report is based on a study sponsored by SAP Concur and conducted by AMI-Partners (an Analysys Mason Company), a leading market advisory firm focused on SMB and enterprise technology solutions. The results from the study are based on a comprehensive online survey of 504 organizations within 6 major countries (Australia, Canada, France, Japan, UK, and U.S.). The companies surveyed were distributed by size as follows: 38% small business (1 to 99 employees), 37% medium businesses (100 to 499 employees), and 25% nationals—large mid-sized firms (500 to 999 employees). In addition to the online survey, AMI conducted in-depth interviews with key financial decision-makers in charge of their company's T&E and/or vendor invoice management to supplement the survey finding.

Employee Size		
	Sample – N	Proportion
1-99 Emp.	189	38%
100-499 Emp.	187	37%
500-999 Emp.	128	25%
<b>Total</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>100%</b>

Countries		
	Sample – N	Proportion
U.S.	216	43%
Canada	59	12%
Australia	56	11%
UK	55	11%
Japan	61	12%
France	57	11%
<b>Total</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>100%</b>

Verticals		
	Sample – N	Proportion
Manufacturing	105	21%
Retail	95	19%
Financial Services	99	20%
Professional Business Services	101	20%
Technology Solution Providers	104	20%
<b>Total</b>	<b>504</b>	<b>100%</b>

N-Values by Software Category Type		
	Sample – N	Proportion
Currently Use Expense Management Software	329	65%
Currently Use Vendor Invoice Management Software	232	46%
Currently Use Travel Management Software	205	41%