Capturing Revenue
In an Evolving, Global, Technological Environment

Enterprise Billing in a Changing Landscape

Capturing Revenue In an Evolving, Global Technological Environment

In an ecosystem where margins are getting smaller and alternatives more widely available, any barrier to selling can cripple a company's overall competitive position. Subtle differentiators in service offerings can win customers away and revenue from any source may be critical to survival. The global economy is relentless in its ability to produce innovation and drive prices lower. For companies to thrive in today's highly competitive and dynamic world of "better, cheaper, faster" they need systems and infrastructure that are cost-effective and facilitate change quickly and accurately. In order to monetize this rapidly evolving, global economy, companies need enterprise billing systems that can rapidly evolve along with it.

Evolving Global Economy

In order to monetize this rapidly evolving, global economy, companies need billing systems that can rapidly evolve along with it.

Evolving Billing System

Pervasive technology innovations; a fundamental shift in customer demand and competition from a variety of incumbent, global players are combining to dramatically reshape industries of all types and sizes. This represents tremendous opportunities for companies who are nimble and can easily adapt to change. But this rapidly evolving landscape can also displace companies who are entrenched in antiquated IT infrastructure and business processes. In fact, a recent survey of
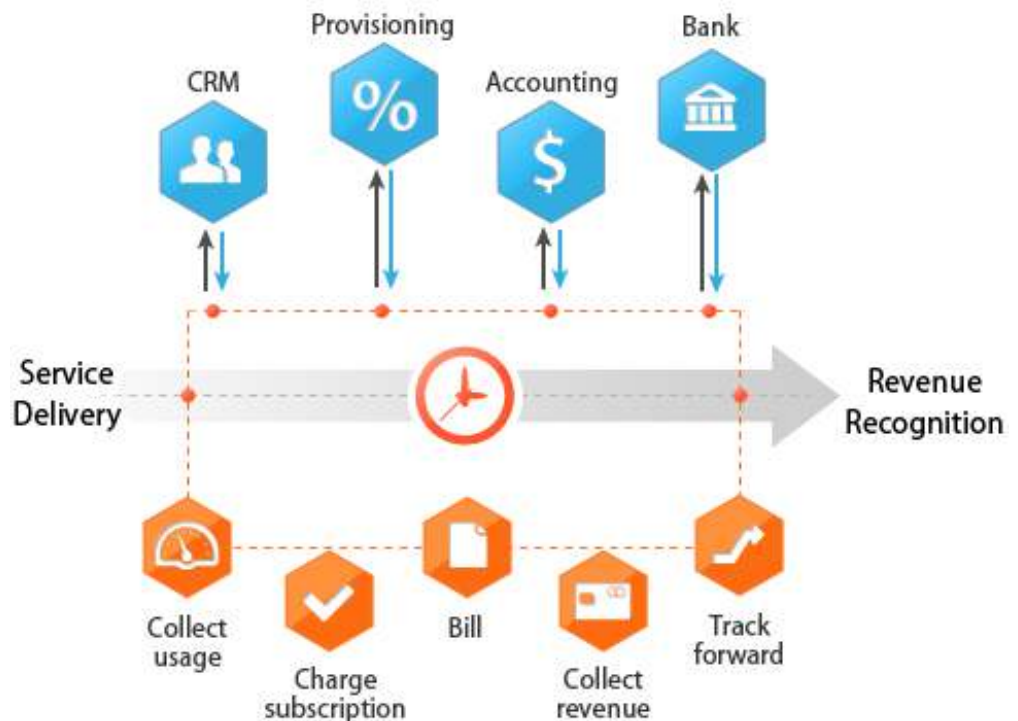
contact@billingplatform.com
1-888-348-8868
www.billingplatform.com

telecom executives across Europe, Africa and the Middle East sited shortcomings in billing capability, accuracy, and lack of integration as major barriers to delivering new products and services in an evolving, global, technological environment.

Why Billing is Critical

Billing is the source of business intelligence that provides measurable insights into the performance of products and services as well as sales and revenue recognition. It is also one of the most consistent interfaces between you, your customer and their pocket book - and, as such, carries tremendous responsibility. At a minimum, the biller must accurately integrate with CRM, Provisioning, Accounting, and Banks as well as source systems like bridges, switches, and ERP to collect service usage; calculate subscription charges; produce and distribute bills; collect revenue; and track balance forward. How well it does all of this will determine how quickly customers can know their balances and pay for goods and services. It will either widen or shorten the gap between service delivery and revenue recognition.

Billing systems determine how quickly customers can know their balances and pay for goods and services.

It is the lifeblood or central nervous system of any company, responsible for the bottom line.

Yet the billing system typically remains invisible to most until there is a problem. And by the time problems with recurring billing become known, the aftermath can be felt, not only with lost revenue, but also with lost opportunities and alienated customers.
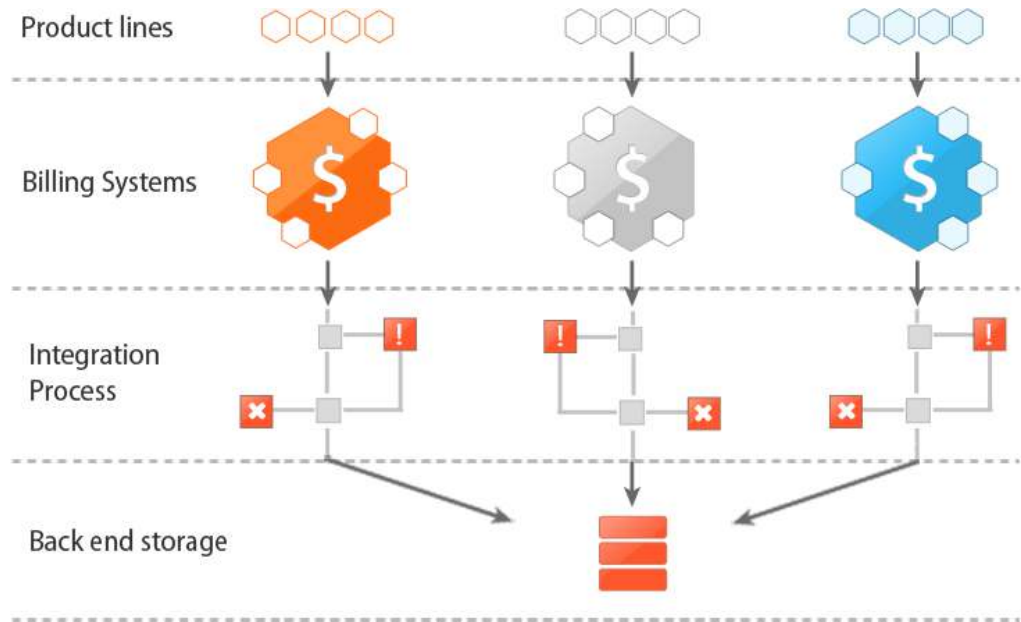
Where billing breaks-down

In mature industries, product differentiators are subtle among legacy offerings. Competitive pricing and billing options become the primary means of customer retention and growth. As new products and services are added, bundling of these services into palatable, marketable packages is equally critical. Today, the customer expects to be in the driver seat when it comes to product and service configuration – thus, the one-size-fits all model no longer applies.

All of these factors place a heavy load on the enterprise billing system, requiring it to be a jack- of-all-trades when it comes to product and marketing support, and a powerhouse with regard to high-volume rating and invoicing. It also must be extensive enough to handle real-time processing from multiple sources, with multiple currencies, and in multiple languages & time zones.

These are lofty, and sometimes impossible expectations for most billers. Most recurring billing systems are highly adapted to specific industries, with specialized rating models that produce a distinct type of bill for a specific geography. The rollout of a unique product, service, or rate plan could require months of development - costing millions, and allowing time for competitors to take control of market share. Often times these highly specific billers place a drag on creative product development that stifles sales & marketing and erodes competitive advantage.

Because of its mission-critical role, implementing a new recurring billing system can be a daunting and frightening proposition. The risks are outrageous and the rollout and cutover must be flawless. As a result, many large companies have implemented several billers, each servicing a specific product line. This leads to extremes in complexity on the back end with integrations, reporting and service management. It also creates limitations in areas where the bundling and convergence of charges for diverse, yet complementary products provides a significant competitive advantage.

Implementing several billers, each servicing a specific product line, leads to extremes in complexity on the back end.
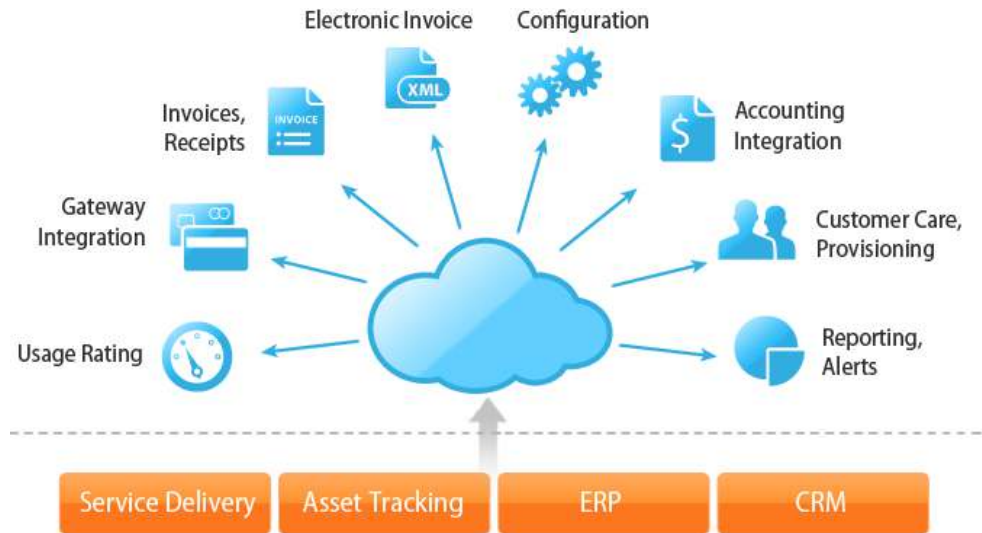
Is there a solution in the cloud?

The good news is that today the cloud offers relatively low risk, cost effective enterprise billing solutions for software and systems where cutting edge upgrades and technological improvements are made available for free as part of the solution on a consistent cycle. Traditional software implementations require hardware, data-centers, networks, compliances and human resources to implement and maintain. The pay-as-you-go, cloud model alleviates the financial risks associated with these implementations. It also introduces a lightweight mechanism for running new and old systems in parallel for an evaluation and comparison period or during a pilot phase of an untested new offering.

Subscription-based recurring billing is now a common, cloud offering and highly desirable for small to mid-sized companies who are focused on a subscription model for all of their service offerings. This type of solution provides a good alternative with a comprehensive suite of tools for AR, Reporting, and Invoicing. However, it is still focused on a specific charging method that silos billing, yet again, around a pre-determined model. While Software as a Service (SaaS) can offer financial efficiencies and potential cost savings, it doesn't respond to the problem of evolving product and customer diversity and the need for continuous, functional scalability.

Electronic Invoice   Configuration

Invoices, Receipts

Gateway Integration

Usage Rating

Accounting Integration

Customer Care, Provisioning

Reporting, Alerts

Service Delivery   Asset Tracking   ERP   CRM
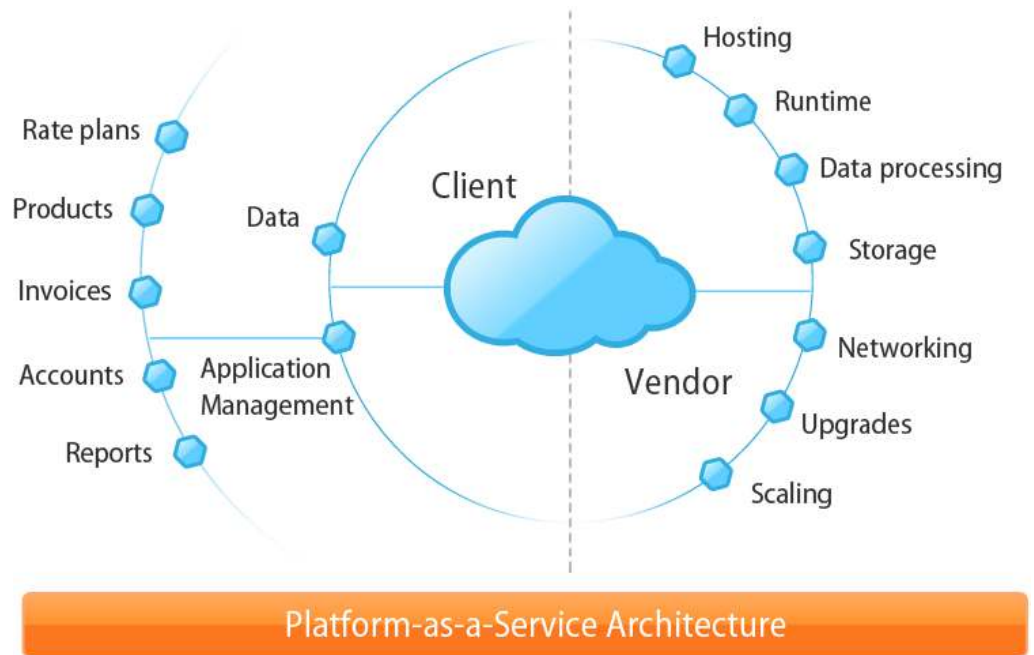
The power of PAAS

The new momentum around cloud computing is a natural counterpart to the historic, global, technological progression we are experiencing today. It is becoming the norm for small business and is slowly gaining popularity with large enterprises. Ultimately, Platform-as-a-Service (PAAS) offerings are becoming the cloud's answer to the scalability problem - offering a highly configurable solution focused around a generic business function such as AP, CRM or Billing.

One of the leaders in this space is Salesforce.com, who provide CRM solutions to companies of all sizes with highly diverse sales and customer management needs. Their popularity comes from their ability to quickly satisfy ongoing changes in disparate CRM processes - allowing companies to efficiently configure the system to fit their needs. As the product matures, it can also better serve specific industries with knowledge gained across a highly diverse, international customer base.

The goal of good business software today is to assist your company in staying ahead of the competition as a leader in innovation. It aspires to help companies drive demand and market capitalization by facilitating good ideas instead of undermining them. A sound, PAAS offering reduces the cost of change by making your lightweight, cloud implementation as robust and specific as it needs to be to support your initiatives when you need it to. It is designed for rapid response to change with a focus on a specific business function. It should do an outstanding job at its core while supporting as many permutations as necessary to remain ultimately flexible.

A sound, PAAS offering reduces the cost of change by making your lightweight, cloud implementation as robust and specific as it needs to be.

Platform-as-a-Service Architecture

The Ultimate Billing Platform

The ultimate solution to the problem of monetizing the rapidly evolving, global economy is a billing system that can evolve at the same pace. It must also keep the cost of innovation low to align with an aggressive, global competitive environment. In business today, good ideas must be monetized before they become obsolete, commonplace, or saturated by the intense competition in the global economy.

The modern billing platform must be excellent at rating, charging and invoicing; while providing infinite choices in configurations to adapt this critical piece of the business life cycle to constant changes in its external environment. It cannot have a monolithic view of anything. It cannot assume a specific charging model, product line, geography, billing cycle, currency, or customer. In a global economy that is constantly changing with technology, it truly must be capable of being all things, to all people, at all times.

It must be able to quickly adapt its product catalog, invoicing, rating, charging and integrations to new trends in technology, consumption and compliance in a global marketplace. If implemented in-house, it needs a robust infrastructure and team of highly skilled, technical resources to ensure its promise. If implemented in the cloud,

contact@billingplatform.com
1-888-348-8868
www.billingplatform.com

it must deliver this configurability in a seamless and scalable manner. It must also integrate with core business systems to ensure its ongoing relevance and compatibility with the corporate enterprise and global ecosystem.

The platform must be able to quickly adapt its product catalog, invoicing, rating, charging and integrations to new trends in technology, consumption and compliance in a global marketplace.

BillingPlatform.com

BillingPlatform.com is a cloud platform that specializes in high-volume, integrated enterprise billing solutions for customers of all sizes in diverse industries including Telecommunications, VOIP, Backbone, Video and Satellite, and more. The company currently supports customers in the US, Canada, South America, Asia Pacific, Europe and the Middle East. It focuses on the ability to quickly adapt to any business model or industry, internationally, through its highly configurable, PAAS, billing architecture.

As a true cloud service, BillingPlatform.com provides all of the redundant hardware, software, network and compliance required for enterprise-grade, billing and e-commerce. It also integrates with virtually any external equipment interface, payment gateway or information system. Its highly configurable architecture allows

customers to quickly and easily roll out new products and services with creative pricing and bundling options at a low cost and with very low risk.

The system supports any charging and rating model from subscriptions and metered usage, to blended/bundled rates and tiered pricing. Its metadata architecture enables the extension of any system configuration or customization to built-in reports and dashboards, invoicing, web service APIs, and user Interface. Its customer-centric model allows for the individual assignment of rate-plans, billing cycles, invoice templates, languages and time zones at the account level to accommodate functional diversity and preferences among retail and wholesale clientele.

The platform provides the ability to customize the data model and user interface to quickly add new, back-office modules that integrate with its core billing, rating, invoice and reporting infrastructure. Built-in, customizable mediation and mapping facilitates multiple integrations from any source and format; this completely automates diverse and complex usage collection and rating and provides an optimal level of convergent billing and invoicing.

The Bottom Line

In a world where innovation drives consumption and globalization constricts pricing, companies must keep costs low, be present at all times, and stand poised to take advantage before hundreds of competitors seize the moment. Success in today's economy requires sharper minds and better ideas. These ideas deserve the support of systems that can rapidly and gracefully move them forward toward their ultimate, business goal – the recognition of revenue and the bottom line.

For more information about BillingPlatform.com
visit our web site at www.billingplatform.com