Sidetours
incoming services

Digitization of payments and invoice recovery at Sidetours

40+ years of experience

1,2M passengers

Spain and Portugal

The starting point

After more than 5 years working with Voxel in electronic invoice recovery and achieving **annual savings exceeding €8,000 by automating the process, in 2021**, receptive tour operator Sidetours identified another administrative process that needed to be automated: supplier payments.

Many hotels, first the Portuguese followed by the Spanish, began having a similar requirement: **they wanted to be paid using virtual credit cards (VCCs).**

Up to this point, Sidetours was paying some of its suppliers before check-in (pre-payment) via bank transfer or check. However, these methods of payment created **a lot of manual work for them: not only in processing the transaction but also when requesting the invoices.** Month to month, Sidetours had to receive and account for the list of pending invoices, request them by telephone or email and clarify with suppliers (and also internally) whether or not the hotels had credit. In addition to causing delays in payments, **a professional from the team had to invest 2h** a day performing tasks that did not provide added value to the company.

In this scenario, **Sidetours decided to digitize and automate the payment process.** To accomplish this, Sidetours contacted their trusted technology partner: Voxel.

> **Many hotels want to get paid with virtual credit cards (VCCs).**

> **VCCs are only activated when the hotel has issued the invoice for the service.**

The solution

Bavel Pay was the product chosen by Sidetours. Bavel Pay is an electronic payment solution provided by Voxel that is capable of automatically issuing payments through more than a dozen partners. Thanks to this solution, **Sidetours was able to begin automatically issuing virtual credit cards (VCCs) to all its suppliers in less than 5 months.**

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Also, and thanks to Bavel Pay's innovative modules, Sidetours has ensured they receive all invoices, because **the VCCs it issues are activated only after the hotel has issued the invoice for the service.**

The operation is very simple: Sidetours sends a payment instruction to Bavel Pay. Then, Bavel Pay connects to its supplier payments hub to obtain the VCC. In the case of Sidetours, the VCC issues Ixaris. When Bavel Pay obtains the information from the VCC, it distributes it to the hotel. Once the end-customer arrives at the establishment, the hotel issues the invoice for the service and it is only at that time that the VCC gets activated so the hotel can receive payment. Bavel Pay sends the invoice to Sidetours for it to be integrated with its ERP. **This process is automatic and does not require human intervention.**

This way, Sidetours as well as the hotel obtain what they need. On one hand, the hotel obtains a VCC at the time the reservation is made as a guarantee of payment and the receptive tour operator can recover the invoice before check-out. "*In the past, the hotel was not in a hurry to send the invoice because they had already received payment. Now, all parties are happy*", explains Pep Álvarez, Deputy CFO of Sidetours.

The outcome

Sidetours has already sent **more than 660 VCCs to more than 70 hotels. Their goal for 2022 is to double the number of VCCs they send through Bavel Pay.** Currently, Sidetours works with just one payment partner, but thanks to Bavel Pay modules, **they are able to add new payment providers when needed.**

Once they began working with VCCs, **the relationship between Sidetours and the hotels has improved significantly.** Also, working with VCCs is an added benefit that the sales team can offer, especially to urban hotels.

Internally, the manual workload of the payments team has decreased and they no longer need to dedicate a professional to managing B2B payments on a daily basis.

Thanks to the automated payments process, Sidetours is able to **recover all invoices** from its suppliers without any effort from their administrative team and can consolidate all the data in their ERP. Also, **suppliers receive timely payments.**

"*Digitization has always been a goal of Sidetours. After the pandemic, we have invested a lot more in digitization*", explains Álvarez. And continues saying that "*thanks to the digitization of payments and the reception of invoices, we are able to trace all transactions and the entire history is kept in one digital file*".

Reception of invoices: **€8,000+ in annual savings**

660+ VCCs issued automatically

Automatic invoice recovery

Elimination of manual tasks

Timely payments

Improved relationships with suppliers

x2 the volume of VCC without needing to augment the management team

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