



# Electronic Billing and Payments

Streamlining the way we do business

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## **CommSecure Australia Pty Limited**

ABN 14 001 950 670

**964 Pacific Highway, Pymble NSW 2073 Australia**

**Tel: +61 2 9497 4400 Fax: +61 2 9497 4499 Web:**

**[www.commsecure.com.au](http://www.commsecure.com.au)**

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## EBPS Holds Key to Success

In today's cut-throat marketplace, forward-thinking organisations must pursue every possible avenue for reducing costs, improving efficiency and strengthening customer relationships.

For enterprises with substantial customer bases and extensive invoice runs, Electronic Billing and Payments Systems (EBPS) will slash the time and costs associated with billing and receivables while improving convenience and quality of service for customers.

### What is EBPS?

Electronic Billing and Payments Systems, such as CommSecure's BillSecure, enable an organisation to present bills to customers online and receive payments electronically, avoiding the costs of printing and posting paper invoices along with associated manual processing and reconciliation procedures.

With EBPS, customers can view bills online at their convenience and pay via BPAY®, credit card or direct debit. Payments can be accepted over the phone using Interactive Voice Response (IVR) systems or online over the Internet.

### Benefits of EBPS for Enterprises

The most obvious advantage of EBPS is the way it encourages and facilitates customer self-service, automating the process of bill presentation, payment and receipting with only minimal input required from staff. The personnel costs associated with accounting transactions are greatly reduced, as are stationery and postage expenses.

Corporations are becoming more aware of the high administrative costs associated with receiving payments by cash or cheque, both in manual processing and in addressing the problems often associated with cheques.

According to the Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts, a shift away from cash and cheques could free up \$2 billion per annum in the Australian economy.

Even more compelling data comes from two major studies in the US which highlight the way EBPS enhances the quality and value of the customer relationship.

After tracking two groups of Bank of America customers over 31 months, Forrester Research found that the **online bill payers became 31 per cent more profitable** for the bank by increasing their number and value of loan and deposit accounts.



Similarly, a study of customers at the top 30 US banks by Boston Consulting Group over a 12 month period found the **profitability of online bill payers increased by 40 per cent** while the profitability of offline bill payers increased by just two per cent.

CommSecure's own analysis shows that migrating customers to electronic delivery of bills and lower cost payment methods could generate a potential savings of 50% over the cost of non-electronic methods.

In addition to the obvious cost savings and profitability growth, these studies reveal a significant increase in the depth of relationship between the banks and their online customers, who tended to consolidate their accounts and investments with their online biller.

CommSecure's BillSecure solution offers further benefits through its ability to integrate billing data from multiple customer systems, enabling organisations with multiple product and service offerings (such as electricity and gas), to provide customers with a single, consolidated account.

### **ASP Offering Reduces Costs, Eases Integration**

Since CommSecure's BillSecure solution is delivered via an Application Service Provider (ASP) model, it dramatically reduces the time and costs associated with implementation.

Not only does a hosted solution require no up-front capital investment, but it can be implemented in a much shorter time frame than that of an in-house development project.

Companies can begin reaping the benefits of BillSecure's advanced billing and payment capabilities almost immediately, with CommSecure's 'pay as you save' approach ensuring the cost of EBPS access quickly pays for itself through process improvements and reduced expenses.

The system is hosted and maintained at CommSecure's state-of-the-art, highly secure and redundant facilities, with all access via a standard Web browser. This means that maintenance, security and on-going enhancements all remain under the control of CommSecure's expert technical specialists and the system can easily be scaled to cater for increased demand.

### **Benefits of EBPS for Customers**

Electronic billing and payments offers customers an easier, more flexible way to complete their financial transactions from the comfort of their home or office at a time that is convenient to them. Not only do they avoid having to deal with paper



invoices and wasting precious natural resources, but they can access and view their accounts online from any standard browser.

For customers, the ability to view bills and pay their accounts electronically fits well with their busy lifestyle, as well as ensuring that in the instance of any discrepancy or complaint, they have access to the same account view as the supplier's contact centre, ensuring that errors can be quickly resolved.

Little wonder that customers tend to place more trust in suppliers with whom they have developed an online relationship, as demonstrated by the US studies.

## **What is Driving EBPS Adoption?**

The Reserve Bank of Australia believes the shift towards electronic payments is "undeniably global".

According to a recent RBA report, "It is driven by advances in technology and the lower cost of electronic payments, as well as the additional convenience that they can offer to consumers and businesses. It is fair to say that few people are in any doubt this shift will continue for many years to come."

With Internet access now available to over two-thirds of the Australian population at home (Australian Bureau of Statistics) and broadband services experiencing very strong growth, particularly wireless, the infrastructure is now in place to support consumer access to EBPS.

Today, more and more time-poor Australians are deserting banking and shopping queues to leverage the Internet not just for their finances, but also for research, travel bookings and shopping for everything from computers, books and magazines to flowers and groceries.

According to the Reserve Bank, Australians made 190 non-cash payments (excluding cash and cheques) per capita in 2005, with the vast majority of these paid either by credit card or direct debit. In fact, the percentage of bills paid via cheque dropped from 57 per cent in 1990 to just 27 per cent in 2005, while BPAY became an integral part of daily life, processing 12 million transactions every month.

This represents an enormous opportunity for enterprises that recognise the value of extending the public's ready acceptance of electronic payments with CommSecure's advanced capabilities for online bill generation, presentation, notification and reconciliation.

## **Why CommSecure?**



CommSecure is one of Australia's leading providers of next-generation EBPS solutions, offering a compelling value proposition for enterprises wishing to improve the effectiveness and efficiency of their customer transactions.

CommSecure's BillSecure system is one of the most secure and feature-rich offerings on the market, encompassing bill generation, presentation, notification and archiving, along with electronic processing of payments, multi-channel receipting, reporting and reconciliation.

This suite of integrated products allows the biller to choose between delivery via its own branded website and/or Internet Banking, using BPAY View®.

Importantly, the service is also bank independent with gateways to all major Australian banks and credit card companies.

CommSecure's ability to integrate multiple data sources into a single invoice alleviates the need for organisations to invest in complex integration projects, enabling them to enhance customer service and respond more nimbly to changes in market demands.

With security certification by Australia's leading banks, credit card companies and the Federal Government, CommSecure is also the leading accredited bill service provider for BPAY View with over 60 per cent of current implementations.

## Conclusion

The world is moving online and there are enormous benefits for organisations that move quickly to build trusted, interactive relationships that leverage the power and flexibility of the Internet. The ability to streamline financial transactions while simultaneously enhancing service and convenience for customers adds up to lower costs, higher profitability and more loyal customers.