



VIC.AI



ORGILL

Scaling retail AP: CNRG boosts invoice processing 4x with AI

Vic.ai has significantly enhanced CNRG's AP processes, positioning the company for scalable growth while achieving greater invoice efficiency, real-time visibility into key processing metrics, and a more accurate balance sheet.

AP cost- and time-savings driven by:

- > 90% accuracy in invoice coding and classification
- > Achieved a no-touch invoice processing rate of 60%
- > Reduced processing time from 5 to 1.2 minutes per invoice

Industry:

Retail (Hardware and Home Improvement)

ERP:

Microsoft Great Plains

Products in use:

- Invoice Processing
- Approvals
- Advanced Analytics

Central Network Retail Group (CNRG), a wholly owned subsidiary of Orgill, operates 145 hardware stores, home centers, and lumberyards across 16 states. With multiple brands and a complex retail network, CNRG faced significant challenges in managing its accounts payable (AP) processes efficiently without adding headcount. The company struggled with manual, time-consuming invoice processing and lacked visibility into spending across its various brands. Staff turnover, accurate record-keeping, and invoice recall were also consistent challenges. This case study examines how CNRG overcame these obstacles, realized substantial ROI, and achieved remarkable improvements in its AP operations through Vic.ai's advanced AI-powered accounting platform.



Prior state and business challenges

Before adopting Vic.ai, CNRG's AP department grappled with managing the high volume of invoices across its multiple brands efficiently. The company's manual processes were not only inefficient but also prone to errors, with 18 AP clerks processing and posting invoices. In addition to the manual effort required to process invoices, CNRG faced multiple challenges in managing its AP operations, which caused delays and limited financial visibility. These obstacles included:

- 1 | Time-consuming invoice processing:** The AP team spent approximately 5 minutes processing each invoice manually, including downloading, printing, coding, and entering data into their ERP system, Microsoft Great Plains. This inefficiency significantly slowed down the entire AP process and limited the team's capacity to handle growth.
- 2 | Lack of visibility across brands:** With multiple brands operating under the CNRG umbrella, it was difficult to gain a comprehensive view of spending across different expense categories and vendors. This limited visibility hindered strategic decision-making and negotiation power with suppliers.
- 3 | Difficulty in scaling AP operations:** As CNRG grew, the team faced challenges in integrating and centralizing AP operations for new stores. The manual processes made it difficult to absorb additional workload without significantly increasing headcount.
- 4 | Limited reporting and analytics:** The manual nature of their AP processes made it challenging to generate timely and accurate reports on AP performance, spending patterns, and other key financial metrics.
- 5 | Inefficient approval workflows:** The lack of standardized approval processes across brands and expense types led to delays in invoice processing and inconsistencies in how expenses were approved and coded.

To improve invoice processing efficiency, gain better visibility into spending, and increase automation, CNRG recognized the need to rethink their operational AP approach and adopt more advanced technology.



"I had been thinking about AI as a possible option for us to utilize. When someone from Vic.ai reached out, they hit all the points I had been considering in terms of functionality and benefits."

LACEY OURSO

VP of Accounting

Embracing AI for accounting innovation

Lacey Ourso, VP of Accounting, recognized the need to incorporate AI into their accounting technology stack. She knew that evolving their automation approach was crucial for sustained growth and scalability. With an eye on the future, CNRG set out to find a solution that would not only address their current challenges but also position them for long-term success in an increasingly digital landscape.

The CNRG team began exploring AI-powered options for AP automation. "I had been thinking about AI as a possible option for us to utilize," Ourso recalls. "When someone from Vic.ai reached out, they hit all the points I had been considering in terms of functionality and benefits."

During the vendor selection process, Ourso was particularly impressed by the comprehensive nature of the Vic.ai platform, with end-to-end invoice processing and bill pay. Unlike other solutions that CNRG considered, Vic.ai presented a holistic approach to financial operations with AI at its core.

This end-to-end solution capability, combined with the projected efficiency gains, set Vic.ai apart from other vendors and aligned well with CNRG's goal for an impactful financial transformation.



The Vic.ai platform

CNRG implemented several key components of the Vic.ai platform:

- 1. Invoice Processing
- 2. Approvals
- 3. Advanced Analytics

AI Invoice Processing	AI Approval Flows	AI PO Matching	AI-Driven Analytics	Payments
Filter	Status	Open Invoices	Approval	Pro
Invoice Number	Bill Description			
22611715	Computer equipment for n hires (Marketing dept.) in f			
42145	Video Platform			
42529	HR Management Tool			
2461245	Interface Design Tool			
2412355	Communication Platform			

Vic.ai integrates directly with Microsoft Great Plains to enable a seamless flow of financial data across the CNRG organization. The integration allows for real-time synchronization of invoice data between Vic.ai and Great Plains, eliminating the need for manual data entry while reducing errors and providing a single source of truth for financial reporting and analysis.

The implementation of Vic.ai has had a significant impact on AP processes for CNRG, all of which contribute to tangible savings and measurable improvements, including:



Invoice ingestion

All expense invoices now go through Vic.ai, with automatic coding and integration into Microsoft Great Plains.



Workflow standardization

Approvals for invoices have been standardized across the organization, with specific flows set up for invoices over \$3,000 and certain GL codes.



Analytics and reporting

The platform provides real-time analytics on invoice processing data, team performance, and spending patterns across brands.





"[Vic.ai] has helped balance out the workload, because the time the team is saving processing expenses they can use to work through statements for other brands or vendors, and keep our non-expense invoices caught up."

CRISTEANA GUSTIN

AP Supervisor

Augmenting AP team with AI technology

As the traditional role of an AP professional continues to evolve with technology innovation, many organizations face challenges in retaining staff while managing increasing workloads, and CNRG was no exception. AI-powered solutions like Vic.ai have become crucial for finance teams needing to maintain operational efficiency while adapting to these changing workforce dynamics.

With Vic.ai, CNRG is able to counterbalance these staffing challenges. Cristeana Gustin, AP Supervisor, notes, "It's helped balance out the workload, because the time the team is saving processing expenses they can use to work through statements for other brands or vendors, and keep our non-expense invoices caught up." This shift demonstrates how AI can augment AP teams, allowing them to focus on higher-value tasks and maintain productivity, even with reduced staff.



The tangible ROI of an AI-driven approach

Meeting the goals they had set for improving efficiency and scalability, CNRG realized significant benefits after implementing Vic.ai:

Faster invoice processing: The CNRG team has seen a dramatic reduction in invoice processing time, from 5 minutes per invoice to just 1.2 minutes. This 76% reduction in processing time has freed up significant capacity for the AP team.

Improved accuracy and automation: CNRG has achieved a 90% accuracy rate in invoice coding and classification. The implementation of Autopilot for invoices under \$3,000 has further increased efficiency.

Better resource management: Dashboard and user processing data have empowered CNRG to make strategic process improvements and support team development. Gustin elaborates, "The dashboard visibility has been invaluable. We now get automated accrual reports and can track which brands process invoices faster. This insight helps us identify where additional training may be needed or who might be struggling with recent changes, allowing us to continuously improve our operations and upskill our team members effectively."

Enhanced visibility and control: The centralized platform has provided CNRG with unprecedented visibility into spending across its various brands. Gustin notes, "It's been helpful to see what brands are paying for each different type of expense category, and provided a lot more visibility than we had beforehand."

Streamlined approvals: The implementation of approval workflows has improved control and standardization across the organization. Gustin explains, "Before Vic.ai, no one was reviewing what our AP clerks were posting. Now we have approval flows in place, and if an invoice is over \$3,000, we can dig in and make sure they're coded correctly."

Employee satisfaction: The AP team has embraced the Vic.ai platform. Gustin shares, "I think the team likes it. It helps them streamline their work processes. Even those who were initially adverse to change have accepted it and are moving along with it."



Future platform expansion and automation goals

Looking ahead, CNRG plans to further leverage Vic.ai's capabilities to drive additional efficiencies and insights. KPIs tied to Vic.ai use are built into the AP team's annual goals, including increasing the Autopilot rate and reducing user processing hours.

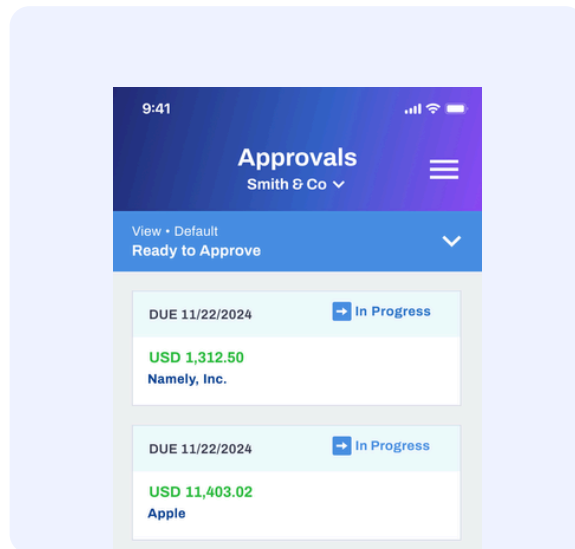
"One of our goals is to have our total user processing hours under 23 per month, and 70% of invoices on Autopilot by the end of the year," Gustin says. "We are on track to meet those goals."

The implementation of Vic.ai has not only addressed CNRG's immediate AP challenges but has also positioned the company for future growth and financial stability. By leveraging AI-powered accounting solutions, CNRG has transformed its financial operations, improving efficiency, accuracy, and strategic decision-making capabilities across its multi-brand retail network.

Overall, the CNRG team enjoys having Vic.ai as an integral part of their automation process: "I would definitely recommend Vic.ai. It's been a significant help with visibility, accuracy of our accounts and cost codes, and has improved our month-end reports and audits," Gustin says. "Plus, support has been great the whole time."

Discover how your AP team can be ultra-efficient with Vic.ai.

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The implementation of approval workflows has improved control and standardization across the CNRG organization, ensuring the right team members approve the right invoices.