Case Study

Svitzer

Svitzer Accelerates Global Transformation
with Basware

basware

Now it all just happens™

SVITZER

✓✓ We were running on a platform that simply wasn't future-proofed. We knew we needed to act if we wanted to compete globally."

Knud Winkler, CFO, Svitzer

Read the full story

Industry: Shipping

Regions: Canada and Europe

Solutions: AP Automation

A Global Leader, Ready to Scale

Svitzer is a global leader in towage and marine services, supporting ports and terminals across six continents. With thousands of employees and operations in 35 countries, the company plays a vital role in keeping global trade moving safely and efficiently.

But scale brought complexity. Fragmented systems and outdated platforms limited transparency, slowed decision-making, and restricted how finance, procurement, and commercial teams could support the business.

Project GAIN: A Bold, Business-wide Transformation

That urgency sparked Project GAIN, the most ambitious transformation in Svitzer's history. The program united three core components: Basware for accounts payable automation, Sertica for procurement, and Microsoft Dynamics as the ERP backbone.

Svitzer needed a partner that could deliver a scalable AP solution fit for global rollout, including complex regions like Brazil with its intricate VAT regulations. Project GAIN was designed to unify finance, procurement, commercial, and operations on one platform, creating shared standards and scalable tools for future growth.

The program was designed to:

- Modernize IT security
- Standardize systems and processes globally
- Drive cross-functional efficiency through automation and centralization
- Unlock high-quality data to enable faster, better decisions

Precision, Planning, and Partnership

Delivering a program of this scale required more than technology, it demanded discipline, structure, and trust. From the outset, Svitzer approached the rollout with professionalism and precision. Every phase was scoped and agreed months in advance, approval cycles were fast, and momentum never stalled.

The governance model was built on clear ownership and accountability. Roles were defined early, decision-making pathways were streamlined, and cross-functional teams were empowered to act quickly. This structure enabled Svitzer to maintain pace across geographies and vendors, even when navigating local complexities.

The project kicked off with a three-day workshop that brought all vendors together to align collaboration strategies for the multi-phase rollouts. The outcome was a comprehensive "rollout-playbook" defining roles, documentation standards, communication channels, and escalation paths. Follow-up workshops were held throughout the project to continuously refine the playbook based on recent learnings and align priorities and timelines.

From Basware's side, the partnership was equally strong. Magnus Bojesen, Professional Services Director, shares:

"What impressed me most was their proactive way of working. Every stage was planned months in advance, which meant we could focus on execution rather than firefighting. They also set a high bar for collaboration, decisive, well-coordinated, and always aligned on next steps."

This disciplined approach didn't just reduce risk; it created space for innovation. Teams could anticipate challenges, adapt quickly, and stay focused on outcomes.

Multiple project teams worked in parallel on different rollouts, and vendors were encouraged to work onsite at Svitzer whenever possible. This allowed requirements and issues to be resolved quickly, while project managers with strong solution knowledge kept discussions efficient and productive.

Brazil: Navigating Complex Compliance

One of the most complex rollouts took place in Brazil, where local tax regulations required a highly specialized setup. Early in the process, it was decided that tax handling would be managed through an ISV module in Microsoft Dynamics. An ISV module is a certified third-party add-on that extends the functionality of a platform like Dynamics to meet specific local requirements.

The Basware solution acted as a data collector, ensuring more than 50 required fields for tax determination and calculation were passed into Dynamics. This included generating invoice coding rows accurately across Cost, PO, and Spend Plan invoices. The rollout proved that Basware could integrate seamlessly as part of a wider ERP ecosystem while also giving the team valuable insights into compliance in South America that will strengthen future projects.

✓✓ **Finance today plays a completely different role. We're no longer just reporting numbers, we're shaping business strategy, based on real-time, high-quality data."**

Knud Winkler, CFO, Svitzer

Key Takeaways

2,000+ days	saved each year through automation and centralization
35 countries	unified on one global platform with standardized processes
✓	**Real-time data** driving faster decisions and stronger financial control

One Platform, One Way of Working

With Project GAIN complete, Svitzer now operates on a single cloud-based ERP platform supporting operations across 35 countries. The transformation has reshaped how the business works, creating one consistent way of operating across finance, procurement, and commercial.

The results speak for themselves:

- 2,000+ days saved annually through efficiencies achieved by automation and centralization, freeing teams to focus on analysis and strategy

- High-quality, granular data enabling early trend detection, proactive risk management, and stronger margin control

- One consistent source of truth across all entities, improving transparency, auditability, and financial control

- Faster decision-making powered by real-time insights, standardized reporting, and shared dashboards across teams

- Greater scalability, enabling confident expansion into new markets without reinventing processes or retraining teams

These outcomes aren't just operational, they're strategic. Finance now plays a central role in shaping business direction, backed by data that's timely, trusted, and actionable.

A Foundation for the Future

Project GAIN has delivered more than efficiency, it's created a new operating model. Svitzer has shifted from fragmented local processes to a global organization built on shared standards, scalable tools, and a unified data backbone.

Finance, procurement, and commercial teams are now better positioned to influence strategy, respond to market shifts, and support growth. The platform enables faster execution, deeper insight, and stronger alignment across the business.

The project also showcased Basware's API integration, which was quickly adopted by Svitzer and other vendors. Push notifications were particularly well received and seen as a major enhancement to the overall Basware API offering. Svitzer also celebrated milestones throughout the project, from team dinners after rollouts to a final celebration event that recognized the hard work and collaboration behind Project GAIN.

✓✓ **This foundation changes everything. We can grow faster, compete harder, and serve our customers better because we finally have the tools and insights to run as a truly global company."**

Knud Winkler, CFO, Svitzer

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