

Talk about sprawling enterprises. As a franchisee of YUM Brands to the tune of about 200 locations, Northwest Restaurants, Inc. connects hungry folks with fan favorites like KFC, Taco Bell, and A&W – throughout Oregon, Washington, Utah, Idaho, and the Carolinas. Which led to a heck of an AP problem before things got streamlined.

“Our big frustration was the length of time it took us to process our invoices in six states across central offices based in Washington and North Carolina,” explained Ms. Finlon.

Friction reigned supreme between the district managers in the field – some 50 of them – and these central offices, as every invoice required approval before payment. If the stacks of paperwork shuffled a bit too much, or snail mail acted like, well, snail mail, by the time an invoice was approved and paid, the bill might already be in arrears.

The bureaucracy of interstate business further complicated this AP mission. Navigating different accounting and sales tax rules across states, combined with a lack of speed and traceability, simply didn’t work in an analog world. Which is why, when Ms. Finlon was tapped to lead the transition to AP automation services, she was more than excited.



**“We held it together with paper clips and bobby pins. We’d be behind on paying bills, not because we didn’t have the money, but because our AP system was analog,”**

– Carrie Finlon, Executive Director, Northwest Restaurants.

“My goodness the paper,” lamented Ms. Finlon. “When it came time to purge paid invoices we’d have to add file cabinets, then more file cabinets. And we had just tons of warehoused bank boxes of paper.”

Ms. Finlon and Kelley Connect joined forces after a fortuitous meeting at a franchisee convention, helped by a Kelley Connect location near Northwest Restaurants’ Woodinville central office. The solution to this AP headache? DocuWare.

“It’s literally night and day. We could not function. We were paralyzed. Kelley Connect set us up with DocuWare, and now as long as anyone in the field has their computer and internet access, they can instantly, in about 30 seconds, assess an invoice, approve, press confirm, and it’s on its way,” said Ms. Finlon.”

That’s what we love to do: Learn the nature of our partners’ business, then allow it to drive the solution. Which typically comes with some extra icing on the cake – peace of mind, and a little bit of joy.

“I’m most proud of the amount of people it positively affected, in this case at least 50 people in the field, plus our central offices. No more night and day UPS store trips to ship docs, it’s all done digitally, which means money savings. I highly recommend automated AP,” concludes Ms. Finlon.

[Learn more](#) about how Kelley Connect can support your AP automation solutions.