



SUCCESS STORY

# AP automation and purchase order matching drives efficiency for Scandinavian sanitaryware group

– BLS Industries

BLS Industries is an industry leader in sanitary products and one of Scandinavia's largest manufacturers of sanitaryware for bathrooms and kitchens. The group's primary product segments are floor gullies, floor channels, indoor waste systems, stainless steel interiors and stainless steel sanitaryware

The group consists of 14 companies in five countries and uses ExFlow for Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012 to streamline its invoice management.

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## BLS Industries introduced ExFlow for Microsoft Dynamics AX 2012

- More efficient workflow and cost overview
- Invoices matched with purchase orders at line level
- ExFlow – the natural AP automation choice for Microsoft Dynamics AX

*- “ ExFlow is without question the best AP automation solution for Dynamics AX users because it’s fully built in to the ERP system. There are several key advantages to using an integrated system. From a security perspective, you don’t want anyone extracting data from your ERP system, changing it and then uploading it again. ”*

**Fredrik Holmberg**  
IT Manager, BLS Industries

## Background

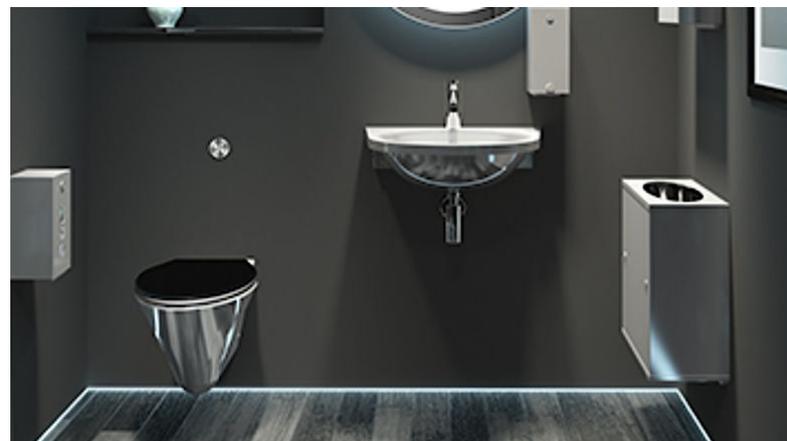
BLS Industries owns a number of leading sanitary brands including JAFÖ, Purus, Unidrain and Trio Perfekta. The group operates primarily in Sweden, Denmark, Finland, Norway and the UK. It also has a presence in other countries and is currently expanding into new markets outside Scandinavia.

The group serves its four brands and their companies from a central logistics depot in Ystad that processes around 10,000 order rows and dispatches 600,000 items each month – always with high delivery accuracy. The depot stocks more than 3,000 products for same- or next-day delivery to Sweden and internationally.

Invoice management at BLS Industries used to be a time-consuming, manual process resulting in poor control, late-payment notices and many hours wasted looking for pieces of paper. The basic process would involve an invoice arriving at the company office in Lund and being forwarded to Ystad for registration before being sent back to Lund for authorisation.

Suppliers sometimes send invoices to the wrong company. ExFlow detects such errors immediately, re-directing the invoice to the right source and enabling one-click authorisation.

“ExFlow has not only streamlined our workflow but also given us an oversight that we lacked before. Today we have one person in our central organisation who spends one hour per day processing 18,000 invoices per year for 12 companies. The same person used to administer one company manually full-time. The numbers speak for themselves.”



## ExFlow and Microsoft Dynamics AX

Fredrik has extensive experience of Microsoft Dynamics AX. Before becoming IT Manager at BLS Industries he spent 15 years as an AX consultant.

During the procurement process, other systems were carefully considered. The chief financial officer even asked for a competitor solution used at one of his past employers. But when Fredrik put forward his arguments, the choice was obvious.

“ExFlow is without question the best EFH solution if you work in Dynamics AX,” Fredrik says. “It’s built in to the ERP system. There are several key advantages to using an integrated system.

From a security perspective alone, you don't want anyone extracting data from your ERP system, changing it and then uploading it again."

An embedded system also avoids time-dependent updates, which create uncertainty over the accuracy of the figures shown in the system. For a company of BLS Industries' size, major discrepancies can arise depending on whether data is shown in real-time in, as in ExFlow, or synchronised with a delay.

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## Smooth implementation

Implementation of ExFlow began with the group's "toughest" company – the one with the most transactions and highest payments flow. The process, initially scheduled to take three months, involved adding suppliers one by one to ensure that everything worked as it should. The initial plan was to activate 1-2 companies per month, but the process went so smoothly that 12 companies – including two apiece from Denmark and Norway and one from Finland – were up and running after 10 weeks.

## The next step

Automated approval is something we will be activating more and more. If the goods received correspond to the invoice there is no need for manual processing. Such possibilities also give rise to further benefits, allowing accounts staff to dispense with old procedures and focus instead on new ways to be more efficient.

*- "Now they come to me to ask why we can't automate more or activate this or that supplier," smiles Fredrik."*

## Automatic purchase order matching

BLS Industries is a manufacturer that sources more than 13,000 items from different suppliers. Manually trying to check each invoice against a purchase order is extremely ineffective and easily gives rise to errors.

ExFlow takes information directly from the company's AX database, enabling the system to automatically match invoices with purchase orders all the way to line level. In the past, an invoice from a large supplier could often require an hour or two of detective work.

Optimising purchase order matching at line level is now one of BLS Industries' top-priority areas as the company seeks to further automate its purchase order and invoice management.

## Unexpected gains

Accounts payable automation saves a purchaser 1-2 hours a week on administration. In the past you would print out invoices, attach delivery notes and purchase orders and then put them in a binder. Now you do it all digitally. If a buyer needs to go back and check something, they can access the data from other parts of the system with a couple of clicks instead of having to sift through binders.

It is easy to focus on accounts personnel when discussing the system's merits. But as BLS Industries has found, life also gets much easier for people in other positions.

For instance, everyone can find the information they need without going through the accounts payable department, as the full invoice picture is available from a range of different Dynamics AX modules such as purchase, fixed assets and projects.



# SignUp Software

SignUp Software is a rapidly growing IT company with extensive experience in the field of electronic invoice and contract management.

We specialise in the development and marketing of applications to enhance corporate profitability by streamlining management of supplier invoices and contracts. Our core business is accounts payable automation solutions developed exclusively for Microsoft Dynamics ERP Solutions AX, NAV and 365 for Operations.

ExFlow is suitable for both local and global organisations and are sold via resellers in more than 16 countries.

Our solutions currently manage more than 20 million invoices annually. The company was founded in 1999 and currently employs over 40 staff.

The head office is located in Stockholm, Sweden. Regional offices in Australia, Denmark and Norway.