



SAP Concur 

SAP Concur Case Study | EXTERNAL

SAP Concur | Devon Air Ambulance

# Devon Air Ambulance Uplifts Invoice Process with SAP Concur



Run Simple

# Quick Facts

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**Company Name**

Devon Air Ambulance

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**Solution**

Concur® Invoice

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**Industry**

Charity

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**Company Size**

90 employees, 450 volunteers

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**Location**

Exeter UK

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**Why SAP Concur & Devon Air Ambulance?**

Facing the rising threat of cybercrime against charities while using a manual paper-based invoice system, Devon Air Ambulance looked to overhaul its processes to deliver more value for its stakeholders and patients.

## ABOUT DEVON AIR AMBULANCE

Devon Air Ambulance is a local charity with ambition. It owns and operates two helicopters and has expanded operations into the hours of darkness, supporting the community of Devon during trauma and medical emergencies. As one of the most well-established air ambulances in the country, it prides itself on professionalism and innovation that ultimately helps save lives.



## A Forward-thinking Charity

It costs £5.5m a year to keep the service flying raised through donations, an in-house lottery, fundraising and 18 charity shops. Spending the funds raised wisely is crucial to its ongoing success. The Charity saw an opportunity to improve effectiveness by **moving away from manual finance processes**, in line with the organisation's overall efficiency goals.

“In an environment where we're seeing more cybercrime targeted at the charity sector, it's important our **controls** are extremely **strong**.”

David Hawes, Finance Director, Devon Air Ambulance

## Triplicate Purchase Order Forms

To increase visibility of goods and services ordered across the Charity, it operated a purchase order (PO) system. But these were handwritten on 'triplicate' forms, which presented a number of challenges. There was a risk of POs being incomplete, incorrect or needing to be physically retrieved. As the process was paper-based, it was time-consuming to ensure the correct authorisations were obtained ahead of purchase and then payment. All this didn't help the finance team get a **clear view of spend**.

“We can instantly pull up an invoice, cross-reference against the PO, check bank details, search historical payments and **reduce the risk of error**.”

David Hawes, Finance Director, Devon Air Ambulance

As Finance Director, David Hawes explains, “Manual triplicate POs and invoices slows the process down. Trying to knit the two together can be arduous and has an increased risk of manual error, so was a driving factor for change.”

### **TACKLING THE THREAT OF CYBER FRAUD**

The rise of online fraud was also proving a real threat: “In an environment where we’re seeing more cybercrime targeted at the charity sector, it’s important our controls are extremely strong and we’re protecting the money our donors give us for the benefit of our patients.”

Invoice phishing in particular is becoming more sophisticated and David describes how they’ve seen invoices that appear to come from people within their own Charity despite increasingly stringent filters. They needed an automated system that could help them enforce standard and consistent controls, **minimising the risk of cyber fraud** and error.

### **CUTTING A PATH TO GREATER EFFICIENCY**

David was tasked with streamlining finance processes and investigating viable alternatives. Moving away from paper POs and invoices that were causing payment delays and risk was the first priority. An automated online system was the natural choice, offering a faster process with checks and balances in place making it easier to validate invoices at any stage.

Concur Invoice was selected on the strength of its offering and the team’s proactive approach. “SAP Concur had everything we needed and there wasn’t an equivalent service at an equivalent price.”

David explains how the invoice process has since turned around: “We can instantly pull up an invoice, cross-reference against the PO, check bank details, search historical payments and reduce the risk of error.”

Once a purchase is requested, a PO is generated to send to the supplier. When the invoice is received, it can easily be checked against the PO to ensure they match up before being seamlessly imported to their finance system on a weekly basis. The team don’t have to duplicate any entries, which significantly reduces errors. They also don’t have to waste time chasing approvers or tracking down details when suppliers call. And because invoices are sent to a central place, fraudulent invoices can be more easily spotted and filtered out.

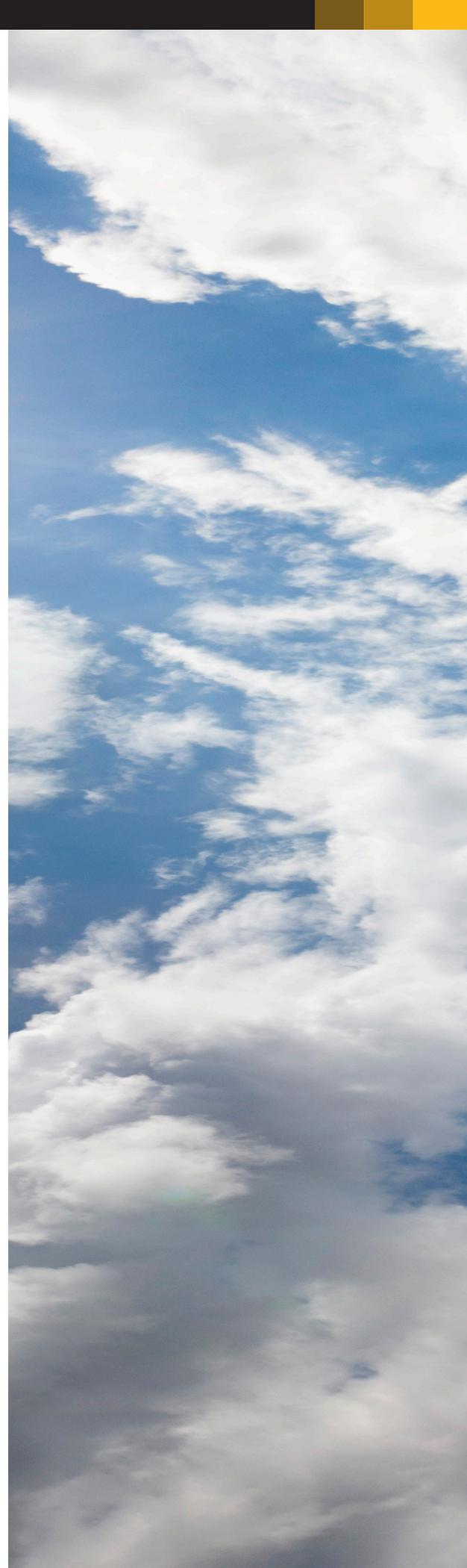
“In reality, significant time is used up responding to ad hoc emails and queries, which is where we’ve seen much of our time savings. By being able to have the invoice quickly to hand and easy to access for approvals, we’re able to run the month end cycle earlier every month with a reduction of errors,” David notes.

### **ONWARDS AND UPWARDS**

Devon Air Ambulance plans to roll out SAP Concur Invoice across the entire Trust so other parts of the Charity can benefit from the success David has seen. “Our administration costs can define how we are perceived as a charity. Ensuring our systems are up to date and we’re **increasingly efficient**, especially in an environment where charities are under pressure to justify costs, is essential, and using Concur is a key part of that.”

## ABOUT SAP CONCUR

SAP Concur imagines the way the world should work, offering cloud-based services that make it simple to manage travel and expenses. By connecting data, applications and people, SAP Concur delivers an effortless experience and total transparency into spending wherever and whenever it happens. SAP Concur services adapt to individual employee preferences and scale to meet the needs of companies from small to large, so they can focus on what matters most.



**CS DEVON AIR AMBULANCE enUK (18/01)**

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