



The ROI of legal e-Billing tech



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Introduction

You know the saying, “you need to spend money to make money?” When it comes to legal e-Billing tools, we’ve found that a slightly different version applies: you need to spend money to save money.

While you might initially be put off by the price tag of **new legal e-Billing software**, remember, **investing in new legal e-Billing software** offers long-term cost savings. In fact, our customers save an average of 8.4% on legal spend after switching to SimpleLegal — and that’s just including savings from automated invoice adjustments.

And when you frame the cost of a new e-Billing system in relation to your usual legal spend, it **usually doesn’t even exceed 1% of your legal budget**.

The sooner you upgrade your system, the easier it’ll be for your team to keep costs down, proactively manage spend issues, and boost productivity and collaboration. Case in point: even amid the COVID-19 pandemic, our platform helped multiple new **customers save over \$900,000 each**.

Legal e-Billing software can help you maintain a strong ROI in any economic circumstance by eliminating manual invoice review, compiling real-time spend data, streamlining communication between departments and with vendors, and bringing valuable context to line items.



Save money and time with automated invoice review

Manual invoice review is a logistical nightmare. From billing errors and savings opportunities slipping through the cracks to delays in approvals, this ineffective process makes it difficult to manage legal costs.

An automated legal e-Billing system removes these headaches. You keep track of all your invoices in a central digital database, making it easy to find what you need and sort by categories, like approval status, vendor, or invoice date. **Automated approval workflows** also reduce the time spent chasing down different team members for updates and sign-offs.

These capabilities reduce excessive legal costs and **repetitive admin work**, which Brightpearl found takes up an average of **21 hours a week**. With that time back, your team will be more productive and focused on delivering more business value.

Additionally, this type of useful tech helps reduce burnout among overloaded employees, which costs companies between **\$120 to \$190 billion each year**.

Automated approval processes are helpful for teams of all sizes, but they're especially impactful for large international ones with even more invoices to manage. For instance, Crocs' legal team was able to use SimpleLegal to **streamline their complex routing process** across accounting entities in the United States, Europe, and Asia.

Streamline approval processes with Intelligent Invoice Workflows

Sophisticated, configurable rules give you the flexibility to implement complex **billing guidelines** that are unique to a legal department while also creating custom approval workflows to keep invoices moving.

SimpleLegal's **Intelligent Invoice Workflow** (IIW) employs validation rules to ensure submitted invoices align with your outside counsel guidelines, identifying deviations before the invoice even gets to a reviewer. This type of assistance has been shown to **save clients an average of 3% to 5%** in the first year of use.

For example, if you set rate caps on different timekeeper levels, IIW can automatically highlight line items that exceed those amounts. You can also set it to auto-reject or adjust line items — whatever works best for you and your team.

This function is particularly helpful for preventing costly **double billing** and bill padding, a practice roughly **21% of attorneys** admit to doing, according to the American Bar Association. Without a digital tool that blocks these entries, extra charges can quickly add up to thousands in unnecessary legal spending.

IIW also helps you take advantage of existing vendor savings agreements by verifying that discounts and alternative fee arrangements are consistently applied.

ATTIC saves hours each month through billing guideline enforcement

By using SimpleLegal's streamlined, automated process for submitting and reviewing invoices, the **American Trucking and Transportation Insurance Company (ATTIC)** has been able to save 55 hours a month.

Easy-to-read spend dashboards and reports allow ATTIC to find cost-saving opportunities, and they've decreased their legal spend by 6%.

ATTIC's outside counsel loves the new platform for submitting invoices, and 100% of their law firms now successfully use e-Billing.

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Besides enforcing billing guidelines, SimpleLegal streamlines clunky approval workflows with custom, automated invoice routing.

You can create and save teams to apply to different review processes, giving you a quick foundation to work off that can be edited as needed. And you're automatically notified whenever someone approves or rejects an invoice. Our progress tracker and prominent timestamps make it easy to visually monitor invoice statuses and keep track of turnaround times.

On the approvers' side, they all have access to a handy "Why Am I Here?" function. So, they no longer need to send emails asking why they or their teammates have been tagged in.



Circle simplifies approval processes with automated workflows

Financial institution **Circle** uses SimpleLegal to gain a deeper understanding of where their legal spend goes.

Automated invoice routing has allowed the team to save 5 full days of work a month, and finance has a better working relationship with legal since they're kept in the loop.

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Optimize costs with real-time data visibility

If you're manually managing your invoices, you're probably also manually managing your spend data. But manual tools like spreadsheets open the door to errors in your legal analytics, from **simple human oversight to a lack of real-time updates**. This makes it difficult to accurately analyze and report on legal spend.

Legal e-Billing software collects and updates your invoices and legal spend data in one place — in real time. And customizable filters make it easy to sort through a mountain of data, allowing you to hone in and critically evaluate legal spending.

With comprehensive visibility and greater confidence in the accuracy of your spend analytics, you can deliver valuable insights and make **vendor decisions** with assurance.

Remove data silos with an integrated platform

Legal tech that features a flexible **application programming interface (API)** lets you connect the software to other key tools in your tech stack, like iManage, Anaqua, Box, and IPfolio.

These integrations make platforms like ours a true single source of truth, with all your most valuable data in one easily accessible place.

Just take these **3 key vendor metrics** you can track with SimpleLegal:

- 1 Average time to bill:** Gives you an understanding of matter complexity and how efficient your vendors are at completing work. This is especially helpful if you have multiple vendors working in the same practice areas.
- 2 Guideline adjustment percentage:** Shows you how frequently vendors submit invoices that don't adhere to your billing guidelines and need adjusting.
- 3 Average rate/timekeeper use by task:** Shows whether vendors are using appropriate staffing levels or exceeding rate caps.

Without objective data points like these, it's much harder to accurately assess vendor performance and whether you're getting a strong return on your investment. Our **Enhanced Reporting** function lets you create custom reports and interactive visual dashboards for stakeholders with a few clicks, painting a detailed picture of legal spending and vendor performance.

And the easier it is to analyze and report on **legal analytics**, the easier it is to find ways to save and demonstrate the clear value of legal ops.

YAI uses real-time data and automation to scale

Before using SimpleLegal, **Young Adult Institute (YAI)** paralegal Alexandra Bedon called spend reporting and billing "a mess." Now, our user-friendly platform has made it "the easiest part" of her job.

Real-time data can be pulled into custom reporting templates with the click of a button, making it easy to share detailed legal spend analytics with the C-suite.

And automated invoice submission and review processes have resulted in **50% time savings**, with an average bill review taking **under 30 minutes to complete**.

YAI's outside counsel also benefits from our easy-to-use CounselGO portal, with **100% of law firms** adopting the platform.

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Gain another knowledgeable review partner with legal AI

Automation like IIW is great for teams just getting started with e-Billing and spend management, especially when the goal is to catch clear invoice violations. However, automated review functions lack the capability to understand a line item's context before deciding if it should be flagged.

Legal AI can catch issues that aren't based on pre-set rules, adding an extra layer of protection against excessive legal spending. And unlike simple automated reviews, AI-based reviews can also offer suggestions on how to address errors or violations. These capabilities save you time, help you **maximize cost savings**, and improve vendor billing practices.

And according to Onit, 77% of legal teams are currently using **some kind of legal AI**. The sooner you get comfortable using it, the easier it'll be for your team to evolve and scale in the years to come.

Legal AI continuously learns from historical data

Using billions of dollars of historical invoice data, our AI-powered **SimpleReview** continuously hones its understanding of real-world legal billing. Its machine learning and natural language processing result in hyper-focused, efficient invoice reviews that are more nuanced than IIW.

Let's say you have an IIW postage rule that flags items that include the keyword "FedEx." On one invoice, there are two line items that include this phrase:

- **Send documents via FedEx (tracking #2349832498237498)**
- **File deposition documents for FedEx hearing**

Based on the pre-set rule, the IIW would flag both line items — even though the second item isn't related to postage. In contrast, SimpleReview could accurately understand the difference in context between the two items (postage vs. deposition) and would only flag the first item.

While you're still responsible for the end decisions on flagged line items, SimpleReview relieves you of the upfront burden of manual review and thinking through each one. Having this extra "teammate" is especially helpful for supporting understaffed in-house teams. Legal AI minimizes costly risks and helps you take advantage of potential savings opportunities you might not have noticed on your own.

Want to learn more about legal AI?

CHECK OUT OUR FREE WEBINAR.



Minimize friction with internal and external partners via automated accruals management

Our internal data shows that just 48% of law firms actually respond to **accruals requests** — and manually managing accruals and follow-ups doesn't do much to boost that number.

Without a streamlined process for tracking accruals, finance ends up with surprise invoices that derail budgets. This inefficiency strains relationships between finance, corporate legal, and vendors. Everyone gets sucked into back-and-forth conversations in an effort to remedy discrepancies that could've been avoided with an automated e-Billing platform.

Automated accruals management keeps everyone on the same page, reducing unexpected billing surprises and creating better working relationships.

Greater transparency improves collaborations with finance

We designed our intuitive e-Billing software to make collecting and tracking unbilled estimates a breeze.

You simply enter when you need accruals submitted, and our platform takes care of contacting vendors to remind them of the deadline. **Legal and finance** gain clear visibility into the status of requests, and both teams save time in sending manual reminders to vendors.

Granular details like which invoices are pending, missing information, or rejected also help legal get ahead of potential billing issues, so you can connect with vendors to resolve them. This shift makes sense, as legal works more closely with outside counsel than finance does. Taking this work off finance's plate also establishes **your team's reputation** as a helpful partner instead of a roadblock.

“ From a finance standpoint, automating the accruals process is the biggest benefit. We saw a much higher response rate to requests for unbilled estimates from our law firms, and we face fewer surprises and adjustments at month and year end.”

– Jia Hua Juszczak, **NextRoll** senior accountant

User-friendly tech and concrete data translate to stronger vendor partnerships

By automating accruals management, modern e-Billing software makes it more likely that vendors will submit. You don't have to worry about following up with unresponsive vendors because the platform does it for you, notifying vendors until the accrual submission is received.

SimpleLegal makes it easy for vendors to submit those accruals through our [CounselGO portal](#), which includes free training. In fact, CounselGO supports every single Am Law 200 firm, so you know it's tried and tested.

Our legal tech also gives you concrete vendor metrics, like accrual submission rates, to use in vendor evaluations. You'll see improvement in vendor performance when you come to the table with actionable takeaways instead of vague asks. This type of objectivity creates clear expectations between in-house legal and outside counsel, reducing frustrations.

NextRoll improves visibility and strengthens relationship with finance

Because marketing tech company [NextRoll](#) didn't have an established process for requesting and tracking work from law firms, their legal department couldn't effectively control spending. Their finance team was frustrated with being out of the loop and making some of the largest year-end adjustments for legal.

With SimpleLegal, NextRoll **consolidated all of their invoice and matter information** in one accessible place. This makes it easy to identify which vendors, projects, and timekeepers take up most of their budget or deviate from their standard billing guidelines.

And **automated invoice review workflows** keep finance and legal on the same page while saving them time spent on lengthy email conversations.

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SimpleLegal supports your team's continuous growth

Knowing your legal vendor has your back isn't something that can be measured with a dollar sign, but it certainly has value. From processing \$4.4 billion in invoices in 2021 alone to offering free software training and consultations, we're proud to guide clients, from start-ups to Fortune 500 companies, in scaling and achieving their unique spend management goals.

Check out our **savings calculator** to learn how much you can save with SimpleLegal, and sign up for our **free e-Billing demo** to see exactly how we deliver that value to customers.



SimpleLegal, an Onit company

SimpleLegal provides a modern legal operations management platform that streamlines the way corporate legal departments manage their matters, track and interpret spend, and collaborate with vendors and law firms. SimpleLegal combines e-Billing and spend management, matter management, vendor management, and reporting and analytics into one comprehensive application to optimize legal operations and the management of the entire legal department.

For more information visit: www.simplelegal.com