

How e-invoicing will change accountant's work: pros and cons 3/41/24

The approach of 2026 sees businesses actively getting ready to accept a key change to the process of accounting – adoption of structured electronic invoices (e-invoicing). Despite the challenges this move brings, it allows businesses and accountants to optimise the processing of invoices and make it more transparent. This article explores how e-invoicing will change the accountant's work, as well as looking at the main advantages and disadvantages.

How e-invoicing will change the accountant's work

E-invoicing will considerably change the accounting routine, as manual work will be reduced while the role of automation and technological integration will grow considerably. Many accountants are used to paper invoices or PDF files they have to enter into accounting systems manually. E-invoices will help to automate this process, as they will be directly imported into accounting systems, securing faster and more accurate processing of invoices.

Less time will have to be spent checking and recording invoices, as the system will be able to predefine accounting entries. This will allow accountants to focus on activities with higher added value, such as analysing data and preparing financial statements. The automatic transfer of e-invoices to the State Revenue Service (SRS) will accelerate and facilitate the preparation of VAT returns.

Advantages for the accountant

Faster and more efficient processing of invoices

E-invoicing allows invoices to be processed much faster. With invoices being automatically integrated into accounting systems, the accountant does not have to enter or check each invoice manually. This saves time and minimises the risk of human error.

Improved cash flows

As e-invoices are processed faster, businesses can pay their bills on time, avoiding interest on arrears and possibly obtaining early payment discounts. This helps them plan their financial resources better.

Enhanced statutory compliance

E-invoicing ensures all of your invoices comply with the law, such as VAT requirements, and are reported to the SRS properly. This minimises the risk of being fined for filing incorrect data.

Automation and transparency

Automation cuts down on manual work and improves transparency in invoice processing. Accounting systems can have predefined accounting entries, which accelerates work and reduces errors.

Security

E-invoices are forwarded within an encrypted system of transmission offering a higher level of security compared with traditional methods, such as email.

Automatic transfer of data to the SRS

E-invoice data will be sent to the SRS automatically, leading to faster refunds of input VAT and improving the accuracy of VAT returns.

Disadvantages and challenges for the accountant

Initial implementation cost

The transition to e-invoices may require considerable investment in adapting your systems, especially if you are using different systems for issuing and receiving invoices. Additional costs can be incurred in staff training.

Monthly expenses

If you opt to use an external provider of e-invoice transfer services, such as the PEPPOL network, you may have to pay additional monthly service fees.

Reliance on technology

Accounting is becoming heavily reliant on technology. System failures or technical faults can make it difficult to issue and pay invoices, so backup plans will be necessary.

Security and cyber-attack risks

Data digitalisation increases the risk of cyber-attacks. Businesses will have to put tighter security measures in place to prevent fraud and data leaks.

Changes to document storage systems

The move to e-invoicing will require you to adapt your document storage systems and update your accounting policies to ensure they meet the new standards for electronic document governance.

Conclusions

While e-invoicing offers many significant benefits to businesses and accountants, adaptation will take some time and money. Automating and accelerating the processing of invoices will allow accountants to focus on strategic tasks by reducing the amount of manual work and the risk of error. At the same time, businesses will have to think about adapting their systems and processes, as well as training their staff to ensure the move to e-invoicing is successful and efficient.

Making timely preparations and understanding the pros and cons of e-invoicing will help accountants and business leaders get ready for the changes in 2026, ensuring the new technology not only facilitates their work but also improves financial governance in their company.