



BillQuick Accommodates Project Phasing & Billing Against Client Retainers

By Isaac M. O'Bannon

BillQuick 2003 is the latest version of BQE Software's (888-245-5669; www.bqe.com) flagship time and billing management software. The software has industry-specific features that can be selected



for accountants, as well as other service professionals such as engineers, consultants, contractors and legal offices. Billing can be based upon criteria such as fixed fee, time and expense, hourly billing and contractual billing based upon percentage and/or progress payments of a fixed fee. BillQuick can be configured to manage time and billing for more than one accounting or CPA firm individually, with

clients, billing and staff kept separately. BQE developed BillQuick 2003 for small to medium-sized firms and offers BillQuick Enterprise for larger companies and BillQuick Lite for the sole practitioner.

The program is offered in single or group licenses and can be used in networked environments. This new version has significant advance-

BillQuick's partially redesigned interface is well-designed, with pull-down and icon menus across the top of the main window, and the Navigator subwindow in the middle of the screen. The icons at the top of the screen are a bit cluttered, and their functions are not always that obvious at first glance. However, as the user grows accus-

“Remote-entry modules are available for Palm and Windows CE-based PDAs, as well as web-based time card and expense log interfaces.”

ments that require more powerful computing systems than the previous versions. Single computer and network workstation installation requires an 800MHz processor, 256MB of RAM or more, and 350MB of hard disk space. Systems should be running Windows 98/2000/NT/ME/XP and should have Internet Explorer 5.0 or later. It can be used on most Windows and Novell networks. The enterprise edition of BillQuick 2003 requires Microsoft SQL Server 7.0 or newer.

tomed to the program, the quick access provided by these icons overcomes the clutter. The Navigator screen has also been modified from last year, offering icons that are more intuitively organized and that provide access to the primary sections of the program, including Employee, Client, Project, Time Entry & Expense Log, Invoices & Payments, and Codes/Schedules & Budgets, which serves as a firm management area.

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BillQuick Is Offered In Single Or Group Licenses

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Time and expense data is entered in the program's Time Entry and Expense Log, which offers timer-based and manual time entry, an Expense Log, and access to Invoices and Payments. These functions allow users to input time or expenses with as few as two keystrokes. BillQuick 2003 then intelligently reviews the client data and bill at the appropriate time. The Time Card module gives employees full access to enter their time directly into the system, while security and access features limit access to information they have authorization to view. Employees can have an unlimited number of rates, including their default and overtime rates, which can be charged to clients in user-defined increments down to 1/100th of an hour. Project management features also allow any number of rates to be assigned to activities, projects and clients, and alerts the user if a project is nearing or exceeds a predefined budget. The program can also accommodate project phasing and bill against client retainers.

BillQuick 2003 offers more than 300 customizable report templates, invoices and labels, as well as manual billing, reprinting and override capabilities. Included in these reports are office profitability analyses that help firms maximize efficiency by tracking performance and profitability based on client, staff or projects. All invoices, statements and reports can be modified completely using the included Crystal Reports utility, and then completed invoices can be sent to clients via e-mail if desired. (The company noted that Crystal Reports Print/Preview engine is included; the Report Designer required for customization is sold separately — currently \$190 for Crystal Reports 9.0. Customization services are offered by BQE.) The new version also integrates completely with QuickBooks and can share data with Peachtree and Quicken. As well, it can generate tab- and comma-delimited files for import into other accounting programs. The integration with QuickBooks allows instant access to pre-existing customer lists and

contact information, helping to reduce redundant entry. Remote-entry modules are available for Palm and Windows CE-based PDAs (BillQuick Wireless, which should be available by the time this review is published), as well as web-based time card and expense log interfaces.

BillQuick 2003 is an outstanding time and billing management program, making time-based billing about as simple as possible. The scalability into its enterprise version helps it satisfy the needs of firms of almost any size, from a sole practitioner to a large, multi-office firm. The program is extraordinarily user friendly with one of the best help utilities and interface guidance systems (right-click menus, help prompts and user tips) in any software package. Pricing has remained the same as last year, with multi-user licenses starting at \$395 for two users and \$695 for five, and support packages offered by subscription (30 days of technical support is included with purchase). ■ ★★★★★

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Employee	Client	Department	Activity	Rate	Hours
37090003	03 K2FA	Department of Water and Power	COPI	0.00	0.00
37090003	03 K2FA	Accounting and Billing Department	CM ST	1.75	1.75
37090003	03 K2FA	Department of Water and Power	MP	2.25	2.25
37090003	03 K2FA	Department of Water and Power	HE	3.25	3.25
37090003	03 K2FA	Company/Contract	SA	2.25	2.25

- Bill rates based on Employee, Activity and/or Client
- Multiple stop watches to track time automatically
- Automatic detection of incomplete time sheets
- Bill per hour, per day, recurring, % complete or fixed contracts
- Email invoices
- Tracks open invoices and automatically prints collection letters
- Web-enabled
- PDA-enabled Palm/Pocket PC
- Customizable invoices & reports



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