

Automation transforms managed print service provider billing for PAE

PAE Business is a software and solutions company established in 2000 to deliver specialised managed print services to the European market. The company focuses on providing its clients, a network of value-added resellers (VARs), with award-winning applications including remote printer device management, print governance, secure print governance and secure print. It works with partners including Katun, PPC Solutions, Ricoh and Toshiba.

Recognised as being at the forefront of the managed print services sector and its evolution into managed content services, PAE Business was keen to apply that same philosophy to its service provider billing process.

Time for a change – embracing automation

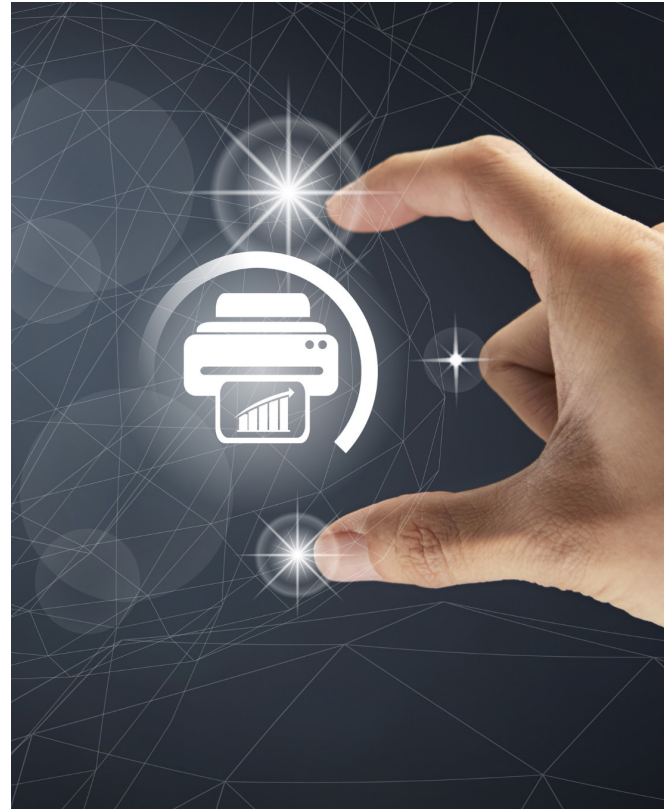
PAE's print IT billing was a challenging and time-consuming manual process. On average it took staff four to five days each month to complete. It was also heavily reliant on spreadsheets and the manual inputting of figures into their accounting systems (including Sage 50) – increasing the potential for error.

This was compounded by the fact PAE works with nearly 700 VARs and 11 distribution partners who have onward billing.

In 2021, the company was introduced to PRD Technologies at [Technology Live](#), the ICT, managed IT, mobile and print exhibition, and discussions began on the best way to streamline PAE's billing system.

Based on PAE's current and future requirements, we took on the project to build an automated billing system that:

- Offered automatic data collection, processing and billing processes for consumable print IT data
- Generated subscription cost data for VARs to onward bill to their own end-customers
- Was compliant with ISO27001 standards



A customised automated billing system

We developed a proof-of-concept system based on our Intelligent Billing platform that met the specific requirements of the managed print services industry. It was created taking into consideration PAE's process was entirely manual and the challenges surrounding billing VARs in different European territories.

Specifically, this meant PAE needed to produce invoices in multiple currencies for its customer base and be able to issue the invoices and charge on behalf of other partners – that is, not just PAE UK, but its Netherlands and other global counterparts as well.

Other considerations included:

- Making provision for customers in different regions, not only in terms of currency but also in terms of using multiple languages and adhering to tax rules specific to region and country
- Legislative requirements – based on region, customers had different rules for processing data, as well as charging structures that differed per client
- The ability for PAE to process and charge contracts on a monthly, quarterly and annual basis
- Being able to calculate excess usage figures and billing outside of a customer's contracted bundle





Innovative solution to streamline managed print services billing

The Print IT sector was, at the time, a new one for PRD Technologies with a different format of input files and data from other industry sectors we already worked with, such as [Telco](#), [CSP](#), [MSP](#) and [ISP](#). Due to the versatility of our Intelligent Billing platform and the expertise of our development teams, we developed a solution ideally suited to PAE's unique needs.

The platform was configured accordingly and given the importance of security, the proof-of-concept-system underwent a stringent testing and quality assurance process. We ran multiple parallel runs between the existing manual system and new billing platform to ensure all data was correct.

A step change for PAE

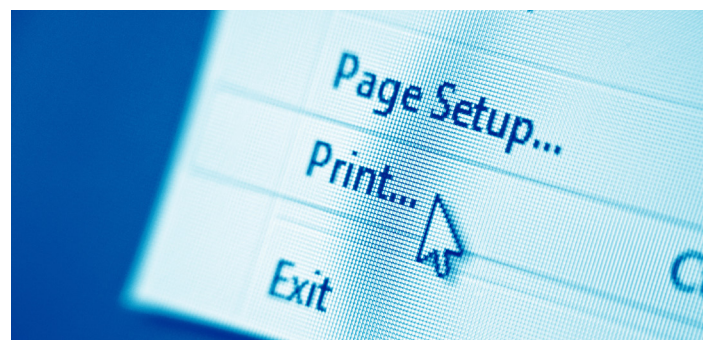
The new Intelligent Billing platform has streamlined PAE's operations by reducing the number of manual processes and key staff dependencies, enabling staff to focus on other areas.

Another key benefit of automating the processes was the significant impact on customer service. The automated platform enables the billing team to generate accurate invoices rapidly. From a business point of view, this has reduced debtors' days, which has in turn improved cashflow.

Sophisticated service provider billing solutions

Simon Adams, MD of PRD Technologies commented, *"We've had many conversations with businesses in the managed print industry and there's an acknowledged reliance on manual, traditional processes. Our Intelligent Billing platform can add significant value to the print IT channel, as the success of this project and the excellent feedback we continue to receive from PAE demonstrates. There is a great opportunity for similar businesses in the industry to update, innovate and streamline their billing processes, working with an experienced billing provider like PRD Technologies."*

If you're experiencing challenges when it comes to managed print services billing, [get in touch](#) with us today to discuss how we can help you transform your business.



“ This was a step change for us moving from manual billing to a completely automated system. PRD worked closely with us from the very beginning, giving us absolute confidence in the final platform. The team has transformed the way we bill our customers, saving us significant time and money, and ensuring accuracy across the process. We would definitely recommend PRD to other managed service providers looking to streamline their operations. ”

Phil Madders
Director of PAE Business