channel

Service description version 2.1

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Service description “channel”

With the interface to the UPG network, you are able to send electronic invoices to all registered users and your own customers. channel is a simple solution for managing all outgoing invoices efficiently and cost-effectively via a single channel.

Once the contract has been signed, the project team carries out and checks the one-time activation on the dispatch page. After successful activation, the system can be used for productive dispatch immediately - without local installation and without any effort.

During the initial dispatch of invoices, the UPG project team is available to help with any problems and make any necessary changes. Further invoices are then processed fully automatically. A check of various mandatory invoice details is carried out for each transmission that requires a corresponding check.

PDF data format

The invoicing party can simply send the documents to UPG in the form of a PDF file. The following requirements must be met:

- Only one invoice may be transmitted per PDF
- The order of the pages must be adhered to (invoice ends with the total amount)
- The PDF file must be machine-readable (not an image file)
- The fonts used must be included in the PDF
- The PDF must comply with the PDF/A 1b or PDF/A 2b standard
- The PDF version must be 1.3 or higher

The invoice layout cannot be changed without prior agreement with UPG.

UPG creates an invoice template based on the sample invoices provided by the client. The data is then read out using a special process and manually edited if necessary.

The sender master data (e.g. bank details) is transmitted to the invoice recipient based on the information provided by the client in the UPG portal, regardless of the information on the invoice. If there are any discrepancies following implementation, UPG will make changes for a fee or create additional invoice templates for a fee. With this type of processing, the PDF usually represents the original.

The transmitted invoices/PDFs must contain the mandatory details of a business letter and those of an invoice.

If e-mail is used as the transmission protocol, additional quantity/size restrictions apply (see handling of faulty documents).

Structured data format

As an alternative to PDF files, the connection to the UPG network can also be established by sending structured data formats. UPG distinguishes between standard formats and individual formats.

In the case of UPG standard formats, the structure is predefined by UPG. The invoice issuer can choose between the UPG standard XML, UPG variant SAP IDOC, UPG variant Edifact 01b, UPG standard CSV, ZUGFeRD 2.1 (EN16931) and XRechnung 2.0.1.

The corresponding format descriptions created by UPG will be made available to the customer.

Alternatively, the connection to the UPG network is made using an individual data format. Based on the data format provided by the client and the associated documentation, UPG takes over the individual adaptation and data conversion to the client's requirements.

In addition to the structured data format, a PDF file is also required for the provision of electronic invoices to customers and preparation for invoice printing. The client has the option of sending a PDF file to UPG or using a standard PDF layout from UPG. If the client creates the PDF himself, he must ensure that the current PDF layout of the client's company is used and that the content of the structured data record and the PDF match.

The transferred PDF must comply with the PDF/A 1b or PDF/A 2b standard.

Data transmission

The following protocols are available for the transfer of invoice data from the client to UPG:

- SFTP
- E-Mail
- REST API
- AS2
- AS4
- UPG Document Manager (software which transfers your data to UPG)
- Manual upload to the portal via the user interface of the channel

In some countries, further transfer options are available:

- OFTP2
- FTPS
- Web Services (SOAP)
- https PUT / POST

If you wish to use these, please clarify in advance whether they are available.

UPG also offers national PEPPOL connections to German, Hungarian authorities and other international authorities, e.g: Federal Portal (ZRE), OZG-RE, City of Bremen, NAV Hungary and others.

Please refer to the separately available documentation of the transfer protocols.

Sending attachments

Attachments to documents (orders, delivery bills, proof of work) can be uploaded as separate files in addition to the main document. These are merged with the main document and combined into one PDF file. The attachment must be in the form of an image file (PDF). When sending a PDF invoice by e-mail, PDF attachments must already be integrated into the PDF invoice when it is sent.

In the XRechnung 2.0.1 output format, the attachments are embedded in the XML data record. Restrictions on the possible file types are defined by the XRechnung specification or other external specifications. UPG has no influence on these specifications.

Separate attachments that are transmitted by e-mail cannot be processed by UPG.

In order to process attachments, UPG needs to be able

- to clearly assign the attachments to a document
- to recognize when a document is ready for processing

These requirements are met if (or condition)

- The invoice is uploaded complete with attachments via the channel user interface
- The number of attachments to the invoices is always identical and the invoice image can be recognized as such by UPG (individual configuration, asynchronous transmission is possible)
- The attachments are transferred synchronously with the document and the invoice image can be recognized as such by UPG (individual configuration)

For “PDF by email sender”, which work without a structured format, there are also various combination options that can be set in the channel. Please refer to the user manual.

If you are planning to send attachments, please enquire in advance about the exact sending options. Not everything is always possible.

Routing / Assignment of the recipient format

The customer number assigned to your customer by you (alphanumeric) with a unique description (anchor word) is expected on every invoice. The anchor word is not required for structured data records. The customer number is required to identify the customer and the receipt options stored in the portal for this purpose.

If no customer number is stored on an invoice or the corresponding master data record is missing, you can choose between the following options:

- the invoice is transferred to the print service provider. In this case, no campaign is displayed on the cover page (see chapter Customer management)

- the invoice remains in the system as incorrect. If the recipient's master data record is missing, you can create it manually. Processing of the invoice must then be restarted in the channel.

Mandatory information

Ensure complete mandatory information: Our service checks invoices before they are sent to the invoice recipient. This ensures that both the semantic requirements of international standards and the individual requirements of invoice recipients are met.

Handling of incorrect documents

If you submit documents with errors, these are automatically blocked by UPG and you are subsequently informed.

The following errors are possible:

Category	Error
E-Mail sender address	E-mail was sent from an unregistered address.

E-Mail attachment	• No attachment in e-mail • Attachment was not a PDF • PDF attachment was larger than 2 MB
Invoice fields	Mandatory information* is missing on the invoice. This mandatory information can originate from semantic requirements of formats (e.g. XRechnung) or mandatory fields of network customers who, for example, have instructed UPG to reject invoices without an order reference.

Channel functions

Multiple sender organizations in the channel

In the channel, it is possible to send documents for different organizational units that are under the umbrella of the channel user via a single sending channel. This type of processing always requires an individual project.

The documents sent via a channel can then be distributed to several organizations on the UPG platform, for example via a distribution process, or assigned to different processing routes within an organization. A separate channel is required for each organization, e.g. different companies or subsidiaries.

The distribution process can be used for structured data and for PDF documents and must be implemented individually.

PDF creation from structed data in the sender’s layout

A PDF invoice layout can be created from structured data according to the sender's specifications, which is then ready to be sent to the invoice recipient. Instead of the UPG standard layout, a design in the style of the channel user can be used.

The invoice sender is obliged to ensure that the invoice content and layout requirements comply with the legal requirements for invoices in the sender's country.

Acknowledgements

By default, the invoice sender is notified by e-mail of the following actions:

- Errors in the transmission or the transmitted data from the sender to UPG (manual, only in the case of automated data transmission)
- Errors in validations commissioned by the sender (automatic)
- Error in validations requested by the recipient (automatic

Some recipient systems return information about the positive/negative processing of the data. This feedback is then also sent to the sender by e-mail (automatically). Other messages generated by the recipient system cannot currently be transmitted.

If desired, the channel user can receive the automatically generated notifications as a structured file via a selectable transmission protocol.

If external platforms that do not return success or error messages need to be served, UPG cannot return a

qualified message either. The sender must then request this information either directly from the recipient or via the non-feedback third-party platform.

Customer management

- You can manage your invoice recipients independently via the UPG channel. All you have to do is set and save the desired shipping option for the invoice recipient once.
- Manual entry of customer data or import of lists.
- Multiple contact persons per customer as invoice recipients for email dispatch.
- Language selection per contact person selectable between German and English.
- Fixed additional details, such as a supplier number.
- Sending invoices by email as original PDF, XRechnung 2.0.1 or as ZUGFeRD 2.1 (EN16931) PDF with structured data.
- Additional dispatch of UPG standard data formats XML, CSV, SAP IDOC, Edifact as booking aid.
- Setup of a UPG e-mail address for e-mail dispatch.
- Forwarding of undeliverable e-mail addresses to an e-mail address specified by you.
- Definition of a subject line and email text for all customers.
- Customer-specific definition of email subject and text in the channel user interface.
- Configuration of customer-specific file names (only for PDF files in email dispatch).

Individual customer onboarding

If a customer is not part of the UPG platform but requires a special form of electronic data transmission, UPG can connect this recipient on behalf of the invoice issuer. The transmission method can also be selected. The price includes the transmission of a test file.

Sponsored buyer: There are invoice recipients in the UPG network who are not customers of UPG. Separate costs are incurred for sending to these invoice recipients. After commissioning, UPG informs the invoice recipient and provides test data.

Archiving

Both the supplier and the recipient must keep invoices for 10 years. As the period only starts at the end of the calendar year, it can be extended to almost 11 years. The invoice must be legible until the deadline expires. The retention obligation also applies to electronic invoices. If archiving is not already carried out on the systems of the invoice recipient or invoice sender, archiving can be commissioned by UPG.

- The standard period for archiving on the UPG platform is 3 months. Within this period, the client can retrieve his data free of charge via the portal. Any further archiving of documents is carried out by the client.
- Online archiving for 12 months can be ordered as an option
- Online archiving for 11 years can be ordered as an option. This allows the client to access the data at any time during the entire statutory retention period.

There are different archiving scenarios:

- The sender creates the original and archives it in their system. This clarifies the archiving process. However, some customers cannot then be reached (example: sender creates PDF, recipient wants structured data without PDF or an XRechnung).
- The original is created on the UPG platform according to the invoice recipient's specifications and differs from the original format. There are 3 ways to ensure compliance with the legal archiving obligation:
    - The client undertakes to undertake the archiving himself. He has the option of downloading the document from the UPG portal for 3 months. After the 3 months have expired, the document will be deleted from the UPG portal. If the sender has failed to download the data in time, the data will be lost. With a bit of luck, the sender can only request it from their customer.
    - It is still possible to order archiving via UPG for 11 years for a fee. See the LTA service description.
    - Furthermore, you can order the return from the UPG archive to the client's archive for a fee directly during setup.

In addition to the archive options available as standard (3 months, 1 year, 11 years), the invoice sender can receive the processed/generated data via an agreed transmission protocol. So that the archive files can be assigned to the documents in the sender system, it is possible to receive the archive files unzipped or zipped. The naming can be determined by the client (additional costs may be incurred).

Roaming

UPG supports the establishment of roaming agreements between the various service providers of electronic invoice exchange services. This should ensure that individual companies do not have to set up multiple interfaces to the various e-invoicing service providers. In such a scenario, the invoice data is sent from the client to its service provider (UPG), from there to the recipient's service provider, which prepares the data for the invoice recipient.

If the client's customers already use other service providers, UPG attempts to establish a corresponding roaming agreement with this provider. UPG charges an additional roaming fee per roaming partner for invoices that are processed via a roaming agreement.

As a member of the European Association of E-Invoicing Providers “EESPA” and the German “Verband elektronische Rechnung e.V.”, UPG already has numerous connections to other providers worldwide.

UPG can draw on extensive expertise thanks to its many years of actively shaping global roaming agreements and can offer its customers a wide range of roaming connections. This enables a high degree of global networking for participants in the UPG network.

Invoice printing

UPG offers invoice printing in some countries. The costs for printing include the material, postage, enveloping and dispatch via Deutsche Post. Mail merge (clustering) and envelope insertion are not included. Information from invoices is only recorded and read at header level when the invoice is printed. Data processing takes place in data centers that are ISO 27.001 certified.

Printing and enveloping are carried out in cooperation with renowned service providers throughout Germany. All processes are well established and certified. The print service provider requires an approx. 1 cm wide left margin for technical reasons. Each document is scaled accordingly for this purpose.

Our services include:

- Transfer of data to secure data centers

- Preparation of documents in a professional print pool
- Electronic IT franking and postage optimization
- Application of inserting control for automatic inserting
- Use of neutral paper and neutral inserting envelope
- Printing of the prepared documents by a print service provider
- Handover of the items to the delivery service provider (Deutsche Post)
- Data receipt at UPG by 8:00 a.m. guarantees handover to the postal service provider on the same day and usually delivery on the following day
- Generation of a cover page containing the recipient's address and the QR paycode for easy payment with the Volksbanken and Raiffeisenbanken and Sparkassen banking app

Giro Code

In cooperation with the Volks- und Raiffeisenbanken and the Sparkassen Finanzgruppe, UPG supports the SEPA payment process for electronic and paper-based invoices. Using a specially generated QR code, all relevant information for the payment can be read out error-free via the respective banking app. The customer then authorizes the payment on their smartphone or tablet using ChipTAN or the new PushTAN procedure. The QR code is printed as a preview page/cover page.

This function is only available in Germany. Ask us about alternatives if you would like to attach a Swiss QR code to your invoice in Switzerland, for example.

Customer activation

Optionally, a freely configurable letter text can be printed on the cover page with which you can suggest that your customer switch to electronic invoicing.

The customer can use a configurable registration page to register to receive invoices electronically as a PDF file.

The customer can access this input page via an additional QR code printed on the letter, which they can read using their smartphone and a suitable app. A 10-digit numerical code is also generated on the letter, which the customer can use to register themselves on the https://www.UPG.com/code page with their individual numerical code.

The numerical code is valid for four weeks.

Receiving orders

Channel makes it possible to receive orders. However, the network available for this is still very small as of 2023. As orders are usually time-critical, only orders from senders that have a direct structured interface to UPG can be processed.

The order module must be purchased for a fee if required.

Sending order confirmations

Channel enables order confirmations to be sent. Sending order confirmations is part of the order module.

Versions

Version	Date	Description / adjusment	Author
2.1	20.11.2023	Introduction versioning	Herbert Angermann
2.1	30.07.2024	Change of letterhead and company name to UPG	Heike Kießling