



ACQUISITIONS on Auto-Pilot

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The University of Plymouth has been using Electronic Data Interchange (EDI) for ordering from our main book supplier since 2004. A major benefit has been the reduction in the amount of paper generated, which has contributed to Plymouth's status as one of the greenest universities in the UK. There was also a reduction in the time taken for an order to reach the supplier.

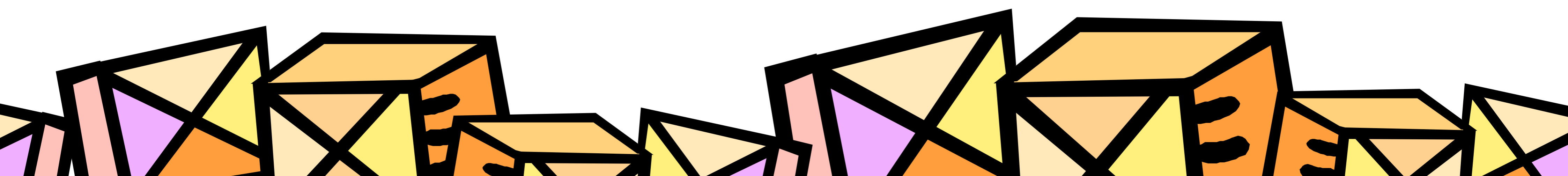
We are now using EDI ordering for both our main book suppliers. This has required some trial and error matching MARC fields to EDI fields, and ensuring that the order template also contained the appropriate fields.

The next step was to investigate whether we could minimize the data entry and paper passing at an earlier stage in the order process. One of our suppliers had systems in place to do this. So now titles are identified on the supplier's database by our subject librarians (SL), details such as location, item type and fund are added. The subject librarian saves the list for later retrieval by our acquisitions staff who will download the file of records. Using the bulk import rules we create an order record, line items and a brief bib record in Voyager. After the order is checked for completeness it is ready for approval and is sent back to the supplier by EDI.

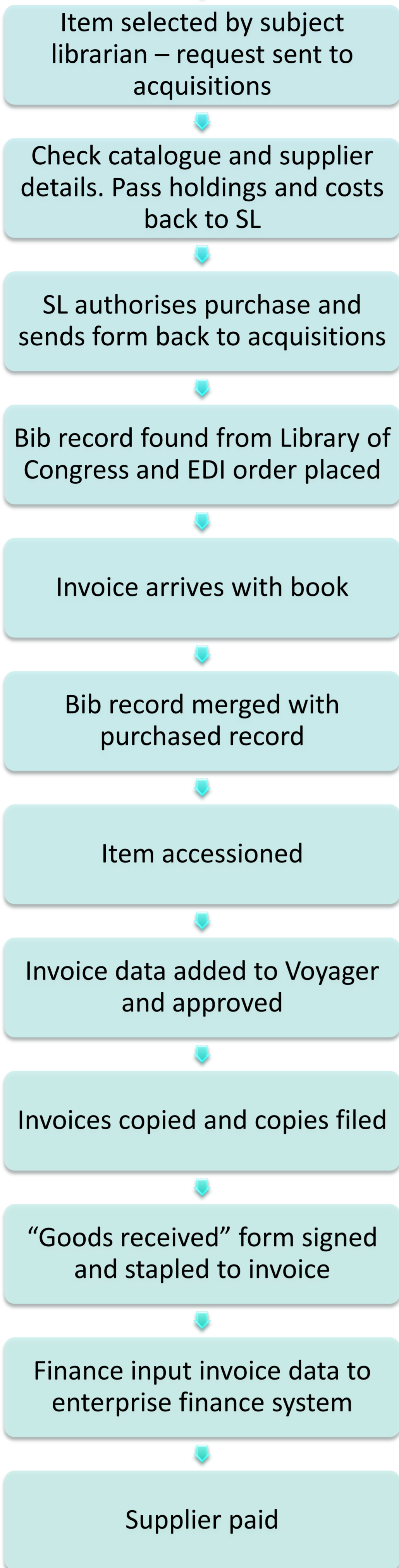
Receiving invoices via EDI has taken longer to implement than we would have wished. Our main supplier at the time did not have procedures in place and took a long time to change our customer profile to match our requirements. We were luckier with our other supplier who was able to provide invoices in this way almost immediately. We now collect invoices from the ftp servers of both of our suppliers.

We are now planning a project to extract the data fields of approved invoices from Voyager for transmission directly into the university financial system (Agresso). This should save considerable staff time as the finance staff will not need to re-key in data that already exists in Voyager.

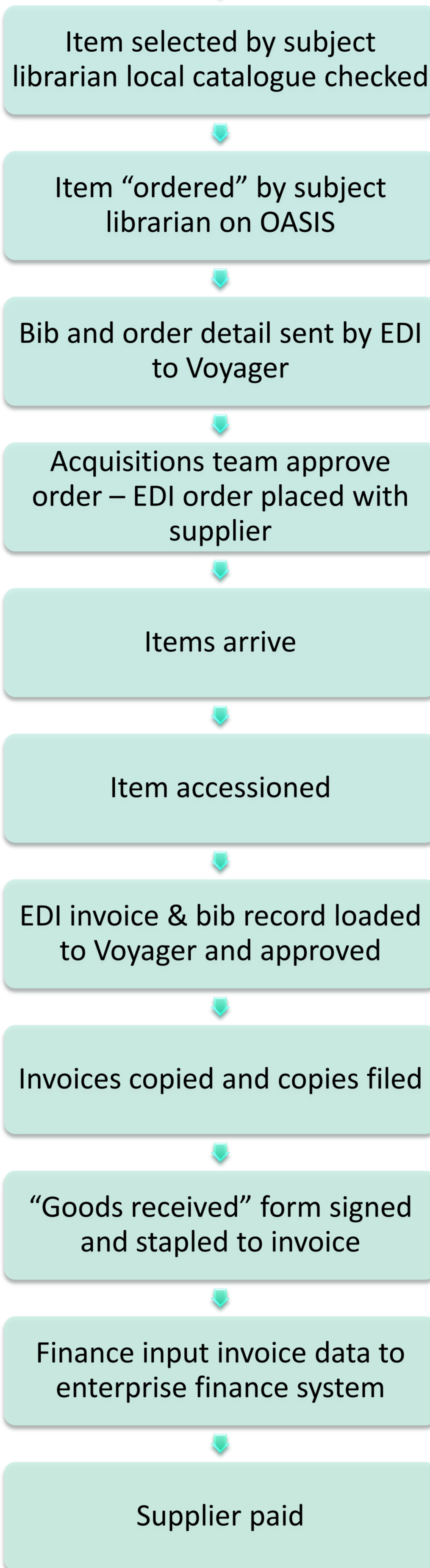
We also looked for greater efficiencies in the supply of print journals, but Voyager does not appear to support automated check-in, one of the options offered in the consolidation services proffered by the journal suppliers.



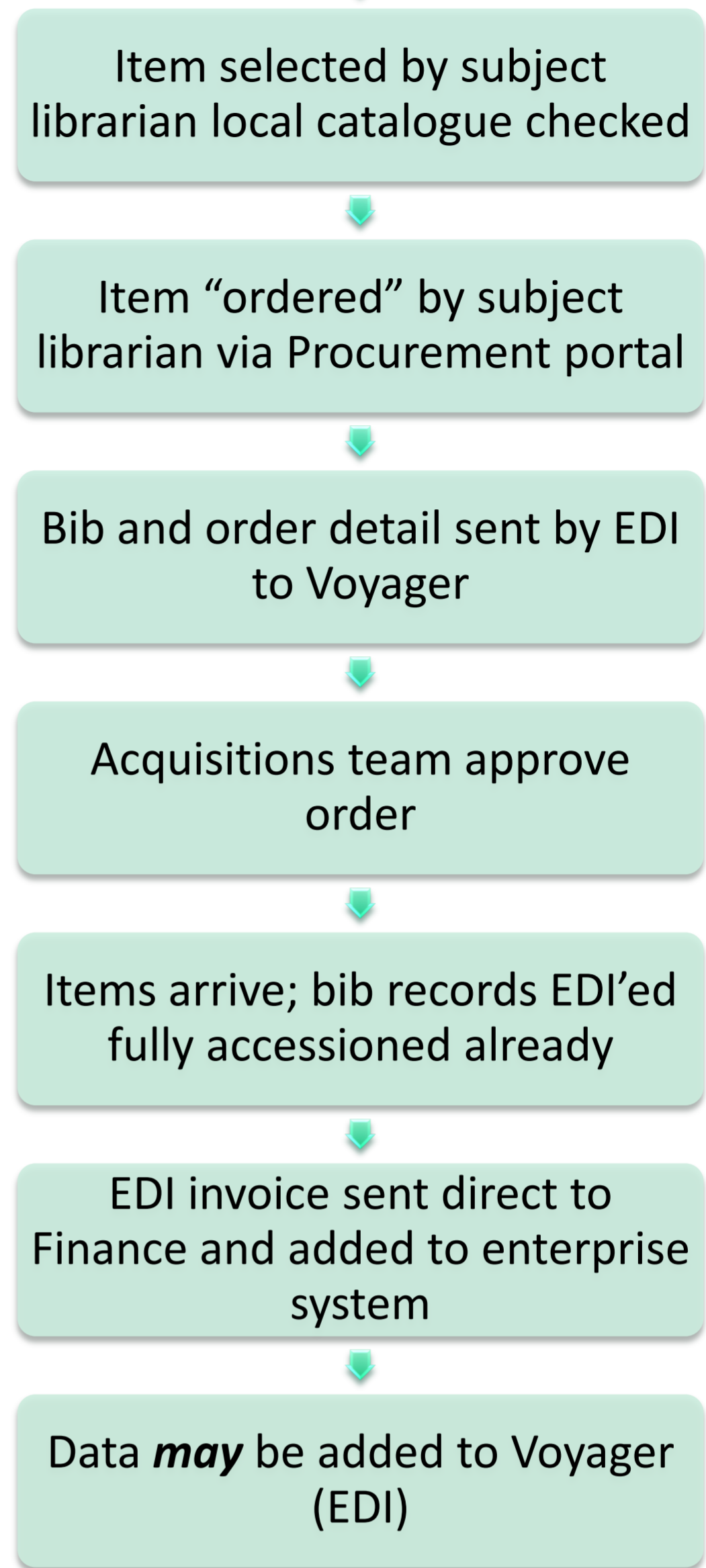
Past



Present



Future



Advantages

- The green agenda
- Time saved in data processing
- Quicker delivery and payment
- Reduction of instances of repetitive strain injury in our staff
- Redeployment of staff into more interesting and challenging areas