

## INCOME COLLECTION IS EVERYONE'S PROBLEM

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the process, leaving only the exceptions to be dealt with by the income team.

### Scaling for growth

None of this is rocket science, and I know there are a few housing providers already working on this kind of process. However, most housing providers employ sizeable teams to do all these elements manually. It is hard work no doubt, but as the scale

of the task increases, they cannot simply be multiplied. They will also be needed to focus on the more complex challenges that the full roll out of universal credit will undoubtedly present over the next couple of years.

There will be many tasks where people skills are essential, but the key challenge right now is to identify those that are

less complex and can be automated effectively. The income collection challenge really is about getting the machine to work harder so the people can work smarter. The technology is out there, it just needs to be embraced.

*John Doyle is managing director of The Housing Contact Company.*

# Adactus streamlines purchasing with Invu

*Invu has implemented a new purchase order processing (POP) system at Adactus Housing Group, adding to its earlier implementations of an electronic document management system and an automated accounts payable system, both from Invu. The new system is intended to give the housing provider better control of its spending across all departments combined with a transparent system of accountability for budget holders.*

The earlier adoption of the Invu systems had automated and accelerated many of its invoice processes and improved its invoice approval practices, but it didn't give budget holders full control of their budgets at the point a spending commitment was made.



The system developed with Invu moves the point of control from the invoice arrival to the earlier point of requesting a purchase and enables the budget holder to see the potential

impact of that commitment on their budget before any expenditure is committed to.

Adactus staff can now search previously-purchased products or services to use as a template, or simply create a new one, add it to their basket and send a request for approval based on automated business rules within the system. The system uses these rules to relate general ledger codes to the relevant budget holders, who can in turn approve requests, while the system also has the capability for budget holders to delegate a level of authority on each GL code to users based on monetary value.

The system is self-service so once the line items are approved, an employee can raise and place an order with the supplier and 'receipt' the goods or service when delivered. When supplier invoices are received, they are data-captured using ABBYY capture software and either automatically matched to fully-receipted purchase orders or adjusted and approved by budget holders.

Chris Holden, management accountant, Adactus Housing Group, said, "We had no central purchase ordering solution in place. Having looked at other purchase ordering systems on the



market, we decided to develop a bespoke solution with Invu. We wanted a POP solution that embodied the same principles as Amazon by being easy to use and intuitive.

"Invu's POP solution lets our budget holders easily approve purchase requisitions or reject any that they don't want to commit to before the supplier receives the PO, thereby preventing cash from leaving the business unnecessarily. Now we have an inclusive PO system in place, visibility across the purchasing process has been significantly improved."

Adactus's corporate services and finance departments were the first to pilot the solution and iron out any glitches, when ordering items such as stationery or IT equipment. The last two departments,

(development and asset management) will be trained on the new POP solution over the next few months.

Holden adds, "Our budget holders now have far greater control over what is being spent against their budgets because they can see purchase requests before any goods are ordered. This gives Adactus better oversight and we can forecast our cash commitments better.

"Most people have used Amazon or eBay without having to use a help manual, which is the spirit in which our system has been designed. While our system includes a 'tips' mechanism, it is an intuitive system requiring minimal training."