



CLOUD FAX SERVICES

THE CLOUD FAX ADVANTAGE

Boosting Efficiency and
Lowering Costs with
Automated Fax Operations



THE CLOUD FAX ADVANTAGE



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ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Steve Smith • U.S. Chief Operating Officer

As U.S. Chief Operating Officer at Esker, Steve Smith is responsible for all operations in North and Central America.

Steve joined Esker in 2003 after 17 years at Equitrac Corporation as the Senior Vice President of Worldwide Sales and two years in sales at Pitney Bowes. Steve earned his bachelor's degree in Marketing and Finance from the University of Wisconsin – Whitewater.

INTRODUCTION: WHY FAX IS MOVING TO THE CLOUD

While fax may seem like a technology of the past, it is still widely used as a primary means of exchanging business information. Electronic methods are available, but many businesses are unwilling or unable to change due to cost restrictions or other barriers. The good news is, fax may be unavoidable for some businesses, but *outdated fax procedures* don't have to be.

Businesses operating traditional fax communications are regularly confronted with a number of issues including:

- Inefficiency of fax machines
- Hidden costs of fax servers
- Functional limitations of basic outsourced fax services

Today, many of these businesses looking to integrate a more modernized faxing solution with their ERP applications have stronger options – particularly in the realm of cloud-based solutions. Cloud services for fax communication are gaining popularity amongst organizations that wish to reduce costs, simplify their IT landscapes and streamline critical business processes.

Using its fully integrated document process automation platform, Esker offers the option to seamlessly leverage cloud-based services for fax communication. Our specific solution, Esker Cloud Fax Services, enables organizations to benefit from Esker's pay-per-use automation technology in every department without having to deal with in-house hardware.

About This White Paper

Businesses that rely on faxing no longer have to endure the headaches and added costs of traditional fax procedures and equipment – many have chosen to move their fax operations to the cloud. This white paper outlines the need for automation, how the automation technology works and the benefits of migrating to ERP-integrated cloud faxing.



THE FAX OF YESTERDAY

In the past, the available options for integrating fax with ERP applications have forced enterprises to choose between cost, efficiency and functionality. For many, this meant having to sacrifice some potential benefits in order to get others.

No Ideal Options for Fax

Fax machines burden organizations with manual processes including printing, faxing, managing paper and other consumables, and equipment maintenance. Fax servers typically require a major investment in software, hardware, fax boards and lines, maintenance, and training. Even the options for basic outsourced fax services have shortcomings, since many do not include key features such as ERP integration, tracking capability or real-time status notifications.



OPTION 1

Fax Machines

- Printing
- Faxing
- Wasting paper
- Consumables cost
- Maintenance of equipment

or



OPTION 2

Fax Server

- Hardware
- Software
- Fax-lines
- Maintenance
- Training

or



OPTION 3

Basic Fax Service

- No ERP integration
- No real-time status notification
- Different interface to learn

THE FAX OF TODAY

Today, businesses running ERP applications no longer have to choose between fax machines, fax servers or basic outsourced fax services. Esker offers a better option that delivers the benefits of automatic cloud faxing and fax status management – all integrated with ERP systems.

Fax Automation in the Cloud

With a cloud automation service, no fax server software or hardware is required on-premises because the infrastructure is exclusively hosted by Esker. Your company can connect directly to the service and integrate faxing with your ERP applications securely and efficiently, leveraging standard communication protocols. Real-time fax communication status is communicated back to the ERP server, and the service provides a Web interface for monitoring fax delivery and reporting on fax traffic. In addition to outbound faxing from ERP applications, the service can also handle inbound faxes.

Key Benefits

Esker Cloud Fax Services applications offers:

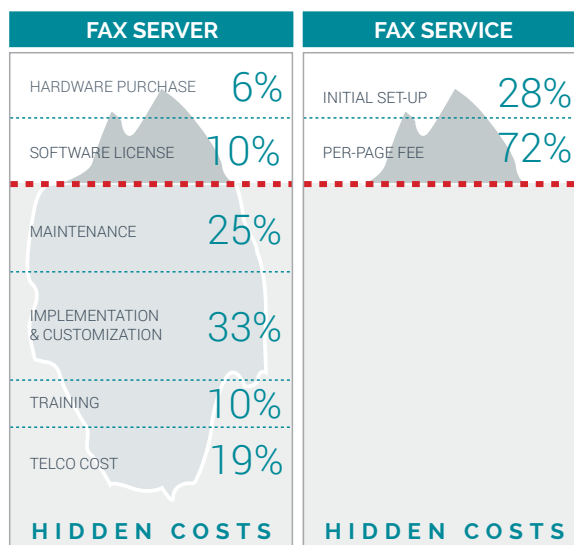
- The ability to send faxes directly from ERP applications or receive faxes as an email
- Production faxing from ERP solution modules
- Quick and cost-effective global deployment of fax with a single ERP instance
- Real-time notification within the ERP system for all faxes
- Almost no upfront investment necessary and minimal operating costs
- Fax capability available 24/7 year-round
- Virtually unlimited capacity to handle any fax volume
- Least-cost routing through Esker's secure worldwide network of fax production facilities

Companies can gain all of these benefits with pay-per-use cost efficiency by moving fax communication to the cloud service model.

Comparing Fax Costs

One of the biggest (and often overlooked) benefits of cloud fax automation is the predictability of the pricing process. When using fax as a service, all costs are straightforward and clear as you always know what your business is spending on fax communication – what you see on the surface is all you pay for.

On the other hand, fax servers do not always give you a clear picture of fax costs. You might know what your hardware and software licenses are costing on the surface, but there are other expenses that are not as predictable, such as the costs of maintaining hardware and software, implementing and customizing the solution to meet your specific requirements, training users, and telecommunications.



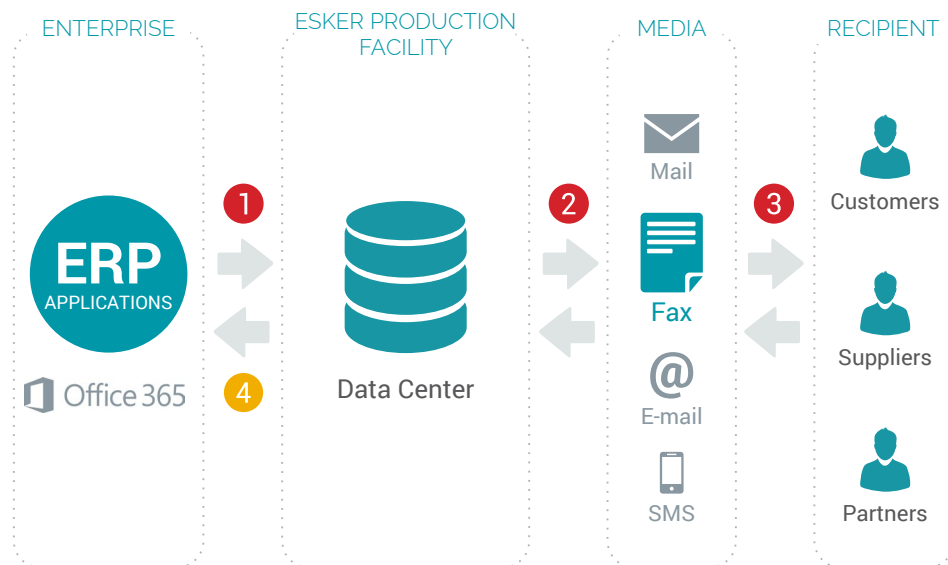
HOW CLOUD FAXING WORKS

With Esker Cloud Fax Services, users submit faxes automatically from their ERP application.

The documents are securely transferred to an Esker production facility where they are processed and faxed according to user specifications. A notification is fed back into the ERP system so users can follow the status of their faxes.

Esker Cloud Fax Services for ERP Applications

Esker Cloud Fax Services seamlessly integrates with a wide range of ERP applications, allowing users to fax quickly, easily and cost-effectively throughout your entire organization. Here's how it works: (1) Documents are transmitted from your business applications to an Esker production facility. (2) They are then received by a multitenant Esker server platform through an authenticated, encrypted and secured connection. (3) Once the fax is delivered, a fax status is fed into your business application, and is (4) updated in real-time and made visible to users.

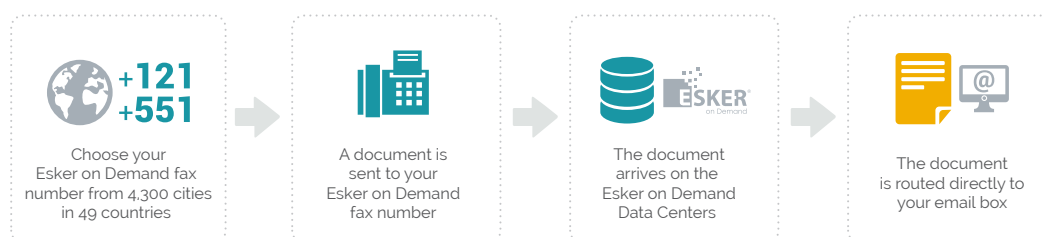


Esker Cloud Fax Services for Desktop

In addition to allowing faxes to be sent directly from any ERP application, Esker also offers the ability to send and receive faxes directly from your desktop and/or messaging environment, like Microsoft® Office 365.

FlyDoc, the world's first online fax and mail service, enables users to fax invoices, orders and other business documents directly from their desktop, just as easily as sending an email. Likewise, users receive faxes directly in their email box.

Users can also send and receive faxes in the cloud with Office 365. Accessible from virtually anywhere, Microsoft's Outlook Web App (OWA) enables you to fax by email from any desktop or mobile device.



ESKER ON DEMAND INFRASTRUCTURE

Esker on Demand production facilities are designed for secure, dependable and traceable data processing. Esker's network allows for easy scalability and flexibility to help businesses overcome the costs and hassles of dealing with high-volume document delivery. Data centers located in North America, Europe and Asia-Pacific are monitored 24/7 to deliver continuous service.



3 DATA CENTERS **7 MAIL PRODUCTION FACILITIES**

- Backup and monitoring between data centers to ensure 24/7 availability
- Data transfer by secure protocol (SSL)
- Clustered servers with internal redundancies to prevent hardware failure
- Dynamic line allocation and routing to prevent contractual delays
- Security guaranteed



A Secure Global Network

Along with level 1 operational support, the Esker on Demand emergency team is available at all times – ensuring data security and service continuity.

Data is transferred using SSL – identical to the encryption used for banking transactions. Esker server platforms use high-availability cluster technology that provides internal redundancies to counter any possible hardware failure. The platforms in North America and Europe are capable of backing up one another for minimal production interruption. And, Esker uses a system of dynamic line allocation to ensure there are no delays in the delivery of your faxes based on your service contract.

Mail in the Cloud

Since many customers still prefer to receive invoices by traditional mail, Esker offers a cloud-based solution, Esker Mail Services, to transform electronic documents into postal mail without the need for mailroom equipment.

Documents are securely submitted by the user from the ERP application to Esker production facilities. There, the mail pieces are automatically printed, folded, inserted, stamped and sent out within 24 hours of being created. Global least-cost routing capabilities are available with Esker Mail Services as well, which helps to minimize international postage costs, and allows for visibility of your mailings with status updates available within ERP systems.

WHERE FAX AS A SERVICE OFFERS VALUE

Esker Cloud Fax Services tends to be less expensive and easier to manage than other faxing options, so just about any organization can benefit from it. In working with ERP customers, Esker has identified several scenarios in particular where the solution works best.

Implement Quickly without Risk

Esker Fax Services for ERP applications is ideal for organizations looking for a solution that is rapidly delivered, offers the advantages of fixed costs and is flexible enough to satisfy changing needs.

Global Deployment for Single-Instance Environments

Esker Cloud Fax Services works particularly well when a company is making the transition from a distributed architecture to a single instance globally. Esker has seen excellent results with companies running their ERP system from the U.S., Europe or Asia. Typically, each destination manually faxes locally or has various fax servers with least-cost routing. Then, they move to a single instance globally and can have a centralized solution for faxing globally that is in alignment with their ERP strategy.

One of the most appealing aspects of Esker Cloud Fax Services is that it gives companies the opportunity to try cloud faxing in their environment without taking on risk or making a large investment. It is a practical way to get the benefits of automated faxing immediately, which can help to simplify a complex situation like a global ERP rollout.

Consider Esker Cloud Fax Services when you are:

- Replacing unsupported fax systems
- Current fax server not licensed to work with the latest version of your ERP system
- Getting started with an ERP solution
- Upgrading ERP applications
- Also in need of email and postal mail services
- Moving from a distributed ERP architecture to a single global instance
- ERP instances on multiple continents either faxing manually locally or using various fax servers
- Moving to a centralized solution for faxing globally that is in alignment with ERP strategy
- Rolling out ERP implementation to regional subsidiaries
- Looking to try cloud faxing with minimal investment



CUSTOMER SUCCESS STORY:



Organic Valley is America's largest cooperative of organic farmers and one of the nation's leading organic brands. Organized in 1988, it represents over 1,800 family farms in 33 states and four Canadian provinces, with products sold in supermarkets, natural foods stores and food cooperatives nationwide.



The Objective

Organic Valley was using an outdated version of a RightFax fax server software product to send 500-1,000 faxes once a week over its four analog lines. Faxes could be backed up for at least six hours at a time with no way to monitor the fax queues and no administration tools to facilitate the process. In addition, the connector between RightFax and Organic Valley's SalesLogix CRM system was no longer supported. As a result, Organic Valley sought an alternative solution that could help them:

- Utilize reporting, management and prioritization capabilities
- Cut costs associated with average monthly paper usage (\$1,500 a month)
- Improve sustainability and environmental impact through paper reduction
- Reduce the amount of labor needed for order entry and filing
- Leverage "paperless" functionality within its ERP system to apply to other areas of the business



The Solution

Organic Valley saw the Esker solution as a step toward rules-based document process automation using intelligent data capture and other capabilities that was in-line with its long-term objectives. Working with Esker, Organic Valley found that it didn't need telco lines to handle its mass fax blasts. Instead, they could take advantage of Fax on Demand overflow capabilities of the Esker Cloud Fax Services solution, leveraging Esker-hosted infrastructure for delivery of faxes. Once the queue reaches its limit, any additional faxes are automatically sent using the on-demand solution.



The Results

- Reduced fax queue time from six hours to 20 minutes
- Saved at least \$700 per month in paper costs
- Decreased number of calls to helpdesk
- Increased staff productivity
- Set the stage to create an integrated, user-friendly interface for all faxing needs

ABOUT ESKER

Esfer is an industry leader in document process automation solutions, helping organizations of all sizes Quit Paper™ and improve how their business information is processed and exchanged via one unified and ERP-integrated automation platform. Esfer's suite of automation solutions, offered on-demand or on-premises, help customers around the world reduce processing time and costs, increase their competitive advantage, gain significant operational efficiencies, and realize measurable ROI in as little as three to six months.



Global Expertise

Founded in 1985, Esfer has more than 80,000 customers and millions of licensed users worldwide. Esfer operates in North America, Europe and Asia Pacific with global headquarters in Lyon, France, and U.S. headquarters in Madison, Wisconsin.





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