

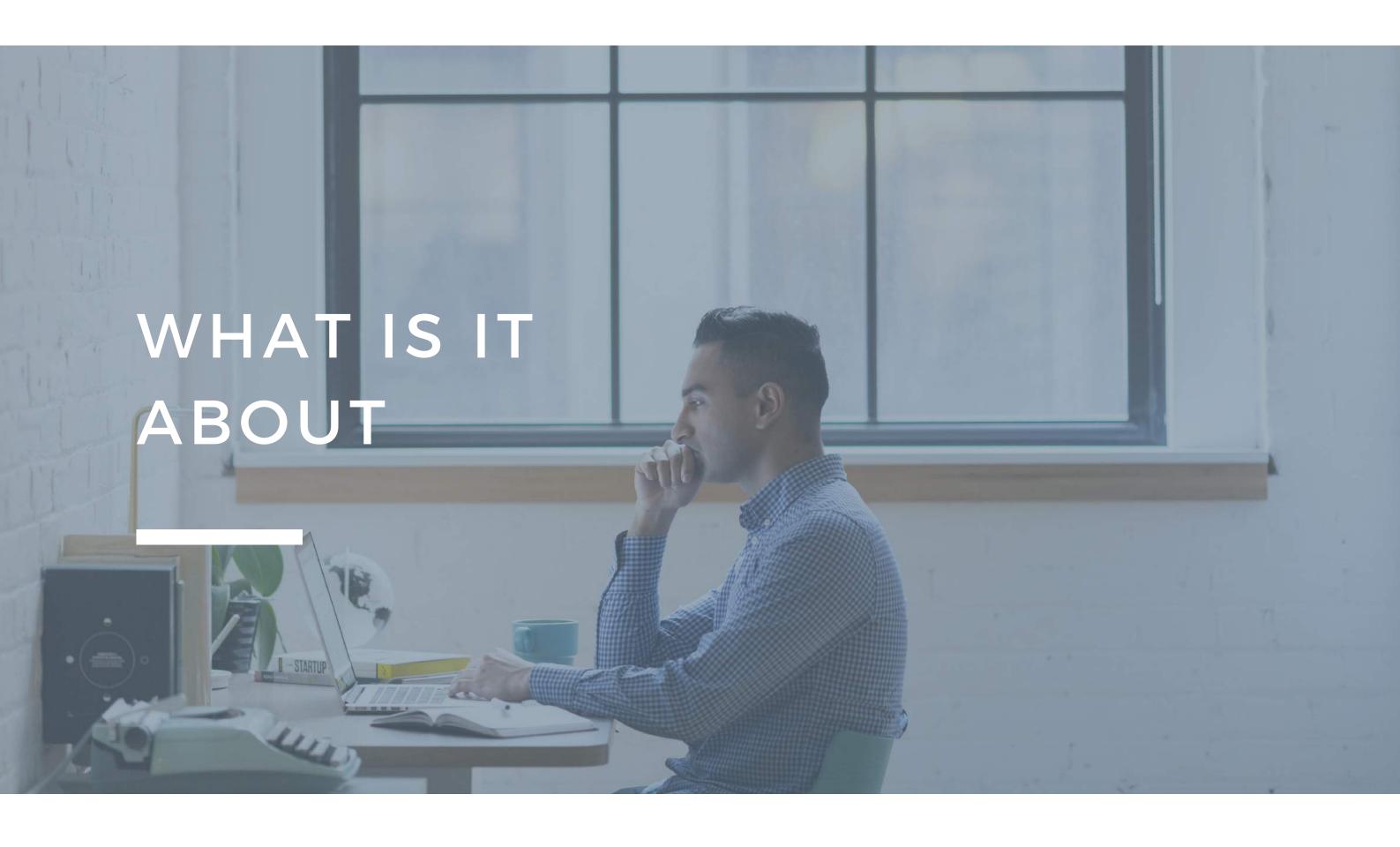
Whitepaper

The MaxBill Approach to Maximising Business Value from

### BILLING SOLUTION

April 2020

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Service providers are demanding more than ever before from their billing operations. No longer is it just a process of calculating how much their customers owe and issuing bills. A modern billing system and operation must also underpin the diverse new propositions and business models that service providers are increasingly relying on to expand their revenue streams.

Bringing in a new billing system that is capable of managing these more complex and demanding requirements is crucial for many service providers' strategies. But commissioning a flexible modern billing solution is just the starting point. What matters is how the new system is implemented.

That is why MaxBill uses an innovative project implementation methodology, called MaxValue, to ensure that every billing deployment and upgrade we do maximises the business value delivered to our clients.

This whitepaper explains how MaxValue surpasses the traditional approaches to doing billing projects and illustrates through case studies how we help service providers across the telco, energy, and gaming sectors get the most from their billing deployments.





#### WHY MAXVALUE

Many service providers fear their billing implementation or upgrade will drag on indefinitely and fail to live up to expectations. MaxBill's approach is specifically designed to de-risk such unwanted outcomes. Our unique MaxValue methodology for implementing billing software puts the focus on delivering definitive business value for our clients and doing so within industry-leading timescales.

Typically, it takes just three to six months from project kick-off for our clients to see the most valuable results. That's a far cry from traditional billing approach that all too often are marred by over-complexity, drawn-out timescales, escalating costs, and, ultimately, poor business results.

One reason why traditional billing projects can fall short of expectations is that deploying the billing software is treated as the end-goal. In a quest to implement more system features and functions, the true business drivers for the project get easily overlooked.

To make matters worse, implementation often just replicates the service provider's existing business processes and migrates data to the new system, perpetuating the inefficiencies and outmoded practices of the past.

So, we think beyond just introducing new features and functionality, and focus instead on using our MaxBill solution to create a modern billing platform that can help our clients achieve their strategic goals and address the obstacles to the growth.

Of course, any efficient billing operation needs features and MaxBill is a certainly a powerful, feature-rich solution. Besides complex, sophisticated rating and billing modules, MaxBill offers advanced product catalog and order processing, partner management and settlement, CRM and a mobile app.

However, our experience shows that business value is achieved by getting most from the existing functionality and then focusing on implementing those features that drive the most additional benefits first—potentially, just one third of

the overall functionality can deliver 70-80% of the total gain from the project for your business. We use the full power of our MaxBill solution to go straight to the heart of our clients' goals, while changing business processes and data to fit the company's specific needs, in line with industry best practices.



### MAXBILL DELIVERS VALUE, NOT JUST FEATURES

The concept of bringing value and not just features has been in MaxBill's DNA from its inception and our many successful billing implementations with market-leading service providers validate the benefits of both our product and our MaxValue approach.

#### Comparison of Traditional and MaxValue Approaches to Billing Projects

	TRADITIONAL APPROACH	MAXVALUE FROM MAXBILL
PROCUREMENT	<ul> <li>Requirements focused on software features and functionality</li> <li>Vendor selection based on lengthy and detailed RFI/RFP</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Requirements driven by well-defined business objectives</li> <li>Vendor selection based on client engagement with proof-of-concepts, backed by due diligence</li> </ul>
IMPLEMENTATION	<ul> <li>Emphasis on introducing functionality and features</li> <li>Often replicates outdated business processes</li> <li>E.g. risky 'big bang', sandbox for new features, phased migration (new customers, then existing base)</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Focus on business outcome</li> <li>Business process redesign using industry best practices</li> <li>Implement the features that give most value first</li> <li>Definitive business value achieved at every stage</li> </ul>
EVALUATION	<ul> <li>Success measured by:</li> <li>Delivery of the project to previously agreed deadlines, budget, and scope</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Success measured by:</li> <li>Clear business value delivered fast (e.g. revenues from new services, opex savings from process automation)</li> <li>Delivery to agreed deadlines, budget, and scope</li> </ul>
RESULTS	UNWANTED OUTCOME	VALUABLE OUTCOME
	<ul> <li>Benefits fall below expectations</li> <li>Over-complexity leading to time and budget overruns</li> <li>Scope creep due to lack of clarity on business objectives</li> <li>Expensive change requests</li> </ul>	<ul> <li>Strategic business goals achieved</li> <li>Most business value delivered within 3-6 months</li> <li>Added benefits from each subsequent project phase</li> <li>On time, on budget, and on scope</li> </ul>

## THE MAXVALUE BENEFITS ANY BUSINESS STRATEGY

Modern billing operations must be capable of supporting a much wider range of service offerings and business models than they could in the past, as service providers target new lines of business to boost their revenues. Many of these new propositions are delivered in conjunction with third parties, so it is critical that a company's billing infrastructure can handle the settlement of revenues between all the parties involved. Some emerging business models involve multiple third parties in extended B2B2C value chains, requiring a billing solution that handles the set-up and management of complex revenue flows (for

more information, see the table below). The MaxValue approach can support any business strategy, for any type of service provider. Each one of our clients has its own business imperatives, whether it's entering a new market, launching a new service or product bundle, introducing an omni-channel customer experience or streamlining business processes for better operational efficiency. By working in close partnership with you, we make sure that each MaxBill deployment is built around your specific strategic needs and every milestone in the implementation brings measurable business benefits.

#### The MaxValue Supports any Business Strategy

STRATEGIC OBJECTIVE	BUSINESS IMPLEMENTATION
Enter new service markets	Most telcos are looking for new services to sell beyond low-margin voice and commoditized connectivity services. One example of a value-added proposition is providing virtualized network management and security services for business customers. To profit from these new VNF services, telcos need not only flexible business models but also a billing infrastructure capable of supporting dynamic service requests.
Expend revenue streams	One new line of business for telcos and energy retailers is offering smart-home services, whereby they resell third-party hardware and software systems. Thus, the billing infrastructure needs to manage the complex business agreements with their vendor partners, such as volume-based calculations or dynamic thresholds, as well as automate the settlement of revenues with each party.  Some service providers are developing more complex business models to expand their revenue streams by forming a B2B2C value chain of actors spanning service providers, product vendors, resellers and consumers. The billing platform must be capable of managing the flow of revenues throughout the entire
Improve customer experience	value chain in accordance with the business agreements between the various parties.  Efficient billing processes with self-service and omni-channel engagement options can help service providers strengthen their brands and keep customers loyal.

## THE MAXVALUE CLIENT JOURNEY

MaxBill's client engagement and project delivery model is designed so that our clients can maximise the benefits of bringing in a new billing solution. From the first contact, all the way through understanding your requirements, to project delivery and after-care, the MaxBill team is dedicated to ensuring your success.

#### Client Engagement with a Proof-of-Concept

Our clients highly value the strong partnerships with the MaxBill team, and we start building a relationship of trust as soon as we engage with you.

During the RFI/RFP stage of a billing system procurement, we explore how

MaxBill proof-of-concept:

Rapid set-up in the Cloud
Tailored to your sector and locality
Uses your live data
Identifies business goals
Zero cost and risk

MaxBill and our MaxValue methodology can address your company's needs. Our deep and solid expertise across multiple business verticals, from media to telecommunication to gaming to energy, enables us to provide valuable insights into how industry best practices can be applied to your particular situation.

Our approach which is highly interactive, which we have seen is the best way for you to find out how MaxBill and our MaxValue philosophy can benefit your business. During the RFI/RFP procurement phase, it can be all too easy for those involved in choosing a new system to become distracted by the process itself and lose sight of their business objectives in the midst of evaluating detailed responses to complex and lengthy questionnaires. When that happens, the RFx processes can become more of a hindrance than a help in identifying the best billing system and supplier for your business.

That is why we offer an opportunity to try out MaxBill at an early stage to test its capabilities and power. We can quickly set up a free proof-of-concept (PoC) trial system in the Cloud that is tailored to your sector and locality and uses your live data.

We firmly believe that a deep understanding of the potential business benefits of MaxBill cannot be achieved just by giving you access to the trial system and the documentation. So, for the best results, we come to your site, so that we can work through the scenarios you would like to evaluate and devise the PoC format together. Our collaborative PoC process not only allows you to discover the service-enabling capabilities of the MaxBill platform, but also helps identify the strategic goals we can support and understand how MaxBill can make a difference to your business.

For clients who wish to assess the performance and scalability of our MaxBill platform, we can share benchmark measurements for each industry sector and locality, and, if required, we can plan benchmark testing into the production process, to obtain measurements for your specific configuration and set-up.

#### Defining the Project

During the project definition stage, we identify how we can deploy MaxBill for optimal benefits to your business in more detail and set up a framework for delivering value.



The MaxValue philosophy is to tackle your biggest problem first, as we know from from experience that solving the most difficult issues will bring the greatest returns most quickly.

MaxBill is a feature-rich solution and from the start, we focus on implementing only those features that will have the biggest impact on your business.

Other MaxBill features can then be introduced incrementally in subsequent project phases, driving additional strategic benefits and business value. This is very different from most traditional billing projects, which are driven largely by implementing systems features without a clear understanding of what benefits they will bring to the business.

#### **Project Delivery**

MaxValue approach is to bring maximum value first and fast. We achieve this by keeping value delivery at the forefront of all we do.



To ensure the best results possible, we work closely with our clients to identify how MaxBill can support their business goals, while we continuously evolve the MaxBill solution to assure the product-readiness that is essential to deliver our clients' strategic goals.

#### Finding the Path to Business Value

Before any of MaxBill implementations start, we work with you to find the best path for leveraging the new billing solution to support your business goals.



This collaborative process helps MaxBill's and client's teams jointly discover how business value can best be delivered and how the implementation can be phased to ensure that each stage brings you well-defined business benefits.

During this preparatory stage, we bring our multi-sectoral expertise and experience, which helps you leverage the best practices for your specific industry, streamline business processes and optimise your billing operations.

As well as reviewing your current billing processes and calculations, we explore together any additional use cases that may need to be supported in the future.

This process brings clarity to the deployment and ensures the focus stays firmly on those key tasks that will bring the most value to your business as well as helping avoid scope creep and overruns during the project (although, changes are allowed).

#### **Product Readiness**

Every MaxBill implementation focuses not just on delivering value, but delivering value fast. For rapid service enablement, we start with the lean implementation of industry processes and their localization, using best practices from our Process Catalog. These are ready-to-use templates comprising code and configurations, which can be uploaded to your system so that you can take advantage of best-practice business processes for your sector. This gets our clients up and running with MaxBill as quickly as possible, so that you can start reaping tangible benefits from your implementation from the outset.

As a billing enabling platform, MaxBill comes ready with data migration tools, so that you can import new customers into the system autonomously as your organisation grows. Our regular MaxBill updates also ensure that once in production our clients stay compliant with any changing local regulations, such as for e-invoicing or the SEPA programme for cross-border Euro transfers. Our annual MaxBill releases are complemented by quarterly updates to ensure you can keep in step with any incoming regulatory requirements.

#### Trusted Partnership

At all stages of implementing the billing solution, the MaxBill and client teams work together in tight collaboration. From workshops where we bring our past project experience and an innovative application of our methodology to your needs, through agile teams comprising MaxBill and client representatives, to transparency and strong governance at all times, we are committed to ensuring that your MaxBill deployment delivers your business goals.

#### Support and Lifecycle Management

Every MaxBill project gives our clients a high degree of independence and self-sufficiency in running their billing operations. We offer face-to-face and work-based training for complex functions and processes, so that your team can be self-reliant in carrying out day-to-day tasks and get the most from the MaxBill system.



MaxBill's client engagement and project delivery model is designed so that our clients can maximise the benefits of bringing in a new billing solution. From the first contact, all the way through understanding your requirements, to project delivery and after-care, the MaxBill team is dedicated to ensuring your success.

#### MAXVALUE IN ACTION

Service providers across the telco, utilities and gaming industries have been benefiting from the MaxValue approach for many years. We are extremely proud of our excellent track record of project delivery and our role in enabling our clients' success.

We have chosen three very different
MaxBill implementations to highlight how
MaxBill and our MaxValue philosophy have
helped our clients transform their billing
operations. Each of these projects
presented its own particular challenges
and complexities.

For example, **DELTA Fiber Netherlands**, a Dutch telecom company that provides high-speed fibre internet, wanted to introduce the latest version of MaxBill for a new service before migrating its existing businesses to the unified solution stack in a phased approach. This methodology allowed the new IT technology stack to be validated end-to-end, before scaling it to support the rest of the business.

For 888, one of the world's most popular

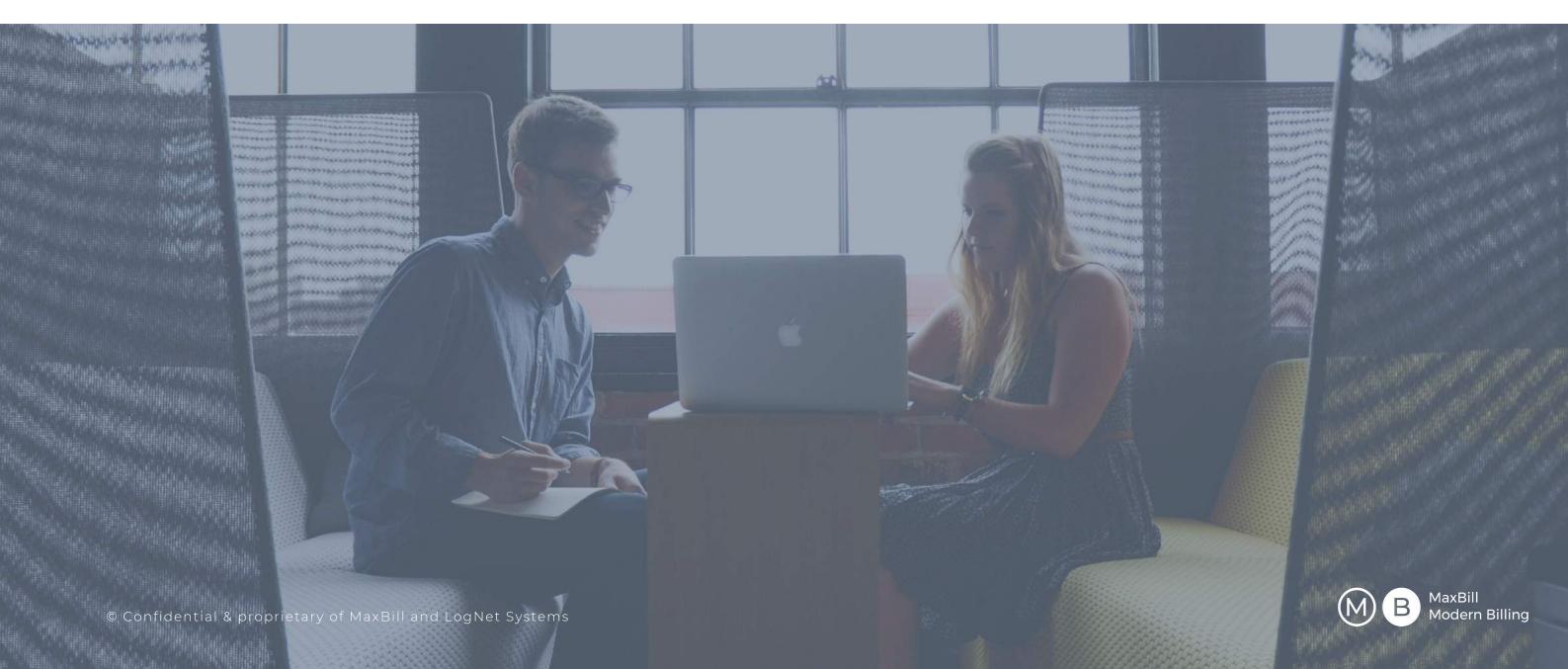
online gaming entertainment and solutions providers, the key challenge was to streamline the company's billing processes of its business partners and game providers, while at the same time allowing for any bespoke commercial terms to be configured in the billing system.

During **First Utility**'s migration to MaxBill, the UK energy retailer (subsequently rebranded as Shell Energy) was growing its customer base very rapidly. One of the main challenges was to extend the functionality and performance of MaxBill ahead of First Utility's growth curve, so that it could manage more complex customer journeys and handle high volumes of customers in an efficient and effective way.



## THE MAXVALUE CLIENT LANDSCAPE

CLIENT	SERVICE SECTOR	STRATEGIC OBJECTIVES
DELTA Fiber Netherlands	Telecom	Create a unified billing platform for a new company following M&A. Validate the IT stack end-to-end for a new service before incrementally migrating over the existing customers.
888	Online gaming	Replace manual processing to streamline settlement.
First Utility (now Shell Energy)	Retail energy & broadband	Create a single billing platform for multiple services, replacing home-grown systems, and extend functionality to improve operational efficiency.



# DELTA FIBER NETHERLANDS: A MAJOR MULTIPLAY TELCO

DELTA Fiber Netherlands was established by Swedish investment firm EQT to consolidate the acquisitions of DELTA and Caiway, two Dutch Internet, TV/fixed/mobile telephony service providers, each having their own portfolio and HFC / Fiber network. The combined entity is now the third-largest telco in the Netherlands.



Originally, a local multi-play telco serving the west of the country, Caiway has in recent years implemented a successful strategy of expanding its fibre network into new territories, targeting particularly rural and other underserved areas.

Meanwhile, DELTA is the incumbent telco in the Zeeland province.

The next step forward is to roll out the DELTA brand beyond its traditional service territory, starting in the newest areas of

network expansion and then extending the DELTA proposition across the former Caiway network footprint.

The company chose MaxBill to create a unified billing platform for the Caiway and DELTA brands. A key requirement was that the extensive multi-phase migration should support the company's strategy of bringing the DELTA proposition to new areas, while maintaining business continuity for the existing customer bases.

#### Creating a Unified Billing Platform

DELTA Fiber Netherlands concluded that MaxBill was the best fit for their needs. Caiway had already been using MaxBill for several years and was very satisfied with both the system and the partnership with the MaxBill team, while before the merger DELTA had independently short-listed MaxBill to replace its in-house legacy systems.



We quickly concluded that
MaxBill would serve our
needs totally.

The extensive migration programme for DELTA Fiber Netherlands will see all the combined entity's customers eventually being supported on the latest MaxBill 5 release, through a phased implementation that aligns with the DELTA Fiber Netherlands strategic objectives.

PHASING	MAPPING OF BUSINESS GOALS AND BILLING IMPLEMENTATION
Phase 1	Deliver the DELTA Fiber proposition to customers in new rural areas, underpinned by the new MaxBill 5 system.
Phase 2	Extend the DELTA brand across the entire Caiway network using MaxBill 5.
Phase 3	Migrate all existing DELTA customers from the in-house legacy systems to the new IT stack. After this critical stage, MaxBill 5 would support the entire DELTA customer base.
Phase 4	Migrate Caiway's customer base from the older version of MaxBill to the new system. This completes the process of migrating all customers of the two brands to the new MaxBill 5 system.

Alongside setting very stringent deadlines for each phase of the project, DELTA Fiber Netherlands insisted that the migration should retain as many of the technical interfaces to Caiway's existing MaxBill system as possible. MaxBill was able to accommodate this requirement, so that any new of Caiway customers could continue to be added to the old billing system while the new IT landscape was being developed.

#### More than Just a Billing System

According to DELTA, MaxBill is much more than just a billing system. The MaxBill solution plays a central role in orchestrating and automating the customer care fulfilment processes, so that both the provisioning and billing of customers' service are managed seamlessly throughout the customer journey. This is achieved by supplying a centralised product catalogue, order fulfilment engine and the billing itself.



We're continually working to optimise our business processes, where the goal is not for the process to fit the IT but the IT should fit the process.

For DELTA Fiber Netherlands, it was crucial that the billing system could support the company's ongoing drive for business process optimisation—where the goal is not for the process to fit the IT, but rather for the IT to fit the process.

Enabled by the richer functionality that MaxBill5 introduces, DELTA Fiber is planning further improvements in the area of order processing, so that it can handle



more complex scenarios, such as enabling customers to rapidly access new content when they add extra TV channels to their current package.

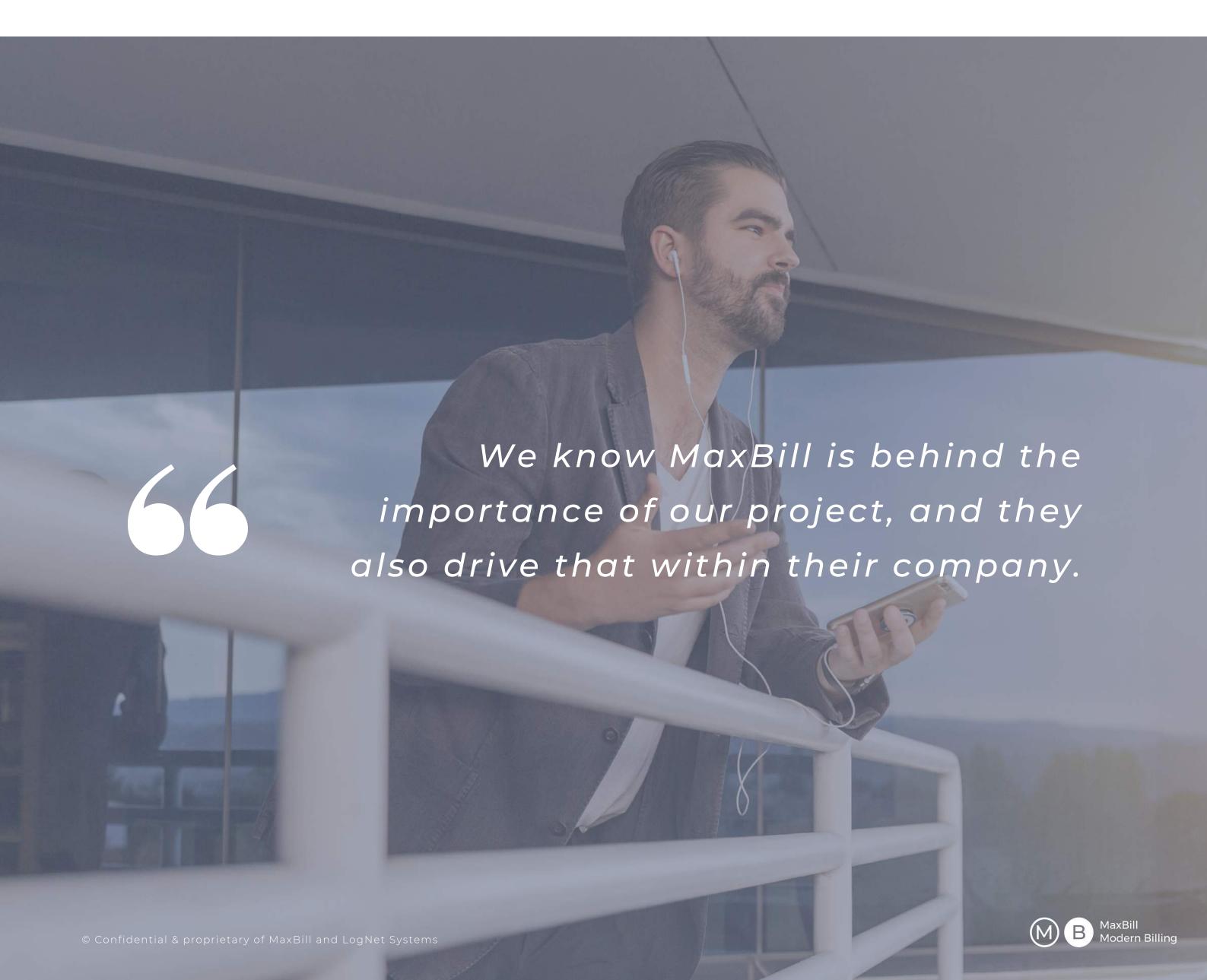
#### **Success Factors**

DELTA Fiber Netherlands is very proud that it has achieved all the business milestones defined for this complex IT project.

Delivering the DELTA brand with the new DELTA proposition on the fibre network

was an essential first milestone in the billing programme and took just six months, despite the complexity of the undertaking. The company says the success is down to the dedication of its own staff, which is matched by the commitment from the MaxBill team.

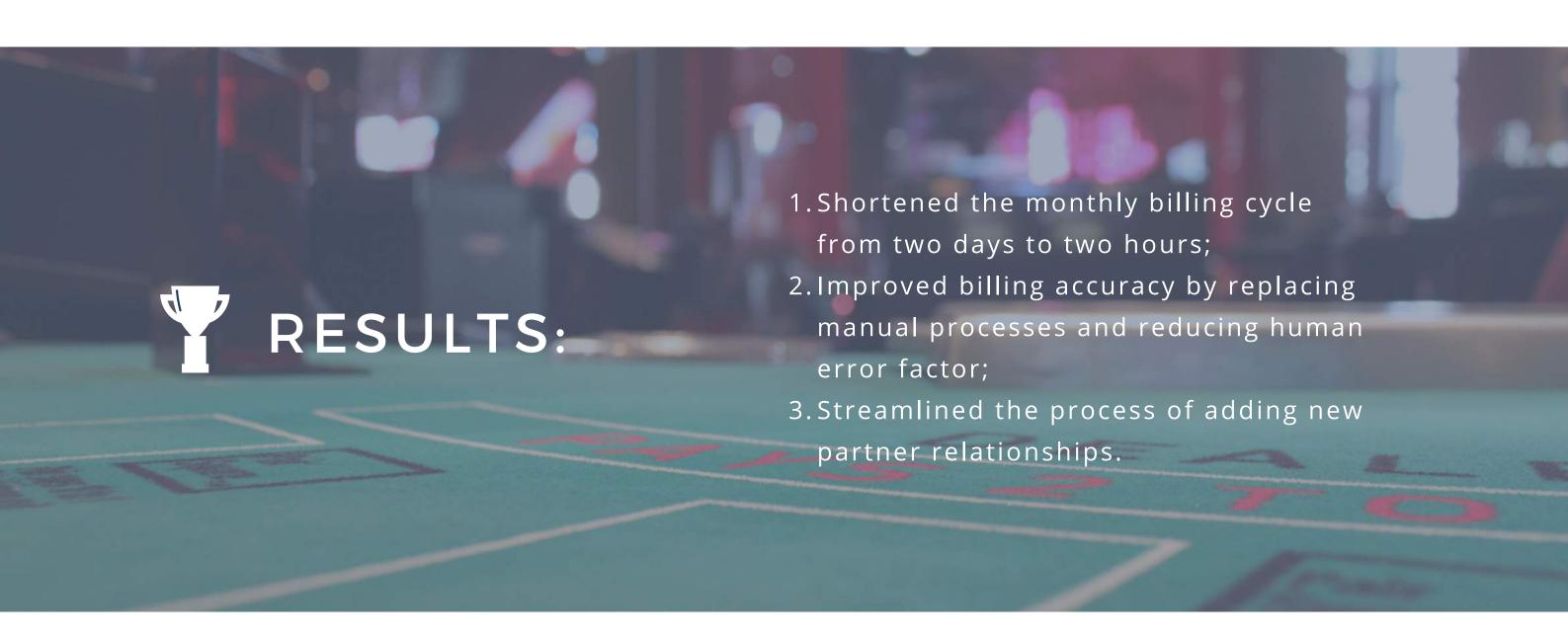
"The whole approach MaxBill took, with a team dedicated to us and frequently on premises in the Netherlands, was all focused on achieving that goal. They were completely bought into our plan."



#### 888:

## INTERNATIONAL ONLINE GAMING PROVIDER

888 is one of the world's most popular online gaming entertainment companies and solution providers offering online casino, poker, bingo and sports games, in some cases, in partnership with third-party providers.



#### **Project Requirements**

888 decided to replace its manual billing processes with a commercial off-the-shelf (COTS) software solution, to create a standardised platform for billing.

The new software system needed to support several different types of commercial relationships that 888 maintains. As the precise commercial terms can vary for each business partner,

the revenue-sharing and settlement processes must be able to cater flexibly for each situation, while at the same time maintaining a high degree of accuracy.

By migrating to a COTS solution, the company was aiming to speed up billing cycles, improve billing accuracy and gain more control over the billing process. Finding a supplier with expertise in gaming and knowledge of the industry's needs was essential for 888.



#### Tackling the Biggest Challenge First

In line with MaxBill's implementation philosophy of focusing first on the tasks that deliver most business value, a key task was to create a common template for the variable settlement terms. The MaxBill team worked closely with 888 to ensure that the billing implementation would not only streamline these existing commercial arrangements, but also be able to cater for the envisaged future use cases and scenarios.

#### **Project Benefits**

Having a standardised framework for billing has assisted 888 to handle the growing number of its business

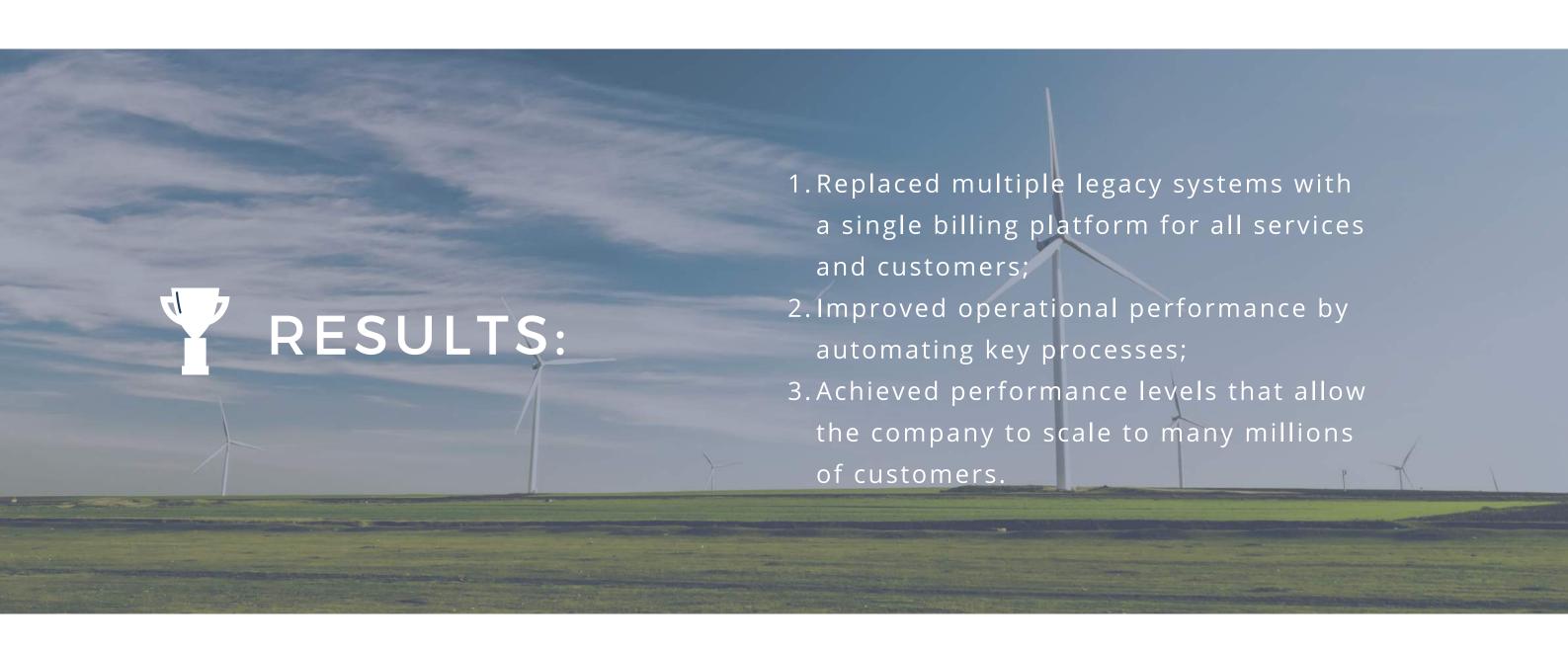
partnerships. With MaxBill up and running, billing now takes just a couple of hours, compared to two days in the past with manual processing. Equally as important to those efficiency gains for 888 is the much greater control the company now has over its billing processes, along with the improved accuracy that automating the formerly manual processes has brought.

For 888, the MaxBill approach has been fundamental to the overall success of the project. "Their team is amazing. They are very, very dedicated to the project and we don't take it for granted. We highly appreciate it."



# FIRST UTILITY: THE UK'S LARGEST ENERGY SUPPLIER

First Utility, now rebranded as Shell Energy, is the UK's largest independent energy supplier, serving over 800,000 residential customers. The company was founded to provide a competitively priced alternative to the Big 6 energy companies, along with superior customer service. As well as supplying gas and electricity, First Utility also offers residential broadband and telephony services and smart home technology. The energy retailer was acquired in 2018 by Shell.



#### A Unified Platform for all Services

As a start-up company, First Utility built its own billing and CRM systems, but later decided to replace these with commercial billing software to support its rapid customer growth and help improve operational efficiency.

A key requirement for First Utility was to replace its siloed legacy systems and create a unified platform that would be

capable of billing not only for gas and electricity, but also for various other types of services that the company wanted to introduce, including home broadband and telephony.

After a competitive procurement process, First Utility chose MaxBill. Our proven track record in the highly competitive and high-volume telco sector plus the MaxBill system's flexibility to adapt to the requirements of energy billing were



decisive factors in First Utility's choice of supplier.

Before implementing the MaxBill solution, First Utility had two legacy systems to manage its customer base. The first step of the migration involved connecting new customers to the new strategic system. Over time, the whole customer base that resided in the company's legacy systems was migrated to the MaxBill platform. Today, the customers for all Shell Energy's services are managed within a single system.



We're very proud of having our entire customer base in a single system

"MaxBill plays a 100% role in our billing landscape, so we don't have any other billing systems for any products or for any parts of our portfolio. That includes not just energy billing, but also telco billing on the same platform within the same instance, which we're pretty pleased with."

#### Scaling Functionality and Performance for Customer Growth

Initially, First Utility, together with MaxBill, developed what it calls a "happy path of capability for customer journeys"—that is,

the core functionality needed to manage the most common energy billing scenarios, including on-boarding customers and change of tenancy.

As its customer base grew, First Utility found it required additional functionality to handle more complex scenarios, such as off-boarding, as well as to improve operational efficiency through process automation. At the time, these extra capabilities were not yet supported within the MaxBill system, but had to be developed and phased into production ahead of when they would be needed according to First Utility's growth curve. "There was a constant dialogue about what might be required to drive a power performance and allow the system to scale alongside our rapid customer growth." The strong relationship between the MaxBill and First Utility teams, coupled with their shared goal of creating a good solution for the UK energy market, carried the project through these mid-phase challenges.

With the migration now completed,
MaxBill can provide the performance
levels needed for First Utility to scale to
many millions of customers. Following its
acquisition by Shell, the energy supplier
has ambitious growth plans. "MaxBill is
expected to be the platform that will
accommodate that growth."

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Confidential & proprietary of MaxBill and LogNet Systems

We have reached performance levels that allow us to scale to many millions of customers.

# RECOMMENDATIONS FOR GETTING THE MOST FROM YOUR BILLING PROJECT

To ensure your billing project maximises the benefits to your business, we recommend that service providers:

#### • Be clear about your goals

Replacing a billing system should be seen as a critical enabler for your business goals, not an end in itself. The biggest benefits can only be achieved if service providers ensure that it is their strategic objectives that are driving their billing implementation.

#### Align the procurement process with your strategic objectives

Many procurements are heavily reliant on systems features and functionality as a means of differentiating between suppliers. An overemphasis on systems capabilities can cause the objectives for a project to be forgotten and set you on a path to disappointment. We recommend that service providers make the most of the RFI/RFP processes to understand what suppliers can offer beyond features and evaluate how their approach can help you deliver your strategic goals.

#### • Ask for a proof-of-concept trial

There is no better way to assess the fit of a billing system and a supplier with your business needs than trying out the software for yourself. A PoC trial gives both you and the systems vendor an opportunity to explore how business value can be delivered through your billing project and gauge how any future collaboration might work.

#### Come to the project ready

Good preparation is essential before starting any billing deployment or upgrade. Rather than replicate outdated business processes, consider how the latest best practices for your industry can streamline your operations and improve efficiency. Think ahead so that any streamlined processes are designed around both your current and your anticipated future needs.

#### Tackle your biggest problem first

Our experience shows that confronting your most difficult challenges first is the key to unlocking the maximum business



value from any billing implementation.

#### • Insist on value delivery

Each phase of your project should be planned to deliver definitive business benefits as quickly as possible, but without simplification. This requires an unwavering focus on your business objectives, plus strong governance to ensure that all team efforts are directed towards the agreed goals. All our projects are designed to deliver clearly defined business benefits with three to six months for each phase.

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To learn how MaxBill can support your billing project, contact us at

info@maxbill.com

#### ABOUT MAXBILL

MaxBill is a fully-featured billing and customer relationship management solution which supports multiple service environments and features advanced rating options, CRM, order management and billing, strong partner management and reconciliation capabilities.

Our platform enables utility providers to manage multiple service offerings to encourage the growth of their business with automated service delivery, simplified customer support, and transparent billing.