American Airlines

customer story

Industry: Business Services

Company Size: Enterprise

Employees: 120,000+

Challenges:

- After a merger, AA faced fragmented, manual procurement, invoicing, and contracting, limiting efficiency at scale.

- Lack of centralized contracts and spend visibility hindered accurate forecasting and effective supplier negotiations.

- Inconsistent compliance controls across global markets created regulatory risk and made policy enforcement difficult.

Solutions:

- Procure-to-Pay

- AP Automation

- Source-to-Contract

- Supply Chain Collaboration

Results:

- Automated invoice processing boosted PO-backed spend, strengthened compliance, and cut manual work globally.

- AI insights from 20,400+ digitized contracts reduced cycle times and improved working capital opportunities.

- A centralized database and AI innovation enable quarterly governance reviews and predictive analytics at scale.

First-Class Operations, Powered by Coupa AI

When American Airlines (AA) merged with US Airways, it created one of the largest airline networks in the world. It also created a tangled web of operational systems, workflows, and data silos. Procurement, contracting, and invoicing were fragmented across continents, buried in manual processes, and split between legacy systems. Employees couldn't make key decisions around sourcing airplane parts, securing catering suppliers, or managing global vendors. With the lack of visibility and standardization, even the routine became difficult. For leadership, it signaled risks to both customer service and the bottom line.

"We needed to look at our data, people, and process. How can we apply our resources to be more efficient? How can we analyze or look at the gaps in our complex organization?" These were the questions that Alison Devad, Director of Accounting Automation at AA, set out to answer with help from Coupa's AI-Native Total Spend Management Platform. Once AA deployed Coupa across its core operational teams, real-time intelligence and intuitive workflows took flight.

Contract intelligence drives strategy at scale

As part of a company-wide digitization initiative, AA migrated over 9,780 contracts into Coupa, eventually centralizing visibility across more than 20,400 contracts. What once lived in disconnected systems is now accessible through a single platform. That shift unlocked actionable data for finance and procurement teams, with AI-powered dashboards linking contract terms directly to spend transactions, payment schedules, and supplier performance.

Today, teams can forecast more accurately, manage cash flow with greater precision, and optimize working capital at scale. "Spend analysis plays a big part. We leverage that to understand our finances, helping us renegotiate and extend payment terms," says Alison. Contract cycle times have reduced drastically, and, quarterly contract governance reviews are now the norm to ensure the best deals are always secured with suppliers. All of this is powered by the data Coupa provides.

From "highly manual" to "automated cruise control" for invoicing and procurement

More than 60 countries worldwide now mandate e-invoicing. With operations spanning continents, Alison knew AA's manual and paper-based invoicing and procurement processes increased the company's compliance risk. With Coupa, AA is boosting its e-invoicing using AI-driven validations and country-specific compliance tools to standardize and automate workflows across internal markets. That automation isn't just saving time. It's building a database of operational intelligence. "We have all these insights around our invoice processing. We can look and ask ourselves, are we increasing our automated intake? What about our PO initiative? How much is PO-backed versus non-PO invoiced?" explains Alison.

On the procurement side, enforcing compliant spend for a global company is no small feat. An intuitive intake for indirect and direct spending gives the procurement team a unified view of enterprise needs, empowering them to consolidate and source more strategically. For suppliers, a single login portal and real-time collaboration tools streamline onboarding and improve PO confirmation. "Coupa isn't just a transformation. It's a first-class upgrade to how we work," says Alison.

All of this has resulted in an increased PO-backed invoice ratio year over year, reducing non-compliant spend and strengthening supplier relationships.

A better employee experience, fueled by data and AI

At American Airlines, caring for people isn't just about the passenger journey, it's about the employee experience, too. From frontline crew to back-office teams, AA knows that when employees are empowered, customers feel the impact. That's why leaders like Alison see Coupa's AI-native, data-rich platform as more than a digital upgrade. It's a way to help teams work faster and enjoy what they do.

"We try to leverage the Coupa system to improve our employees' satisfaction. The user experience of Coupa, as well as for our suppliers, ultimately positively affects our customers," says Alison.

Multiple teams across the enterprise now use Coupa, from procurement to finance to accounting. Intelligent automation, AI-powered recommendations, and real-time dashboards on one platform reduce repetitive work and surface smarter decisions. The result: employees spend less time chasing approvals and more time driving outcomes that ripple across the organization.

"Our journey has been centralizing our processes, both domestically and globally," Alison explains. "We're excited to keep evolving with Coupa, especially being part of an early AI adopter community. We want to take our processes and our people to the next level."

Simplify your complex global operations with Coupa's AI-Native Total Spend Management platform. Click the button to learn Why 3,000+ Companies Trust Coupa.

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