

BIC Advisory on Invoice or Delivery Note Provision for Book Deliveries

Introduction

This issue arises because some book distributors supply EDI invoices electronically to booksellers and the paperwork included with the books is a delivery note, rather than an invoice. The delivery note may not include an invoice number and so goods-in at the bookshop is made more difficult because the delivery has no invoice against which to receive the books, i.e. to check on prices, discounts, VAT, etc.

One solution deployed by The Booksellers Association on Batch.co.uk, enables booksellers to key into Batch a delivery note number and receive an invoice number and the invoice details on Batch. To use this service (which is free to BA members), the supplier has to be on Batch and has to supply details of their invoice to Batch in a timely manner.

A leading bookseller has supplied BIC with some key points for this advisory.

Suppliers

If you supply goods with a Delivery Note and you generate an Invoice afterwards, there are number of ways to help the bookseller link the two documents, allowing them efficiently to process the invoice for payment.

- 1) EDI Invoices – ensure the delivery note reference is populated in the first sub-field of the DELN element of the ODD “Order and Delivery References” segment. Use of the DELN field is mandatory, either a delivery note number and/or a despatch date must be sent. Best practice is to send both.
- 2) Include the delivery note number on your PDF invoices.
- 3) Check with your customer to see if they’d like automatically to receive PDF copies via email.
- 4) Send your EDI data to Batch (including the DELN field, as above) so they can add the data to their lookup tool.
- 5) Publish your own look-up tool on your website and provide a hyperlink or URL to this website on your email and PDFs.

Booksellers

If you are supplied with a Delivery Note and later you receive an invoice, there are a number of ways you can link the two documents.

- 1) EDI Invoices – if you process EDI invoices, the delivery note number should be contained in the invoice file. Speak to your systems supplier to see if it can be used in your system (the DELN element of the ODD segment).

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- 2) Ask your supplier automatically to send you PDF copies of each invoice by email.
- 3) Use the tool on the Batch website to search for invoice numbers based on delivery note numbers.
- 4) Check if the supplier has a lookup tool on their website.

Independent booksellers or small chains using Bertline can download invoices from Batch for use in goods-in processing. It is recommended that booksellers should contact both Bertline support and Batch to ensure that these suppliers are set up correctly on Batch (e.g. that Bertline is given the correct supplier GLNs and that Bertline can access the invoices). Receipting goods against electronic invoices enables booksellers to produce an exception report for shortages and be prompted to accept or reject price or VAT changes.

Suppliers who supply large volumes of products to bookshops are recommended to join Batch. Note that these products don't have to be books. There are now some non-book suppliers on Batch. Booksellers are recommended to check which suppliers are now on Batch as the list may have grown since they last checked.