Best practices for implementing BILL AP & AR at your firm

Introduction

Implementing a new automation tool into your firm's tech stack doesn't have to be a long, complicated process. To get you started, we have found that these practices have led to successful BILL AP & AR integrations.
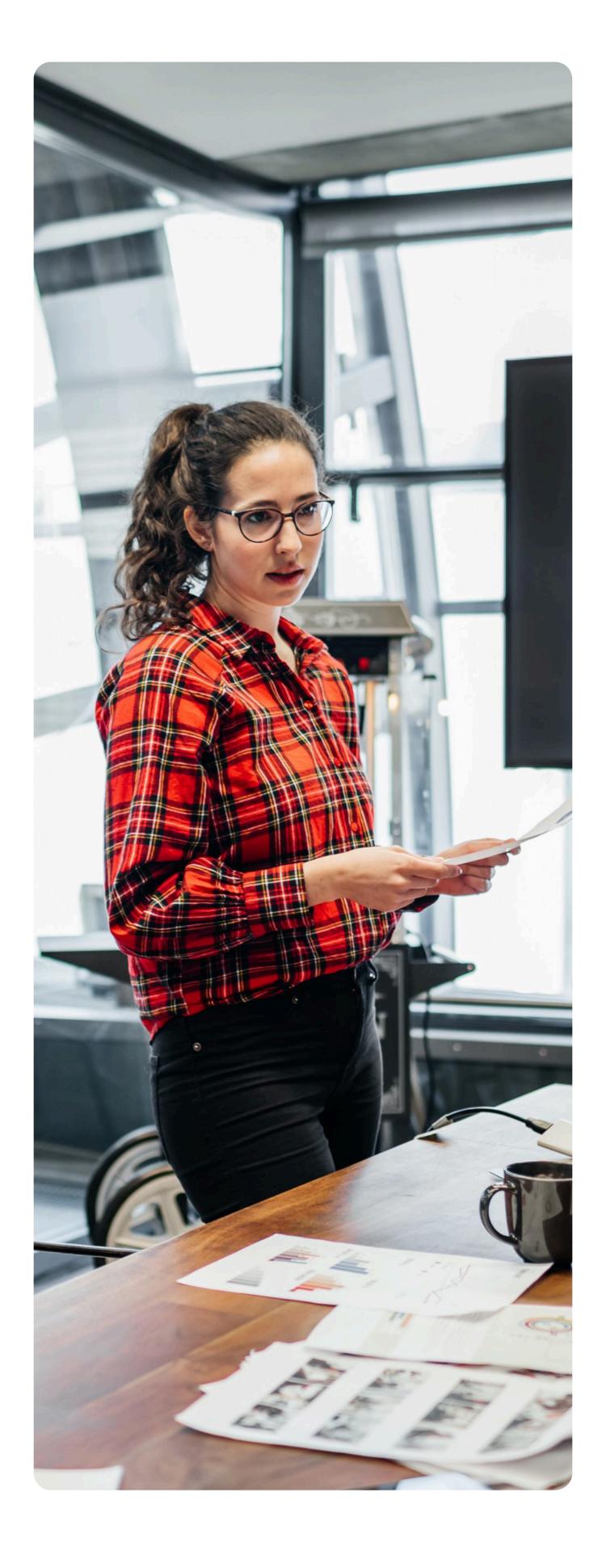
TIP 1

Attend implementation meetings with the BILL team

When you sign on with BILL, your firm will be assigned an implementation consultant. Your firm will have 2-3 calls with this consultant to go over product training, help with the initial client setup, and answer any questions.

If possible, we strongly recommend having a dedicated person from your firm attend these meetings. This could be an operations director or anyone involved in bill pay services. We recognize that this might be more difficult for smaller firms, but we have found that firms who serve over 20 clients see a lot of success from having someone at the firm who can liaise with our implementation team. This way, there is always someone at your firm who can champion the implementation process, train the rest of the firm, and serve as your in-house expert.

Of course, once the initial implementation calls are over, you will still be able to contact your account manager with any additional questions or concerns.

Establish a new pricing structure

The good news is that most SMBs consider their accounting firms to be trusted partners and are interested in expanded services from them. Clients who see the value in your services will be willing to pay for them as long as the price reflects that value.

Implementing a new AP and AR platform is the perfect time to update your prices, to reflect the ways your work is changing.

Start by evaluating your current pricing structure. What is your firm currently charging for AP services? How many transactions do you process across all your clients and for each individual client? Use these questions, as well as your current pricing, to determine the value of your services and where pricing should be updated.

There are many ways that you can price your AP and AR services, but some models offer more opportunity for scaling and growing your firm. These three models are some of the most common ways we have seen accounting firms price their services:

- **Hourly billing:**
  Charging based on time spent.
- **Flat rates and fixed fees:**
  Fixed prices across all clients.
- **Value pricing:**
  Differing prices based on perceived value.

Onboard your clients

Establishing a rollout plan can go a long way when you're trying to smoothly transition multiple clients to a new tool. Our client onboarding guide includes all the steps to the onboarding process and all of the information you'll need to collect for each client. Work with your team to determine your plan for achieving this with each client. Feel free to try the process with one or two clients at first to get a feel for the process and iron out any wrinkles.

Scale and standardize

Once you feel confident in the client onboarding process, you can standardize this process and scale it to all of your clients—and start thinking about future clients. Think about how you want to scale: are you going to get all of your AP and AR clients onto BILL after your initial tests, or do you want to meet individually with each client and onboard them separately?
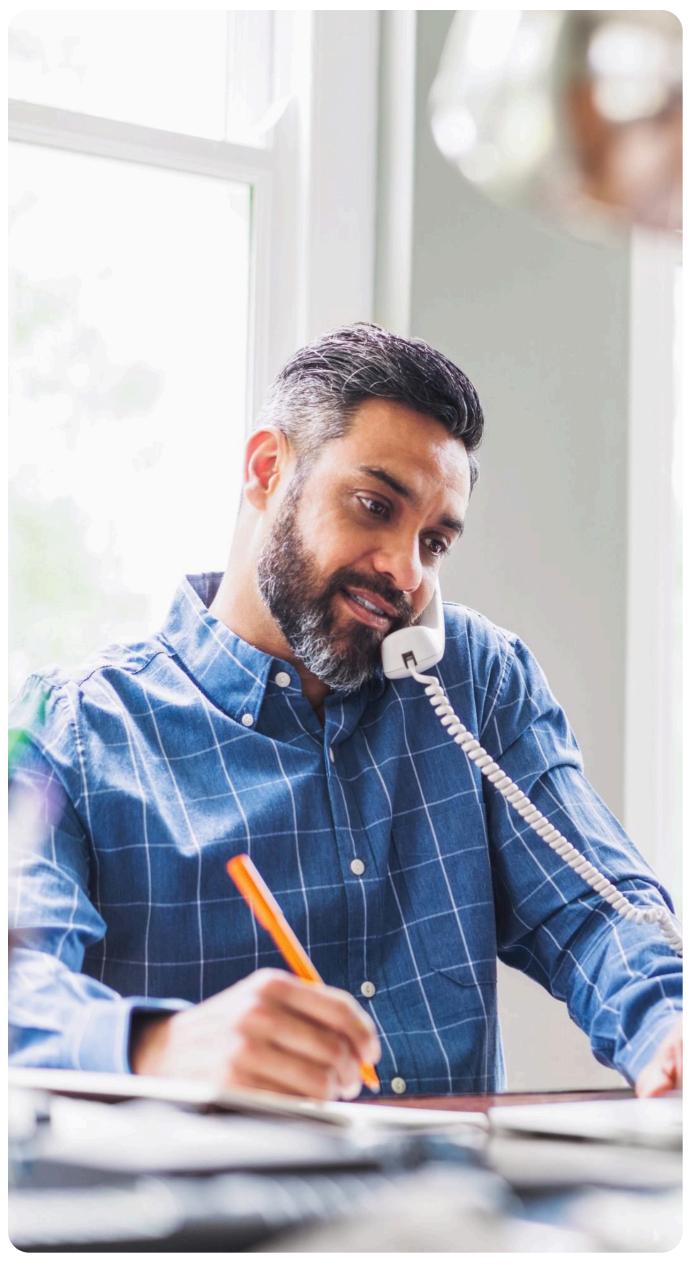
There are several models for how to manage AP/AR services for your clients:

- **Firm ownership:** Fully outsourced AP/AR services where the firm handles everything.
- **Joint ownership:** A collaborative model where the client and the firm both play a part in the process.
- **Client ownership:** The firm oversees while the client maintains responsibility for the entire AP/AR process.

These workflows prompt other questions to answer as you scale: Do you want to have one standard workflow across all your clients, or allow each client to choose their level of involvement? How will that affect pricing and other structures at your firm?

Notify your clients

Even if your firm was already offering AP and AR services, you may want to communicate these changes to your clients. They may not be concerned with which platform your firm uses if they're not involved, but you should notify them of anything else that changes as part of this change, such as your new pricing structure or changes to their involvement levels.

Add new technology and services

AP and AR are not the only services that BILL can automate for you. Once your team is confident using our AP and AR platform, talk to your account manager about additional features—such as ACH or international payments—and our spend management software, BILL Spend & Expense.

Additional technology, like BILL Spend & Expense, will require its own implementation and onboarding process. Just as your team will take time to learn the new processes when switching to BILL, your clients who maintain a level of involvement will require an adjustment period. Determine the thresholds your clients must meet to indicate that they are ready and open to learning about additional BILL products, which may require a bit more involvement from them. Watch for these signs to tell when your client is ready for BILL Spend & Expense.

Implementing BILL AP & AR at your firm may seem complicated, but by following these practices you can help the process go smoothly for your team and for your clients.

Ready to help your clients spend smarter?

Reach out to your account manager today or visit
bill.com/for-accountants.