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From the November 2005 Review of Time
& Billing Software

LexisNexis continues to actively develop its Time Matters and Billing Matters practice management and time-based billing applications, most recently releasing version 7.0 of the two products with added and enhanced features. Time Matters was examined in the review of practice management software in our October 2005 issue. LexisNexis' development of time and billing-focused Billing Matters 7.0 makes sense pragmatically: The company has a long history of providing resources
for the legal community, which pretty much came up with the idea of billing based on time plus expenses. The products have undergone significant enhancements,
including the addition of features that allow the software to be tailored to
the specific needs of accounting practices and other professional services firms.

Billing Matters supports multiple billing methods, and its Plus version adds check writing, accounts payable, increased budgeting tools, and integrated control over payables, registers and GL. A one-user license of Billing Matters Professional edition costs $350; additional users cost $200 each. The Plus version costs $525; $300 for each additional user. An enterprise edition that makes use of a SQL database is also available.

Ease of Use/Program Set Up — 5 Stars
Billing Matters installs smoothly, with setup tasks such as entering staff,
staff groups, work codes, projects and firm information guided by wizards and other assistive devices. The program's interface is centered around the
Navigator screen, which uses a workflow diagram with icons to offer access to

regular activities such as entering timesheets or expenses via the Quick Item,

shortcuts, and most of the program's tools are can be customized to suit user preferences.

The two primary methods of time entry are intuitive, with the Quick entry mode offering users the ability to select a date range to either enter or review data, with entry taking place on forms that include smart auto-entry forms and selection lists that store previous entries and speed the selection of clients, dates, billing codes and other data. The calendar-focused Timesheet method offers at-a-glance five- or seven-day views, with greater access to billing detail through a tabbed screen interface for viewing or entering markups and time/expense splitting between clients. When using Billing Matter's scheduling calendar, the program can automatically transfer most pertinent data to a timesheet, providing a third option for data entry that speeds much of the process. Time entries can be supplemented with notes through a memo function.

Management Functions — 5 Stars
Billing Matters allows an unlimited number of staff with unlimited rates per staff member, and can be set to bill work on a flat-fee or time basis. More advanced features include the ability to bill in advance, against trusts, progress/phased billing, and consolidated and split billing among more than one client, with the option to set up billing preference templates for clients. For review and audit purposes, Billing Matters' BillFlow Manager automates the workflow process, enabling management users with appropriate security access rights to track time entry and the billing process, with the ability to filter timesheets by staff or date, with drill-down output showing time and expense data and all supplemental information. BillFlow can also be set to automatically notify specific users when Pre-bills are ready for review. The feature also allows creation

of pre-bills and bills, editing of preferences, adding, editing or deleting

Alarms associated with specific clients, engagements or timesheets can be set up within the system's calendar function for items such as ToDos, Events and Phone Call, while Quick Alarms can also be used for other items. Another interesting feature is what the program refers to as Triggers, which can be set to make the program perform a specific action when another action takes place, such as when you mark a record as completed, you can have the program automatically create another record or cause a change in another field in the same record. Billing Matters includes an audit trail of all engagement activity, and security features enable setting access rights that can restrict features and functions even down to the field level on entry forms. The included document management functions also enable attaching scanned documents directly to engagement records.

Billing & Reporting — 5 Stars
Basic bills can be generated very quickly, while more advanced features are available for split and consolidated bills, as well as other options. Billing Matters' reporting functions include a report writer/invoice designer that includes dynamic capabilities, such as basing client invoice messages on aging. This will result in a kinder "reminder" to 30-day accounts, and one that is a bit more stern for more delinquent accounts. Users have control over the level of detail and fields to be included on invoices, as well as over font, colors, text and graphics and other data, and can easily add firm logos or other components to client deliverables.

The program contains more than 50 drill-down capable customizable reports for engagement, project and task productivity analysis, as well as AR and WIP, with the ability to create a virtually unlimited number of custom reports. A

notable feature especially for firms trying to minimize paper usage is the system's

Blackberry
wireless handhelds. As well, Billing Matters synchronizes with QuickBooks 2002 and later for accounting functions.

User Support & Help — 4.5 Stars
Billing Matters includes strong assistance features and a well-built Help utility, but, because the program's feature set is fairly strong, some training
may be advisable for new users. Fortunately, the company also sends a training CD along with the software, and live and web-based options are also available. Technical support is free up to 10 incidents for a one-year period, with $50 per-incident tech assistance after that, or the option to purchase a support subscription.

2005 Overall Rating: 4.5 Stars

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