Tech talk with a Partner: presenting the Solutions & Services recommended app stack for schools

Q&A report

Q: Will the staff and principal need to sign the paper form?
A: The idea is that no paper has to be signed. ApprovalMax handles the automated routing and digitally record the approval vote. An audit trail will be generated and attached to the document in Xero.

Q: Between completing the purchase order and approving payment of the invoice in ApprovalMax, will there be a facility to verify goods have actually been received?
A: You can configure multiple steps in the approval workflow. Best practice is to have the first step for review and coding while the 2nd step can be used for confirmation of goods received. The following steps are used for the financial approval.

Q: Only two of our departments use purchase orders. Can ApprovalMax start at the bills step?
A: Yes, some schools just use Bill Review and Approval at present. You can also decide to set up only staff that use POs in the Purchase Order feature.

Q: Is ApprovalMax NZ Auditor approved? Are the auditors happy to proceed with this process rather than manual sign off?
A: Leading firms recommend ApprovalMax to their audit clients. ApprovalMax treats Xero as the system of records and the digital audit trail is available attached to the item in Xero. Reporting from ApprovalMax saves time and money during the audit process.

Q: Is the connection/attachments of invoice automatic or manual?
A: Sandy: Hubdoc means that the attachment of invoices can be fully automated. Our training provides the most efficient means for schools and a variety of methods is best used.

Q: When will Xero develop better security restrictions based on allocating a specific range of codes that relate only to individualised specific budget managers, rather than having full access to all the financial information as they would get presently. This would be a great feature to have for all schools Business Managers, so we can give these people access as required.
A: ApprovalMax can cover this. Take out approvers from Xero / Hubdoc and let them work only in ApprovalMax. We handle security on the user level.

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Q: Does the invoice coding etc. need to be done via ApprovalMax? Can it just be entered via Hubdoc?
A: It could be done either in Hubdoc or in the first step in ApprovalMax. If you code in Hubdoc, the coding flow down to Xero and ApprovalMax.

Q: Can the Hubdoc tags be automated to link to the folders within xero files?
A: Sandy: We are finding that schools are making more use of Tag folders in Hubdoc. I think it is quicker to do so and Mel (Xero) recommended Hubdoc usage rather than Xero Files. Also, Auditors have to be given Standard access to Xero if a school wants them to access Xero Files. Some auditors have policies that preclude this level of access. Hubdoc allows any document/file to be uploaded.

Q: In ApprovalMax, if you have multiple codes, how do you add/change these at the point of the budget manager approving them?
A: Invoice only user permission has a smaller chart of accounts. ApprovalMax looks after this part well.

Q: Can the approvers be set up according to groups of ledger accounts, or does every approver have to match a single ledger account?
A: Approvers can be set up very quickly with various criteria. Solutions and Services recommend that the account codes are entered and matched to the Approver. It is quicker than you might imagine to do!

Q: What happens if a staff member leaves, does the information still remain in ApprovalMax?
A: When a staff member leaves, you would need to remove the user from your Organisation to make sure he has no longer access to the data. All items approved by that removed user will still show the user vote. The information will be available and can be audited.

Q: Can you please confirm if the person that approves the invoice codes it?
A: You can configure Reviewers in the first approval step. Reviewers are allowed to change coding before approving.

Q: So, coding of invoices is via the office? Is there an easy way to change without rejecting and redoing?
A: You can configure Reviewers in the first approval step. Reviewers are allowed to change coding before approving.

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Q: Is the ApprovalMax invoice/confirmation attached automatically to the transaction? With the Awaiting Approval in Xero - how does ApprovalMax know who needs to approve it? E.g. The Principal may approve most invoices, but the Principal cannot approve his own, so maybe the Board approves this one. The Principals Credit Card may be coded to «various» codes. Does that make sense?

A: Yes, the invoice is automatically attached in Hubdoc. ApprovalMax automatically attaches the Audit Approval certificate once all approvals are complete. You can set up the Approval Workflow so that the Board Chair approves any reimbursement for the Principal and you can also specify particular accounts e.g. PD-Principal etc. for the Chair.

Q: What happens to an invoice if it is rejected on ApprovalMax?

A: The invoice is moved back to the draft status in Xero.

Q: I am thinking of the budget managers being able to have access to printing out their individualized data for any period of time, such that they can only generate their budget info. ApprovalMax will only give them prior access to their bills, as I understand and not the data info etc.

A: Sandy - Monty provides the Actual vs Budget comparison for budget holders and that can be each month or a full year reporting with all transactions.

Q: Is there a chance the print button in Monty could be at the top of the screen rather than having to scroll down?

A: In Monty (and Xero) pressing the keyboard END key immediately takes you to the Export button and then you can just click on PDF to display and then Print.

Q: Is there a plan to be able to link budget in Xero to automatically syn to Monty?

A: No. We recommend that the budget is entered into Monty, rather than Xero, so that budgets can be entered into the balance sheet and the entry is quick on screen, or using Export and Import.

Q: So, there is no way to track when an approval limit has been changed and who did it?

A: Currently ApprovalMax does not track approval workflow configuration changes. But this is something we are planning to add later.

Q: How does the coding work if an approver reassigns the invoice to someone else?

A: ApprovalMax provides an audit trail of all Approvers - date and time stamped.

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Q: When will Monty not show all the corrected coding from Xero in the Monty reports?
A: The Xero API at present provides the data output to all Xero add-on developers (not just Monty) as journals from the ledger. If school users edit transactions then this creates additional journals. Our understanding is that Xero has a development item listed to provide the API by transaction (that may not be the right term) and we will need to adapt Monty for that but it will be welcomed by schools. In the meantime, we recommend that edits are avoided in Xero. If the code is not known for sure then I would save the transaction in Hubdoc with Draft status and leave it as Draft until confirmed.

Q: Has Monty developed yet/added in the specific budget code(s) numbers within the details of transactions below the summary report? This would be a real help for our budget managers.
A: Yes, the Account Code number is listed at the start of each Account Code list of transactions.

Q: Does it matter for ApprovalMax is we have tracking codes for our departments?
A: Yes, ApprovalMax manages Tracking Codes. Monty has Tracking Reports set up now (recent) but it is limited to Revenue and Expense codes. S&S recommend that the Chart of accounts is structured to avoid Tracking as we think it adds to the data entry time.

Q: If staff pay a bill with their own credit card, can they use the ApprovalMax app to claim a reimbursement, i.e. can it be allocated to the staff member instead of the company they paid?
A: Yes. the Staff member will show as the Contact in Hubdoc and Xero. We recommend that staff are asked to email the reimbursement claim form and source document as one pdf for efficient management by the finance team. You could ask them to email directly to the Hubdoc address.

Q: Can budget holders generate their own purchase order number with ApprovalMax?
A: After a PO has been fully approved in ApprovalMax, a PO is created in Xero. Xero assigns the next available PO number which ApprovalMax reads back and uses as a reference.

Q: Can we upload journals via excel?
A: Xero has lots of features, and repeating journals are very quick to set up, copying journals saves a lot time. But it is also possible to upload journals from Excel in Xero.

Q: Can Admin override a Department approval if budget holder absent 20th of month?
A: Yes, the administrator can force decision and enter a reason. Approvers get emailed reminders so most get better and quicker at their «budget holder responsibility» and action easily online.

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Q: Could the principal be given access to view all transactions with the app stack?
A: Yes, the Principal can be set up as an Approver in ApprovalMax: for all transactions, or for some over a specific limit, or for specific account codes etc. The Principal can also be added as User in Monty to see all reports at any time, or even to enter the budget if wanted.

Q: Where can I find the pricing on Monty/ApprovalMax?
A: Please use this link to get a special offer for Monty and ApprovalMax:
https://landing.approvalmax.com/schools/ and then email admin@solutionsandservices.co.nz and we can send you the pricing offer.

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