Product Review

2014 Review of BillQuick

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From the Dec. 2014 review of Time and Billing systems.

Best Firm Fit

BQE Software offers time management, billing and client communication solutions tailored to the specific needs of a variety of professional services firms, including tax and accounting practices. The company's BillQuick system is geared for small- to mid-sized practices of five or more staff who want options for budgeting, tracking and billing clients or other third parties, and includes project management features.

Strengths

• Tight integration with the most widely-used small business management software, including QuickBooks, Sage 50 and AccountEdge, as well as custom integration and export functions for many additional systems.

• In addition to accounting practices, the system can be customized to meet the needs of other specific industries, including AIA (architecture), engineering, IT consulting and legal practices.

• Strong reporting functions and project management tools.

• The company offers a mobile app for time and data entry on iOS and Android devices.

Potential Limitations

• Because of the extensive functionality of the program, some user training maybe be necessary to optimize the system during setup and to gain the most benefit from its features.

• The system does not include a built-in calendaring module, but an optional Outlook add-in enables integration and the ability to create time slips from calendar items.

Overview

BillQuick has more than 300,000 users globally, most in the accounting and architecture/engineering professions, for which it offers customization options that meet specific needs and terminology of these fields. Other industries it can be designed for include IT consulting and legal firms.

BillQuick

The company also offers two online options: The BillQuick Web Suite, which is designed for firms that want to host the traditional desktop version of the system on their own servers to make it available for their staff and clients (BQE can also host it); and BillQuick Online, a solution designed for the internet and offering similar features as the desktop version.

The desktop version of BillQuick, reviewed below, is available in four versions:

- **BillQuick Basic:** ideal for firms with one to four timekeepers, with the system using a Microsoft Access database.
- **BillQuick Pro:** designed for professional practices with five to 15 users. It can be used on either Microsoft Access database or Microsoft SQL Express.
- **BillQuick Enterprise:** a scalable version designed for organizations with any number of users, running on Microsoft Access, Microsoft SQL Express, or the full Microsoft SQL Server.
- **BillQuick Lite:** a simplified time and invoicing tool for single users.

BQE Software offers additional products and services, including BillQuick HR (for human resources management), mobile apps for Apple and Android devices, and add-ons for Microsoft Outlook and workflow automation. Web hosting of the program is available from Cloud9 Real Time, Right Networks, InSynq and other ASPs.

Product Functionality

Users can track time or enter expenses via multiple methods, including using an automated timer that is built into the system, as well as with the system's mobile apps. Another method is by using the Outlook add-on to sync calendar items, which can be turned into time entries. Users can also manually key time data into the program, or import data from time clocks or Excel spreadsheets.

Users can also run simultaneous timers for multiple projects, which can be viewed on a single screen. Projects can be set up and managed with multiple sub-projects, due dates, benchmarks, WIPs and other management options.

BQE includes workflow management tools that can accommodate routing of time sheets to firm managers or for setting time as non-billable. Authorized firm staff can also add notes to time entries. Firm administrators can set hourly rates by employee or task, as well as with separate fee schedules at the client and project level. The program's AR function tracks collected and paid taxes, including sales tax, GST, PST, HST and VAT. For expense entries, BQE can import data from other systems which can be billed, with or without markup, to clients.

BillQuick

For firm employee management, the program tracks paid time off (PTO, sick leave, holiday, etc.), but it does not offer integrated payroll features. Integration options allow firm management to export staff hours, PTO and other information into third-party payroll programs. With BillQuick Plus Accounting, users have access to AR and AP features, with check printing functions.

Users can track jobs in progress using budgets or WIP reports, which can be linked to a variety of exception alerts. The program has more than 150 customizable invoice templates or users can create their own, with the ability to process them in batch for selected clients, or across multiple projects. Invoicing can be done on paper or electronically via secure e-mail, with accompanying documents linked and attached. BillQuick also offers firms the ability to accept payment via PayPal or credit card.

BillQuick has an extensive collection of customizable reporting options, including revenue and workload forecasting, realization rate, realization percentage by employee, client, and project, AR aging, and many others. Custom reports and functions can accommodate industry standards using Crystal Reports or product tools for developers (API). More than 40 pre-defined exceptions can be used to alert users to specific client or staff activity.

The BillQuick support website offers a knowledge base and a user forum, and access to the program's searchable help utility. Training is available from BQE and is recommended for this versatile application. Support is available by subscription or per-use via e-mail or telephone.

Summary and Pricing

BillQuick is a comprehensive and powerful time and billing solution that has matured over more than a decade to meet the very specific needs of accounting firms and other professional services firms. The underlying databases can support virtually any number of users, clients and projects, especially those needing job tracking and reporting features.

Pricing for BillQuick 2014 depends on the version and number of users. Specific pricing can be found on the company's website.

2014 Overall Rating: 4.75 / 5

BillQuick

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