

COMMON INQUIRIES

COULD BE COSTING YOUR
COMPANY TIME & MONEY





82%

A [Gartner survey](#) reveals that 82% of company leaders plan to allow employees to work remotely some of the time as we enter the post-pandemic era.

With this widespread shift towards a permanent work-from-home model, employees are demanding technology and 24/7 support that enables them to work effectively regardless of location.

However, this poses its own challenge to procure-to-pay (P2P) processes, as more and more resources are being allocated for simple inquiries.



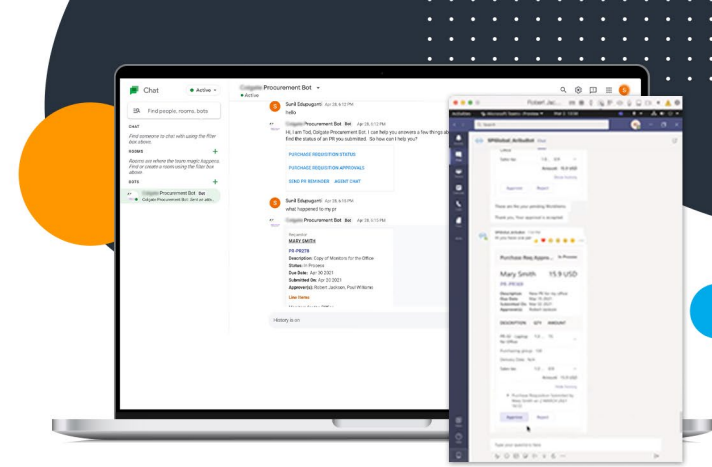
To mitigate employee frustrations while remaining focused on sustained growth, companies need to evaluate their current P2P workflows and implement digital solutions that work to optimize both productivity and profit.



The Most Common P2P Inquiries and Where They Come From

P2P inquiries typically originate from two sources: vendors or internal employees.

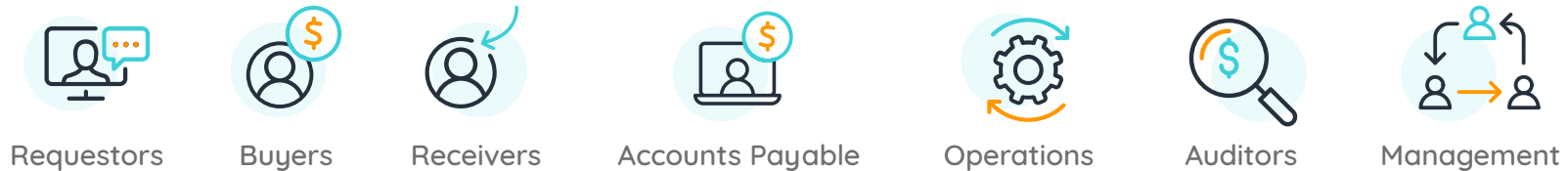
The technology is designed to automate manual processes by utilizing vendor networks and catalogs to extend the boundaries of P2P sourcing and ordering. As a result, businesses experience a reduction in resource allocation and an increased speed of end-to-end processing.



 Common **vendor inquiries** focus on how to interact with customers regarding tracking status of process documents such as purchase orders, contracts, delivery notes, and invoices.

 For **internal inquiries**, these mostly deal with how and when to take specific actions in the P2P process, such as approvals, policies, and procedures.

These inquiries arise from multiple process participants including but not limited to:



Additional internal inquiries are related to exposing processing information such as data involving invoice exception resolution, the status of documents such as an invoice, or details/summary of processing results.

The Effect of Remote Work on Common Inquiries

COVID-19 and its subsequent lockdowns accelerated the movement toward a remote workforce. Yet even as restrictions ease, the work-from-home model is only growing more popular as companies realize it offers vast benefits for both employees and corporate leadership. Businesses are able to minimize corporate office expenses while boosting employee morale.

However, the shift to remote work has also posed plenty of challenges. The work-from-home model has significantly decreased the benefits derived from interoffice collaboration.



Studies have indicated that virtual training does not deliver as successful results as in-person learning, resulting in increased frustrations due to a lack of face-to-face collaboration.



How Common Inquiries Affect *Time*

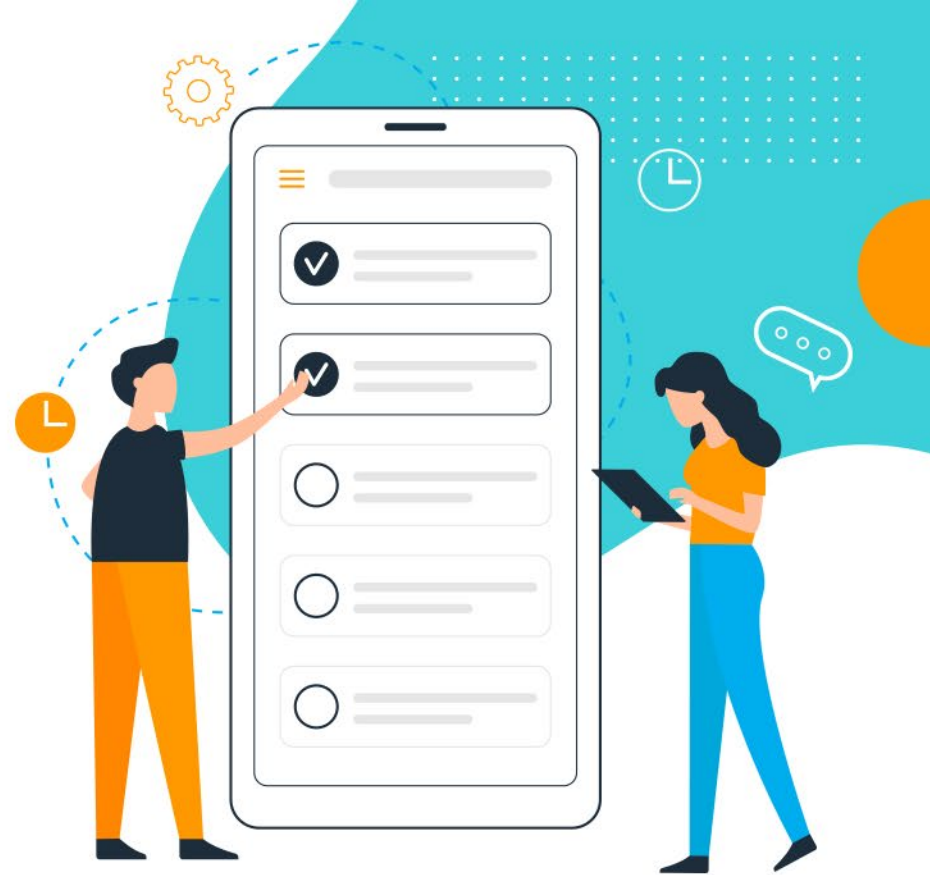
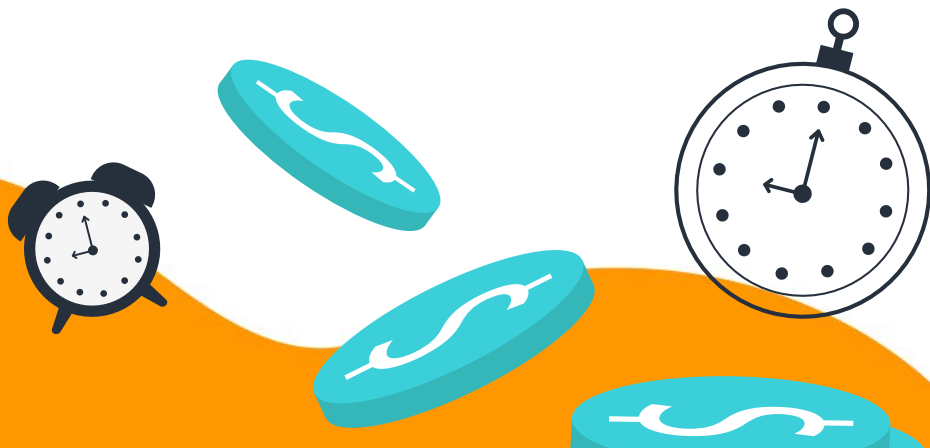
Time spent accomplishing a task has always been a focus for management. Before digital automation, companies invested in time and motion studies to track productivity. These physical stopwatches were utilized only to be replaced with digital reporting tools that can measure tasks down to the second.

P2P operations, in particular, are time-sensitive because the ordered goods and services impact downstream operations consuming these goods and services.



Inquiries, regardless of whether they come from an internal or external source, disrupt the process workflow and increase the time needed to complete the task.

The most time-consuming inquiries often come from requestors needing to know how to create a requisition, approvers waiting for an approved requisition, and vendors pressing for the invoice payment status.



How Common Inquiries Affect *Money*

The phrase “**Time is Money**” becomes very appropriate when examining delays in the P2P process flow. The cash conversion cycle assumes that money invested will generate profit in a timely manner. However, disruptions in operations due to inquiry distractions in the P2P cycle may result in delays that increase costs and decrease profits.

In the P2P process flow, increasing volumes of inquiries often result in increased staffing requirements. These disruptive inquiries often result in errors that increase costs due to rework. In turn, vendors may raise prices or eliminate early payment discounts if they are unable to quickly access status information.

Resolving Process Disruptions Is Critical: Here's How Technology Helps

Digital transformation is no longer a way for companies to get ahead of the competition, it's a requirement to keep pace and reach desired levels of growth and success. To continue to be competitive, businesses must focus on intelligent optimization through flexible digital innovations to meet the evolving business landscape.



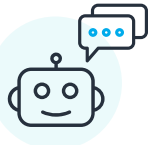
Just as chat tools have become the norm for front office operations, back-office functions need to embrace intelligent chat solutions.

These tools grant immediate access to current and relevant P2P information that is critical to business process workflows.



Save Time & Money with Spotline's Chatbot Solutions

Procurement teams are spending valuable communication resources answering common P2P process inquiries, placing burdens on your business and negatively impacting your bottom line. Many of these interactions can now be automated, allowing you to easily scale your support for employees and suppliers while empowering your teams to focus on critical tasks.



Spotline Procurement Bot is a holistic solution designed to work alongside your SAP® Ariba solution.

Our AI-powered chatbots configure with multiple communication channels including but not limited to SMS, Microsoft Teams™, and Google Chat™ to eliminate the need for frustrating system switching.



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To learn more about Spotline's intelligent solutions, contact our team to schedule a personalized demo.



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