

Reduced Risk, Increased Compliance & More - America To Go Brings Catering Cost Efficiencies to UCSF



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- Jim Hine, UCSF Chief Procurement Officer

Project Overview

Catering costs - from small meetings to large campus events - represent a sizeable percentage of spend at the University of California - San Francisco (UCSF). The University adopted a managed solution developed by E&I partner America To Go, LLC, that enabled it to reduce supplier risk, more effectively track spending, increase financial controls and compliance, and provide users access to a customized, diverse and high quality array of restaurant and catering choices - all supported by a dedicated account manager and 24-hour customer service.

Challenge

“Many of our catering suppliers did not have adequate insurance - particularly auto insurance - which posed a real risk for us when they were on campus,” said Carla Prado, UC Program Administrator. “We needed an effective system of ensuring that we had all the necessary documentation for these suppliers updated and on file. Reducing this risk was a top priority.”

UCSF also identified considerable internal processing costs that could be reduced with a streamlined ordering process. In addition, the University had no way of controlling tips, service fees, or unapproved orders associated with its catering, and was looking for a way to achieve significant savings through capping those costs.

Key Benefits of the ATG Solution

Streamlined Process & Efficiencies - ATG processes all food orders placed with outside vendors, leading to improved operational efficiencies, since everything is within the system and automated.

Controlled Tips & Service Fees - ATG applies the university’s standard tipping policy to all orders, ensuring there are no over-payments.

Increased Spend Visibility - ATG provides customized reports on all relevant food ordering activity.

Increased Compliance - ATG helps achieve entertainment policy compliance by maintaining a repository of all caterer/restaurant required documentation, including the monitoring of insurance requirements.

Vendor Management - ATG handles outreach to all suppliers, managing these relationships with regard to menus, training, compliance, tastings, and campus initiatives.

Additional University Initiatives - ATG provides a valuable vehicle to enhance campus initiatives including sustainability, diversity businesses and healthy beverage compliance.

Customized Solution - ATG customizes its solution to meet the needs of all campus and vendor stakeholders, including accounting approval, and technical requirements.

Customer Service/Dedicated Account Manager - ATG provides 24/7 Customer Service support for customers and vendors. In addition, ATG provides a dedicated Account Manager serving as point person with Procurement, A/P, Sustainability, users, vendors, and other major stakeholders.

E-Procurement Integration - ATG integrates with e-procurements systems, allowing members to utilize existing workflows for routing, approvals, invoicing, payment, accounting, and reporting.



Solution

In March of 2013, UCSF signed on to begin utilizing E&I's America To Go (ATG) contract.

ATG is an online food ordering and expense management company that provides customizable electronic marketplaces for clients to connect with a broad network of local restaurants and caterers. At UCSF, ATG maintains a fully functional punch-out available through SciQuest, supported by 24-hour customer service.

The punch-out makes purchasing food for on-campus meetings and events quick and efficient, utilizing built-in workflows for routing and electronic approval. ATG integrates menus from the University's approved caterers and restaurants into a single system, allowing users to conveniently create catering orders through a customized interface.

There are currently more than 110 vendors available on UCSF's platform, with many more in the pipeline. According to Carla, "We made the program a requirement on campus, which means that all catering purchases must be placed through ATG. We realize we've got to provide as many options as possible, so there's no need for people to go outside of the system."

Key Benefits Realized by UCSF

Customized Campus Solution - UCSF worked closely with ATG to customize the solution to meet the University's complex accounting, approval, and technical requirements and the needs of UCSF's many disparate stakeholders.

Customized Vendor Solution - UCSF worked with ATG to develop a customized solution to meet the needs of UCSF's three major classes of vendors: leaseholders that lease space from the campus; strategic vendors with special relationships to the University; and, the larger restaurant and catering community.

Streamlined Process/Electronic Invoicing - In moving forward with an electronic platform, UCSF was able to automate its ordering, billing, approval and payment processes, resulting in significant process improvements, including a substantial reduction in accounting time, costs, and paperwork related to food ordering.

Increased Compliance - ATG ensures that all vendors enabled on the system have the proper documentation (including auto insurance and health permits) and that the University is specifically named on insurance certificates. All of this information is maintained elec-

tronically in a central repository that can be easily accessed by UCSF staff whenever necessary. "Because ATG has the current documentation on file, we're able to meet entertainment policy compliance closer to the 100 percent that we want to reach," Carla explained. "That benefit alone has been extremely valuable."

Controlled Tips & Service Fees - The ATG platform ensures that users select gratuities within UCSF guidelines. In addition, ATG has helped monitor service fees across all suppliers. This has helped create significant external cost savings, while increasing spend visibility.

Increased Spend Visibility - "The reporting capabilities available through ATG are a considerable improvement over what I was able to capture previously," Carla said. "Now when I am data mining, it is much easier to track spend and utilization. It brings a lot of visibility to that data that we never had before."

Healthy Beverage Initiative - A notable benefit for UCSF has been the opportunity to advance other campus specific initiatives through the platform. One of these programs, a Healthy Beverage Initiative, included the removal of all sugary beverages from campus. As a national leader on research into the link between sugary drinks and obesity, this was a major priority for the Uni-

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versity. “We made it a requirement that all suppliers had to be ‘Healthy Beverage compliant,’ meaning they are not permitted to sell sugary beverages to our campus,” said Carla. “By implementing this requirement through the ATG platform, we were able to ensure near 100% compliance. This is something we are extremely excited about.”

Sustainability - ATG has helped the University advance its sustainability goals by ensuring that suppliers meet minimum standards, surveying suppliers to assess compliance with higher optional standards, customizing the site to promote more sustainable vendors, and creating a reporting mechanism to track progress. UCSF is required to meet ambitious 2020 Zero Waste and sustainable food purchasing goals set by the University of California Office of the President (UCOP). Carla noted that ATG is taking UCSF a long way toward achieving these goals in food procurement.

Diversity - UCSF is working with ATG to support Small or Diversity Businesses. Carla explained, “We are focused on highlighting these businesses for users, making it as easy as possible for them to work with us, while generating better data to track our progress.”

Takeaway

For UCSF, the value-added services provided by ATG have exceeded expectations. For users, ATG serves as a powerful ally and advocate who works on their behalf to ensure excellent value and service, while providing tools to efficiently find, order and expense food orders. For UCSF procurement, ATG provides effective solutions to control spend, ensure compliance, enable total visibility, and advance university initiatives. ATG has also been invaluable in continuing to build and enhance the program.

Carla noted, “I would undoubtedly recommend E&I’s America To Go contract to any members interested in a sup-



plier that will work with them to radically simplify restaurant and catering procurement, while increasing policy compliance, streamlining processes, advancing university initiatives, and capturing considerable cost savings. In fact, ATG has been such a great partner, I’m looking forward to rolling them out at UC Berkeley.”

UCSF’s Chief Procurement Officer, Jim Hine, added, “The ATG managed catering program is the ‘perfect storm’, in a good way, for UCSF. It has enabled us to control external catering costs, reduce internal catering management process costs, reduce risk, and enable our strategic programs such as healthy eating, sustainability, and supplier diversity. All that, plus we have the opportunity to work with some amazing new caterers with awesome food.”

About Us

E&I Cooperative Services is the member-owned, not-for-profit sourcing cooperative focused on education. Members have access to a diverse portfolio of competitively solicited contracts, electronic procurement platforms and consulting services to help reduce costs and optimize supply chain efficiencies. E&I’s [America To Go](#) contract will improve your food ordering experience by providing you with streamlined order tracking customizable expense policy enforcement, and efficient reconciliation functionality.

To learn more about how you can better manage your catering expenses online with America To Go, please visit www.eandi.org. You may also contact Paul Harris, E&I Business Development Manager, at pharris@eandi.org.