Expense Approval Chain Configuration

Who approved this expense report? Who should I submit my expenses to for approval? Who is this person who submitted this expense report to me? You've probably asked these questions on a far more regular basis that you may like to admit. We've talked to customers who used to maintain spreadsheets full of logic-based rules that employees would reference when submitting expense reports. We've seen competitor software packages offer the option to submitters to select any user in the company as the approver for their expense report, like drawing a name out of a hat. Perhaps you might have approved a report from a person you've never met? Yep, that happens too. If approval chains are what ail you, Tallie has your solution.

Dynamic Approver List Generation

Let's say you have an employee named Jim Green. Jim works in the Marketing Department and reports to the Director of Lead Generation Jane Randall, who reports to the VP of Marketing Macy Field. Jim occasionally travels to conferences on behalf of the Business Development Department, whose Conference Attendance team manager is Scott Brown. Sometimes those expenses get pretty pricey, and if the do the Controller Bob Linden needs to get involved. Ok, now Jim has a receipt for Hyatt Hotels to the tune of $2,104.35 for his recent trip to Orlando which included work on behalf of both Marketing and Business Development departments. To whom should Jim Green submit his report and how can he find out this information?

In Tallie, the onus of approver knowledge is placed squarely on the software and not

the submitter, approver or excel spreadsheet. When an expense report is submitted, Tallie dynamically generates the list of approvers appropriate, given the context of each of these expenses, then shepherds the expenses to each approver required, notifying the submitter when the approval process has been completed. Tallie can support a wide variety of permutations and combinations in the approval chain including approver settings specific to company, manager, customer/project or spend level, as well as enabling each of those parameters to be assigned in parallel, series or even with alternatives (such as, either John or Nancy can approve for expenses related to the A & B Vending Company).

Approval Routing By Individual Expense, Not Report

Let's revisit Jim Green's scenario where he has incurred one of many expenses on one report that may need to be approved by a different set of approvers, based on the project or spend involved. When using paper-based, spreadsheet or competitor expense report solutions, Jim is faced with a dilemma. Does he duplicate the Hyatt receipt and attach it to two separate expense reports for submission to two separate groups of approvers? Does he add all approvers to one expense report, essentially asking Business Development and Marketing to approve some expenses unrelated to their respective projects?

Tallie was built to manage approval chains on an individual expense basis. If 4 of Jim's 10 expenses on a report are associated with a project for Business Development, only those 4 will be routed to the assigned Business Development approver. All Jim needs to worry about is submitting his expense report with properly coded expenses. The subset of expenses relevant to each individual approver will be presented to that approver with full transactional detail, receipt images and coding. Once all approvers have approved the relevant expenses, the full expense report appears ready for export to the accounting system by the system administrator. Tallie handles the complete approval routing process from start to finish.

But what happens when there's just one Hyatt expense and it needs to be divided across projects? Never fear! Expenses can be itemized in Tallie, which creates a separate line item for each allocation of the expense. If each line item needs to be approved by a different set of approvers, Tallie manages this just as with all other expenses and presents only the relevant items to the appropriate approvers.

Manager Approvers

One or more direct or departmental managers may be assigned to each expense submitter in Tallie for approval responsibilities. These assignments can be made on an all-or-one basis, meaning either all approvers must approve or just one out of the many. The number of approvers applied for management-based approval is not limited.

If you integrate your instance of Tallie expense software with certain accounting systems, such as Intacct, Tallie is able to identify assigned employee managers on sync

with Intacct and apply them to Tallie user accounts. You may also use our batch upload tool to import a CSV with a list of managers applied to each Tallie user.
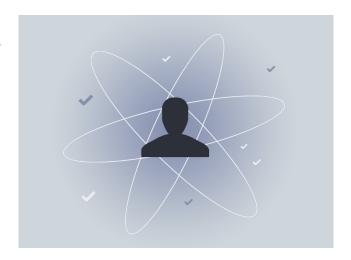
Customer/Project-Based Approval

Very often projects and jobs, whether internal or customer-billed, have budgets associated with them for time, expenses and materials. If your company is managing such budgets, project accounting and management of project-associated spend becomes very important. Not only does Tallie enable expense submitters to track expenses against these projects (and mark whether they are billable to the customer or not), but Tallie offers project-dependent approval routing.

This reflects the reality in business where the budget or account manager for a project is often not in the reporting structure for an individual employee and is likely not the same budget or account manager for another project. With Tallie's project-configurable approval chain management, project managers are aware of project-associated expense spend before it hits the general ledger, and they are enabled to monitor these expenses against individual policies agreed upon by specific customers or in signed project agreements.

Nonprofit organizations can leverage Tallie's project-based approval features for program-based spend monitoring and program-specific expense approval routing. Plus, you can rename the project list as "programs" so that your expense submitters are using terminology that they are familiar with.

It bears mentioning that Tallie's project-specific functionality is not limited to custom approval routing. Expense submitters can be assigned to specific projects and can be given specific time durations during which they are allowed to submit expenses against the project. Additionally, restrictions can be set on those projects so that no other expense submitters may map expenses to the project. All project-based functionality, including approvers and user restrictions can by synced over automatically from Intacct or batch assigned using our CSV import tool for projects.

Spend-Based Approval

It's customary for expenses to be more closely scrutinized by individuals of higher rank if the spend associated with them is greater, but many businesses rely on ad hoc decision-making when it comes to making sure expenses of different values are approved by managers at the correct level in the business. Tallie's monetary approval

levels automate this process, again reducing the effort and responsibility placed on expense submitters and finance teams.

Monetary approval level configuration in Tallie is single expense-specific and role-based. First, you can create an approval level based on a specific spend limit. Each individual submitted expense will be compared against that spend limit to determine whether approval on a spend basis needs to be applied. Next, that approval level can be assigned a role, such as Vice President. Now you have a specific spend limit that is appropriate for Vice President-level approval. From there, each Tallie user can be designated with a specific role. All users with Vice President-level role assignments will be pulled into the approval chain when individual expenses qualify for that level of approval.

Global Approvers

Detailed and dynamic approval chains can be incredibly powerful, but sometimes you just need one person to oversee all spend for the whole company. Tallie allows you to configure any number of global approvers, also on an all-or-one basis. Additionally, when all expenses on a report are approved and the expense report is marked as fully approved, there is one final step required before Tallie delivers the expense report into your accounting, bill pay or payroll system. Tallie requires that you actively choose to export data from Tallie, giving a designated member of your accounting team a final opportunity for approval before the expenses hit your general ledger.
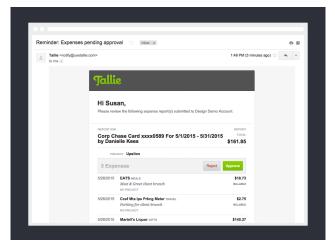
One-Click Approval By Email

With all the opportunities that Tallie provides for variation and configuration in expense report approval chains, it's important for the approval process to be as speedy and intuitive as possible. Approvers are sent an email by Tallie when an expense report, or subset of expenses from a report, is ready for their approval. As an approver, you can see the full detail of the expense report including merchant, date, amount, expense category (which references your chart of accounts or items), reasons for spend and any coding against accounting lists such as customers, projects, classes, departments, or locations. If Tallie has identified any irregularities in the expenses, these are presented in the email as well, such as policy violations or possible duplicate expenses. The source of the transaction is indicated in the email if the expense was generated from a receipt scan, map-based mileage calculation or a credit card transaction feed. You may click

through the email from the receipt icon to view the original receipt image without needing to sign in to Tallie.

At the header of each email, you will see an Approve and a Reject button. Once you have reviewed the expense report and its detail from your email client or mobile phone, approval is as simple as clicking or tapping the Approve button. This will send confirmation of your approval to Tallie and move the expense report along in its approval process. Clicking or tapping the Reject button in your email client or mobile phone will launch your Tallie account to the approvals page, enabling you to enter your rejection comments and return the expense report to its original submitter for revision or comment. It's that easy.