

## NET WORK RICHARD MOROCHOVE



## Bill.com Helps Control Billing Paperwork

THOUGH small-business accounting apps such as Intuit's popular QuickBooks automate your

business bookkeeping, they don't eliminate the paper shuffling. You still need to route bills manually to authorized employees for payment approval, and then file the documents that support the payment. That's where the Web-based cash management and document workflow tool Bill.com—called Cash-View when I tested it in beta form—can help.

You can enter new bills, invoices, and receipts into Bill.com in any of three ways: by scanning hard copies and uploading the image files from your PC, by e-mailing files to your private Bill.com account, or by faxing the documents to Bill.com for the service to input. The first method requires that you set up a system for scanning and converting documents to a supported format such as PDF or a Microsoft Office 2007 file.

Once documents are in the system, you can view them on the Bill.com Web site,

This Web-based service lets you create digital images of your paper bills, upload them, and then manage them online.

add transaction details, and specify who can approve an individual transaction for payment. Then you can instruct Bill.com to pay the bill for you. In response, the company will electronically withdraw funds from your bank account, and prepare and mail a check to the vendor.



The Web-based service is especially useful to businesses that use QuickBooks and must route invoices to multiple people—say, a bookkeeper, a bill approver, and a senior manager—for sign-off and payment. Bill.com passes the transaction data along to QuickBooks 2005 (or later) or to QuickBooks online.

Unfortunately, the service can't read a vendor name from the scanned image of a bill and match it with the same name in your QuickBooks records, so you'll have to enter the name yourself. Bill.com plans to add a data-entry service in the future that will enter vendor and payment details. If you use an accounting app other than QuickBooks, you can enter a summarized total of the monthly transactions via a journal entry.

Bill.com works fine for paying bills, but its accounts receivable features are somewhat limited. You can enter the total amount of the invoices, then enter payments as you receive them, and Bill.com will keep track of what hasn't yet been paid. But Bill.com can't collect money directly from your customers (the company plans to include that feature in a future release).

Bill.com is unique in its price range (\$15 per month per user for up to 10 transactions per user; \$1.25 per transaction thereafter), making it a fairly priced tool for tracking invoices and eliminating bill-paying delays.

The screenshot shows the Bill.com web interface. At the top, it says "bill.com Send. Receive. Pay." and has a search bar for "Cashview" with a "Go" button. Below that are tabs for "Dashboard", "Documents", and "Payable". The main section is titled "New Bill" and contains a "Bill details" form with the following fields:

- Vendor: Factory Supplier Inc.
- Invoice Number: 56789 (with a link to "Vendor's last 5 bills")
- Payment Term: Net 30
- Invoice Date: 10/12/07
- Due Date: 11/30/07
- Amount: 2450.75
- Description: Factory supplies
- Note: (empty field)

**BILL.COM LETS YOU add details and route invoices to the right person for payment.**