


Chapter 8

Certified Invoicing Software: Boosting Entrepreneurship, Innovation, and Sustainability in the Post-COVID-19 Era

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ABSTRACT

The recent tax legislative changes created conditions for the dematerialization of documents, allowing waiving invoice printing, encouraging the adoption of an electronic invoicing and document archiving system. The consequent sustainability and cost reduction measures are allowing the optimization of invoicing and archive procedures, driving companies to invest in the development of technological instruments, incorporating a philosophy of innovation and sustainability. Entrepreneurial entities can take advantage of the increasing use of telework, due to the recent pandemic, by shifting to perform functions remotely. Thus, there is a need to optimize business processes and endeavour technological innovations, taking adequate, quick, and effective decisions. A model can be applied to systematize and simplify the decision-making process related to the Portuguese tax framework and requirements for certified invoicing software or for electronic document archiving. Understanding these requirements can speed up the development or acquisition of a proper invoicing or archiving software.

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INTRODUCTION

In recent years, the software development industry has been faced with legislative changes, which include more functional, and tax or fiscal requirements. By legal imposition, there was an expansion on the range of companies covered by the obligation to have Invoicing Software (ISW) certified by the *Autoridade Tributária e Aduaneira* (AT), the Portuguese Tax and Customs Authority.

The resulting legislative simplification created conditions for the dematerialization of documents, providing for the possibility of dismissing invoice printing, encouraging the adoption of an electronic invoicing and electronic document archiving system.

Thus, measures of sustainability and cost reduction were incorporated, namely, the reduction of file space, reduction of paper, consumables and printing hardware, allowing also to expand the optimization and automation of invoicing and archive procedures. These measures may be a stimulus for companies to invest in the development and use of new technological instruments, incorporating a philosophy of innovation and sustainability.

Most organizations are not Information and Communications Technology (ICT) companies, they are organizations that have to leverage technology at the service of their business. Technology no longer has to be a competitive advantage or the differentiating factor and organizations must, above all, focus on their business and understand how technology can be an accelerator of new business processes or customer relations. Innovation may involve using technologies from a new perspective, taking advantage of existing techniques. To innovate and have a digital transformation, it is not enough to digitize, it is necessary to use the right digital platform, the right mutation accelerators and work and use information in the right way.

Entrepreneurial entities, when starting or reformulating their commercial activity and business processes, should take into account the potential of this new legislative approach. The focus on online businesses, amplified by the increased use of telework, resulting from the measures to contain this recent pandemic, allows some management, optimization and control functions to be performed remotely. The effects are reflected in the need to optimize business processes, the time spent on activities, but above all in technological innovation that mitigates the gaps underlying this new vision of the business and digital world. This new vision will depend on the dynamization of ICT in business processes and the quick response to this desire, where there is a need to make quick and effective decisions, but with the necessary efficiency so that the change is adequate.

In this chapter, a model is formalized that systematizes the decision-making process related to the requirements underlying certified ISW, intending to mitigate the complexity of the process and present an approach that allows mitigating fiscal and financial constraints. Therefore, it is intended to add value, both for organizations that develop ISW and for the client, user of the software.

To support the construction of the model, a detailed analysis of the fiscal legislation, the invoicing framework and the AT certification of ISW was accomplished, in order to identify the main regulatory documents in the field of the thematic. The characterization of invoicing in Portugal was presented, when using ISW.

It is considered that the added value focuses on the presentation of the correct procedures and requirements involved in an electronic invoicing system and electronic document archiving, which can speed up the development or acquisition of a certified ISW.

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