

Industry | **Tech Startup**

# Maximizing Operational Efficiency

9GAG

**Improved operational  
efficiency allowed start-up  
to focus on core business  
activities**

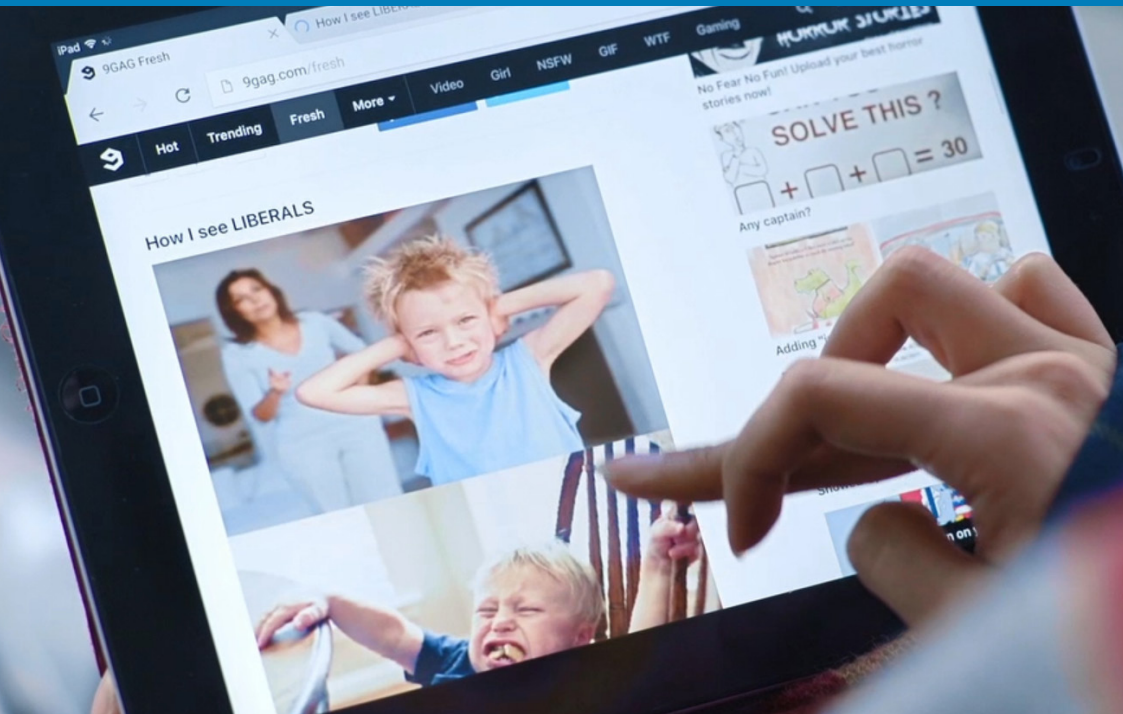


GLOBAL  
CORPORATE PAYMENTS



## THE CLIENT AT A GLANCE

Founded in Hong Kong in 2008, 9GAG has grown into one of the world's most popular social entertainment platforms where users generate and share humorous content. As one of the top 200 most visited websites globally, 9GAG averages more than 70 million active platform users per month. The content shared on its website and social media channels can reach over 150 million people around the globe.



## THE CHALLENGES



### Costly Foreign Currency Payments

To provide the best experience for viewers and platform users, 9GAG invests heavily in its web hosting servers and software. Most of these services are provided by overseas companies, resulting in up to 10 recurring payments to be settled in foreign currencies every month. Settling international payments with local bank credit cards generated unfavourable exchange rates as well as occasional verification and handling fees, which increased the company's operational costs.



### Distracting Administration Tasks

As a startup, 9GAG has a small team delivering big impact. Manual currency conversions complicated the company's accounting process. Administration tasks involved in handling international payments also distracted 9GAG's team from their core job to improve user experience and facilitate business growth.

## SOLUTIONS



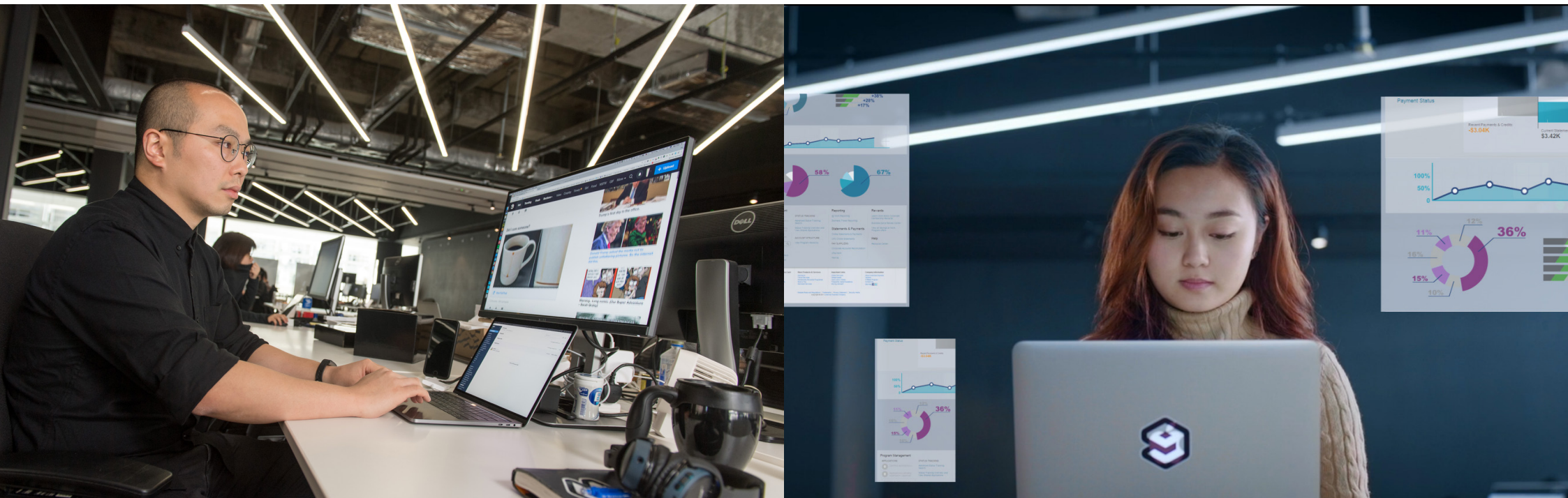
### Direct Oversea Payments

In 2016, 9GAG adopted the American Express Corporate Card programme and began using it for all direct overseas payments while enjoying extended credit-free payment terms. This allowed the company to consolidate and monitor up to 10 monthly international payments into a single management system. All foreign exchange tasks were automated, with currency conversions made at competitive market rates.



### Enhanced Visibility for Auditing

The Programme comes with an effective online expense management portal, American Express @Work<sup>SM</sup> to streamline its administration process for greater speed and efficiency. This made all card transactions viewable by administrators in real time through @Work<sup>SM</sup>, creating greater visibility and control.



## THE RESULTS

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### Reduced Foreign Exchange Costs

By making foreign currency payments to overseas service providers with the American Express Corporate Card, 9GAG saved on exchange rates and handling fees. In addition, the recognition for the American Express brand worldwide effectively precludes the verification fees previously incurred by 9GAG.



### Everyday Spending for Business Trip Savings

As one of the successful startups stories, the team travels extensively across the globe, especially the United States, to share their experience at technology conferences. With the American Express Corporate Card Membership Rewards Programme, they are able to redeem flight tickets from Membership Rewards Points generated from their business expenses, which further reduces 9GAGs operating costs.



### Improved Operational Efficiency Allows Startup to Focus on Impact

Using the American Express online portal @Work<sup>SM</sup> to streamline expense processing has given the accounting team more time to focus on auditing and other budget-related tasks. Staff can now dedicate their time and talents to improving 9GAG's services and growing the business.

“ Many startups like 9GAG are competing for time and talent. American Express Corporate Card helps us save time on mundane administrative work and focus our resources on more impactful projects to make the world a happier place. ”

**Mr. Ray Chan,**  
CEO and Co-Founder of 9GAG

