

PAYMENT AUTOMATION CHEATSHEET



As businesses scale, finance teams often have to cope with a growing number of vendor payments. Manual processes that are fine at a smaller scale are best replaced with more systematic and often automated processes to support growing volumes. This guide covers key areas & technologies to consider and mistakes to avoid as you embark on search for your perfect payment automation companion.

THINGS TO CONSIDER



Fast & robust system integrations

A faster and more robust process is the key goal of payment automation. The best-in-class automation tools leverage two-way API connectivity to replace manual tasks and file uploads with direct data transfers and actions between systems. A good system should take minutes to set up and try it out.



Ease of use

The ease of use is critical for efficient transaction handling and workflow management. Make sure the system strikes the right balance between your needs and the required complexity (multi-currency payment runs, approvals, reconciliations) and the ability for any team member to learn how to use it.



Fraud and error detection

Fraud risks such as Authorised Push Payments or Account takeovers are a real threat. Fraud protection and error detection are important features as you deal with growing volumes. System with good fraud/error detection tools can save you hours and thousands of Pounds



Cost transparency

Demand a clear transparency about running costs. Different providers use various revenue models, which can include steep implementation costs, a blend of subscription and transaction costs or even hidden fees such as FX fees.



Customer support

The reality is often less than perfect, and even if your internal process is close to perfection, you will have exceptions and problems to solve. Make sure your provider is ready to help you solve common issues. Good customer support from a knowledgeable team is often what makes a key difference.



Security

Payments are a highly sensitive area and your system must have robust security features to protect financial data. Providers that are directly regulated by the FCA have to comply with strict regulations - make sure you check their status.

TECHNOLOGIES TO GET FAMILIAR WITH



Open Banking

Open Banking was initially intended to democratise banking for consumers, but business clients are also starting to reap the benefits of the new technology. Open banking can help with real-time visibility of your available cash balances across accounts and currencies and streamline your payment processes by seamlessly instructing your bank to make transfers.



Virtual Accounts

Virtual accounts help collect, hold, and pay from separate accounts without opening more physical bank accounts. This can enable advanced automation, controls, and tracking tools. Such accounts can be a powerful technology for supporting payments in multiple currencies while keeping bookkeeping easy and automated.



Virtual cards

Virtual cards help generate unique card numbers for each supplier or transaction, reducing the risk of compromising physical card details. They are an alternative to virtual accounts, especially in travel and hospitality, where cards payments are popular. While businesses are enticed by cashback rewards, it's crucial to recognise that this apparent saving could be deceptive.



Optical Character Recognition

Optical Character Recognition (OCR) provides a unique competitive advantage for payment automation apps. The software extracts data from invoices and automatically assigns it to the correct payments, reducing manual input and streamlining processes. With machine learning capabilities, OCR can also improve accuracy over time by recognising patterns in the data.

POPULAR SOLUTIONS

 **Airwallex**

 **apron.**

 **crezco**

 **Telleroo.**

 **HedgeFlows**

 **nook**

 **Payhawk**

 **tipalti.**