

Dropbox Automates Manual Work and Gains Visibility into Operations



Dropbox is one of the world's largest cloud-based file storage services, with more than 700 million registered users across 180 countries. Dropbox's mission is to design a more enlightened way of working by providing one place to keep life organized and keep work moving.

With operations on a truly global scale, Dropbox's legal team manages hundreds of matters and processes thousands of legal invoices each year. Dropbox deals with this challenging workload by continuously looking for ways to improve efficiency and save time for its busy team.



Cloud-based file storage service with more than 700 million users across the globe.

Employees: 2,500+

Headquarters: San Francisco

Founded: 2007

Legacy System Struggled to Deliver Efficiency

The Dropbox legal team implemented a legal spend management system early in their company history to help manage their large legal operations. As the company grew in scale, it became clear that this legacy system could not deliver the efficiencies needed to keep up with the team's ever-increasing number of matters, vendors, and invoices across the globe.

Amy Drury, senior Intellectual Property (IP) paralegal with responsibility for legal spend management, explains the difficulties of using the legacy system:

*'We regularly had invoices rejected by Finance because vendors billed with unauthorized currency and legal entity combinations. It was hard to review invoices, open matters and generate reports to understand our spend. **It was just causing headache after headache.**'*

The Dropbox legal team knew that next-generation legal operations software could ease many of their headaches. They put together a team of lawyers, operations and finance staff to evaluate new tools and went looking for the right solution.

Choosing Brightflag

When assessing solutions, Brightflag immediately stood out from the crowd.

Brightflag could alleviate the finance team's frustration by catering for the needs of a global business. By solving for currency complexities and ensuring vendors billed to the right legal entities, Brightflag eliminated the need for time-consuming invoice rejections.

Additionally, Brightflag's ability to automatically review invoices with its patented AI engine meant that busy attorneys would spend less time on administrative tasks, freeing them to focus on delivering valuable legal work.

After narrowing down the vendors under consideration, the selection panel voted to move forward with Brightflag.

Strengthening the Partnership with Finance

Dropbox had three clear objectives in mind when launching with Brightflag. The first of these was to remove unnecessary manual work from the Finance team.

'Cutting down on manual labor for our AP team, who are dealing with so much work every single day from all over the company, was a key objective.' Drury explained.

Dropbox saw an immediate benefit on go-live due to the direct integration of Brightflag with their AP system.

Brightflag's Vendor Pay Sites feature ensures that vendors always submit invoices with the correct combinations of legal entities and currencies. This feature saves days per month for the finance and legal teams.



With Brightflag, the integration with our AP system works seamlessly, removing a lot of frustration for the Legal and Finance teams.”

Amy Drury

Senior Intellectual Property (IP) Paralegal, Dropbox

Previously invoices went through a full invoice review and approval process before being rejected back to vendors, wasting time for both Legal and Finance. With Brightflag, the back-and-forth is eliminated entirely as the currency and entity are checked upfront when the vendor submits the invoice, allowing them to correct any issues straight away.

'With Brightflag, the integration with our AP system works seamlessly, removing a lot of frustration for the Legal and Finance teams,' says Drury.

Brightflag also automated Dropbox's accruals, so closing the books became much easier. Dropbox now sees a higher proportion of vendors submitting accruals while spending two days less on accruals each month.

Increasing Visibility Over Legal Spend

Dropbox's second objective when launching with Brightflag was to improve visibility over their legal spend.

'For the legal team, it was important to see how much we're spending on different matter types and with different vendors and if we could become more strategic with our spend.'

Brightflag's dashboards allow Dropbox to understand their spend across matters types, vendors, and practice areas at a glance. At the same time, user-friendly, out-of-the-box, and custom reporting enables them to drill down into their spend and answer specific business questions.

'We can now quickly produce reports that provide actionable data and help us identify savings opportunities.'

Saving Attorney Time

Dropbox's final objective was to remove manual steps to free up time for their busy attorneys.

'Process efficiency was also crucial: being able to open matters quickly, review invoices quickly, and save attorney time was high on our agenda.'

Brightflag's one-step matter opening allows Dropbox to shave valuable time off the opening of each matter. Brightflag's patented AI engine automates the invoice review process while ensuring the Dropbox billing guidelines are applied consistently, keeping costs in check. It also allows Dropbox to apply fixed and capped fees for IP spend automatically, something that was a time-consuming manual process in their legacy system.

'Invoice review and opening matters is really quick, which is a huge win for our lawyers in particular. We have also seen significant invoice write-downs in areas where vendors were not complying with the agreed billing guidelines.'

12 Weeks

saved on invoice
rejections and
payment

5 Weeks

saved on accruals

Improving the Vendor Experience

As an additional upside, Dropbox's legal vendors are happier using Brightflag because they get paid quicker with fewer invoice rejections for avoidable errors. When invoices are rejected or adjusted by the legal team, the reasons are clear and easily addressed through Brightflag's vendor portal.

Conclusion

Dropbox knew there was a better way to achieve legal spend management efficiency than struggling with a legacy system. With Brightflag, Dropbox has been able to reduce manual work for finance, gain visibility over their operations and create process efficiencies for the legal team.

Looking towards the future, they hope to gain even greater value from their partnership with Brightflag. With years of historical spend data coded by Brightflag's AI engine, Dropbox is using Brightflag's insights for a more data-driven approach to vendor assessment and increased predictability in budgeting. Drury meets regularly with Brightflag's Customer Success Manager to uncover legal spending trends and highlight new ways to improve their legal operations.

'With Brightflag, we have created a stronger relationship with finance, ensured our lawyers have more time to focus on legal work, and improved the billing experience for our vendors. Brightflag's user-friendly platform and excellent customer support enable us to achieve our legal spend management goals and continuously improve our legal team's processes.'

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By the Numbers

Estimated Time Savings for Dropbox's Legal and Finance Teams

Task	Before Brightflag	With Brightflag	Annual Time Savings
Matter Opening	10 mins per matter	30 seconds per matter	4 days
AP Routing	4 days per month	Automated	48 days
Accruals	2 days per month	Automated	24 days
Invoice issues due to incorrect currency and legal entity combination	1 day per month	Automated	12 days