



## Electronic Bill-Payment Service Saves Time and Money

By [Lauren Simonds](#)

September 2, 2009

Online banking and electronic bill payment make life a lot easier for consumers, but that's not a service banks typically make available to small businesses. Fortunately, software-as-a-service companies, such as [Bill.com](#), are stepping in to fill the gap. With its ePayment service, [Bill.com](#) enables its small business customers to pay employees, individuals or vendors through electronic direct-deposit.

Let's start with a quick look at why online banking and small business hasn't taken off.

Small business banking needs are a bit more complicated than the typical consumer, and banks aren't set up to handle those needs. For example, consumer bill payments typically go to credit card companies, insurance providers and utility companies. The majority of the bills that small businesses pay go to small vendors, and they fall outside of a bank's electronic payment network.

Small businesses also tend to have an invoice review-and-approval process that involves multiple people, and banks don't offer a workflow process to accommodate that. Also, bank systems don't synchronize with accounting systems such as QuickBooks — a must-have feature for small businesses, but not a big concern for consumers.

Enter Bill.com's ePayment service, which addresses all of these issues and makes it possible for small business to pay any vendor through electronic direct deposit from any U.S. bank. The company does this using the [Automated Clearing House \(ACH\) Network](#), a secure, nationwide electronic funds transfer system.

Small businesses can match their vendors to Bill.com's directory of more than 4,000 billers, or they can setup an ePayment account for each vendor and input the vendor's name and e-mail address. Once a vendor is in the system, small businesses can easily schedule ePayments from within Bill.com.

The payment process seamlessly synchronizes with small business accounting systems, which eliminates double entry and the errors often associated with it. The service also synchs your banking with your vendors —i.e., with your vendor lists in QuickBooks for example. Currently, the service supports QuickBooks and Intacct accounting programs, with more to come.

Jeff Shultz, Bill.com's vice president of marketing, claims that by using the ePayments service small business owners will reduce the time they spend on their bill-paying process by 50 to 75 percent. "The ePayments service provides a paperless integration of banking and accounting systems with no duplication and a one-click payment process," he said.

Other benefits derived from using the service include lower overall payment costs and improved payment-timing predictability, cash management and payment efficiency. The company also offers a registration process for vendors that want to accept payment from Bill.com customers.

And if you're ecologically minded, Payitgreen.org estimates that a company that uses electronic payment instead of checks to pay even 20 bills each month will save 7.5 lbs. of paper, 71 gallons of water, 9.6 gallons of gasoline and 297 lbs. of greenhouse gases annually.

Bill.com is Verisign secured, uses 256-bit, bank-level encryption and strong password policies. "This lets our customers use simple to remember passwords without sacrificing security," said Shultz. It also adheres to [SAS 70](#) Type II standards and undergoes what Shultz described as a "detailed review from independent auditors of our security and control processes."

A basic Bill.com subscription for one person costs \$24.99 a month and includes 10 free check payments. Each additional check costs 99 cents and e-payments cost 49 cents each. Add \$9.99 per month for each additional person.