The Check Is in the Mail

American Shipper’s Transportation Invoice Processing & Payment Study

Benchmark Report: 2010

Written By:
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Publisher,
American Shipper

Sponsored by:
Executive Summary

American Shipper, in partnership with the National Industrial Transportation League, the Retail Industry Leaders Association, and the Transportation Intermediaries Association, has successfully benchmarked more than 250 payers and payees on their transportation invoice processing and payment practices and systems. In the context of this study payers are shippers and intermediaries who pay for transportation services. Payees (also known as billers) are carriers or intermediaries who collect money for their services. The 40-question survey covers all modes of international and domestic freight transportation.

The common theme in American Shipper’s benchmarking reports is the notion of “winners” and the best practices that make them successful. In the case of invoice processing and payment we are sorry to report that there are no clear winners in freight transportation. Rather American Shipper gives the transportation industry—all modes, international and domestic—an incomplete.

Extensive review of the data distilled in the following study shows that both payers and payees are using strategies to cope — or get by — rather than succeed. But in their defense, the environment in which these companies operate is not set up to allow companies to succeed individually.

The gap between domestic and international

This study set out to measure the gap between domestic and international payment practices. That gap was clearly there but it was not quite the chasm that was initially hypothesized. The domestic market is more automated but not by much.

Further it is remarkable that both segments struggle to streamline the dispute resolution function. Knowing that many invoices are disputed there is no wonder the back end of the process—approval and payment—end up in the hands of people making phone calls, sending e-mails, and eventually signing and mailing checks. A cycle that started in an electronic environment has derailed into a manual exercise.
The check is in the mail ... literally

*American Shipper* calculates that an astonishing 65 percent of transportation payments in terms of dollars transacted are paid with a hard-copy check. This accounts for 69 percent of transactions representing hundreds of billions of dollars trading hands each day, and the majority of it is happening with checks delivered in the mail. This is business the “old-fashioned way.”

Auditing

Payees and payers demonstrate a large commitment to auditing invoices prior to issuing or paying the bill, and after receiving or making the payment. By their own account 47 percent of payers, and 45 percent of payees, audit invoices both before and after the transaction.

Payees and payers agree invoices and payments are accurate 90 percent of the time. Bear in mind this includes domestic transportation payments that tend to be more straightforward than ocean bills with surcharges and accessorial charges. Certainly accuracy will suffer in a more complex market.
Table of Contents

Section I: Introduction .................................................................................................................................................. 3
  > Terminology ....................................................................................................................................................... 3
  > And the winners are ........................................................................................................................................... 3
  > Hypothesis ......................................................................................................................................................... 5

Section II: Demographics ......................................................................................................................................... 5

Section III: Satisfaction Levels .................................................................................................................................. 9
  > Payers ................................................................................................................................................................. 9
  > Payees ............................................................................................................................................................... 10

Section IV: Manual/Automated/Outsourced ............................................................................................................. 10
  > Payers—Domestic .............................................................................................................................................. 11
  > Payers—International ....................................................................................................................................... 12
  > Payees ............................................................................................................................................................... 13
  > Dispute Resolution ........................................................................................................................................... 14
  > Manufacturers .................................................................................................................................................. 15
  > Company Size vs. Automation .......................................................................................................................... 16

Section V: Productivity .............................................................................................................................................. 17

Section VI: Processing and Payment Practices ..................................................................................................... 18
  > Payment Terms ................................................................................................................................................ 18
  > Regional vs. Centralized ................................................................................................................................. 20
  > GL Coding ....................................................................................................................................................... 21
  > Payment with Hard-Copy Check ...................................................................................................................... 22
  > Account Reconciliation vs. Payment Speed ...................................................................................................... 23
  > Delinquencies .................................................................................................................................................. 24
  > Auditing ........................................................................................................................................................... 25

Section VII: Plans to Buy/Upgrade Systems .......................................................................................................... 26
  > Budgets & Timeframe ...................................................................................................................................... 26
  > Drivers & Inhibitors ......................................................................................................................................... 27
  > Delivery Model ............................................................................................................................................... 28

Section VIII: About our Sponsors .......................................................................................................................... 29
  > Descartes ......................................................................................................................................................... 29
  > INTTRA ............................................................................................................................................................ 29
  > U.S. Bank ........................................................................................................................................................ 29

Section IX: About our Partners .................................................................................................................................. 30
  > The National Industrial Transportation League ................................................................................................. 30
  > Retail Industry Leaders Association (RILA) .................................................................................................. 30
  > Transportation Intermediaries Association .................................................................................................... 31
Figures

**FIGURE 1:** Industry Segments Represented .................................................................................................................. 8

**FIGURE 2:** Intermediaries—Divided by Job Role ............................................................................................................. 9

**FIGURE 3:** Company Sizes Represented ......................................................................................................................... 9

**FIGURE 4:** Modes managed .................................................................................................................................................. 10

**FIGURE 5:** Payers—IT Spend as a Percentage of Revenue ............................................................................................... 11

**FIGURE 6:** Payers—Job titles represented .......................................................................................................................... 11

**FIGURE 7:** Payers—Satisfaction with Process, Practice, System ......................................................................................... 12

**FIGURE 8:** Payees—Satisfaction with Process, Practice, System ......................................................................................... 13

**FIGURE 9:** Payers—Payments for Domestic Transportation Services .................................................................................. 14

**FIGURE 10:** Payers—Payments for International Transportation Services ........................................................................ 15

**FIGURE 11:** Payees—Domestic & International Service Operators .................................................................................... 16

**FIGURE 12:** Current Delivery Model ................................................................................................................................... 18

**FIGURE 13:** Future Delivery Model .................................................................................................................................... 18

**FIGURE 14:** Payers—Company Size Dictates Automated/Outsourced or Manual Model ................................................. 19

**FIGURE 15:** Payers—Invoices Processed Per FTE, Per Year ............................................................................................. 20

**FIGURE 16:** Payers—Timeframe to Pay (days from invoice date) .................................................................................... 21

**FIGURE 17:** Payees—Payment Timeframe (days from invoice date) ................................................................................. 22

**FIGURE 18:** Payers—Central vs Regional Payment ............................................................................................................. 23

**FIGURE 19:** Payers—General Ledger Coding ....................................................................................................................... 24

**FIGURE 20:** Invoices Paid With Hard Copy Checks ........................................................................................................... 25

**FIGURE 21:** Payees—Timeframe to Reconcile Accounts .................................................................................................... 26

**FIGURE 22:** What best describes your company’s transportation invoice audit process? ............................................. 28

**FIGURE 23:** Payers—Plans to Buy/Replace System .............................................................................................................. 29

**FIGURE 24:** Payers—Drivers to Systems Adoption ............................................................................................................ 30

**FIGURE 25:** Payers—Delivery Model Planned For Future System ....................................................................................... 31
**Section I: Introduction**

*American Shipper*, in partnership with the National Industrial Transportation League the Retail Industry Leaders Association, and the Transportation Intermediaries Association, has successfully benchmarked more than 250 payers and payees on their transportation invoice processing and payment practices and systems. The 40-question survey covers all modes of international and domestic freight transportation.

This is the third and final report in a series designed to explore the life cycle of freight transportation spend in three segments—procurement, execution (ITMS) and settlement. Each report separates successful firms—or “winners”—from the average in an attempt to highlight best practices. All reports are made available for download at www.AmericanShipper.com.

**Terminology**

In the context of this study payers are shippers and intermediaries who pay for transportation services. Payees (also known as billers) are carriers or intermediaries who collect money for their services.

Many of the data points illustrated within these pages break down the differences between companies that “automate” international transportation management versus those that manually handle this process. In this context “automated” companies employ at least one application to support their transportation invoice processing and payment function. “Automated” does not mean human interaction has been entirely eliminated. Likewise, “manual” does not mean these firms do not use e-mail, faxes and other technologies. There is an assumption that basic computing power is ubiquitous in the logistics management field.

**And the Winners Are ...**

The common theme in *American Shipper*’s benchmarking reports is the notion of “winners” and the best practices that make them successful. Previous studies demonstrated how winners procure transportation services centrally, measure service levels as well as price, and leverage technology to buy effectively. To use an academia analogy the winners are our “A+” students; they are on the dean’s list.
In the case of processing and payment we are sorry to report that there are no clear winners in freight transportation. Rather *American Shipper* gives the transportation industry—all modes, international and domestic—an incomplete.

Extensive review of the data distilled in the following study shows that both payers and payees are using strategies to cope—or get by—rather than succeed. But in their defense, the environment in which these companies operate is not set up to allow companies to succeed individually.

Payment is a group exercise in many respects. Group, or community-based, exercises require standards, governance and central leadership. This is all clearly lacking in the transportation industry on the whole as evidenced by the hundreds of billions of dollars that trade hands the old fashioned way—paper checks printed, signed, sealed in envelopes, stamped and mailed.

In 2010 there is a clear opportunity for an entity, or a small number of them, to step in and right this ship. And there is quite a profit to be made by doing so.

By all accounts the air freight industry is far ahead of other modes due in large part to the immediacy of the need for payment (air freight arrives in hours, not weeks) and the relative strength of its global governing body.

Containerized ocean freight lags far behind for exactly the same reasons air freight is successful. Timeframes in which services are delivered are long and in many cases getting longer. There is no governing body. However all is not lost for containerization as many firms have set their sights on this market’s inefficiencies using the various industry portals and contract management hubs as a substitute for a central body.

Let us be clear that an incomplete is not the same as a failing grade. Rather it is a wake-up call that should send the industry back to the library to do more homework. Hopefully this study’s findings will help to draw a path toward successful invoice and payments management in the future.
HYPOTHESIS

*American Shipper* approached this benchmarking exercise with a set of assumptions to prove or disprove. These include:

- The domestic transportation invoice processing and payment market would be far more advanced and automated than their international brethren. International transactions are more complex, which makes them more difficult to automate.
- Payments with hard-copy checks would account for a considerable portion of payments made for transportation services both international and domestic.
- The market for processing and payment systems would be very active with a considerable percentage of payers budgeted and planning to buy or upgrade. The buzz around payment automation has picked up recently, which is generally an indication of activity in the market.

Section II: Demographics

Study respondents represent all segments of the logistics industry including manufacturers, retailers, intermediaries and carriers. Manufacturers, retailers and other shippers were classified as payers; carriers were classified as payees.

FIGURE 1: Industry Segments Represented
Intermediaries were asked to select either the payer or payee survey based on their job role. The net result was roughly 160 payers and 70 payees participating in this exercise.

Company size measured in terms of annual sales divides the response base into nearly perfect thirds. Transportation intermediaries are heavily represented in the small company segments. Manufacturers and retailers are more likely to be large companies.
Both payers and payees were charged with managing a variety of modes on a domestic and international basis. Truckload and full containerload (FCL) were highest ranked as would be expected from an *American Shipper* study; small package and less-than-truckload scored surprisingly high.
Payers participating in this study tend to spend an average amount of revenue on information technology overall. Nearly half of study respondents spend 1 percent to 2 percent of revenue on IT and a quarter of respondents spend 3 percent to 5 percent.

Job titles run the gamut of the logistics enterprise. VP level and above responses account for 27 percent of the survey. Directors and managers account for another 64 percent.
Section III: Satisfaction Levels

Each American Shipper benchmarking exercise asks respondents to effectively grade themselves on the state of their business processes, practices and systems. Without fail it is remarkable how highly respondents think of themselves. We use this question as a control that allows us to gauge the level to which the responses throughout the survey will be skewed to the positive or negative.

In this study our respondents are bullish on the invoice process and payment abilities, and that should be kept in mind when reviewing the subsequent data points.

PAYERS

On the whole payers are satisfied with their invoice process and payment practices, processes and systems. Segmenting these responses by industry—retail, manufacturing and 3PL-intermediary—shows 3PLs are more likely to be content than any other group. Manufacturers on the other hand are less convinced in their abilities.

FIGURE 7: Payers—Satisfaction with Process, Practice, System

![Graph showing satisfaction levels for payers by industry]

157 total respondents
PAYEES

Similar to payers, payees demonstrate a relatively high satisfaction level with their invoice process and payment practices, processes and systems.

FIGURE 8: Payees—Satisfaction with Process, Practice, System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Carrier</th>
<th>3PL/Intermediary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fair</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Very poor</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

67 total respondents

Section IV: Manual/Automated/Outsourced

From the outset of this study American Shipper attempted to gauge the level of automation and outsourced services prevalent in the various functions of invoice processing and payment. Payers and payees were asked to categorize each segment of the process as manual, automated or outsourced.
PAYERS—DOMESTIC

Going into this project American Shipper expected automation would be far more prevalent in the domestic market than international. These findings support the hypothesis but not to the extent that was expected. It is remarkable that 30 percent of invoices are received manually and only slightly fewer payments are made manually.

FIGURE 9: Payers—Payments for Domestic Transportation Services

157 total respondents
“We have managed to automate some of our international payables process but still have a high incidence of manual intervention and exception management related to these payables. In most respects the amount of additional process revolves around the nature of the business and the likelihood that additional fees or unallocated expenses will be included in an invoice transmission, which subsequently, gets kicked out for audit.”

—David Fisher, director global logistics
Johns Manville

PAYERS—INTERNATIONAL

Payers report their international processes to be noticeably more manual-based than domestic transportation payments. Core functions such as invoice receipt, validation and approval are handled manually by more than half of respondents.

FIGURE 10: Payers—Payments for International Transportation Services

145 total respondents
PAYEES

Payees employ more automation than payers on the front end of their invoice processing and collections function, but it becomes more manual based as the cycle progresses. More than 60 percent of payees say receiving payments is a manual process, which supports other findings in this study. It is notable that payees employ very few outsourced services related to processing and payment. Payers are clearly more amenable to outsourcing opportunities.

FIGURE 11: Payees—Domestic & International Service Operators

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Process</th>
<th>Outsourced</th>
<th>Electronic/Automated</th>
<th>Manual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Invoice Generation</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>85%</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Invoice Presentation/Delivery</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dispute Resolution</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Receipt of Payment</td>
<td>2%</td>
<td>35%</td>
<td>63%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Audit</td>
<td>7%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>61%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

62 total respondents
It is interesting to see that in all three previous charts the dispute resolution function is predominantly manual-based. Domestic transportation invoice disputes—the best case—are still handled in a manual manner by more than 60 percent of respondents. Moreover, it appears in each case the dispute resolution function is where efficiencies are lost.

Based on anecdotal evidence, payees are notoriously bad at issuing correct bills. When shippers dispute those bills, suddenly those smooth, electronic-based transactions become phone calls, e-mails and faxes managed by people. There appears to be an opportunity for technology providers to enable dispute resolution in an electronic environment that would preserve the continuity of this cycle and in the process shake out some of the costs.

“The dispute resolution process will always require some degree of manual intervention as it is not practical to fully automate all possible types of disputes. However, there are best practices for automating dispute resolution—for example, via web portals—where payees can provide visibility and attach supporting documentation for charges. Payers can approve or dispute those charges without endless telephone calls, emails and faxes between the parties.”

—Bob Bowser, director SCM practice, Cognizant Technology Solutions
MANUFACTURERS
Respondents from the manufacturing industry are considerably less likely than the study average to manage invoice processing and payment on a manual basis. More than one-third categorized their model as a mix or hybrid of systems and outsourcing. Another third said they outsource this process to a third party other than their 3PL. Manufacturers are almost three times more likely than average to leverage an outsourcing option for this process.

Looking to the future manufacturers will make a noticeable shift to an outsourced or systems-based strategy. More than half will choose outsourcing to a 3PL or other provider in the future. Another 35 percent will use an application or an enterprise resource planning (ERP)-based system. No manufacturers with a plan to buy or upgrade will keep the hybrid approach that is currently so popular.

“\[The continued growth of the third party logistics (3PL) industry is indicative of the industry’s commitment to excellence, professionalism, technology, and people. 3PLs are the industry’s experts in logistics and turning transportation into a value added proposition.\]”
—Robert A. Voltmann, President & CEO Transportation Intermediaries Association
**COMPANY SIZE VS. AUTOMATION**

In simple terms much of this study demonstrates that small companies (less than $100 million in annual sales) have fewer transportation invoices to manage and therefore do not automate this process. On the other hand, large companies (more than $1 billion in annual sales) have many times the number of invoices and automate some or all of the processing to make the task manageable.

The disparity in the level of automation is very clear. More than half of the manual-based firms are small and conversely more than half of the automated firms are large. This demonstrates that the usage of systems and outsourced solutions is more of a means to cope with the deluge of paperwork than it is an attempt to excel at this function.

> “Another challenge for electronic dispute resolution is that, not only are the payees poor at invoicing, the payers are also very challenged to understand exactly what services they have consumed and, therefore, what they owe the payees.”

—Bob Bowser, director SCM practice, Cognizant Technology Solutions

**FiguRe 14: PayeRs—Company Size Dictates Automated/Outsourced or Manual Model**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Company Size</th>
<th>Automated/Outsourced</th>
<th>Outsourced</th>
<th>Manual</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Less than $100 million</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>57%</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$100 million to $1 billion</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>29%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Greater than $1 billion</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>59%</td>
<td>21%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

154 total respondents
Section V: Productivity

The survey asked payers to provide the number of transportation invoices processed and paid per year and the number of full-time equivalent (FTE) employees that are assigned to manage them. The combination of these figures creates a productivity ratio that demonstrates the level of productivity organizations in different market segments can achieve.

It is important to recognize that companies cannot achieve a 30-fold or more increase in productivity simply by adding a system to manage the function. Remember, small companies have fewer invoices to manage and tend to be manual-based. Large companies have significantly more invoices and tend to electronically manage this function. Again this demonstrates that technology is a means of managing the situation; not strategy to outperform peers.
“One of the most significant benefits we realized upon automation of our payables process was the ability to split our terms between carriers and the 3rd party payables company we use. Our payables provider pays our carriers within 10 days of receipt of a clean invoice, and we pay the 3rd party per our standard terms from their summary date. Our DPO is stable and our carriers are satisfied. This translates into several competitive advantages for us in the market especially during periods of capacity constraint.”

— David Fisher, director global logistics, Johns Manville

Section VI: Processing and Payment Practices

Payment Terms

With respect to payment terms it is remarkable how aligned the payer’s estimates of its average days payment outstanding (DPO) is with the payee’s estimate of its days sale outstanding (DSO). On the average transportation bills are paid 30 to 45 days from invoice date.

Figure 16: Payers—Timeframe to Pay (days from invoice date)
What is more interesting here is the discrepancy among payers. When comparing the retail segment against the manufacturing segment it is clear that retailers are moving payments faster whereas manufacturers are stretching them longer. Retailers may be moving payments faster to facilitate hands-on management of ever-extending supply chains. Manufacturers on the other hand will stretch terms to match other payable cycles.

**FIGURE 17: Payees—Payment Timeframe (days from invoice date)**

![Bar chart showing payment timeframes for different payees.](chart.png)

- **Carrier**
- **Intermediary**

- **less than 15 days**: 14% (Carrier), 0% (Intermediary)
- **15 - 30 days**: 48% (Carrier), 53% (Intermediary)
- **30 - 60 days**: 34% (Carrier), 42% (Intermediary)
- **60 - 90 days**: 3% (Carrier), 5% (Intermediary)

67 total respondents
REGIONAL VS. CENTRALIZED

Payment is overwhelmingly a centrally managed activity for shippers and intermediaries. More than 80 percent of study respondents report they pay centrally including 90 percent of retailers. It is notable that central paying is more prevalent than centralized buy patterns examined in American Shipper’s Transportation Procurement Benchmark Study published in June 2009. Seventy-three percent of buyers reported buying centrally and the remainder managed the activity on a regional basis.

FIGURE 18: Payers—Central vs Regional Payment

156 total respondents
**GL Coding**

General ledger (GL) coding practices allow payers to allocate transportation costs to products, programs or activities. Obviously this is a key to understanding the true cost involved in a business and is a fundamental piece of total landed cost calculations.

**Figure 19: Payers—General Ledger Coding**

Eight-five percent of payers reported to subscribe to this practice. Firms that automate the processing and payment function are 20 percent more likely to use GL codes.
PAYMENT WITH HARD-COPY CHECK

Payers were asked to estimate the percentage of invoices (related to all modes of domestic and international transportation) paid with hard-copy checks. Responses ran the gamut with some reporting as little as 10 percent or less, but most were well over one-half.

American Shipper calculates an astonishing 65 percent of transportation payments in terms of dollars transacted are paid by check. Sixty-nine percent of total transactions are paid with a check. This is both a shocking headline and a huge opportunity for someone.
In a report published in *American Shipper* (“Insomnia,” July 2008 *American Shipper*, pages 68-85) MergeGlobal Inc. estimated the global container shipping industry brought in $205 billion per year in revenue. Clearly the precipitous drop-off in volumes and rates that occurred over the course of 2009 diminished the figure, but the point remains, there are billions—potentially hundreds of billions—of dollars trading hands each day and most of it is happening with checks delivered in the mail; the “old-fashioned way.”

**ACCOUNT RECONCILIATION VS. PAYMENT SPEED**

Most payees claim they reconcile accounts to reflect payments received within two days of receipt. To be clear, any period that can not be measured in hours is too long. Only 43 percent of payees report they reconcile overnight; another 38 percent take up to two days. Along the same lines payers report an average of 2.6 days time is required to process approved payments.

> “With 65 percent of transportation payments taking place in hard copy presumably delivered by mail this is a clear cut area where automation can cut costs and improve efficiency.”

—Casey Chroust, executive vice president retail operations, Retail Industry Leaders Association

**FIGURE 21: Payees—Timeframe to Reconcile Accounts**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeframe</th>
<th>Carrier</th>
<th>Intermediary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Overnight</td>
<td>14%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>One to two days</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>53%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Three to five days</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>More than a week</td>
<td>3%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

58 total respondents
In this economic environment all businesses have been forced to tighten credit policies. If a payer takes three days to get a payment made and it takes the payee an additional three to five days to recognize it, more than a week may be lost where shipments may not move pending the change in account status.

If these payments were to be sent and received electronically, days—or even weeks—can be cut out of the process. But this is not a problem one party can solve. Payment is at least a two-way street and most times it’s far more complex than that. This is a community issue.

**DELINQUENCIES**

Roughly half of payees report that less than 10 percent of their invoices go beyond payment terms or become delinquent. That includes closer to 70 percent of carriers polled while intermediaries seem to have a harder time with delinquent invoices.

This really comes down to leverage. Compared to intermediaries, there are a lot fewer carriers to ship with making the relationship with the carriers more important. After all, a carrier can refuse to move cargo if its bills are not paid up. Thus the carrier is in the driver’s seat most times.

Intermediaries inherently have less power to collect because they do not directly control the transport conveyance and are generally looking to sell more services to that customer. The shipper has more control.
AUDITING

Payees and payers demonstrate a large commitment to auditing invoices prior to issuing or paying the bill and after receiving or making the payment. By their own account, 47 percent of payers and 45 percent of payees audit invoices both before and after the transaction. Carrier invoices are famously inaccurate so it is encouraging to see this type of commitment to getting it right. However, this does raise questions as to the effectiveness of pre-invoicing auditing.

FIGURE 22: What best describes your company’s transportation invoice audit process?

When asked to define how many invoices are reviewed as a percentage of the whole responses varied widely among payers and payees. Some reviewed as little as 10 percent while others report auditing all invoices. This boils down to an issue of automating the audit process. Simply put firms that employ a system can review all of their invoices whereas companies that manually manage auditing can check only a sampling.

On the whole payees (87 percent) and payers (71 percent) agree that invoices and payments are accurate 90 percent of the time. Bear in mind this includes domestic transportation payments that tend to be more straightforward than ocean bills with surcharges and accessorial charges. Certainly accuracy will suffer in a more complex market.
Section VII: Plans to Buy/Upgrade Systems

BUDGETS & TIMEFRAME

Survey results show the market for invoice processing and payment systems is heating up. Buyers with budget to spend in the next 12 to 24 months tend to be retailers (46 percent) that are in the market to replace manual processes and legacy applications. It is noteworthy that small companies polled show little interest in adopting a systems-based approach in the future.

FIGURE 23: Payers—Plans to Buy/Replace System

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Large (ex 3PL)</th>
<th>Medium (ex 3PL)</th>
<th>Small (ex 3PL)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No plans to buy or replace</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>71%</td>
<td>81%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeted within the next 12 months</td>
<td>30%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Budgeted within the next 12 – 24 months</td>
<td>5%</td>
<td>6%</td>
<td>5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>On our company’s 5-year plan</td>
<td>11%</td>
<td>16%</td>
<td>10%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

139 total respondents
“The enhancements to our custody and control processes are justification enough for the conversion to our current automated process. The efficiency of the process, the visibility to the discreet data, and reduction of total FTE staff required to support the process have created significant benefit.”

— David Fisher, director global logistics, 
Johns Manville

**DRIVERS & INHIBITORS**

Payers looking to buy or upgrade their payment system have honed in on two of the key benefits of automation—increased cash flow and visibility to costs. However, as is generally the case in the supply chain business, efficiency always comes out as the top objective.

![Figure 24: Payers—Drivers to Systems Adoption](image_url)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Retailer</th>
<th>Manufacturer</th>
<th>3PL/Intermediary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Other, please specify</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>9%</td>
<td>20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bring systems in line with industry standards</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration, internal</td>
<td>40%</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Expand my offerings/Increase operational scale/capacity</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>18%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Integration, with vendors and partners</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cash flow benefits</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>55%</td>
<td>27%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cost savings</td>
<td>65%</td>
<td>73%</td>
<td>73%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Visibility to costs</td>
<td>75%</td>
<td>91%</td>
<td>80%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Improve operational efficiency</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

43 total respondents
Study participants who are not in the market tend to believe what they have is good enough. Fifty-two percent report that their current system or process meets their needs. A further 17 percent have recently upgraded or replaced their system.

**DELIVERY MODEL**

Companies who are looking to buy will be split into two camps generally along the lines of their current level of automation and as a result company size. More than 40 percent of automated payers will implement an application or ERP-based model in the future, 25 percent will outsource the process, and 17 percent will use a hybrid or mixed model. More than half of the companies manually managing payment will look to outsource this function in the future.

**FIGURE 25: Payers—Delivery Model Planned For Future System**

“The Study provides valuable insights into the efficiencies and effectiveness that electronic payment tools can provide for the payer and payee. As applied modally and industry sectors, this analysis shows where these innovations have succeeded and where they still need to be advanced.”

— Peter J. Gatti, Executive Vice President
The National Industrial Transportation League
Section VIII: About our Sponsors

Descartes is making the world a better place by enabling global organizations with logistics-intensive businesses to save money by improving the productivity and performance of their operations. Underlying Descartes’ offerings is the Descartes Global Logistics Network (GLN), one of the world’s most extensive multi-modal business applications network. Descartes’ logistics management solutions provide messaging services between logistics trading partners, shipment management services to help manage third party carriers, global customs filing and compliance services to meet regulatory requirements and private fleet management services for organizations of all sizes. For more information, visit www.descartes.com.

INTTRA is the leading e-commerce network for the ocean shipping industry, helping shippers and ocean carriers around the world increase efficiencies and control costs. With over 50,000 active links between shippers and carriers, users in 105 countries, more than 30 ocean carriers worldwide and 44 software alliances connected to the INTTRA Network, we provide the global reach and tools needed in today’s marketplace.

To learn more about joining the Network and the products and services available to support your business please visit www.inttra.com/opportunity and schedule a free consultation with an INTTRA e-commerce expert.

U.S. Bank, a leader in corporate payments, is the world’s leading freight payment provider. U.S. Bank offers comprehensive global invoice processing and payment through Syncada by Visa (formerly PowerTrack), a business-to-business payment network. Integrated supply chain finance allows carriers to get paid sooner, while shippers pay later. Robust pre-pay audits on 100% of invoices ensure accuracy. On-line, real-time, collaborative exception resolution further reduces cost and waste. The resulting data provides unmatched visibility to cost and performance to optimize your supply chain and manage your business. Improve cash flow, eliminate paper invoices and checks, and streamline your process today, www.usbpayment.com.
Section IX: About our Partners

The National Industrial Transportation League (NITL) is an association of companies that conduct industrial and/or commercial shipping throughout the United States and internationally. Founded in 1907, the organization is one of the oldest and largest associations in the country representing some 600 member companies involved with the transport of all kinds of freight in domestic and international commerce. The League has a proud tradition of being the “Voice of the Shipper.” Recognizing the changes brought about by deregulation and the growth of the global economy, in 2002 the membership adopted Vision 2020, a sweeping proposal to change the structure of the League. Now all companies involved in freight transportation are eligible for full, voting membership in the League. The roles of carriers, shippers and intermediaries are increasingly blurred and intertwined, so the League membership has been expanded to allow for more cooperative efforts. Through the promotion of a safe, competitive and efficient freight transportation industry, the needs of shippers, and the entire economy, are best met. The National Industrial Transportation League is now “The Voice of the Freight Transportation Industry.”

RILA is the trade association of the world’s largest and most innovative retail companies. RILA members include more than 200 retailers, product manufacturers, and service suppliers, which together account for more than $1.5 trillion in annual sales, millions of American jobs and operate more than 100,000 stores, manufacturing facilities and distribution centers domestically and abroad. For additional information visit www.rila.org
About our Partners—Continued

TRANSPORTATION INTERMEDIARIES ASSOCIATION

The Transportation Intermediaries Association (TIA) is the professional organization of the $164 billion third party logistics industry. TIA is the only organization exclusively representing transportation intermediaries of all disciplines, doing business in domestic and international commerce. TIA is the voice of transportation intermediaries to shippers, carriers, government officials, and international organizations. TIA is the United States member of the International Federation of Freight Forwarder Associations, FIATA.

TIA conducts an annual convention and trade show; an annual marketing conference with leading shippers and carriers; and provides education, research and services to help its members succeed.

American Shipper would like to thank TIA for assisting with this project by distributing the benchmark survey among its membership base.