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# On the Radar: BriteBill Spark modernizes bill presentment

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# Summary

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## Catalyst

The COVID-19 pandemic highlighted a glaring need for the telecom industry to transform its approach to customer engagement. One area of customer engagement that has been long overlooked is the customer bill. Although an important customer touchpoint, the bill continues to elicit feelings of dread, confusion, and anxiety. Amdocs is a global provider of business support systems (BSSs) to the telecom industry that provides communications service providers (CSPs) with tools to modernize customer engagement and service monetization. It does this, in part, with product offerings like BriteBill Spark. This offering uses templates, design assets, and algorithms to modernize bill presentment and simplify and personalize the customer bill while leveraging the CSP's existing BSS ecosystem.

## Omdia view

Bill simplification and personalization is a challenge that the telecom industry has struggled with for years. While there are several niche solutions available on the market to help CSPs design more visually appealing and engaging bills, the market lacked a solution that also focused on bill personalization. Amdocs' BriteBill Spark integrates with CSPs' existing BSS ecosystems and acts as an aggregator of billing operations, including bill presentment. A library of templates and other design assets allows CSPs to redesign the look of the bill across paper and digital channels, while proprietary algorithms enable CSPs to create personalized bill messaging for individual customers. Plans to make the solution compliant with TM Forum Open Digital Architecture and OpenAPI frameworks bode well for the vendor's ability to ensure a seamless integration of the product with CSPs' existing IT landscapes.

## Why put Amdocs' BriteBill Spark on your radar?

CSPs that want to modernize the billing experience without replacing their existing billing systems should put Amdocs' BriteBill Spark on their radar. BriteBill Spark makes use of a CSP's existing BSS ecosystem to feed a proprietary algorithm that generates messaging personalized to individual customers and also streamlines billing operations. Moreover, a library of bill design assets and templates empowers any CSP business user to quickly redesign the look of the paper and digital versions of the customer bill.

## Market context

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Customer engagement has been long overdue for a transformation. As the number of engagement channels has grown in the digital age, it has become increasingly challenging for CSPs to not only support these new engagement channels, but also create a consistent experience across digital and traditional channels. For much of the industry, a piecemeal approach, in which engagement channels were offered when and where needed, was good enough.

The COVID-19 pandemic, however, has caused many CSPs to rethink their customer engagement strategies. Early on during the pandemic when traditional channels like retail and contact center were either shuttered or operating at reduced capacity, CSPs struggled to manage the influx of traffic to other engagement channels. Moreover, as customers faced uncertainties due to public health concerns, high unemployment

rates, and economic instability, the CSP became an important and trusted source of both connectivity and information.

As a result of these challenges, the telecom industry has renewed its focus on transforming customer engagement. Omdia's *ICT Enterprise Insights 2020/21 – Global Survey: Telecoms Survey* found that 52% of CSPs will increase information and communications technology (ICT) spending on customer engagement solutions in 2021. Moreover, 97% of the CSPs surveyed believe investment in intelligent customer engagement solutions to be an important IT project over the next year.

One area of customer engagement prime for transformation is the customer bill. Despite being a consistent customer touchpoint for CSPs, the customer bill has remained relatively unchanged over the years, even as customer expectations of engagement have evolved. For many CSP customers, the bill elicits feelings of dread, anxiety, confusion, and frustration. In reality, bills have the potential to be a critical communication channel between the CSP and its customers; be it communicating information, resources, service offerings, or otherwise. Furthermore, in a world in which consumers are increasingly seeking out personalized experiences, an opportunity remains for CSPs to also personalize the customer experience via the bill.

While there is no shortage of billing vendors in the telecom industry, for most in the industry, bill presentment is just a small piece of the overall billing picture. Within the larger billing market, however, a niche segment of vendors has focused on developing solutions to provide CSPs with tools to transform the customer bill and billing experience. Many solutions on the market today focus on providing tools that enable the CSP to create simplified and visually appealing bills for its customers. The challenge of creating visually appealing bills that are also personalized to individual customers has remained widely unaddressed in the market.

Amdocs' recently launched BriteBill Spark aims to bridge these gaps in the market by providing CSPs with templates and other out-of-the-box capabilities to modernize the billing experience and easily design and personalize both paper and digital bills.

## Product overview

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BriteBill Spark is a bill presentment product from Amdocs targeting CSPs that want to quickly modernize the billing experience without making significant changes to their existing IT landscapes. Relying heavily on the use of out-of-the-box templates, BriteBill Spark enables CSPs to streamline the billing process, simplify the customer bill, improve bill design, and create bills and messaging tailored to individual customers. The product is sold direct-to-market and is available via a perpetual software license. BriteBill Spark can be deployed in three months and is available for deployment on-premises, in the cloud, or as an Amdocs managed service. BriteBill Spark consists of several components and is supported by a drag-and-drop graphical user interface (GUI) to enable the CSP to orchestrate both the design and personalization of the bill. These components include the following:

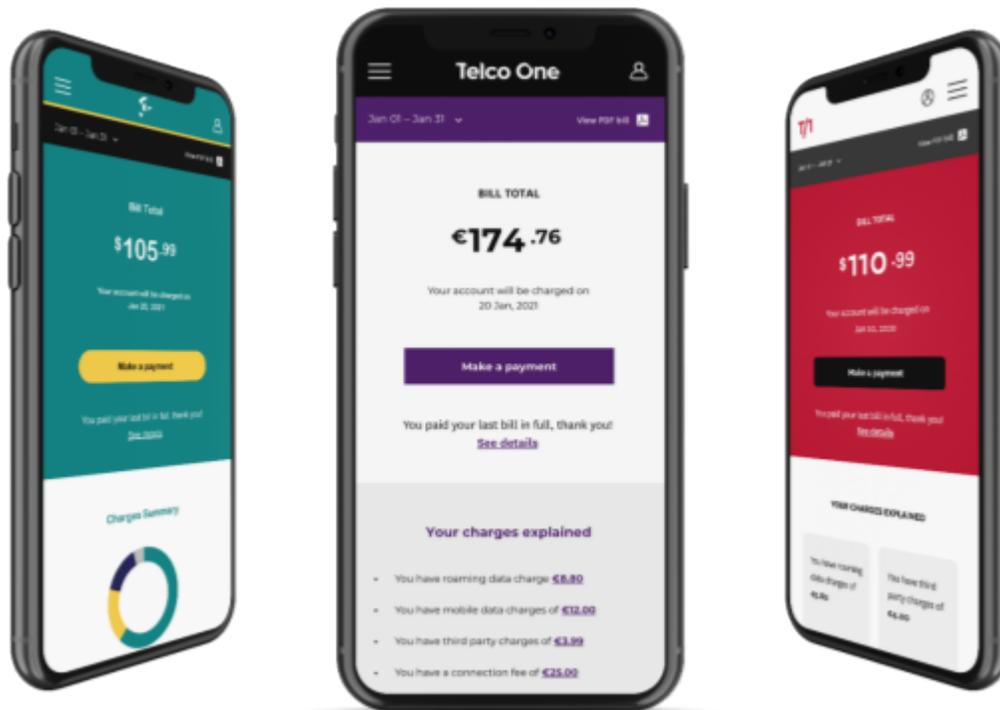
- **Paper templates:** Provide CSPs with building blocks to redesign and simplify the presentation of the paper bill. CSPs can choose from templates for the summary page, important information, charge details, itemized usage details, and marketing content sections of the paper bill. Using a drag-and-drop interface, CSPs can arrange these templated bill components to design the look of the bill.
- **Digital modules:** Provide CSPs with the building blocks to design digital versions of the bill that customers can access via the web, email, an app, and any number of digital engagement channels. The digital modules are formatted for responsive design, meaning the look of the bill

is automatically formatted for the best viewing experience on the device accessing it. Digital bills can be designed using modules for bill total, customer bill history, bill explanation, change summary, charge details, and itemized usage details.

- **Branding elements:** Allow for additional customization of the look of the bill by providing a library of user interface (UI) design assets. These branding elements allow CSPs to manage the placement of the logo on the bill, the fonts, colors, headings, paragraphs, buttons, hyperlinks, and tabs across the paper and digital versions of the bill.
- **Message editor:** Offers personalization of individual customer bills. The message editor can be configured within various sections of the bill templates and enables the addition of images and custom text on the bill. The message editor can also be configured as a “live area” or a component of the bill that is populated with personalized messages based on insight gathered across the integrated BSS applications.
- **Billing operations dashboard:** Acts as a single source of truth for all of the CSP’s billing operations. Integrating with the CSP’s existing billing systems using REST APIs, BriteBill Spark presents a unified view of billing operations across lines of business, customer segments, and billing systems. Using BriteBill Spark, billing operations teams can also control the approval of bill runs, as well as access reporting and invoice views.
- **User management dashboard:** Provides administrative controls to assign and manage user accounts and roles. Additionally, using Spring Integration (an open source framework for enterprise application integration), administrators can block or grant access to screens and actions in the BriteBill Spark dashboards, based on user roles.

## Bill personalization at scale

### 1. Figure 1: BriteBill Spark allows CSPs to modernize and personalize the customer bill



Source: Amdocs

Amdocs tackles the challenge of creating bills personalized to each customer by incorporating intelligence, behavioral science, and semantics checks. Understanding the need for CSPs to do more with less, the core of BriteBill Spark’s personalization capabilities functions by integrating with CSPs’ existing BSS, including billing, product catalog, and CRM systems, using REST APIs.

By integrating with the BSS ecosystem, BriteBill Spark becomes a billing aggregator providing a unified view of billing operations and generating the insights needed to customize bill messaging. Amdocs then uses a proprietary algorithm to ingest and analyze the “facts” that inform the messaging on the bill. These “facts” can include new charges or changes on a customer’s bill, new activity, new offerings, and more; all driven by the information gathered from the BSS.

These facts, along with billing data, then pass through semantics checks to ensure accuracy in the translation of the data from the billing systems. Finally, messaging tailored to the individual customer is fed into the “live areas” on the bill (as configured by the CSP in the message editor), enabling the CSP to dynamically create custom messages on each bill as it is generated. The types of messages shown to the customer in the live areas can also be configured in the message editor. For example, CSPs may want to generate custom messaging in a live area that highlights important information about the bill that month or upsells a new service. They may also use live areas to provide general business and service updates, such as announcing the availability of 5G in the customer’s service area or highlighting the CSP’s COVID-19 response.

# Company information

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## Background

Amdocs is a publicly traded software vendor with annual revenue of \$4.1bn as of 2019. The company has more than 25,000 employees around the world and is headquartered in Tel Aviv, Israel. Amdocs serves the telecom and media industries and has more than 350 customers across 85 countries.

Amdocs' core product offerings include the Amdocs CES20 portfolio, which spans the operations support system (OSS) and BSS domains, and includes customer engagement, business enablement, service monetization, operations and network, data analytics and intelligence, partner ecosystem, and business accelerators. Among its BSS products sits RevenueONE, the vendor's revenue management offering, which includes BriteBill Spark.

Amdocs also offers an extensive services portfolio that includes systems integration, global SmartOps, and global service delivery.

## Current position

Amdocs acquired Irish-based bill presentment and personalization vendor BriteBill in 2017. The acquisition brought in BriteBill's decade of expertise in the bill presentment and personalization space, complementing Amdocs' existing portfolio of BSS assets. In 2019, Amdocs integrated BriteBill's capabilities into RevenueONE.

Despite the integration of the acquired bill presentment capabilities into RevenueONE, there remained a segment of the telecom industry that was interested in a standalone bill presentment solution. Amdocs initially addressed this with a BriteBill offering that delivers a comprehensive set of customization options for CSPs. Prior to deployment, Amdocs conducts extensive mapping of the CSP's IT ecosystem to understand which systems should be integrated with the solution. During this time, the vendor also guides the CSP in redesigning the bill, focusing on the CSP's specific customization needs. While this approach seems to address the needs of the market, it also requires significant hands-on engagement, leading to longer deployment times for the product (6–12 months on average).

Identifying an opportunity to reduce the complexity of delivery and shorten the time to market for CSPs looking for less customization, Amdocs developed BriteBill Spark. The product's heavy reliance on templates and design building blocks (e.g., the digital modules and branding assets) also means that BriteBill Spark can be offered at a lower cost, making it more attractive for cost-sensitive CSPs or CSPs looking to experiment with bill modernization.

## Future plans

Amdocs sees the bill presentment market as an opportunity for growth in the future as the telecom industry continues to focus on transforming both the billing experience and customer engagement. CSPs are increasingly focusing on the bill as both an engagement channel and an upsell tool. Amdocs believes that growth in the bill presentment market will be driven by the demand for a modern, digital billing experience, as CSPs feel pressure to deliver a digital experience with intuitive self-service capabilities. The vendor believes that growth will also be driven by the demand for real-time billing (as opposed to monthly or end of the month bills).

Finally, Amdocs believes that CSPs will continue to seek out bill presentation solutions that are cost efficient and can be deployed rapidly, and thus anticipates an increased demand for out-of-the-box solutions.

To keep the development of BriteBill Spark in line with the industry’s needs, Amdocs closely monitors industry trends and incorporates customer feedback to help shape its product roadmap. In terms of the product roadmap for BriteBill Spark, Amdocs plans to increase the number of templates and out-of-the-box capabilities for the product and focus on enabling real-time bill presentation capabilities. In recent years, Amdocs has also made a significant investment in refactoring many of its core offerings to be cloud-native, taking advantage of microservices architectures. Amdocs plans to migrate BriteBill Spark to a microservices architecture in the future. Plans to make BriteBill Spark compliant with TM Forum’s Open Digital Architecture and OpenAPI frameworks are also in the product’s roadmap.

## Key facts

**Table 1: Data sheet: Amdocs**

<b>Product/service name</b>	BriteBill & BriteBill Spark	<b>Product classification</b>	BSS software
<b>Version number</b>	20.12	<b>Release date</b>	Dec 2020 is the latest release
<b>Industries covered</b>	Telecoms	<b>Geographies covered</b>	Global
<b>Relevant company sizes</b>	Tier 1 & 2 service providers	<b>Licensing options</b>	Perpetual
<b>URL</b>	www.britebill.com	<b>Routes to market</b>	Direct
<b>Company headquarters</b>	Tel Aviv, Israel for Amdocs Dublin Ireland for Amdocs BriteBill	<b>Number of employees</b>	25,000 (for Amdocs)

Source: Omdia, Amdocs

## Analyst comment

Omdia’s perspective on BriteBill Spark is that the launch is well-timed for the market. Interest and, more importantly, investment in customer engagement tools and billing capabilities are trending upward in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic and ahead of the rollout of 5G. Omdia anticipates that customer engagement will play a crucial role in monetizing 5G. With no killer use case on the horizon and CSPs needing to generate interest and stickiness with 5G services, personalizing customer engagement will be key.

Omdia believes that Amdocs is well-positioned for success with BriteBill Spark, as the product speaks to several key competencies desired by CSPs: rapid deployment, low cost, and business user-friendly. By

launching a heavily templated product that leverages drag-and-drop GUIs, Amdocs provides a solution that speaks directly to the needs of IT, billing operations and, perhaps more importantly, the average business user. Marketing or design teams are just as likely to feel at ease using BriteBill Spark to design the customer bill, as are the billing operations teams approving bill runs. Moreover, because the solution is a faster and cheaper option than a more complex billing transformation, CSPs looking to quickly modernize the billing experience are more likely to take a chance on BriteBill Spark.

Despite all of its strengths, however, Amdocs may see some headwinds from the telecom industry. Foremost, at least for the time being, BriteBill Spark is not yet cloud-native. Although a migration of the product to a microservices architecture is in the roadmap, this could be a potential drawback for CSPs that are increasingly looking for cloud-native BSS applications. Nevertheless, the product is cloud-ready and can be deployed in the CSP's cloud environment of choice.

Amdocs may find CSPs to be more timid on the uptake of BriteBill Spark as a result of its non-compliance with TM Forum's Open Digital Architecture and Open API frameworks. Compliance with the two frameworks is a growing requirement in newly issued proposals and considering the product requires integration with CSPs' existing IT systems, non-compliance with the TM Forum frameworks may deter some CSPs that would have otherwise tried the solution. Again, this is something that Amdocs is aware of and compliance with TM Forum's frameworks is in the product roadmap for BriteBill Spark in 2021.

Overall, Omdia believes that Amdocs is well-positioned for success with BriteBill Spark, due in part to the vendor's standing within the telecom industry. As the industry's largest BSS vendor with 38% total market share, according to Omdia's estimates, Amdocs has a long reach. Boasting more than 350 CSP customers around the world, the vendor will have an extensive customer base from which to draw on to upsell BriteBill Spark.

## Appendix

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### On the Radar

On the Radar is a series of research notes about vendors bringing innovative ideas, products, or business models to their markets. On the Radar vendors bear watching for their potential impact on markets as their approach, recent developments, or strategy could prove disruptive and of interest to tech buyers and users.

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