

Efficiency and precision are the hallmarks of legal billing software. Having the right tools can make the difference in streamlined processes and faster collections.

But while most [legal billing software](#) can help you accomplish these goals, top-of-the-line legal billing tools go above and beyond with a comprehensive suite of features that transform the way your legal professionals handle your law firm billing.

Here are the key features to look for in a game-changing legal software solution.

Accurate timekeeping

Precise [timekeeping](#) is crucial for legal professionals, and top-notch billing software recognizes the significance of accuracy. From tracking billable hours to capturing every minute detail, top software ensures that timekeeping is not just a task but an art form.

The right technology makes it easy to bill directly from the legal tasks being completed, whether that's drafting a document, sending a text, having a phone call, or responding to an email — even when attorneys are out of the office. With these features, automated time tracking helps law firms eliminate time leakage and inaccuracies.

Automation

Good billing software automates routine tasks, but the best billing applications take it to a whole new level. Leading legal billing software integrates [robust automation capabilities](#), reducing manual input and minimizing errors. From time tracking to invoice generation, automation ensures that your billing processes are not only efficient but also error-free.

For example, some platforms automatically create invoices for clients billed biweekly or monthly, pulling the data from a particular time range and eliminating the need for manual entry. These platforms can also send automated reminders to clients when payment is overdue, eliminating the need to chase payments. Finally, advanced tools track edits to pre-bills, then automatically forward them through the approval chain, so your bills are more accurate while wasting less time and paper.

Transparent client billing

Transparency builds trust. Instead of the traditional manual process of printing bills and stuffing them in envelopes, modern law firms have switched to online billing platforms. These platforms strengthen client relationships through clear and comprehensible billing practices.

For instance, top software provides a secure portal where clients can have 24/7 access to view, pay, and download their bills. It can also help reduce the need to answer client calls and emails about billing questions with detailed breakdowns of charges, making it easy for clients to understand the services rendered and to review their payment history.

Online payments

While good billing software may support various payment methods, exceptional platforms go the extra mile by offering seamless online payment options, including ACH, credit cards, recurring payments, and more. Leading legal software platforms allow clients to view and settle invoices with just a few clicks, providing unparalleled convenience.

Integration with tools such as LawPay lets clients receive bills in their email inboxes and allows you to check the

status of the email: whether it's been ignored, read, or paid. This feature not only [accelerates the payment process](#) but also enhances overall client satisfaction. Additionally, it can ensure that funds are allocated to the right trust account so you don't have to manually record each payment.

eBilling

Compliance is a non-negotiable aspect of legal billing, but we all know how complex billing can be. Each client has specific preferences and requirements for how they're billed, whether it's an alternative fee arrangement, special discount, or unique invoice template. Then there are also the headaches of [split billing](#), which can be incredibly difficult to track.

Leading legal billing software makes it easy for timekeepers to [customize billing templates](#) for each client and to split bills between different payors. Top software also incorporates [LEDES](#) (Legal Electronic Data Exchange Standard) and [LSS](#) (Legal XML Standard) codes, making it easy for firms, insurance companies, and other third parties to track legal work by task. Top platforms have built-in templates that make creating invoices in the LEDES or LSS format simple.

Centralized reporting

Good billing software may generate basic reports, but the best software takes reporting to new heights with centralized reporting capabilities and helps eliminate the silos that often exist between billing, accounting, and practice management. Advanced legal billing software provides a unified view of financial data, allowing law firms to analyze performance, track revenue, and make informed decisions all in one platform.

More advanced billing software offers easy-to-read reporting templates and dashboards for quick review plus unlimited ways to slice and dice your firm's data with [custom reporting](#) that includes complex features like pivot tables. With these tools, partners can assess matter budgets, marketing teams can determine where to allocate advertising funds, and accounting professionals can calculate sales and other applicable taxes.

Upgrade your billing software today

Legal billing software is no longer a luxury; it's a necessity. But you don't need to settle for a billing platform with bare-bones features that creates more work — and more headaches — for your timekeepers, accountants, and billing team.

Make sure your legal billing software offers these features. If not, [sign up today for a free demo of Centerbase](#) and discover how exceptional legal billing software can revolutionize the way you handle billing and position your law firm for success.