BillQuick Time and Billing by BillQuick Software, Inc.

Overall Rating	**9.0**

Product Name

BillQuick Time and Billing by BillQuick Software, Inc.

Reviewed By

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Summary

BillQuick is an extremely flexible tool that should meet the needs of the most demanding time and expense tracking and billing environments in many professional service industries. It is comparatively easy to use given its multitude of functions and configurability. Initial setup and configuration of the integration with QuickBooks is not a simple task and will require some thought and planning but is well worth the effort. The folks at BQE software are very knowledgeable and helpful with the process of implementation.

Strengths

Of the many features included in the software I was most impressed with the following:

- For the way I work, the ability to start multiple timers and switch between them throughout the day, automatically inactivating one while you work on the other is really nice.
- The ability to use Outlook to collect your time with the add-on product BillQuickAssistant will appeal to many.
- For those migrating from doing their time and billing in QuickBooks they will likely find the following features particularly helpful:
  - Batch printing of reports and invoices
  - Billing review report showing the valuation of work in process at cost and at billable value.
  - Flexible rate schedules based on projects, activities, or employee groups.
  - Ability to limit employees to specific projects and activities to assure accurate posting of time. These limits can be set from the budget that you develop.
  - The QuickBooks conversion utility to save time setting up the system.
  - Real time detailed QuickBooks integration
- Other impressive features include:
  - Project control using phases and % complete calculations. It compares the manager's estimated completion % to the actual % calculation based on time charged.
  - Detailed budgets by activity and phase.
  - Web suite can allow Macs to enter time that posts to BillQuick on a PC. This is particularly useful to advertising agencies.
  - Multiple contacts and locations per client.
  - Multiple contract types
  - Auto complete for invoice memo field is useful for long and repeating invoice paragraphs.
  - Over 300 reports included in library of pre-defined reports and invoice formats.
  - Can create an invoice from your budgets.
  - Instant messaging between users.
  - Document management capabilities.

Limitations

✓ Crystal Reports is required if you want to customize invoices. This may require some additional training and is not an easy task. Alternatively BQE will custom program any reports that you need using Crystal Reports. Also report drill down is limited through the Crystal Reports report writer.

✓ The first time integration guide and wizard need some work. I found a few bugs in the first time integration wizard and the integration documentation did not help resolve them. BQE is on the right track to making this process more intuitive and easy to use.

✓ During integration a number of billed time entries were transferred to BillQuick as unbilled. This is due to a limitation in the QuickBooks SDK. Intuit will include the ability to identify billed transactions in their next release of SDK. In the meantime, there is an ability within BillQuick to select multiple transactions and mark them as billed.

✓ My discount transactions were not passed through on integration. The developer supports credit memos for write-offs which is the more correct way to handle them because you adjust the sales tax payable in the process.

Wish List

I wish I could write and customize my own reports with a tool that is as easy to use as the QuickBooks Report Writer. I also wish the first time interface wizard was a little more intuitive. I think they are almost there on that one but it needs a little work. The location of the filters tab when looking at clients was confusing to me because it seems like it does not apply to the screen I am currently viewing. BQE plans to move this tab to a button on the toolbar in a future release.

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Product Ratings	Rating
Setup and Installation: Initial installation and setup of the software was flawless and easy. Like the typical user, without reading any instructions including the little Quickstart manual in the CD case I jumped right in and was able to install the software and get things operational without a hitch.	9.5
Interface: I found it difficult to get used to the user interface. The interface is complicated by multiple ways of doing things i.e., pull-down menus, icon bar, navigators and the Outlook style column of tabs on the side of the screen. Once I got familiar with the interface it no longer got in the way. There are user preferences where some of the interface pieces like the outlook explorer bar can be disabled if you prefer. Having the filters tab off to the right of a list behind some of the record details was confusing. It also has its own list and it is unclear what you are really filtering.	8.0
Features: This is feature rich software and very flexible. When using this program for a while you are more likely to say, "I didn't know I could do that" than to say, "Why can't I do this". All of my "why can't I do this" questions were answered with a phone call to the developer and in every case they had a workable solution to my problem.	9.0
Follow-through on Claims I found no claims made in the web-site or other literature I reviewed on which the software did not deliver. It does what they say it will do and it does it very well.	9.5
Ease of Use/Service and Support Once you get familiar with this software it is easy to use and navigate. However it does have a little bit of a learning curve. If you are patient you will be richly rewarded with great functionality and ease of use. When I ran into problems I was helped by people who were technically and functionally competent and used tools like Live-Meeting so they could show me how to use the software and it allowed me to show them where I had questions. Attending the free online training is a must! A number of different classes are offered including one-on-one training to cover your issues and interests and will earn you CPE credits. There are also specific classes by industry. It will greatly shorten the learning curve and help you with the implementation process. This training using the net meeting software could make the difference in your ability to successfully implement this software and take advantage of its many features.	9.0

Ratings Definitions

10.0 (Perfect):
This is a very rare score is reserved for a product that is as perfect as it could be.

9.0 to 9.9 (Spectacular):
A product that receives a rating in this range succeeds at meeting all of its intended users' needs and has no major drawbacks.

8.0 to 8.9 (Excellent):
A product that receives a rating in this range is superior in so many ways that its few drawbacks do not have much negative impact.

7.0 to 7.9 (Very good):
While the strengths of a product scoring in this range certainly outweigh its weaknesses, it has some minor faults that users should be aware of.

6.0 to 6.9 (Good):
This range represents a product that is above average. Its strengths outweigh its weaknesses, making it good for most uses but not a standout.

5.0 to 5.9 (Average):
A product that scores in this range is functional but unremarkable.

4.0 to 4.9 (Mediocre):
Products in this range are below average. They fall in the middle of the pack for most features, but suffer from a few additional major flaws.

3.0 to 3.9 (Poor):
A customer should probably not consider purchasing a product in this range or lower. There may be one or two specialized circumstances, however, that could justify the purchase of this product for a very low price for a specific demand.

Data Security This is well designed software from a data security standpoint. The ability to set up security at a very detailed level makes it hard for me to conceive of a situation where you want to grant employees access to only limited functionality that could not be accomplished.	**9.0**
Privacy BQE Software has a comprehensive privacy policy that is posted on their website at www.bqe.com/PrivacyPolicy.htm. It is clear from this that they take reasonable steps to assure that any data collected by them is only used for its intended purpose and is not available for sale or otherwise to persons without your permission.	**9.5**
Integration with QuickBooks The integration between BillQuick and QuickBooks is flexible, and extensive. The first time integration wizard walks the user through the process. The integration manual is a must read before beginning the process. Do not be in a hurry during this process. If you are already using QuickBooks then a lot of your work is done by running the feature to get the data from QuickBooks and drop it into BillQuick. Once this process is complete, the real-time synchronization option can be set to keep everything up-to-date in both programs no matter where you make your changes. The QuickBooks update happens instantaneously. In some cases certain functions have to be closed and then opened for changes to appear in BillQuick. The data synchronized includes list data i.e.: items, employees, customers/jobs, vendors, and transaction data like: time entries, expense entries, invoices, payments, bills and checks. Once it is setup the integration is great. However, check your data carefully after your initial setup especially if you were previously a QuickBooks user. I believe the vendor is committed to improving both written and on screen documentation in this area and that should help immensely.	**8.5**