

S U C C E S S S T O R Y

Am Law 100 Firm Makes the Switch to Aderant BillBlast to Tackle Split Billing and Enable Self-Sufficiency



A law firm's billing process goes to the heart of its business relationship with clients. If the billing system is flawed and inefficient, the accounts receivable effort—and the firm as a whole—will suffer as a result.

Recently, an expansive Am Law 100 firm experienced a multitude of challenges with its eBilling software, consuming valuable time and resources. When these issues began to overwhelm its billing staff and impact cash receipts, the firm set out to find an alternative solution. Not yet a user of any products, the firm began to explore Aderant's suite of solutions, including those that would integrate with their existing financial system.

A Billing Backlog and Challenges at Every Turn

Inefficiencies within the firm's legacy eBilling solution spawned months of delayed billing and an enormous backlog. This was exacerbated by the fact that many of the firm's clients require complex split billing. While a common practice, split billing is also a frequent challenge for firms, as multiple parties are responsible for paying for legal work. Each paying party expects to receive their portion of the invoice in compliance with their format requirements and based on their percentage of responsibility.

Unfortunately, the firm's existing combination of solutions simply could not handle the volume and complexity of split bills; the billing department found itself continually asking the IT department for help to stretch the system's capabilities to meet its split billing needs. But ultimately, the process of creating split bills remained a time-consuming, manual process — the firm knew they needed a best-in-class solution.

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The Search for a Best-in-Class eBilling Solution Started and Ended with BillBlast

Determined to find a replacement that would seamlessly integrate with its existing financial system, the firm turned to Aderant BillBlast. When making the decision, the firm's leadership appreciated that BillBlast is a financial system agnostic solution. They valued BillBlast's ability to extract necessary data from its existing financial system as well as to support split billing and other complex functions. BillBlast efficiently automates the creation, delivery and tracking of all invoices, automating steps which the firm had been carrying out manually for a large percentage of their monthly bills due to the previous solution's limitations.

Smashing Year-End Goals

During implementation, the firm elected to take advantage of BillBlast's native capability to process historical bills. The results enabled the firm to uncover hundreds of bills that had yet to be submitted by their previous ebilling solution. Determined to have them out the door and paid in the few short months leading to year-end, BillBlast enabled the firm's billing team to clear out their entire backlog of unsubmitted invoices before the close of the 2021 business year. Additionally, the firm was able to reduce their overall backlog of billing errors by more than 82%, the overall count of eBill invoices with outstanding receivables by more than 32%, and the total outstanding eBill A/R by more than 65%.

Tackling Split Billing While Fostering Self-Sufficiency

Prior to implementing BillBlast, the firm had been forced to handle split and complex billing arrangements manually, resulting in extensive delays. Now billers can do it all in a single click. BillBlast can accommodate for each payor's requirements within the bill files it prepares for delivery, for example billing them at the 100% value, with or without IF adjusting line items, and based on each parties' agreed upon rates. This unique agility is a major win for the firm's billing staff, as they finally have a solution capable of handling all their intricate billing needs.

With its previous system, the firm had to rely on a technical resource to manipulate a text file for every single invoice and payor—a challenging, time-consuming, and error-prone process. BillBlast has completely eradicated this problem, allowing billers to be more independent and self-sufficient. Now, once a bill is finalized in the financial system, the firm's billing staff can send it to all relevant parties without involving a technical resource.

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Boundless Benefits

Aside from the initial challenges that BillBlast was intended to solve, the firm has gained additional process improvements and functionalities since implementing the software, including:

- **Bill consolidation on-the-fly**— The firm can download bills to a single LEDES file, consolidating them in an instant. The need to manually combine 100s of individual LEDES files into a single file via copy and paste was eliminated by BillBlast's ability to consolidate on the fly. By downloading bill files to a single bill file, BillBlast eliminated hours of work each week for the billing and technical resources who were previously performing this consolidation manually.
- **Nightly data extraction/uploading for dashboard display**— The firm opted to receive BillBlast data in a nightly feed downloaded to their network. Through the same system, the firm then pushes billing data back into its financial system, to be displayed with financial dashboarding tools. This nightly process gives attorneys using dashboards more visibility into BillBlast delivery activity.
- **Quick bill dispute resolution and revenue protection**— By quickly resolving client bill disputes, the firm can protect its revenue. When a client disputes timely receipt of an invoice, BillBlast effortlessly obtains the proof needed (images of the invoice), confirming the status and substantiating to the client that the bill has been delivered.
- **Downloading bills by batch into zip directories**—Business needs often require efficient and easy access to a specific set of LEDES files, perhaps in the case of a group of invoices a client wishes to further audit or maybe those that the client expects to receive via email delivery. BillBlast assists with downloading these files and grouping them into a directory, making it more efficient for billers to access files on-demand and then execute on a client's requirement.

Having made the switch to BillBlast, the firm is in an improved position to serve clients while preserving its own financial interests. Because of its initial success with BillBlast, the firm is now evaluating BillBlast's email module, a feature that enables firms to email invoice PDFs directly to clients who do not require delivery to a vendor site. BillBlast has brought tremendous efficiency and support to the billing team, getting them back on track and consistently encouraging more independent and proactive work.

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