Introduction

Catching Clouds, LLC has a dream-team partnership. Scott Scharf, cofounder and virtual CIO/CTO, has been working in information technology for 30 years with a focus on providing technology consulting. His partner and wife Patti Scharf, MBA, MAcc, CPA, cofounder, lead controller and tech power user, has dedicated her career to addressing the tax and accounting needs of small and midsize businesses. Together, they offer a savvy mix of accounting and technology experience to their U.S. and international e-commerce and online business clients.

“I look at technology and process consulting for our clients, while Patti implements automated cloud-based accounting solutions so they can leverage technology in a smart way,” says Scott.

Catching Clouds LLC
Scott Scharf, Co-Founder and Virtual CIO/CTO
Denver, Colorado
Five full-time employees

Catching Clouds LLC specializes in helping multi-channel, e-commerce sellers grow their businesses by providing them with current, accurate and actionable financial information about their businesses. The firm provides virtual controller and bookkeeper services combined with the accounting cloud tools, design and management necessary to be customers' complete accounting department.

SERVICES OFFERED
Cloud Accounting Services, Virtual Bookkeeping, Virtual Controller

TARGETED INDUSTRIES
Online and E-Commerce Businesses

BILL.COM MODULES USED
Accounts Receivable and Accounts Payable

INTEGRATED WITH
Xero, QuickBooks Desktop and Online

Firm’s adoption of Bill.com helps enable its rapid growth and supports virtual operations.
The Unique Challenges of E-Commerce and Online Businesses

With the amount of technology expertise fueling the firm and the needs of its e-commerce clients, it is not a surprise that the firm focuses on bringing the power of cloud-based technology to clients. Unlike other businesses, e-commerce and online businesses have a pressing need for daily and accurate accounting information.

“When you have an online business, you can have 3 or 3,000 orders coming in each day. You need to be constantly in touch with how much money you made, how much is available to take out of the business and how much is available to reinvest. You can’t gain that clarity if you’re not doing the accounting on a daily basis,” explains Scott. Bill.com allows customers to view and process accounts receivable and payable in real time.

“"We use Bill.com for most of our clients. It’s one of the first things we use that blows their minds."" 

On top of that, sales taxes and regulations further complicate accounting procedures.

“Regulatory and sales tax is a big challenge,” says Scott. “If you’re not doing accounting or bookkeeping on a daily basis, you can’t keep up. We touch all of our clients’ books every day. By noon of every day they have an updated picture of their income from their online sites,
an understanding of what's going on with the money in their business and a better feel for details and the big picture. It goes beyond how much money is in an account. It's how much is going to sales tax or payroll. The right bookkeeper and controller, along with the right cloud-based technology, can find trends and help with these questions.”

“Bill.com offered our clients an online, 24-hour way to pay bills coupled with ease of use. Bill.com also understands accounting partnering. For example, I can log in one time and get information for all clients, and it integrates with other accounting software. Bill.com understands that there is a bigger world out there and integration is extremely important to create that big picture,” comments Scott.

However, as a Certified Information Systems Security Professional, Scott was determined to extensively examine Bill.com's security – and he does so regularly to ensure that his strict expectations are satisfied.

“Security is first when we evaluate solutions,” says Scott. “If we're going to take our clients' data and put it in the cloud, it has to be secure. Bill.com continues to pass on all counts.”

In terms of client acceptance and usage, Scott shares that clients get acclimated to Bill.com within a week or two. He explains, “We get them up and running on it within a day and then have them fully trained in only a few days.”

Scott is familiar with numerous types of accounting and business technology. As he explains, “We're using Xero as our core cloud accounting ledger, although we still have a few clients on QuickBooks Desktop and Online.”

**A Security-Focused Criteria**

Patti Scharf discovered Bill.com four years ago at a Sleeter conference. Impressed by its capabilities, she began using it right away. When Catching Clouds was founded shortly afterwards by both Patti and Scott, Bill.com was integrated into their arsenal of cloud-based solutions.
Benefits

“If it wasn’t for Bill.com, we probably wouldn’t have the practice we have now,” comments Patti. “The A/P processes used to be incredibly manual and time consuming. We’d gather bills, check physical files to see if they had been paid, enter bills into software, print them on triplicate paper check stock, track down owners for signatures, stuff envelopes, mail and then file copies. Bill.com drastically reduces these steps. It lets you run your business from any beach in the world.”

These added efficiencies gives the firm’s operations a higher level of flexibility and responsiveness.

“Bill.com allows us to scale our firm and add more customers without having to add more staff. All work for our clients is consistent due to automated workflows supported by the solution. In fact, Bill.com allows us to bring on more clients. We have a great amount of flexibility to scale and can add more clients very easily,” explains Scott.

“Above and beyond that, Bill.com creates a fully auditable trail for business processes. We don’t have to have signing rights on customers’ bank accounts. We can access their information as needed, as well as authorized employees. Virtual bookkeepers can process the bills. A virtual controller can review it. The client approves or questions it. We wouldn’t have that level of control without Bill.com,” comments Scott.

Bill.com comes in especially handy when there are questions regarding a payment.

“If a vendor tells a client that it hasn’t been paid, we can quickly log in to Bill.com from any PC, laptop or mobile device, find the vendor, find the check and see when it was deposited. Before that we would have had to hire an intern to dig through files,” says Scott.

Bill.com also enables the company to operate virtually and save money.

“Our employees can work from their home during their office hours versus having to go into the office. This saves us time and money. We can hire fewer people to do less work without overburdening them,” comments Scott.

“Bill.com integrates with accounting, and it imports balances and information from other systems. How do businesses do business well? They collect money and pay it appropriately. Bill.com allows them to do that in an efficient manner. It actually becomes a communications tool,” says
Scott. Multiple people can log in and see bills and vendors. Vendors can log in and see the status of bills. Bill.com alerts people automatically as to next steps, so they don’t have to default to 50 emails.

“One client has about 100-200 bills a week during a specific eight-week period, and it would take them 60-80 hours a week to handle that in-house. The amount of time to manage it on their end is maybe one to two hours a week now.”

The efficiency and effectiveness Bill.com introduces to accounting is unparalleled,” says Scott.

Clients have also commented positively about Bill.com.

“Customers love it. It’s new for a little while, but once they’re used to it, they can’t see doing business and paying bills any other way. They see writing manual checks as a bad thing now and even call it a real pain. But what they really appreciate from Bill.com is that it allows them to disconnect and not be in the office. We have clients that spend months at a time away from the office and staff because they can monitor and track bills no matter where they are,” says Scott.

When asked if he would recommend Bill.com, Scott responds positively.

“Yes. I would and I have.”