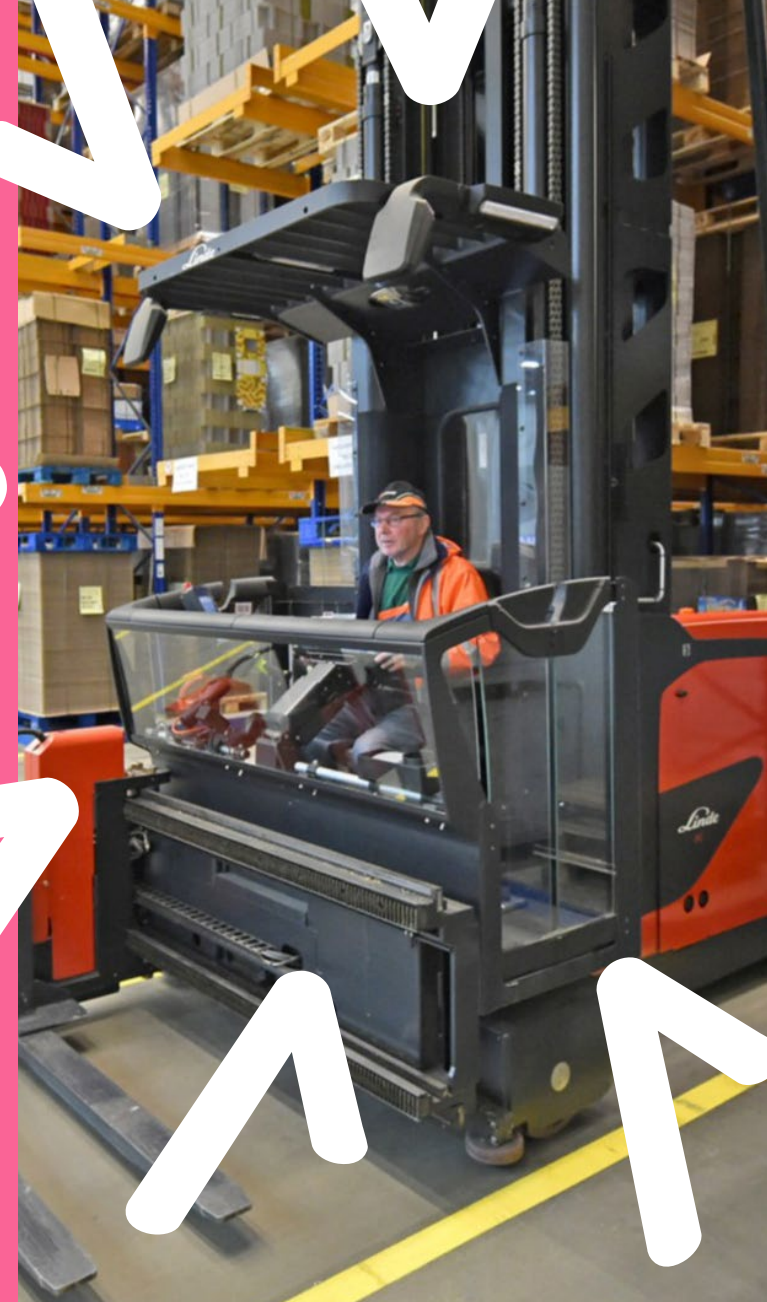**Case Study**

KION Group

Accelerating AP Transformation in Step with SAP S/4HANA

basware

Now it all just happens™

✔✔ **The clean core principle was central for us. Basware's external architecture meant we could modernise AP without building complexity into SAP."**

Thomas E. Müller, Senior Director,
GPO Finance Supply Chain

Industry: Manufacturing

Region: Global

Solutions: AP Automation

Company Overview

KION Group is a global leader in intralogistics, employing over 42,000 people and generating €11.4 billion in revenue. Operating in more than 100 countries, the company delivers industrial trucks, warehouse technology, and integrated supply chain solutions. As part of its finance transformation journey, KION is rolling out SAP S/4HANA while simultaneously standardizing its AP processes using Basware.

A clean core approach to finance transformation

KION's invoice automation journey began as part of a broader centralization agenda, including the creation of an in-house shared service center in Poland and the establishment of a GPO finance structure. From the outset, the company adopted a clean core principle, choosing to deploy a cloud-based AP automation platform outside of SAP.

According to Thomas E. Müller, Senior Director, GPO Finance Supply Chain, "We chose Basware early on because it allowed us to separate invoice automation from SAP, so we wouldn't have to implement in ECC and then re-do everything in S/4HANA. That early decision helped us stay clean and scalable."

The goal was to modernize AP operations without embedding customizations in SAP. By selecting Basware, KION avoided ERP lock-in while gaining a flexible platform capable of managing the full invoice lifecycle – enabling capture, validation, compliance, and reporting across a multi-ERP landscape.

Proven SAP integration – reduced complexity

Since implementation, KION has integrated Basware with five SAP ECC systems and one S/4HANA instance. Additional markets are being brought online as part of the phased SAP rollout. Müller notes, "We've tested the integration across different ERP systems, including S/4HANA. It works. Any timing issues we experience are internal – not due to the Basware platform."

Because Basware supports both legacy and modern SAP environments, KION is able to deploy the same invoice processing framework across its evolving ERP landscape without major rework. The platform also supports procurement integration with SAP eBuy, Ariba (for indirect spend), and SAP's MRP systems (for direct spend).

"The clean core principle was central for us. Basware's external architecture meant we could modernise AP without building complexity into SAP," says Müller.

Efficiency gains and better visibility

Since replacing paper-based and email-driven processes with Basware, KION has significantly improved invoice handling across regions. Müller explains, "With Basware, we moved from paper and people to digital and data. It's a major shift in how we run AP."

The company now achieves an e-invoicing rate of 58% and has reached 40–50% touchless processing across its operations. Invoice cycle times have halved, backlogs have been reduced, and month-end close is faster with fewer accruals.

Müller adds, "We now operate in a much more structured, measurable way – moving from people-based processing to system-driven processes." These improvements have also led to a better supplier experience and a reduction in email inquiries.

Aligning with SAP S/4HANA – at the right pace

Originally, Basware rollouts were AP-led. Now, the S/4HANA deployment timeline dictates the sequencing of future Basware implementations. Müller confirms, "The S/4HANA rollout now sets the pace. Basware's model allows us to stay aligned without slowing anything down."

Because the solution is ERP-independent, KION can continue deploying AP automation alongside SAP transformation without risk or delay. This flexible rollout model helps the company maintain momentum and deliver consistent processes across both ECC and S/4HANA environments.

✓✓ **We're integrating Basware step-by-step with our S/4 environments, and it's working well. The platform adapts without disrupting our SAP roadmap."**

Thomas E. Müller, Senior Director, GPO Finance Supply Chain

basware

Supporting compliance, AI, and scale

Beyond operational gains, KION also sees Basware as a long-term partner in compliance and innovation. The platform supports evolving e-invoicing mandates – such as France's Chorus Pro and Poland's KSeF – while enabling global consistency in invoice processing.

"Basware is our partner of choice for managing government mandates," says Müller. "Their expertise gives us confidence across Europe."

He is also optimistic about the potential of AI in further improving AP performance. "The AI capabilities are a standout," he explains. "Basware brings innovation that helps reduce touchpoints and improve control."

Müller also emphasizes the collaborative nature of the partnership: "I appreciate how Basware invites customers to shape the roadmap. That kind of collaboration really matters."

Keeping AP agile with Basware during SAP S/4HANA transformation

KION's experience shows how Basware supports complex transformation programs with:
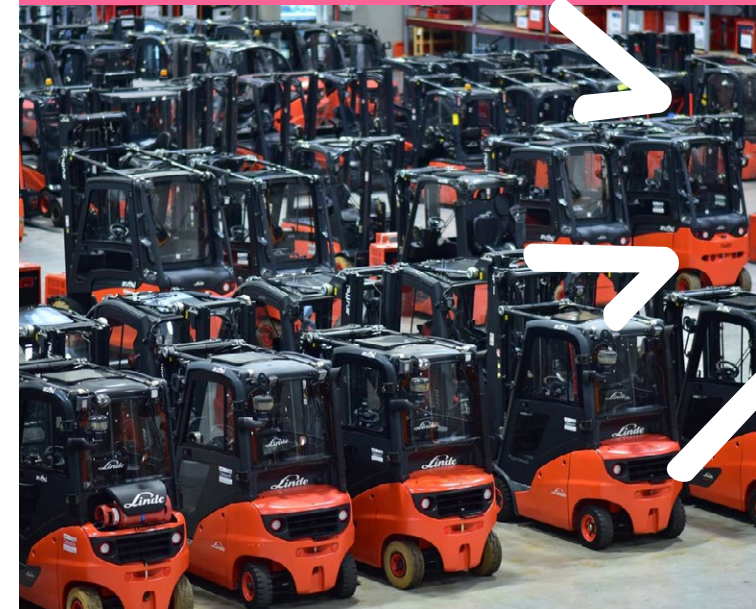
- **Clean core alignment** – keeping automation outside SAP
- **Proven SAP and S/4HANA integrations** – supporting multi-ERP setups
- **Full invoice lifecycle coverage** – standardized, scalable, and measurable
- **Embedded AI** – enabling touchless processing and continual improvement
- **Global readiness** – ensuring compliance across regions

"Basware gives us automation we can trust today – and the agility we'll need tomorrow," says Müller. "It's more than just software – it's a platform that supports how we want to run finance."

✓✓ One of the key advantages with Basware is that it fits around our ERP strategy – it doesn't slow it down or require heavy customisation."

Thomas E. Müller, Senior Director, GPO Finance Supply Chain

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