

How WebsterRogers Cuts Bill Payment Time in Half with Bill.com

WebsterRogers, LLP

William R. Barefoot, CPA, CGMA,
Senior Manager, QB Pro Advisor
South Carolina
140 employees

WebsterRogers, LLP is a leading South Carolina-based accounting and consulting firm that provides a broad spectrum of assurance, tax and advisory services to the firm's clients. Founded in 1984 on the principles of quality, integrity and dedication to client service, a success is directly related to our strong commitment to both our people and clients. WebsterRogers offers the degree of personal attention, responsiveness and accessibility our clients expect and deserve – coupled with national resources that can satisfy their needs.

TARGETED INDUSTRIES

Manufacturing, health care, automotive, hospitality industry, nonprofit, local government and farming

BILL.COM MODULES USED

Accounts Receivable and
Accounts Payable

INTEGRATED WITH

Intacct, QuickBooks Online

Cloud-based solution enables firm to introduce and maintain a new level of efficiency in its operations

Introduction

WebsterRogers, LLP has served southeastern South Carolina for more than 30 years, with nine offices located in cities such as Columbia, Myrtle Beach and Hilton Head. However, as senior manager William Barefoot explains, the firm has moved far beyond a focus on just South Carolina.

“We are stretched across the East Coast because of how we utilize technology – both on-premise and in the cloud,” Barefoot explains. “We’re not limited to a 50-mile radius around the office.”

The accounting firm also differentiates itself from competitors with its unique view of customer service.

Barefoot explains: “We have a good reputation for taking care of our clients and being ahead of the curve in terms of adopting and using technology. Our philosophy is that in order to provide truly exceptional customer service, our professionals must focus on mid-practices areas.

CHALLENGES

- Manual processes that demanded high labor investment and yielded low profitability
- Reliance on paper for A/P

SOLUTION

- Bill.com Accounts Payable

RESULTS/BENEFITS

- Internal processing time for bills reduced from hours to minutes, with clients cutting bill payment time by 50 to 75 percent
- Migration to online review, approval and hosting of invoices and documents putting vital information at the firm's and clients' fingertips

We take a team approach. For example, if a colleague of mine specializes more in taxes and has a client that needs assistance with making accounting software more efficient, he or she would refer that client to me. It's not uncommon to bring in two to three others on accounts that can help in different proficiencies. One person doesn't have to try to be everything for a client."

The firm works with both individual clients and businesses.

Internal Challenges That Impact Efficiency

Although it had adopted multiple technologies to help in other areas of the practice, WebsterRogers faced challenges on the accounts payable front. The firm was handling the process manually. Clients would drop off bills. The firm would cut checks and deliver them. Then the clients would sign them. This proved to be a time-consuming and labor-intensive process.

"The challenge was to be able to provide our services in a much more efficient manner so that the firm spent less time on low profitability work," comments Barefoot.

The firm began to search for a solution that would help automate and streamline the A/P process. The first criteria for the ideal solution was that it had to be cloud-based.

"When the term 'cloud' started surfacing more, we knew that was where the profession was heading. We definitely didn't want anything that was based on-premise. Being able to serve clients that you can't physically be with was very high on our solution priority list. The right solution needed to be accessible, mobile, able to be used with

various devices and easy for clients to work with,” shares Barefoot. “We also wanted a solution we could brand as our own and offer as a service of WebsterRogers.”

Through the AICPA (American Institute of Certified Public Accountants), one of WebsterRogers’ partners discovered Bill.com. The cloud-based solution offered the firm the opportunity to introduce greater efficiency and profitability into highly manual processes.

“The AICPA gave us a list of cloud-based applications and software vendors that they had vetted and felt like would be good partners, and Bill.com was one of those,” says Barefoot. “We researched other options, but in the end discovered that Bill.com was pretty unique in what it offered. When compared to services through banks or other alternatives, Bill.com gave you the most options such as integration with QuickBooks, the ability to collaborate and important security features that allowed you to control access.”

WebsterRogers decided to test drive Bill.com to see if it would be a good fit for the firm and its clients.

Implementing Bill.com

“We are advocates of pilot programs,” shares Barefoot. “For new software programs, we normally test them internally before rolling them out to clients for further testing. For Bill.com, we followed the same pattern. We used it internally for six months to process our own expense reports and pay our vendor invoices. We also synchronized it with our accounting program Accounting CS from Thomson Reuters. We were really impressed with how easy it was to use Bill.com and process and pay bills. We changed to a different accounting software – Intacct – so we could directly sync with Bill.com instead of importing and exporting information.”

“ We researched other options, but in the end discovered that Bill.com was pretty unique in what it offered. ”

While the technology passed internal testing with flying colors, Barefoot acknowledges that the process of moving people from paper-based review and approval to on-screen review and approval was the biggest hurdle for the firm to get over.

But the hurdle did not halt progress.

“We have 140 professionals and staff and 22 partners, so we had everything represented from early adopters to resisters. Some adopted quickly while other balked. However, once the resisters got through a cycle once or twice and realized how much more efficient and convenient it is to work electronically, any objections were usually silenced pretty quickly,” says Barefoot.

After an internal run, the firm elected to invite key clients to put Bill.com to the test.

“We rolled out Bill.com to five to ten clients for six months and got a very positive reaction from them,” explains Barefoot. “With Bill.com, the time it took clients to receive, review, approve and post an invoice was easily cut in half.”

Based on this experience, the firm rolled out Bill.com to a larger contingency of clients, and now more than 35 are using Bill.com.

The Benefits of Cloud-Based Operations

“The ability to work with clients in the cloud through Bill.com has made us much more efficient,” shares Barefoot. “Now

everything can all be done online, at your computer or on your smartphone. Bill.com makes it easier for our clients to power through burdensome tasks and get back to their business. Clients can approve and pay bills and do it in a fraction of the time that they normally would – usually 50 percent to 75 percent less. ”

“Our clients love Bill.com. It’s easy to use. It saves them quite a bit of time and makes their life less complicated,” says Barefoot.

Beyond the time and cost savings associated with using it, they are also discovering the value of Bill.com’s document management features.

“Bill.com’s document management features are one of the key things we point out to clients when we propose Bill.com. They can save financial documents and reports using the document folders and look up vendor payment, contracts and history in just a few clicks,” explains Barefoot.

Internally, WebsterRogers’ professionals are discovering Bill.com benefits as well.

“Day in and day out, I’m working with clients everywhere. I can log in to Bill.com and serve clients from South Carolina, Maryland, New York and beyond as easily as if I were sitting right next to them.

That was one of the main criteria we considered when evaluating solutions, and Bill.com is absolutely allowing us to accomplish this,” comments Barefoot.

WebsterRogers employees have come to embrace Bill.com.

“The majority of our professionals who use Bill.com love it. For example, on one account it is now only taking them 10 minutes a month instead of hours to pay 20 bills,” says Barefoot. “It’s cut the time normally spent on receiving and processing bills in half. You can’t argue with those time savings.”

Barefoot continues: “I recommend Bill.com every day. I’m always hounding my peers to give me more names of clients who can use it.”



Bill.com
1810 Embarcadero Road, Palo Alto, CA 94303
Main 650.621.7700 • Fax 650.644.0293 • www.Bill.com