



corcentric™

Getting Started with PEPPOL for Electronic Invoicing

Introduction

PEPPOL started life in Norway in 2008 as a framework to guide the exchange of electronic documents between European governments. With an increasing drive for digitisation within government administrations, there was a need to ensure cross-border document delivery did not become a minefield of compatibility and connectivity challenges.

With over 30 countries now actively participating in the ongoing development of the PEPPOL framework, its status as a *de facto* B2G standard has never been more certain. So much so, that governments

outside of Europe, such as those in Australia, New Zealand, Canada, and even the US, look to PEPPOL as an established framework to adopt for their e-delivery projects.

As more governments require invoices to be delivered to their administrations electronically (e.g. Germany from November 2020), businesses need to adopt a compatible form of electronic invoicing. PEPPOL adheres to the requirements of the EU electronic invoicing directive ([2014/55/EU](#)) and stands out as a well-established approach to meet these and future requirements.

SHARE THIS GUIDE



This guide looks at what PEPPOL is, where it is best applied, where its limitations lie, and how to overcome these. We will also review why the PEPPOL network provides an easy, low-cost, low-risk approach to delivering documents to organisations.

What's Inside?

Click on the sections to navigate through the guide.

01
What is
PEPPOL

04
Who uses
PEPPOL

07
About
Corcentric
EIPP

02
The Structure of
PEPPOL

05
Why is PEPPOL so
popular?

03
Is PEPPOL EDI?
Do I need more
than just PEPPOL?

06
How do I get started
with PEPPOL?

01

What is PEPPOL

PEPPOL is a framework, not a platform, language or service in itself. It includes a set of guidelines and specifications to facilitate the exchange, management, and tracking of electronic documents between participating organisations. There is also a PEPPOL network of connected platforms, securely and efficiently exchanging electronic documents in a specific way.

PEPPOL is based on three major pillars:

01

PEPPOL eDelivery Network

This is the network of access points and the platforms that connect them. It describes and facilitates the flow of all PEPPOL-compliant documents between participating parties.

02

PEPPOL Business Interoperability Specifications 'BIS'

These specifications define what is required to format and exchange documents via the PEPPOL network.

03

PEPPOL Transport Infrastructure Agreements-TIA

These agreements are the legal framework that define the network governance from region to region. The agreements are required for access points and service metadata publishers to engage with the PEPPOL network.

One of the biggest benefits of using PEPPOL to deliver electronic invoices is that there is a clear and well-established set of requirements for use and delivery. The popularity of PEPPOL as a framework indicates that it is very likely to be here for the long term and become more widely used over time.

02

The Structure of PEPPOL

An important consideration for any organisation considering PEPPOL is that it is a path, not a destination and, as such, requires careful thought in how you connect to it and maintain your ongoing interaction with it.

OpenPEPPOL, which is the non-profit organisation that defines and owns the agreement of what constitutes PEPPOL, and each of the 14 PEPPOL authorities exist to evolve the requirements and capabilities of PEPPOL over time, much like the continued evolution of the Internet on which the PEPPOL network runs.

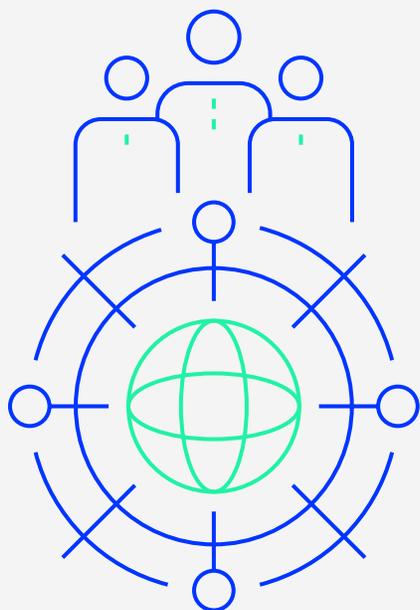
01

OpenPEPPOL

OpenPEPPOL, a non-profit organisation, underpins and oversees the whole PEPPOL network. It has the responsibility for defining, maintaining, and managing the evolution of the architectural, procedural, and technical standards that constitute PEPPOL.

OpenPEPPOL is analogous to the W3C consortium, which defines technological standards and guidelines underpinning the world wide web. OpenPEPPOL exists to do a similar job of stewarding the evolution of the PEPPOL network in accordance with current and pending EU law.

OpenPEPPOL grants status to the PEPPOL authorities and actively unites the local implementations of PEPPOL across all regions. In order to maintain their status, the PEPPOL Authorities must continue to contribute to OpenPEPPOL.



02

PEPPOL Authorities

OpenPEPPOL standards and guidelines form the backbone of the PEPPOL network, but it is the local PEPPOL Authorities that define each region's specific regulations. This is a necessary layer of hierarchy to ensure PEPPOL adheres to regional legislation in the realms of data transfer, management, security, and other areas.



Not all countries have a dedicated PEPPOL authority. Countries using PEPPOL without a regional authority will have access points that operate in a way defined exclusively by OpenPEPPOL, but those with a local PEPPOL Authority will have access points that are more tightly regulated – meeting both OpenPEPPOL standards and the additional requirements of the local PEPPOL Authority in the region.

03



Access Points

Access points are how a business connects to the international PEPPOL network. Access points may offer PEPPOL connection compliant with a specific region, adhering to PEPPOL authority requirements for that region, or broader compatibility beyond specific regions. Choosing the right access point will largely depend on where your customers are located.

At Corcentric, we offer complete flexibility with regards to which access points are used. We can make recommendations and select access points for you, or work with a specific access point if you have already identified a preference.

Access points are certified by a PEPPOL Authority, registered with OpenPEPPOL, and have an obligation to stay up-to-date with the latest standards, security, and performance requirements – or they lose their access to the PEPPOL Network.

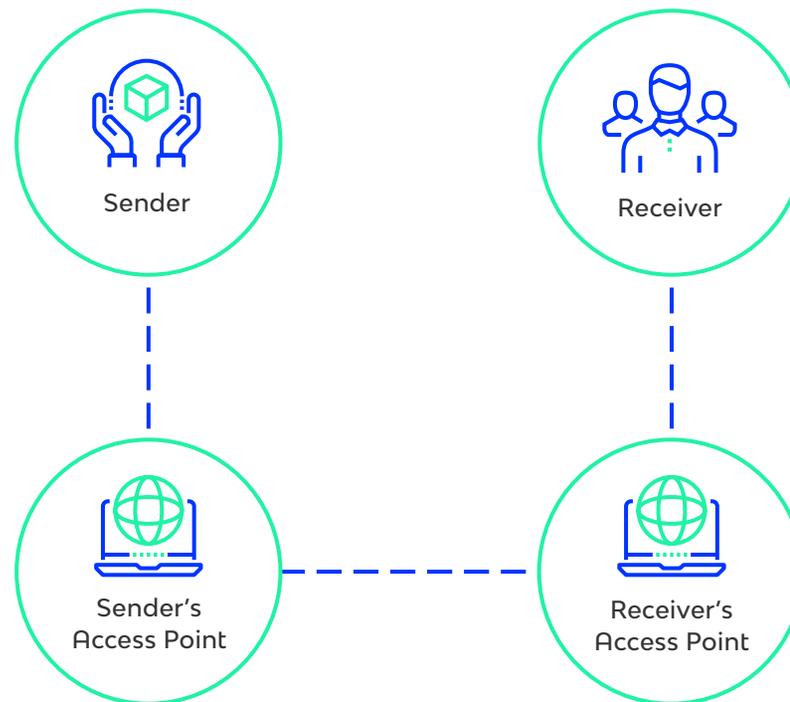
04

The advantage of PEPPOL's 4-Corner Model is that the complexities of the connection the data parsing/handling/transfer are isolated to the access point and the relationship between the access point and the supplier or receiver. This makes connection easier, more scalable, and preserves Network independence from suppliers and receivers.

The 4-Corner Model

The 4-Corner Model is a way of describing the structure of two parties' connection and communication with the PEPPOL Network.

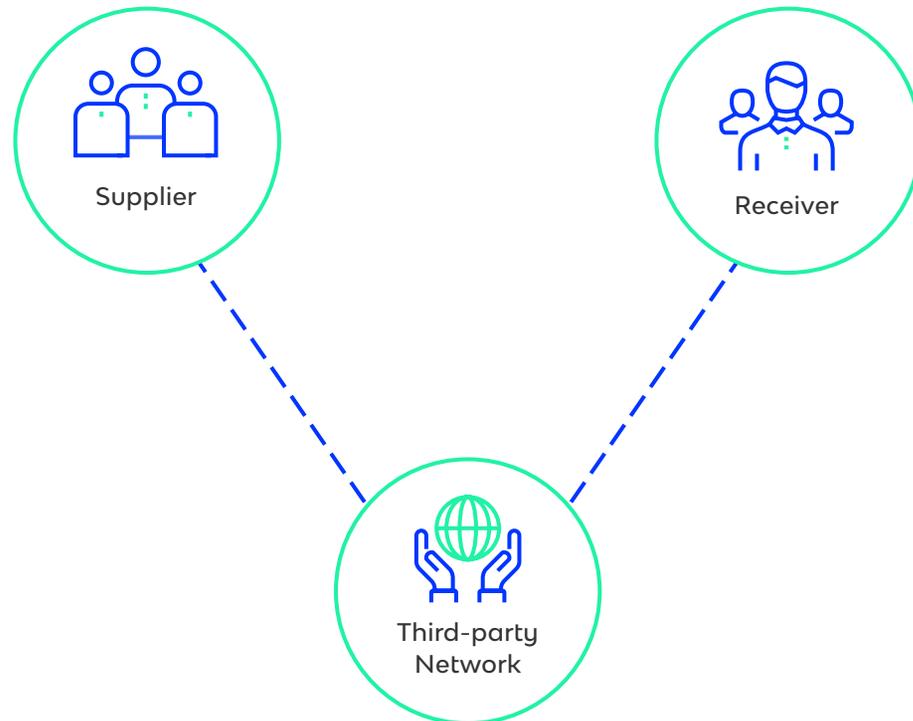
The four 'corners' are:



04

This differs from traditional Sender-to-Receiver direct connections, found when sending invoices over FTP, direct EDI, or other 1-to-1 connections. These connections could be thought of as fitting a 2-Corner Model, where the sender and receiver are considered 'corners'.

Invoicing networks, such as Tungsten, Ariba, and others, introduce another party to the 2-Corner Model – a third corner, so to speak. So these networks could be considered as a 3-Corner Model with corners:



03

Is PEPPOL EDI? Do I need more than just PEPPOL?

PEPPOL is a framework that sends documents electronically. The documents are sent as XML, using the UBL standard. Because documents are of a machine-readable standard (XML), many businesses refer to this as an electronic data interchange or EDI process, even though there are no EDI standards involved.

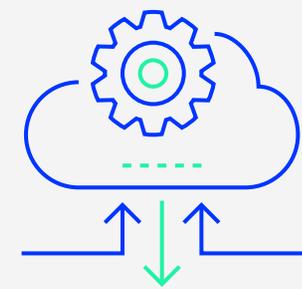
EDI invoicing solutions are not generally PEPPOL compliant, but some e-invoicing services (e.g. Corcentric EIPP) are able to incorporate PEPPOL requirements within [the broader scope of EDI](#), alongside other types of document delivery (e.g. PDF via email or even automated print and post) through one managed service.



Specific invoicing requirements can vary across different regions using PEPPOL. These regional variations are captured in the CIUS (core invoice usage specification) aspect of the [European Norm EN 16931-1:2017](#) for electronic invoicing within that region. For instance, the XRechnung format in Germany. These regional nuances are important to ensure compliance with local regulatory requirements, such as tax, archiving and authenticity verification.



PEPPOL may be perfect for working with public sector businesses in certain regions, but it is important to be aware that delivering invoices outside of the public sector may require more flexibility in what is sent and how it is formatted. There is no requirement for B2B invoicing to comply with PEPPOL BIS or use the PEPPOL network, like there is for B2G invoicing.



04 Who uses PEPPOL

PEPPOL was designed to be used by the public sector, where the vast majority of implementations are. As a considerable proportion of the private sector sell into the public sector, there is an inherent spread beyond this initial market.

More commonly, private sector businesses need to incorporate the capacity to deliver invoices to the PEPPOL network alongside a variety of non-PEPPOL delivery requirements.

PEPPOL started life as a European venture and has successfully become the B2G e-invoicing framework of choice across more than 30 countries. This rapid and successful growth has established PEPPOL as the leading framework of its kind, resulting in consideration and subsequent adoption far beyond Europe in recent years. Singapore, Australia, and New Zealand have adopted PEPPOL as their standard for B2G invoicing. Canada and the US are at earlier stages with deployment within their public sectors, too.

Whilst the spread beyond Europe looks encouraging, PEPPOL is extremely unlikely to penetrate South and Central America to any great degree – as these regions have well-established, and widely used, e-invoicing structures that predate the expansion of PEPPOL beyond Europe.

05

Why is PEPPOL so popular?

01

PEPPOL was designed to fulfil a growing need for standardisation in B2G electronic document exchange. That need has only grown over time as governments seek to maximise the potential for savings and improved visibility through process digitisation.

02

The international draw of PEPPOL increases as more countries require the use of it. Despite some regional variances, PEPPOL is close to an international standard for much of the B2G transactions in the EU and beyond.

03

The open source nature of PEPPOL has allowed much collaboration and investment of time from participating PEPPOL Authorities, resulting in an ongoing commitment to the framework.

04

PEPPOL is one approach businesses (particularly private sector businesses) can take when deploying e-invoicing and can easily be integrated with broader e-invoicing solutions as one channel amongst others for invoice delivery.



How do I get started with PEPPOL?



Any business wanting to exchange documents over the PEPPOL network needs to connect via an access point. Working with a service provider, such as Corcentric EIPP, is the easiest way to do this. Your PEPPOL partner can manage the process of getting set up with a suitable access point and meeting the document-level specifications needed for PEPPOL compliance in the regions you intend to exchange documents with.

How can I minimise the risks when moving to PEPPOL?

Consider the risk of your invoice delivery becoming too narrowly focussed. Are all of your customers using PEPPOL now? If not, can you project which customers will move to PEPPOL in the future? When your invoicing requires delivery to any non-PEPPOL customers, PEPPOL compatibility should only be considered as part of a broader e-invoicing solution.

A solution partner like Corcentric can manage your PEPPOL network invoicing alongside other EDI connections, as well as PDF invoices over email, and even traditional printed and posted invoices. In fact, the most effective way to connect to the PEPPOL network and comply with regional requirements is to find a suitable service provider to work with. This enables you to outsource the risks, whilst retaining control of the project.

Many businesses have underestimated the risks of trying to deploy PEPPOL via in-house

IT deployment. As with any large and complex IT project, there is a risk of getting bogged down with development costs and time. There is also the ongoing risk of staying current with changes to PEPPOL requirements. In many cases, the challenge of hiring and maintaining PEPPOL (and other EDI/e-invoicing) experts renders this impractical to take on as a purely in-house project.

Different service providers may have preferences, or limitations, on which access points they can work with. This point needs to be carefully considered to ensure you are able to connect with and exchange documents with every customer in every region you intend to service – both now and in the future.

Consider also how your service provider charges for your project – is there a high initial outlay, or will delivery costs be charged as a per-unit cost for the number of documents exchanged?

Moving into electronic invoicing, via PEPPOL, should be a future-proof change for any business. Ensure you have every possible invoicing scenario covered by your solution partner of choice to minimise costly extensions or changes to your service provider in the future.

Arrange a call with one of our e-invoicing experts to find out how you can include PEPPOL compatibility within your invoicing



07

About Corcentric EIPP

Corcentric EIPP is a managed service dedicated to streamlining, automating, and enhancing business invoicing, from delivery through to payment. Corcentric EIPP ensures accurate and efficient delivery of invoices to your customers in the medium which suits them.

Beyond saving time and cost through invoice automation, Corcentric EIPP enables a risk-free and seamless shift towards electronic invoicing, reducing errors and driving down DSO.

Corcentric EIPP also removes the classic challenges of document storage and retrieval for auditing and compliance. Businesses depend on Corcentric EIPP to provide secure online access to their document distribution history, facilitating ease of reporting, performance analysis, and proof of delivery, along with a range of other document management functions.

Headquartered in the United States, Corcentric helps more than 2,000 of the largest companies leverage smarter technology and services to reduce operating costs, improve cash flow, and unlock the hidden value within their enterprise.

The Corcentric Difference.

We are an organization of industry experts that have a deep understanding of the markets we serve and the problems we solve for our customers. We take a consultative, insight-led approach to every interaction, and combine people and expertise with technology to deliver better solutions. As industry experts in the business of helping business, we pride ourselves in our relentless focus on consumer satisfaction. The success of our customers is a reflection of our success.



WHAT COULD PEPPOL DO FOR YOU?

Let us show you how EIPP enables connection to the PEPPOL network.

[CONNECT WITH AN EXPERT >](#)

PRODUCT INQUIRIES

For product and sales inquiries, please contact:

Call: +44 20 3868 0216

Email: eipp@corcentric.com >

Web: corcentric.com/contact >

FOLLOW US



SHARE THIS GUIDE

