THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO SAAS BILLING SYSTEMS

The Complete Guide to SaaS Billing Systems

The reason that so many SaaS companies struggle to accurately calculate core metrics like MRR and Churn has nothing to do with their complexity. The formulas are pretty straightforward and accessible, even if you slept through most of your math classes like I did.

In our work building our free SaaS analytics tool ProfitWell Metrics, we've found that convoluted billing systems deserve most of the blame for our collective metrics illiteracy. SaaS companies have a strange affinity for overly complicated billing system configurations — to say nothing of those that decide to frankenstein a billing system of their own — that makes extracting all of the necessary data for metrics a nightmare.

To improve your life (and your understanding of your business), you should be designing your billing system in a way that leverages the strengths of existing systems. Yet with so many options out there, it can be tricky to find the perfect fit.

To prepare you for your journey to your billing system Shangri-La, we've put together a complete explanation of the types of billing systems on the market and detailed dossiers on 21 different providers.

Patrick Campbell

Table of Contents

Brought to you by the crew at ProfitWell.

Understanding the Different Types of Billing Systems

Before we get into our epic comparison table, we first need to talk about the types of systems available. With so many different options that seem to address overlapping parts of the billing process, it's important to figure out exactly what your company needs.
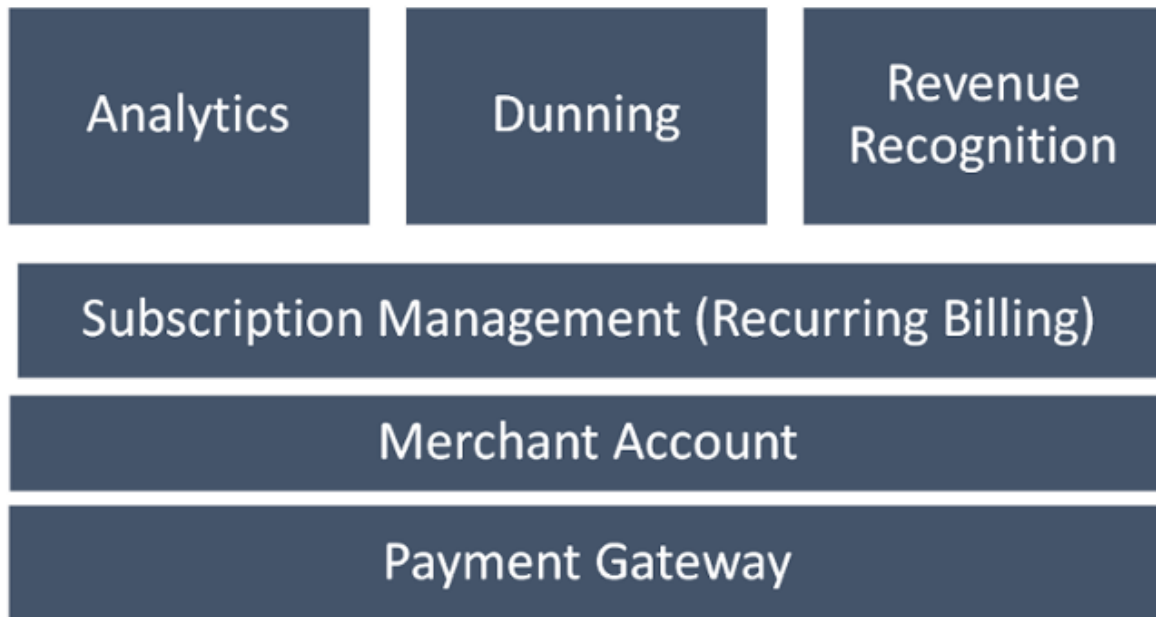
Starting from the payment gateways, the most customer-facing of the bunch, and moving towards internal services, these are the components of a complete billing system.

- Payment Gateways connect with credit card companies and make it easy for your customer to use any card without having to submit to Payment Card Industry (PCI) compliance.
- Merchant Accounts are bank accounts that allow your business to accept money from payment cards. Some are provided behind the scenes, so you may not know about them.
- Subscription Management (also called Recurring Billing) services work on top of payment gateways to handle subscriptions and make sure the right accounts are charged the right amount every month.

- Analytics systems give you an in-depth look at your customers and sales. These tools give you the insights you need to optimize everything from pricing to retention.
- Dunning tools work to mitigate the impact of failed payments by ensuring customers always have updated credit cards on file. Some systems proactively ask a customer to update a card that will expire soon; others follow up after a charge bounces.
- Revenue Recognition systems automate legally mandated accounting processes and ensure that you're only booking revenue for products or services you've delivered.

How Should You Decide?

In the past, most SaaS businesses would simply choose one of each service and combine them to create a billing stack. As more services have entered the market and capabilities of existing systems have increased, the lines between these systems have blurred. There are now "hybrid" billing systems that include both a payment gateway and a subscription layer.

You should ask yourself a few key questions when designing your billing stack:

What size is your company? Companies at later stages will need more sophisticated options and customizability than early stage companies.

What is the size are your customers? Are they willing to pay higher prices for more custom plans? If your customers are enterprise level or you find yourself selling a lot of custom plans, you'll need a stack that can accomodate.

What's your approach your pricing? Do you want to offer specific features like discounts or upgrades in addition to your plans? Flexible pricing means you'll need a stack that is equally customizable.

We'll answer these questions when we do a deep dive into each system to help give you a clearer picture of which services best fit for your company.

Growth SaaS

These systems are designed for SaaS companies in the growth stage. They're perfect for new and scaling startups and and pack enough flexibility and features to grow with you. The chart below gives you an overview of all the billing systems in this category.

Growth SaaS						
Software	Type	Unique Selling Point	Pricing Type	Merchant Account	Transaction Fees	Target Market
Stripe	Hybrid	Flexible integrations	Per transaction	Yes	Yes	All
Braintree	Hybrid	Mobile app ready and online and international availability	Per transaction	Yes	Dependent on payment method	All
MemberMouse	Hybrid	Wordpress plugin	Monthly subscription	Yes	Dependent on gateway and merchant account	Mid-Market
FastSpring	Hybrid	One-stop-shop for e-commerce - large range of services offered	Per transaction	No	Yes	Mid-market to Enterprise
WooCommerce	Hybrid	Designed for ecommerce operations	Monthly subscription	No	No	Mid-market
Recurly	Subscription Management	Multiple billing models for subscription billing	Per transaction and monthly fixed subscription	No	Dependent on payment method	Mid-market to Enterprise
Chargify	Subscription Management	Manages the entire customer lifecycle and provide customer support	Monthly subscription	No	Dependent on gateway and merchant account provider	Mid-Market
MoonClerk	Subscription Management	Stripe for non-developers	Per transaction	No	Yes	Mid-Market
Chargebee	Subscription Management	First $50,000 is free	Monthly subscription	No	No	Mid-Market to Enterprise
FuseBill	Subscription Management	Flexible billing schedules for your customers	Contact for quote	No	No	Mid-Market to Enterprise
Zoho Subscriptions	Subscription Management	Includes free accounting integrations and RESTful APIs	Monthly subscription	No	No	Mid-Market

If you're still a relatively small company and your billing isn't too complex (and probably won't become more complex in the future), we recommend Stripe and Braintree. Let's jump in to see how they stack up against their competitors.

We'll start with hybrids -- payment gateways that have a subscription layer.

Stripe

A favorite among fast growing SaaS companies, Stripe is known for being super easy to use and easy to integrate. Stripe is a system you can get up and running in just a few minutes. Their composable payment APIs let developers focus on the product rather than writing payments code while providing enough detailed support documentation to allow advanced options.
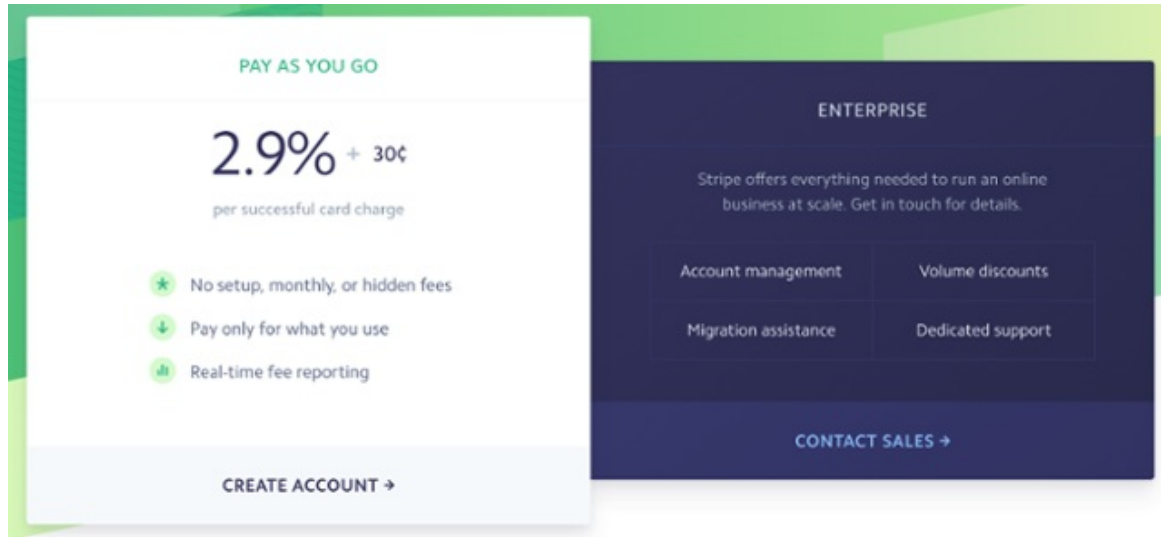

What Are They Great At?

Stripe's use of flexible integrations and built-in APIs makes it perfectly designed for programmers and developers at lean startups. Stripe's focus on removing all of the pain points in setting up a billing system simplifies the billing process and saves hundreds of hours of dev time.

What Are They Missing?

The strength of Stripe's "per card charge" is that it allows new businesses to start billing with minimal costs. But this charge quickly adds up once you scale and generate a higher volume of transactions. Stripe gets really expensive for companies that are too large for the "pay as you go" plan but too small for the enterprise plan.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

As a hybrid system, Stripe bundles a payment gateway, merchant account and subscription management platform into a single service. Stripe provides a solid foundation for billing, but needs to be integrated with a subscription management platform that has a wider range of subscription-specific features.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition

Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)
Merchant Account
Payment Gateway
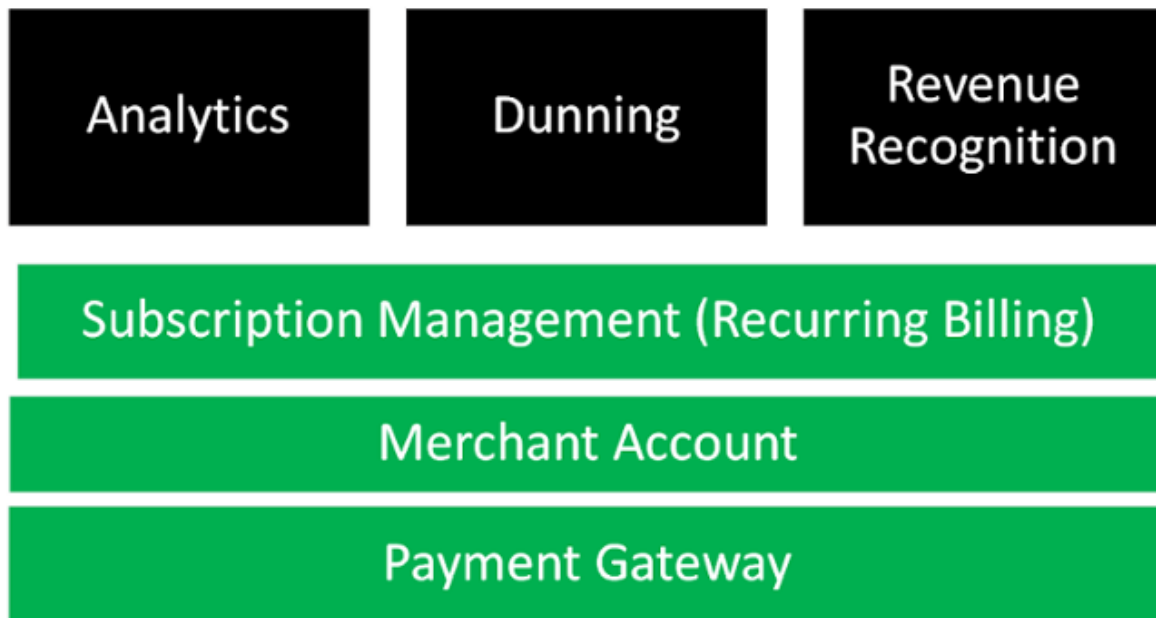
Company Size: The ease-of-use makes this great for developers at any growing internet business.

Customer Size: The pay-as-you-go plan means you can offer affordable plans to your customers, and as you scale up, your customers will grow with you.

Pricing Approach: Stripe fees are transactional, allowing you to have more flexible pricing to bring in customers as you grow.

Braintree

Subscription billing systems often require an integration with a separate payment management system that comes with complicated hidden fees. Braintree works to provide a simple and transparent payment management system that allows the use of any gateway without having to worry about regular subscription fees. They consolidate multiple payment options under one roof that would otherwise be time consuming to access on your own.

CARDS AND DIGITAL WALLETS

CREDIT/DEBIT CARDS

Apple Pay

Android pay

venmo

2.9% + $.30
per transaction after your first $50K in card processing.

* An additional 1% fee applies to transactions presented outside of your home currency
* A flat $15 fee is assessed for chargebacks
* Fees are returned for fully-refunded transactions
* Discounted rate of 2.2% + $.30 for eligible nonprofits (not valid with our $50K promotion)
* Discounted rates and interchange plus pricing are available for business processing over $80K per month

P PayPal

* Your rates are predetermined by PayPal, but generally 2.9% + $.30 per transaction; you can contact PayPal directly or visit their pricing page for more details.
* 3.9% transaction fee + fixed fee based on currency for international sales (no foreign exchange fees and no cross-border fees on European card transactions)
* Discounted rate for eligible nonprofits

Bitcoin through Coinbase

* No processing fees on the first $1M of transaction volume. After that, a fee of 1% will apply. A $.15 fee applies to each batch disbursement to your bank account.

What Are They Great At?

Braintree is built to work across all platforms, including mobile apps and websites. Because of its full coverage of payment options, it's a great choice for a wide range of users from freelancers through larger companies looking to expand on multiple platforms.

Braintree also comes with no minimums or monthly fees, as you only pay them for the transactions you process as a full-stack merchant. They also have robust international availability and currency settlement options.

What Are They Missing?

Similar to Stripe, Braintree charges on a per transaction basis. With medium to high transaction volume, it can get expensive pretty quickly if you aren't big enough to qualify for their discounted rates.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Braintree is a hybrid service with a built-in payment gateway, merchant account and subscription management service. It can also integrate with your existing merchant account if needed. If you combine it with another subscription management system, it can still be used for its gateway function.
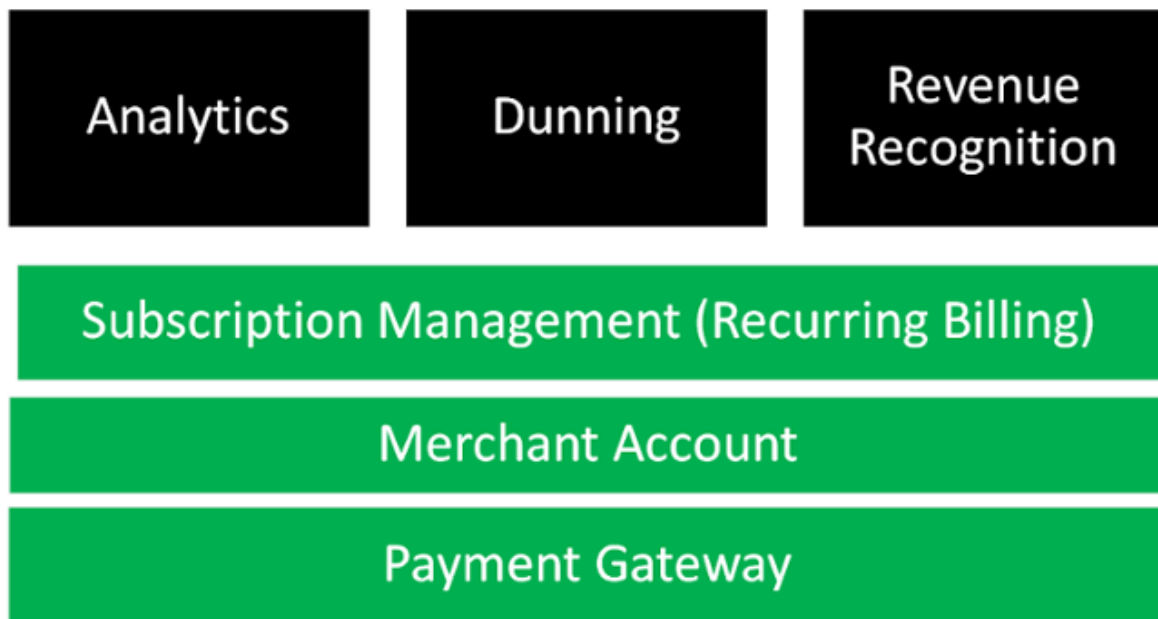
Company Size: Braintree is great for companies big enough to start expanding to multiple platforms or internationally.

Customer Size: The wide variety of payment options opens your business to most potential customers, from smaller customers who may prefer to pay over Apple Pay or Paypal to larger customers who prefer ACH.

Pricing Approach: Your pricing varies by customer size and the platform in use.

MemberMouse

If your business runs on WordPress or you want to station your subscription service on your WordPress page, MemberMouse is a great option. It's a WordPress plugin designed to be an all-around platform to help you sell products, manage subscriptions, and curate memberships. It has a variety of built-in features to make the integration flexible and the system easy-to-use.

Pricing That Encourages Your Success

| Starter	Advanced *Recommended*	Premium
1,000 members	50,000 members	100,000 members
✓ Content Protection	✓ Content Protection	✓ Content Protection
✓ Member's Area	✓ Member's Area	✓ Member's Area
✓ Piracy Auto-Locking	✓ Piracy Auto-Locking	✓ Piracy Auto-Locking
✓ Drip Content	✓ Drip Content	✓ Drip Content
✓ Smart Tags	✓ Smart Tags	✓ Smart Tags
✓ Upsells/Downsells	✓ Upsells/Downsells	✓ Upsells/Downsells
✓ 1-Click Buy	✓ 1-Click Buy	✓ 1-Click Buy
✓ Support Automation	✓ Support Automation	✓ Support Automation
✓ Checkout Pages	✓ Checkout Pages	✓ Checkout Pages
✓ Trial Offers	✓ Trial Offers	✓ Trial Offers
✓ Coupons	✓ Coupons	✓ Coupons
✓ API	✓ API	✓ API
✓ Plugin Updates	✓ Plugin Updates	✓ Plugin Updates
✓ Email Support	✓ Priority Email Support	✓ Priority Email Support
✓ Basic Reporting	✓ Basic Reporting	✓ Basic Reporting
	✓ Advanced Reporting Suite	✓ Advanced Reporting Suite
	✓ Lifetime Value Reporting	✓ Lifetime Value Reporting
	✓ Churn & Retention Reporting	✓ Churn & Retention Reporting
	✓ Facebook/Twitter/G+ Login	✓ Facebook/Twitter/G+ Login
	✓ UserVoice Integration	✓ UserVoice Integration
		✓ Lime Light CRM Integration
		✓ Phone Support
$19.95 / month	$99 / month	$299 / month

What Are They Great At?

Considering that WordPress currently powers 27% of the web, it's surprising that more billing systems aren't built for the platform. MemberMouse fills this gap and provides a secure system that allows users to start adding customers in just 2 minutes and 30 seconds.

What Are They Missing?

While MemberMouse offers a wide range of features to make your site and billing system customizable, the learning curve for new members can be significant. Making the product more user-friendly would allow non-developers to more easily customize it to their needs.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

MemberMouse provides most of the structure needed to get your billing system up and running by providing a merchant account, subscription management system and features such as analytics and dunning. It also integrates with a number of different billing systems to provide a payment gateway.
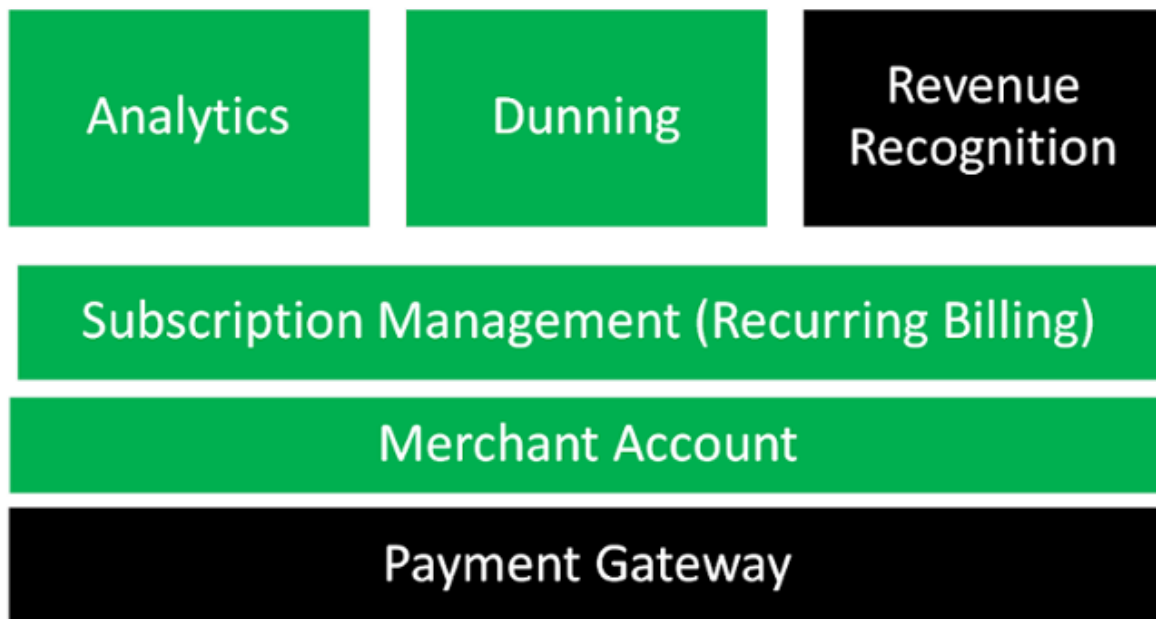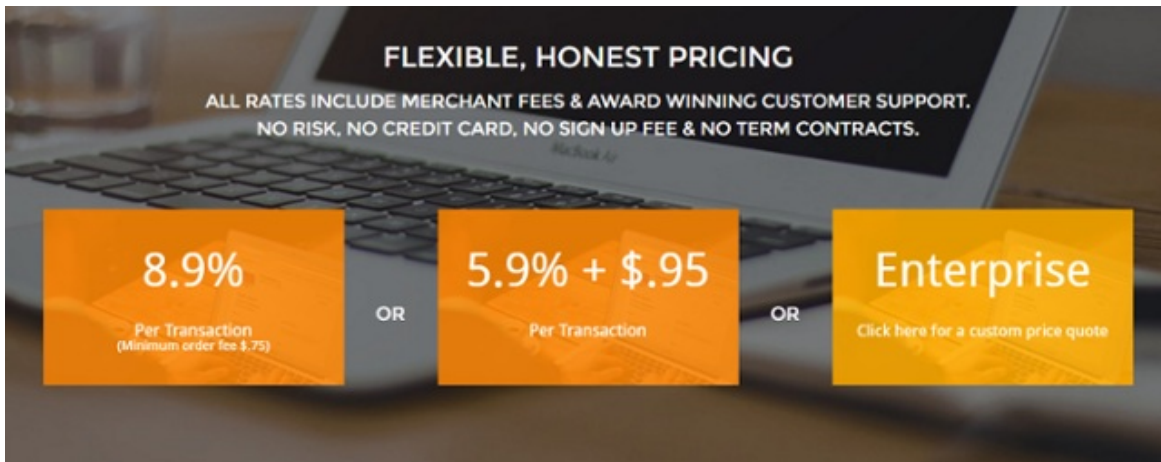
Company Size: MemberMouse scales well for Wordpress-based companies of all sizes, but operates best with businesses that already have a decent number of members because of its customizability.

Customer Size: The customizability of plans allows you to cater to a wide range of customers. You can serve those who are interested in a one-time membership fee or those who prefer to pay in cycles.

Pricing Approach: MemberMouse fees are fixed based on how many features you need, so you can pay for more features as the complexity of your pricing increases.

FastSpring

FastSpring can help get a SaaS vendor site get up and running in a day. They are a full-stack service that goes beyond managing subscriptions and payments to offer storefront optimization, payment page customization, and back office services. If you're looking for a one-stop shop for the business end of your SaaS company, FastSpring has you covered.

What Are They Great At?

FastSpring can help you build your payment process from scratch while maintaining a cohesive experience for your customers by integrating with your existing website design. It also automatically implements cosmetic pricing localization and automatically displays your prices to your customers in their local currency and language.

What Are They Missing?

They say you get what you pay for and with FastSpring, you're definitely paying for a premium service. At up to 8.9% per transaction, FastSpring is far from the most affordable option for a billing system. It can be difficult for the early-stage startups that FastSpring is equipped to help to justify the cost.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

FastSpring will take care of your subscription management and recurring billing. FastSpring also helps you prevent failed payments with built-in payment routing to maximize credit card charge success and provides analytics in their back end to track customers' payment activity.

Company Size: FastSpring's ability to let you build a page from scratch makes it well suited to startups and small businesses.

Customer Size: FastSpring offers a two main pricing options to accommodate teams with different types of customers.

Pricing Approach: Customer support is at the foundation of FastSpring's service. They offer dedicated and prompt customer service to your team and your customers. This lets you have a hands-on, customer-driven approach to pricing.

WooCommerce

WooCommerce is incredibly flexible: it lets anyone set up an eCommerce site selling anything. Their toolkit of products can accommodate sales of everything from physical products to software. It's built to be used by store owners and developers alike -- store owners can easily create their own platform and developers can use WooCommerce's tools to help clients.

Subscription options

A subscription entitles you to **1 year of updates and support** from the date of purchase.

- ✓ SINGLE SITE
  $129.00
- ○ 5 SITES
  $199.00
- ○ 25 SITES
  $299.00

ADD TO CART

OR UPGRADE AN EXISTING SUBSCRIPTION

What Are They Great At?

WooCommerce is equipped to help teams at all stages. They can support your business whether it sells one product or thousands, so as you grow and expand your offerings, you don't have to worry about switching providers. They also support growth across platforms by offering integrations with third-party apps that let you turn a WooCommerce store into a mobile app. Their features are all built to integrate with WordPress, making them incredibly accessible.

What Are They Missing?

Although WooCommerce promotes its documentation as one of its strengths, users report that it's occasionally lacking. Without enough transparency in the code base, users have to purchase WooCommerce's ready-made extensions, which can get pricey.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

You can manage your billing through the site you create with Woocommerce. The product comes bundled with payment gateways: PayPal, BACS, and cash on delivery. You can also integrate with 366 extensions for additional features including analytics.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition

Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)

Merchant Account

Payment Gateway
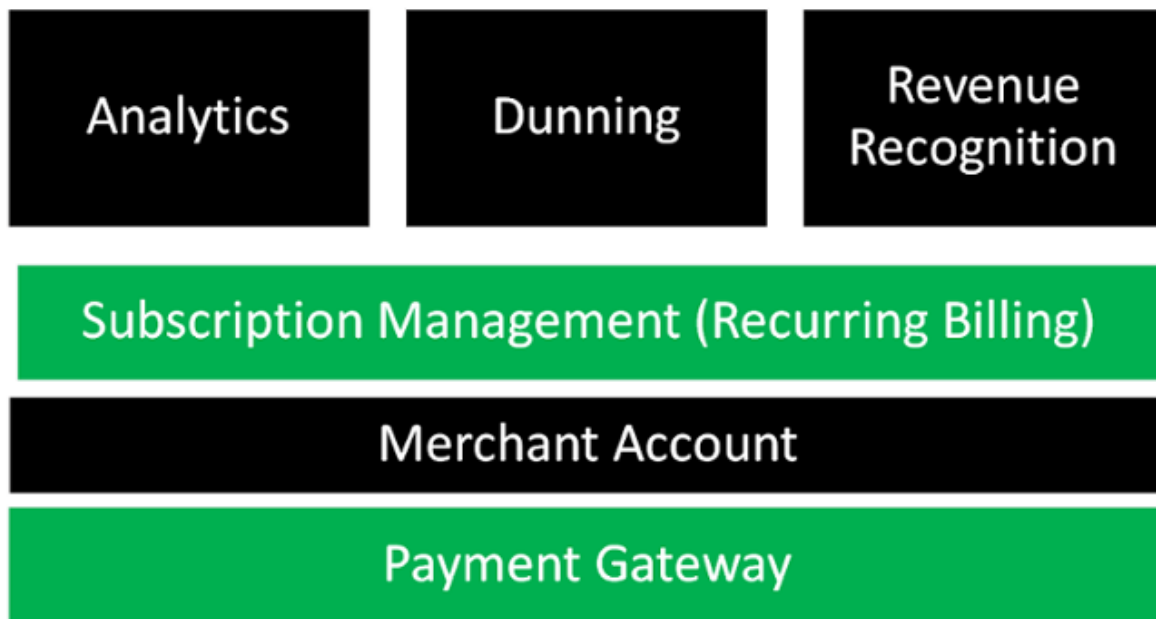
Company Size: WooCommerce is open source software that is quick to deploy. If you're bootstrapped or don't have a lot of resources, WooCommerce is a great way to get started. However, once you require more than basic setup, you'll have to start paying for customizations, which can get costly.

Customer Size: Given the many different types of payments accepted and the sheer number of extensions available, WooCommerce can be scaled to accommodate customers of many different sizes.

Pricing Approach: Use WooCommerce when you want to hit the ground running with your pricing. The initial setup is very easy and the WordPress plugin provides a deep community of support, so it's easy to deploy pricing quickly and simply.

Next, we'll look at subscription management systems designed to support the subscription side of SaaS businesses in the growth stage.

Recurly

Recurly is an easy-to-use subscription management system that is great for SaaS businesses that are just getting started with a billing system. It's often used on top of payment gateway services -- even those that already have a subscription management system -- because its many options for quick integrations make payments easy.

What Are They Great At?

For companies that have developed different delivery plans to align product features with customers' willingness to pay, Recurly offers different billing models for subscription billing. These models include:

- One-time charge model ex. $349 for a security camera as part of a monitoring plan
- Fixed recurring model ex. $19.99/mo for a video streaming service
- Seat-based model ex. $12/user per month for scalable services
- Usage-based model ex. $49/mo plus $.02 per message for services in which customers pay for how much they use

These built-in point of sale UI options help Recurly fit any company model.

What Are They Missing?

Even though Recurly lets you export your data to a CSV, its native reporting capabilities are limited. As it has both a fixed price and a variable fee, it can get expensive. Since you will probably need to layer it on top of another system, the price can be challenging for smaller-budget teams.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Recurly is a subscription management system that includes analytics, dunning and revenue recognition features, but needs to be integrated with a payment gateway. They connect with a number of supported gateways to make setup easy.
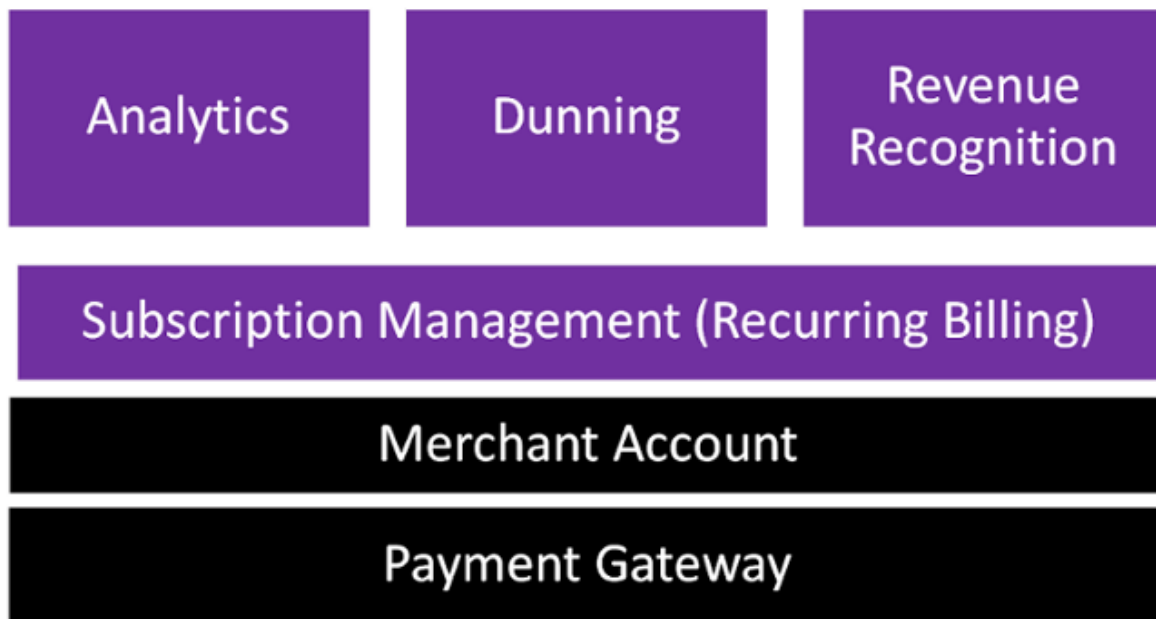
Company Size: Often used in tandem with something like Stripe, Recurly is great for companies that want to expand more into features like dunning and revenue recognition.

Customer Size: Recurly's billing models allow for sales to a wide range of potential customers who can pay for everything from a one-time product as part of a subscription to a variable recurring charge based on usage or another value metric.

Pricing Size: Each billing model allows for a different type of pricing, based on what features of your product you want to offer and what value metrics you use. This allows for flexibility, and lets you test out different types of pricing.

Chargify

Chargify is a subscription management platform that focuses on customer support to build relationships. Each of their pricing plans are centered around a seat-based model and provide different options for support that you can offer to your customers. Like Recurly, it's often used on top of payment gateway services because of its variety of integrations.

BASIC	PLUS	PRO	ENTERPRISE
$149/mo	**$199/mo**	**$499/mo**	For businesses with 3,000 to millions of customers
500 Paying Customers (additional: $0.69/ea)	500 Paying Customers (additional: $0.69/ea)	2,000 Paying Customers (additional: $0.49/ea)	Enterprise-grade functionality & support for as little as 5 cents per customer
1,000 non-paying users	**Basic Features Plus...**	**Plus Features Plus...**	**Pro Features Plus...**
Credit Card Billing	Invoicing/Net Terms Billing	High Priority Support	NDA & Uptime SLA
PayPal Billing	Analytics (Churn & LTV)	Team Member Access Controls	Component Subcodes
ACH/eCheck Billing	Webhooks Replay		Per Product Component Pricing
Customer Self-Serve Portal	Salesforce.com Connection		Vendor Approval Documentation
API Tech Support	Xero Accounting Integration		Dedicated Support Contact
Tier 2 Phone Support	MailChimp Integration		
Try for Free	Try for Free	Try for Free	Let's Chat

What Are They Great At?

Chargify positions their focus on building customer relationships as a differentiator that really makes them more than just a billing service. While the features they offer aren't particularly unique, most do revolve around your customers. With Chargify you can:

- Track and keep data on each individual customer
- View customer churn and lifetime value metrics
- Offer referrals to customers to provide extra benefits

Manage the entire customer lifecycle, including making the signup process easier, staying connected with your customers, ensuring that billing is accurate and managing subscriptions

What Are They Missing?

At the moment, Chargify doesn't accommodate companies that sell physical products. They also don't offer shipping features which could be helpful to small eCommerce businesses.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Chargify is a subscription management system that includes analytics, dunning and revenue recognition features, but needs to be integrated with a payment gateway. They connect with a number of supported gateways and will help you get set up with a merchant account.
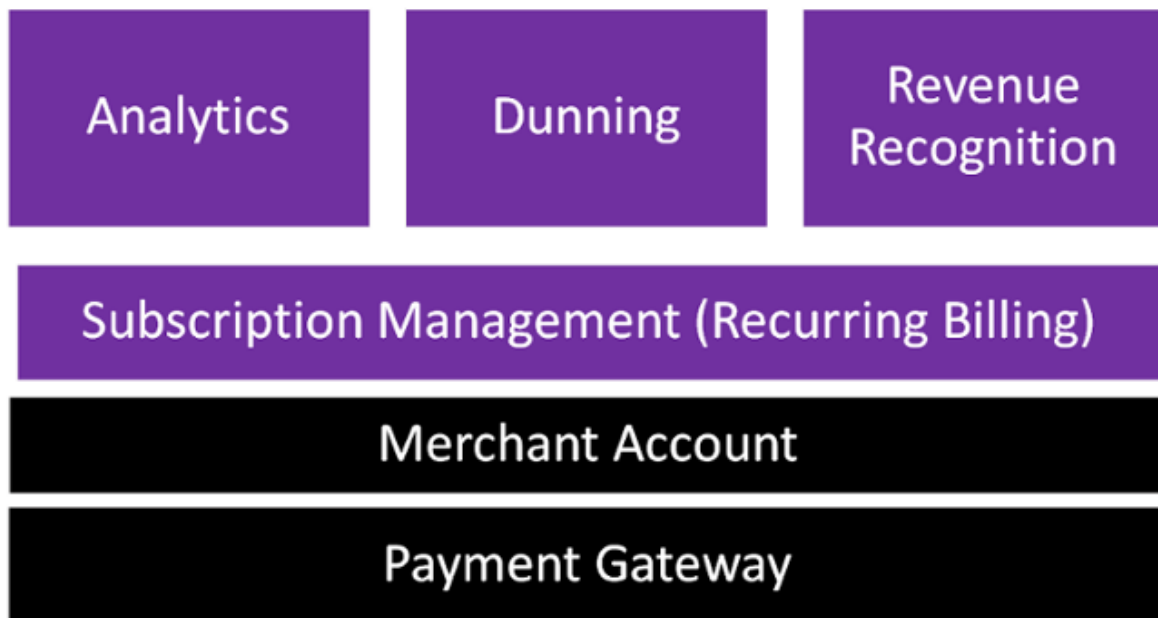
Company Size: A company that already has an established customer community can use Chargify to take it to the next level with involved customer lifecycle management.

Customer Size: Your customers should match your size and grow with you, as you move through the Chargify pricing plans.

Pricing Approach: Chargify's support features make it easy to center your pricing around what support you offer and how you bundle it into each subscription plan.

MoonClerk

MoonClerk allows you to use Stripe if you are not a developer

MoonClerk relies on Stripe to accept both one-time and recurring payments. It's customizable, works for desktop and mobile, has an easy setup, and doesn't require any technical experience. The huge bonus is that they integrate with Stripe, which makes Stripe (whose tagline is "Stripe—Payments for Developers") accessible to everyone whether or not you have a coding background.

Pricing

Third Party Processing Fees

Fees Per Transaction (USA)	2.9% + 30¢

MoonClerk partners with Stripe. Stripe is one of the world's best, most secure online payment processors and allows you to start accepting payments immediately. Learn more about Stripe and Stripe's pricing for your country.

MoonClerk Monthly Rates Automatically adjusts based on your volume

| Monthly price	$15	$30	$50	$75	$110
Monthly volume	$0 - $2,000	$2,000 - $4,000	$4,000 - $7,500	$7,500 - $12,500	$12,500 - $20,000

What Are They Great At?

MoonClerk advertises that they can get your online business up and running and accepting payments in one day. It's a simple way to collect recurring payments while you work on other aspects of your business that need attention. It's also one of the more affordable options out there, with monthly pricing starting at $15.

What Are They Missing?

Though MoonClerk is affordable and makes Stripe easy to set-up, it's missing the same features that Stripe is which means you're likely going to have to use it in combination with other products.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

MoonClerk provides a solid option for quickly setting up your subscription management system, but it will be one tool of many in your kit. You can use Stripe for the payment gateway and merchant account, but if you want more advanced features for analytics, dunning, or revenue recognition, you'll have to add another product to your stack.
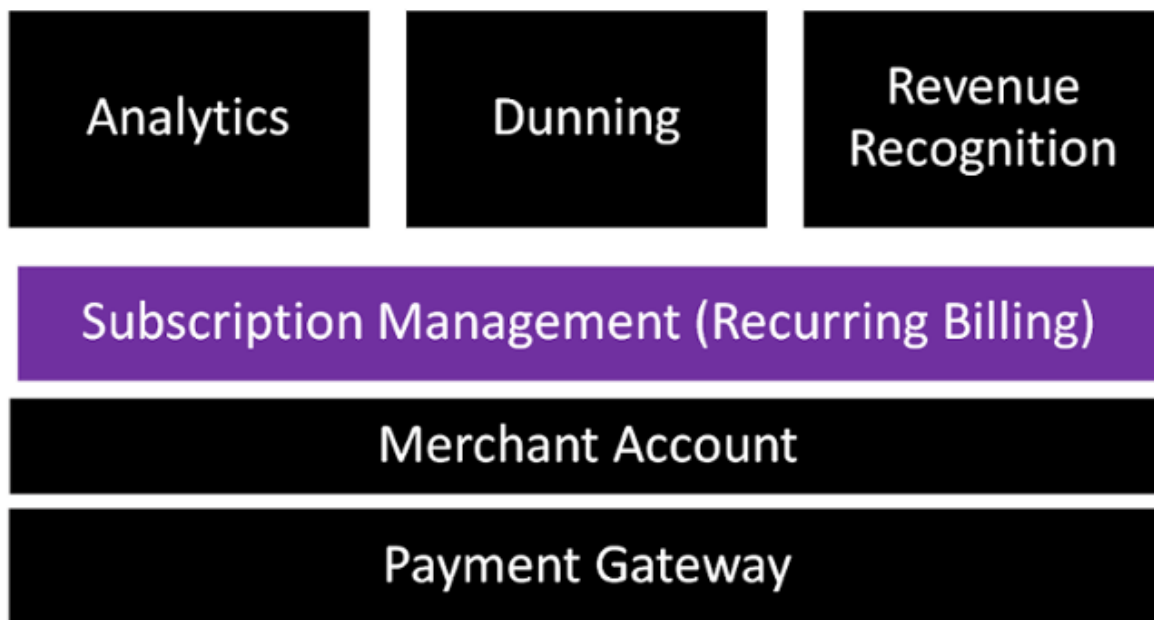
Company Size: MoonClerk is best for startups and small businesses. Their inexpensive pricing makes it easy for startups to afford their product and the product's ease of use and integrations with Stripe means that it's accessible to non-technical team members.

Customer Size: MoonClerk's monthly rates based on volume are more suitable if your team has smaller customers with less complex needs.

Pricing Approach: MoonClerk allows for flexibility when accepting payments because links to their payment forms can be added to your existing website and emails, or saved as an icon for mobile devices.

Chargebee

Chargebee offers one API layer to handle almost all of your SaaS billing needs, including subscriptions, recurring payments, billing, and analytics. It has a lot of options to help you customize your customers' plans. This can be really helpful when you're scaling your business. Chargebee is our pick for companies in the $1M - $20M ARR range with moderately complex pricing.

What Are They Great At?

Chargebee allows you to start for free (up to your first $50,000 in revenue), which allows you to see how you'll use the product and which plan is best for you. Customers have also praised the clarity and usefulness of the documentation. They also appreciate the responsiveness of the support team.

What Are They Missing?

Chargebee allows you to accept payments in multiple currencies (up to three on one site with the Launch Plan/Basic Plan and more with the Pro Plan). However, you can't manage multiple currencies through a single dashboard, so if you're a global company your analytics will be fragmented and require some extra work.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Though Chargebee is a very comprehensive product, you'll still need a payment gateway to directly process payments and a merchant account (for which you could integrate with Stripe).

Company Size: Chargebee offers multiple plans that can meet the needs of companies of different sizes.

Customer Size: Since Chargebee offers so many customizations and add-ons, the product helps your team accommodate larger customers with more complex needs.
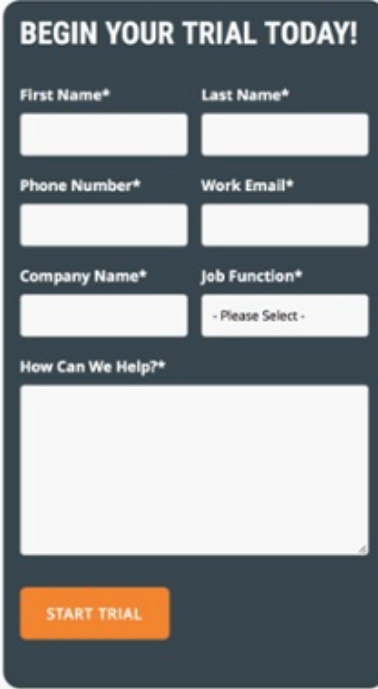
Pricing Approach: Chargebee is a great platform to use if your team wants to scale. You can manage your payments as you grow without losing control over data, accounts, or administrative details.

FuseBill

FuseBill manages subscription and billing for B2B and B2C companies. It's particularly well suited to SaaS and tech companies, because it offer an API for web app integration. They have flexible pricing options which means your team can offer your customers many different plans and accept a variety of payment methods.

What Are They Great At?

FuseBill provides great user experience by allowing you to easily and security collect and transfer data. They have PCI Level 1 certification and 99.95% systems uptime, so you can feel comfortable storing your data there. FuseBill also integrates with Salesforce, which makes it very easy to transfer information to your CRM.

**What Are They Missing?**

FuseBill doesn't have transparent pricing. They're subscription based, but rates aren't stated upfront -- for more information about pricing you have to contact a sales representative. It's easy to begin a trial from FuseBill's website, but for more information about pricing you have to contact a sales representative.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

FuseBill allows you to manage many aspects of your billing process in one place —in addition to the subscription and billing management system, it also includes analytics, dunning management, and revenue recognition features.
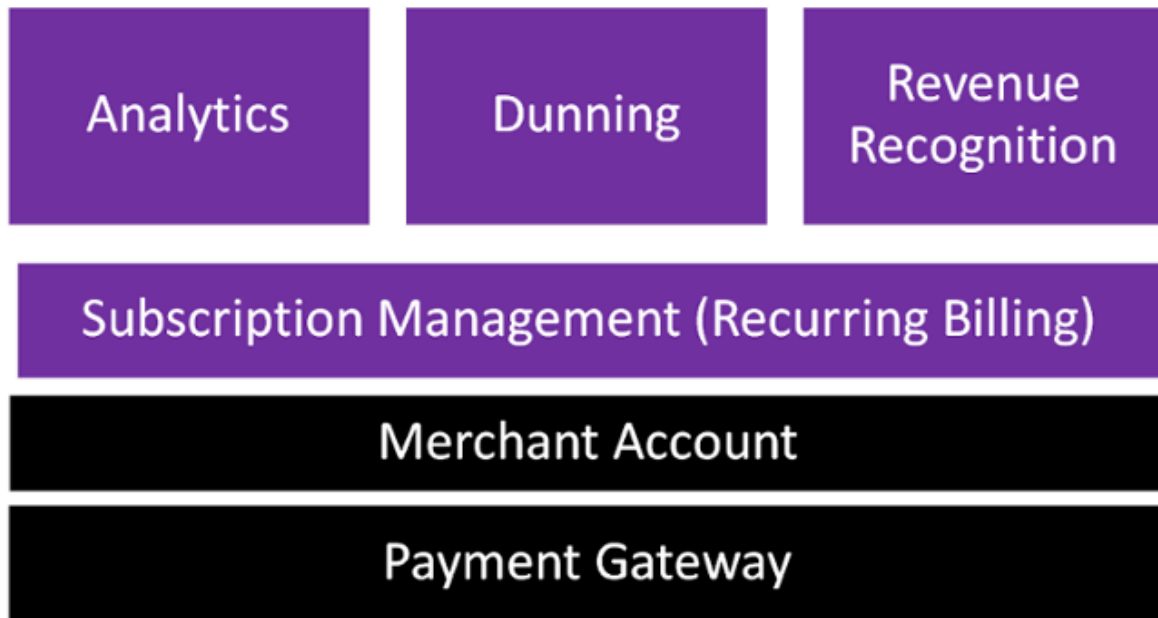
Company Size: FuseBill's powerful features, Salesforce integration, and systems security makes it a good tool for larger companies. They target companies with revenue in the $1M to $50M range.

Customer Size: The flexibility and range of customizations means your team can support customers of different sizes and with different needs using FuseBill.

Pricing Approach: FuseBill is looking to meet your long-term needs as your company scales. By allowing you to offer different types of plans, accept different forms of payment, and use their coupons and discounts module, you can accommodate various types of customers over your company's lifetime.

Zoho Subscriptions

Zoho Subscriptions allows you to automate your subscription management. It allows you to set up a free test account (without a credit card) and only starts charging you when you start billing customers. The sandbox environment lets you experiment with different pricing models so you can determine what works best for you, no strings attached.

What Are They Great At?

Zoho Subscriptions has a free integration with their accounting software, Zoho Books. They also offer REST APIs and Webhooks to increase integration options for developers.

What Are They Missing?

Though it's great that the product comes with the Zoho Books integration for free, the two products are deeply intertwined, which makes it difficult if you want to use a different accounting software like QuickBooks or Xero.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Zoho Subscriptions includes subscription management, instant and real-time analytics, and dunning management. The product integrates with multiple payment gateways.
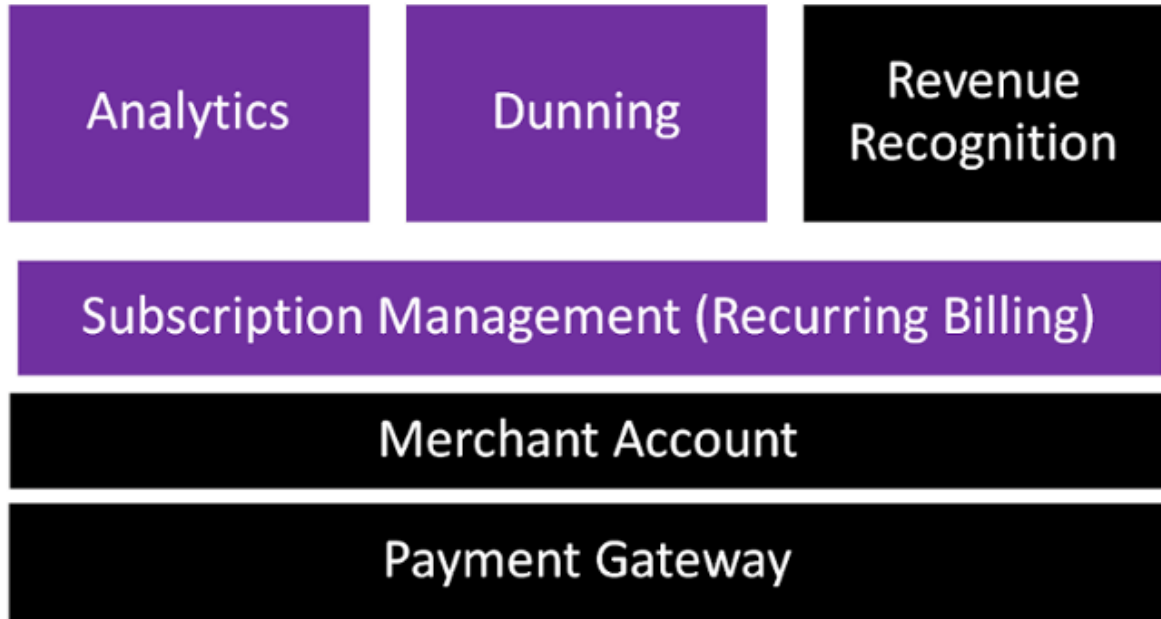
Company Size: Zoho Subscriptions can support large and small companies. Its sandbox environment is great for small companies that are looking to test their options before committing to a particular product and their monthly payment plan means you're never locked into a contract.

Customer Size: With Zoho Subscriptions you can bill for individual projects or subscriptions, so you handle different types of customers.

Pricing Approach: The REST APIs at Zoho Subscriptions provides another degree of flexibility for developers.

Enterprise SaaS

Enterprise SaaS companies have entirely different needs for their billing systems than growth stage SaaS companies. These companies often look for feature-rich billing providers that specialize in more than payment processing. Enterprise focused billing and subscription management systems often include other areas of accounting, inventory, and eCommerce control.

Choosing the right system for your company is even more difficult for enterprise companies than for growth companies. The complexity requires significant buy-in and training for your team and you may be tied to long-term contracts.

These options are expensive, but you get what you pay for. The target buyers for enterprise solutions are companies with high revenue that can afford the top-end options if they provide top-end value.

Enterprise						
Software	Type	Unique Selling Point	Price	Merchant Account	Transaction Fees	Target Market
Digital River	Hybrid	Reseller business model and comprehensive business operations support	Contact for quote	Yes	Contact for quote	Mid-to-Large Enterprise
Intacct	Hybrid	Focus on organizing your cloud ERP	Contact for quote	No	Contact for quote	Large Enterprise
Salesforce Quote-to-Cash	Hybrid	Integration with Salesforce analytics and Solutions Configurations	Monthly subscription	No	No	Large Enterprise
Netsuite	Hybrid	Global transactions managed under one system	Contact for quote	Yes	Contact for quote	Large Enterprise
goTransverse TRACT®	Hybrid	High touch customer support	Contact for quote	No	Contact for quote	Mid-to-Large Enterprise
Apttus	Hybrid	Quote-to-cash system with multiple CRM integrations	Contact for quote	No	Contact for quote	Mid-to-Large Enterprise
Aria	Subscription Management	Manages entire subscriber lifecycle	Contact for quote	No	Contact for quote	Mid-to-Large Enterprise
Vindicia	Subscription Management	Cashbox feature speeds transaction time to market	Contact for quote	No	Contact for quote	Mid-to-Large Enterprise
Zuora	Subscription Management	Highly customizable with many add-ons	Monthly subscription	No	Contact for quote	Mid-to-Large Enterprise
Cleverbridge	Subscription Management	Focused on customer success	Contact for quote	No	Yes	Mid-to-Large Enterprise

If you've moved beyond the growth stage (congrats!) and need a system that can handle more complex subscription pricing, we're big fans of Zuora.

Let's take a look at the rest, once again starting with hybrids - payment gateways with a subscription layer.

Digital River

Digital River is a prime example of an all-in-one solution for an enterprise SaaS billing system. Not only do they offer the ability to process payments, but they also provide a host of other financial solutions. This includes tax and legal compliance for different jurisdictions, risk management and financial reconciliation, and the ability for FX within the product.

RECURRING REVENUE MODELS

Simple Renewals
Our most basic subscription model allows your subscribers to pay once, up front and for a fixed period of entitlement with the option to renew.

Flexible Term Renewals
Our duration based model offers flexible pricing and renewal scheduling to offer your product in different lengths of time and prices.

Metered Renewals
Our usage based model allows your customers to only pay for what they use. You can bill by the seat, number of transactions, incidents or whatever measurable unit you choose.

What Are They Great At?

As one of the more mature systems on the market, Digital River has baked reliability into the product over many years. Though they have different options, Digital River products are still simple to use over a wide-range of use-cases. The software can serve as a single point of contact for the commerce, finance, and marketing teams to coordinate.

What Are They Missing?

Digital River doesn't have many customization options for end users. You are largely reliant on the Digital River team for help in a number of situations. Some enterprise companies might be fine with this level of service, but for any that are still looking to move quickly, this could represent a barrier.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Though the basics of your billing system will be taken care of, you will still need separate solutions for analytics or revenue recognition if you need that ability.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition

Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)

Merchant Account

Payment Gateway

Company size: You should be an enterprise-level company that needs more than just a single turnkey billing system and is looking to integrate your entire customer billing flow into a single platform.

Customer size: Your customers are large-scale companies that require enterprise plans and individual contracts.

Pricing approach: You should be looking to offer significant customization in each plan you offer to customers.

Intacct

Intacct is an easy-to-use cloud solution that can take the place of an enterprise company's ERP. Financial reporting, contract management, and revenue recognition are all part of the core platform. The intuitive reporting and dashboards make it easy to understand and easy to get up and running for new users.


What Are They Great At?

Reporting is Intacct's strong point. Intacct allow you to build easy-to-understand dashboards for different roles in your organization. Your CFO can see balance sheets, expense breakdowns, and cash all in a single screen. Your VP of Sales can see bookings and revenue on a separate dashboard if needed. This allows leaders to get an easy, quick glance into the financial health of the company.

What Are They Missing?

Whereas some enterprise level billing systems offer a complete package including supply chain management, Intacct isn't one of them. Therefore, this might not be good for eCommerce companies. However, this lack of insight into manufacturing and inventory isn't a typically problem for software companies.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Intacct has dunning and revenue recognition as standard, but doesn't offer merchant accounts or a payment gateway on top of subscription management, so it would need to be paired with a tool that offers these.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition

Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)

Merchant Account

Payment Gateway
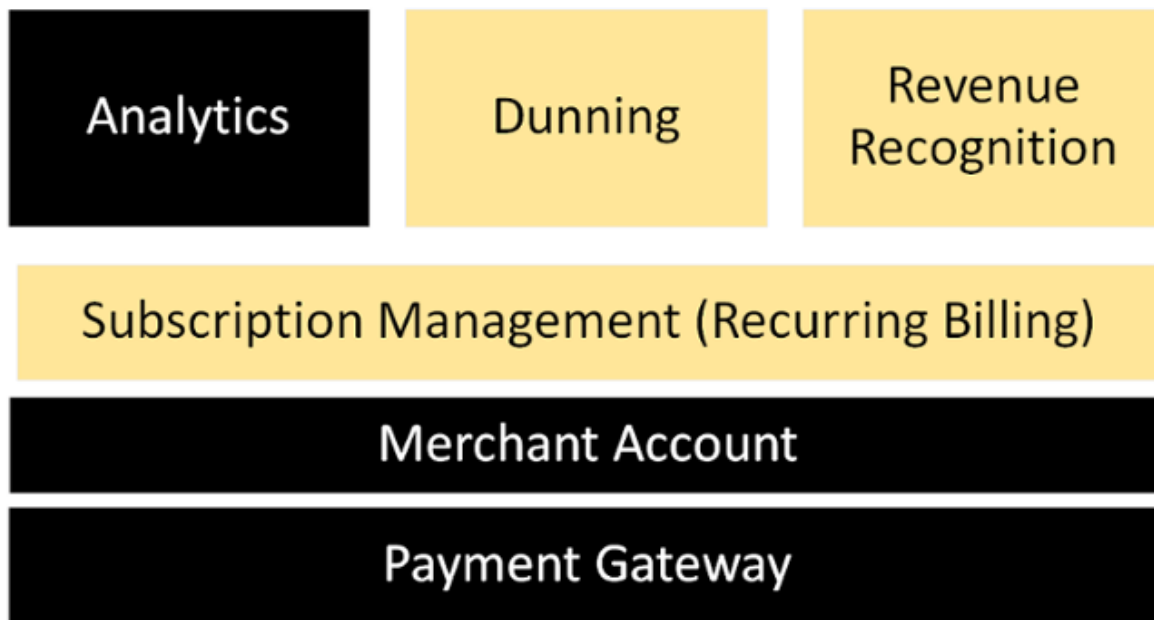
Company Size: Intacct works well for enterprise software companies that have achieved maturity.

Customer Size: Though ideal for enterprise customers due to the ability to work with different plans, Intacct can also be used for high-volume, low-revenue customers.

Pricing Approach: Intacct isn't as customizable as some other enterprise systems, so it is less useful if you have a particularly complex approach to pricing.

Salesforce Quote-to-Cash

Many people know Salesforce as a powerful sales and marketing management tool that helps collect data and conduct analytics. But Salesforce also offers a billing process integration called Salesforce Quote-to-Cash. As a Salesforce Integration it does require having Salesforce as a tool, but it also has access to the rest of Salesforce's powerful platform.

| MOST POPULAR		
CPQ Pro	**CPQ Premium**	**Billing**
Configure, Price, Quote (CPQ) with Renewal and Order Automation	Multi-Channel Selling with Advanced Workflows	Invoicing, Subscriptions, Collections, Taxes, Reporting and more
$75 USD PER USER PER MONTH*	**$150** USD PER USER PER MONTH*	**CUSTOM**
Speed through the last mile of your sales cycle with Salesforce CPQ Pro. Easily manage complex product configuration, apply dynamic pricing for partners and customers, automate and forecast renewals, and quickly manage add-on and co-terming orders.	Manage the most complex sales cycles quickly and easily with Salesforce CPQ Premium. Use advanced workflow to route requests, export data automatically with Partner APIs, sell through the channel with partner portals, and give your customers and partners power with self-service.	Take the pain out of the cash process. Easily manage orders and subscription billing, quickly generate revenue recognition schedules for every order, automatically generate invoices, integrate with payment gateways, and generate reports to run dunning processes and track your business.

What Are They Great At?

By virtue of its connection to Salesforce, Quote-to-Cash has full access to analytics to give you a view into the customer lifecycle. The insight into your customers makes this product stand out. Quotes, proposals, contracts, and billing can all easily be assigned to each customer natively within your CRM without the need for multiple integrations and customizations.

What Are They Missing?

The connection to Salesforce is also the main restriction here. As Quote-to-Cash is a Salesforce add-on, it can't be used as a standalone product for companies with different CRMs. It also doesn't offer the same depth of features as other specific billing systems. Though the product works well, it's not Salesforce's core product.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Salesforce Quote-to-Cash is a hybrid service, as it provides both a payment gateway and subscription management. As with Salesforce, you would need to integrate with a merchant account via AppExchange.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition

Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)

| Merchant Account |
| --- |

Payment Gateway
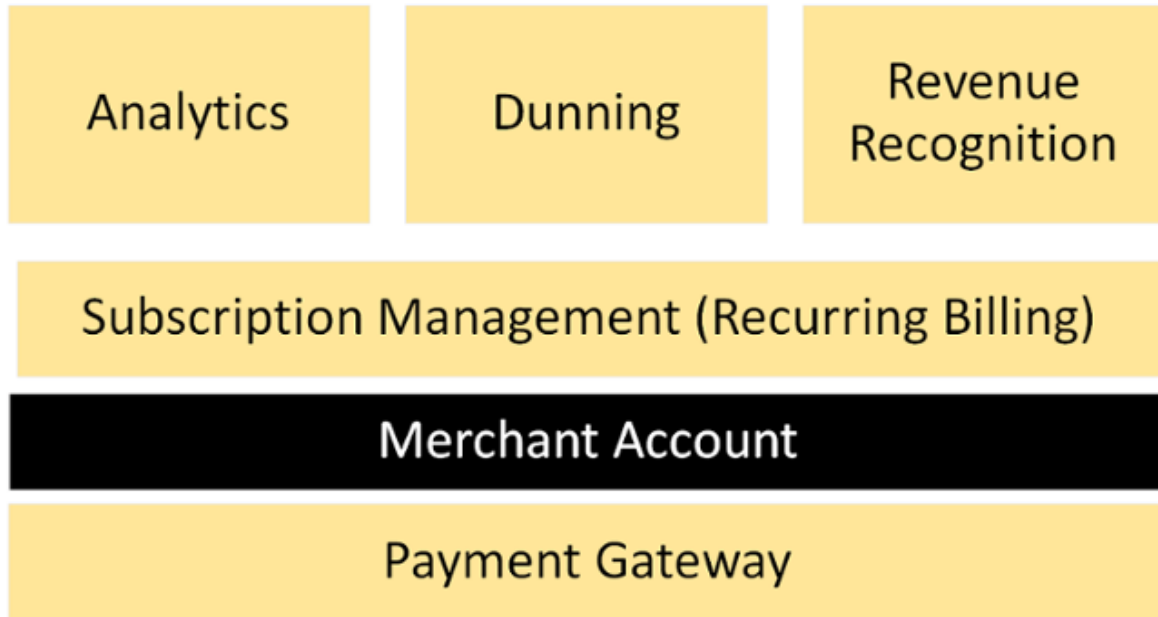
Company Size: This is a great option for larger companies already using Salesforce to manage their sales and marketing processes. The easy integration with the rest of your Salesforce analytics makes it possible to have all of your data in one place.

Customer Size: Enterprise customers can afford to pay for customized subscriptions. Solutions will help your sales team find the best package for even the most difficult customer.

Pricing Approach: Solutions allow you to offer customized quotes for customers and make pricing adjustments when needed, keeping your pricing flexible.

Netsuite

Netsuite from Oracle allows you to manage global transactions in one system. It is a complete system, with a fully-featured accounting suite, a CRM, and features for merchandising companies to manage their supply chain and inventory. The entire package can be easily customized for different companies' requirements.
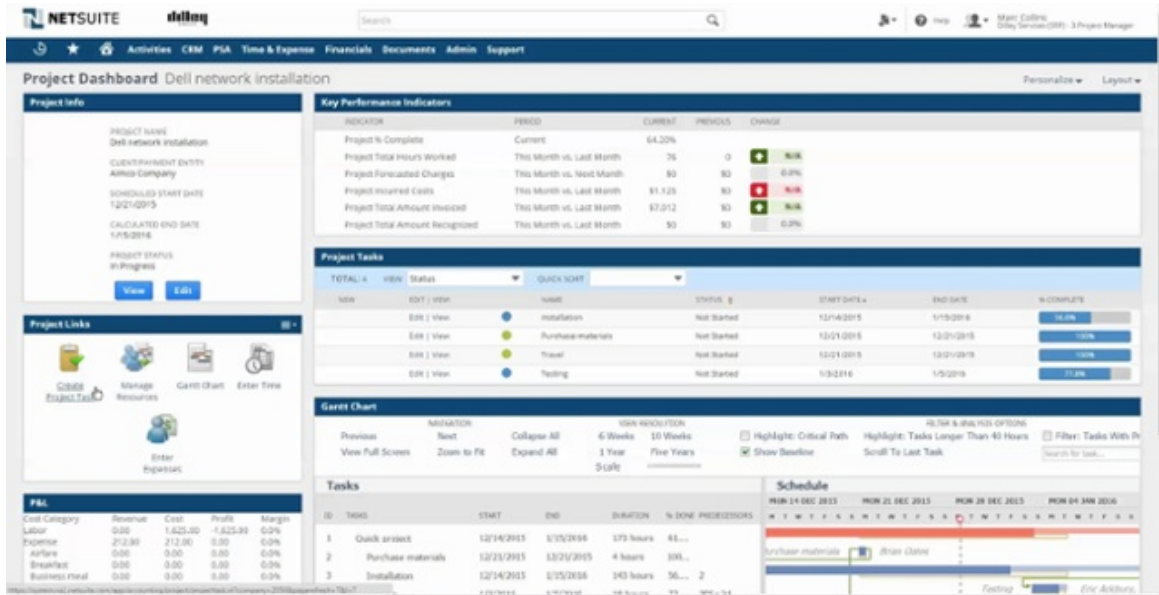

What Are They Great At?

The sheer wealth of data at your disposal within Netsuite is the platform's major selling point. It can give any member of any business unit access to customer information, transaction histories, invoice and order status, and ongoing customer concerns. It allows for a complete overview of the customer and their financial history with the company.

What Are They Missing?

The major drawback for Netsuite is the lack of graphics, charts, and other visualizations that use its underlying data. It's spreadsheet heavy, so new users can have difficulty understanding what all the data means. Finance teams that spend their entire day in Netsuite can understand all the data presented. But teams like sales and marketing that just need to quickly check in on certain data points can find the data-driven interface confusing.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Netsuite checks all the high level for a SaaS billing system—analytics, dunning, GAAP—but it isn't a hybrid billing system with a payment gateway.
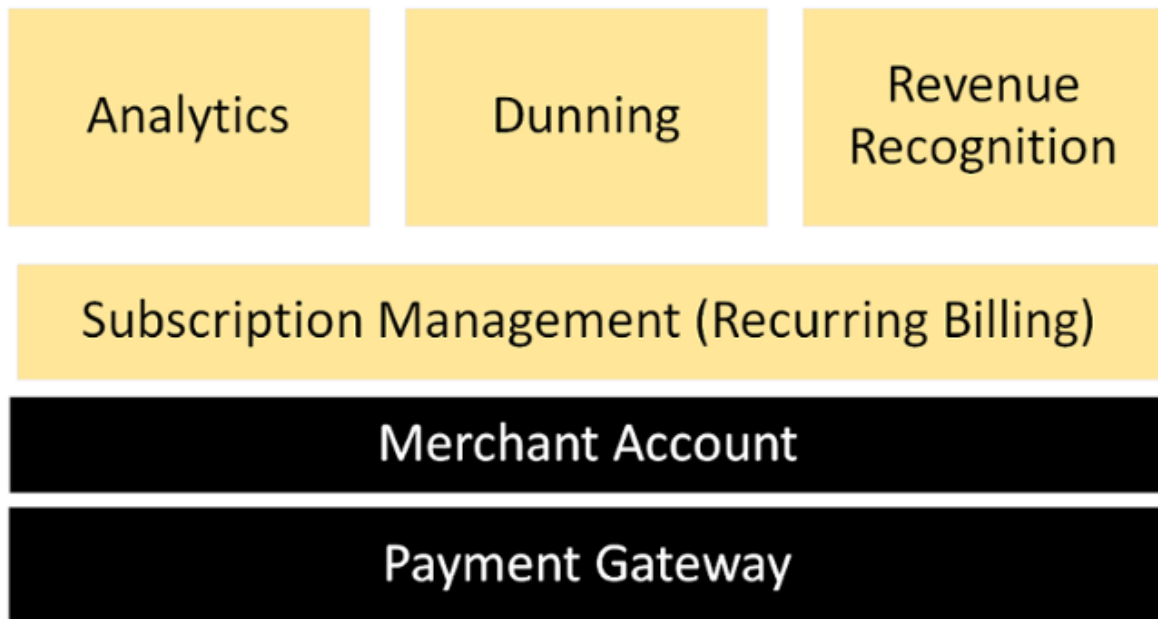
Company Size: Netsuite is for advanced enterprise companies.

Customer Size: It's best suited for companies with higher pricing who serve other enterprise companies.

Pricing Approach: Netsuite wins when you need maximum flexibility in your pricing to land extremely large contracts.

goTransverse TRACT®

TRACT has options for mid-size and large enterprises. At the top end of the market, they offer a complete solution covering everything from marketing to sales and finance. Their enterprise solution boasts the high levels of security, service-level agreements, and "white-glove" customer service that are a pre-requisite to play at this level.

Intelligent Billing for Smart Business

DRIVE REVENUE
Accelerate top-line revenue through intelligent billing and real time dynamic monetization

SPEED TO MARKET
Go-to-market faster and smarter than the competition with enterprise-grade security, reliability and scalability

GAIN VISIBILITY
Gain visibility and unique insights into the consumption-to-cash lifecycle through on-demand reports and analytics

INCREASE SAVINGS
Give your team more time, and focus by reducing costs related to overhead and churn

What Are They Great At?

Reviews report that Tract's biggest asset is its customer service. They are reported to take feedback extremely well and deeply engage with their enterprise clients. The customer success team helps customers them through implementation and remain responsive to service and support calls.

What Are They Missing?

In one word: dunning. The lack of a dunning system on this platform is unfortunate given that its a core feature from many competitors. With dunning being so important to reducing churn, this could be an easy way for Tract to rise above their competition.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

TRACT doesn't have a merchant account or payment gateway, so you would need to integrate it with one of these to directly process payments.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition
Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)		
Merchant Account		
Payment Gateway		

Company Size: Tract is useable by small and medium enterprises.

Customer Size: They can range from individual customers to organizations.

Pricing Approach: The flexibility of Tract means that you can offer most pricing options.

Apttus

Like Salesforce, Apttus offer a Quote-to-cash solution for billing. In fact, the Apttus version was originally built on top of Salesforce alone until they chose to expand it out to integrate with other CRMs. This allows you to manage the entire revenue process beyond just billing. You can optimize pricing, upselling opportunities, and revenue recognition from within the platform and follow customers' lifecycles to develop a deeper understanding of each customer.

7 Accelerate Your Business with Apttus Quote-to-Cash and Quote-to-Contract Editions

Now transforming the Quote-to-Cash process is simpler than ever with Apttus Quote-to-Cash and Quote-to-Contract Editions.

| **Enterprise Quote-to-Cash**	**Ultimate Quote-to-Cash**	**Enterprise Quote-to-Contract**	**Ultimate Quote-to-Contract**
Complete tools to manage enterprise Quote-to-Cash processes	Advanced tools to manage the most sophisticated Quote-to-Cash processes	Achieve full automation of sales processes to increase revenue results	Achieve total control of sales processes with advanced capabilities
For organizations seeking full solution configuration, pricing, quoting, contract creation, obligations management and revenue management capabilities.	For organizations with more sophisticated needs such as complex approval processes, mass renewals management, and transaction compliance.	For business seeking complete and accurate configuration, pricing, quoting, contract creation and obligations management capabilities.	For organizations with more sophisticated needs such as complex approval processes, mass renewals, mass contract amendments, and partner commerce.
LEARN MORE	LEARN MORE	LEARN MORE	LEARN MORE

What Are They Great At?

This quote-to-cash structure gives your sales team visibility into the entire lifecycle of a customer. They can access expiring contracts and upsell and cross-sell opportunities to build recurring revenue. Unlike Salesforce, this quote-to-cash platform works across a variety of different CRMs.

What Are They Missing?

Again, dunning isn't built in. This critical feature might not be as important in high-touch sales environments such as enterprise, but the lack of dunning basically rules this out for any subscription model based on automation.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Like Salesforce Quote-to-cash, Apttus requires integration with a merchant account. Unlike Salesforce, it doesn't provide a payment gateway so it will also need to be paired with a payment processor like Stripe or Braintree.

Analytics	Dunning	Revenue Recognition

Subscription Management (Recurring Billing)
Merchant Account
Payment Gateway
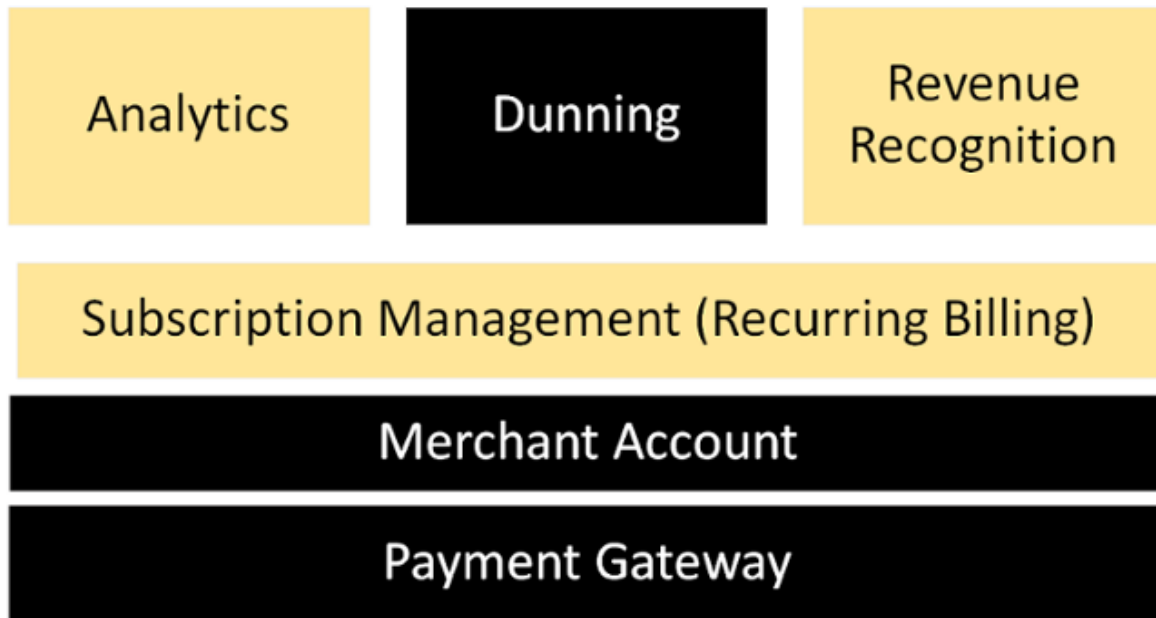
Company Size: Apttus is for advanced stage companies where you're producing individual quotes for customers and need to follow their journey through your product to target upselling opportunities at the end of the contract.

Customer Size: Large companies that want individual quotes for pricing and have individual needs.

Pricing Approach: If you are pricing individually and want to be able to easily track customers beyond the sales process, a quote-to-cash system that fits into your CRM gives you opportunities to gain expansion revenue beyond the initial sale.

Now we'll jump into subscription management services designed for enterprise SaaS companies.

Aria

Aria's strength is its flexibility. It can be used for all types of customers and companies. If you have a simple 3-tier pricing system, it can handle that. It can also handle complex, individual arrangements with different customers. It doesn't matter if your customers are small companies or other enterprises — Aria offers customized solutions for all possibilities.

Aria Crescendo: The Monetization Platform for Multi-dimensional Customer Choice
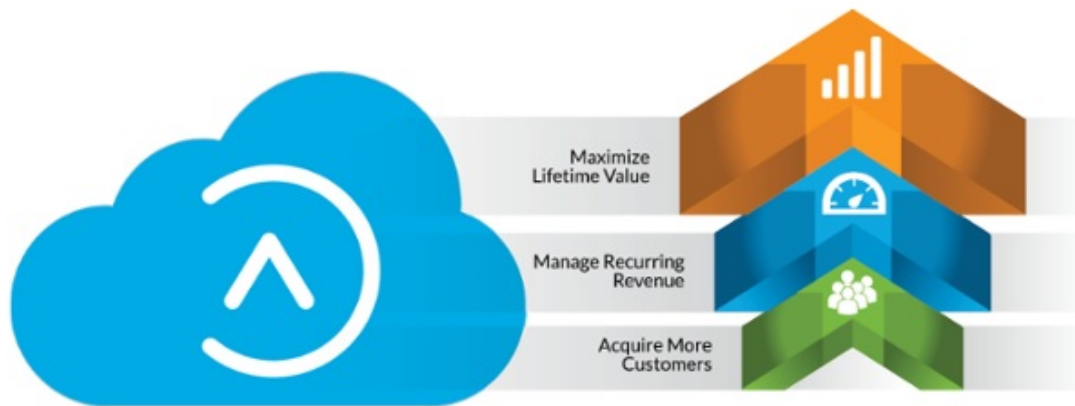
What Are They Great At?

Dunning. Aria is one of the few enterprise billing systems that includes dunning in their platform. This means that the system can be used to support subscription companies with tens of thousands of customers.

What Are They Missing?

Though Aria's dunning options work well for smaller companies, the lack of a free trial isn't. While this is common with heavy duty systems, this makes it more difficult for Aria to appeal to companies looking to try out several billing options before committing.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Aria provides the tools needed within a subscription management platform such as analytics and revenue recognition.
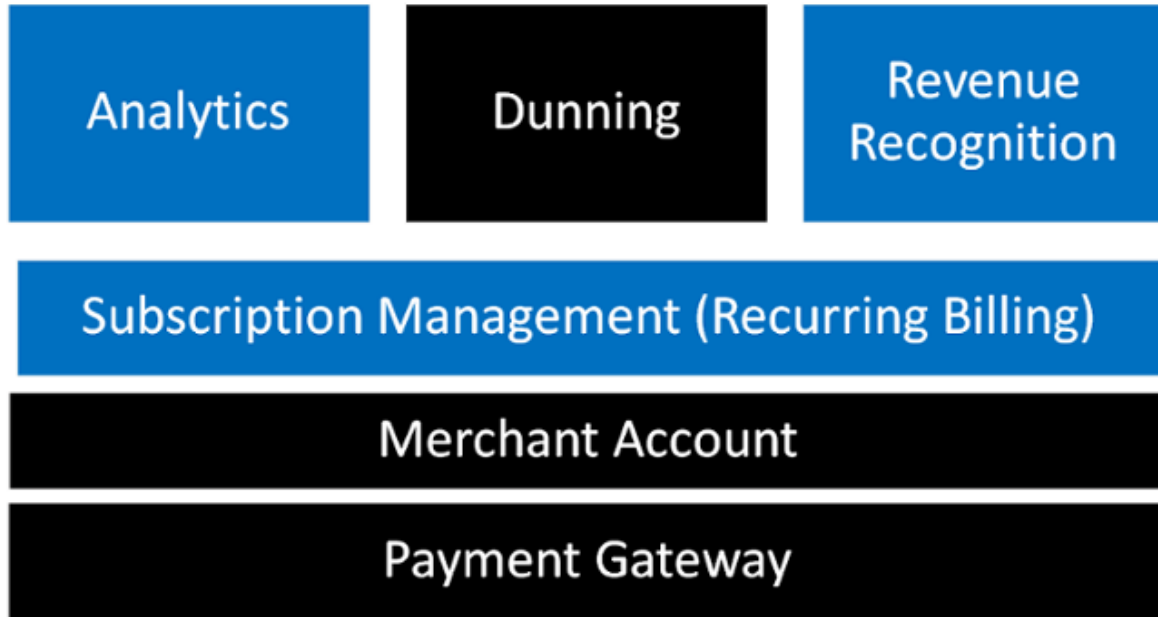

Company Size: Mid and large enterprises.

Customer Size: As they offer significant customization, Aria can handle a variety of customer types and sizes.

Pricing Approach: Flexibility means that Aria will work with most pricing approaches.

Vindicia

Vindicia looks to get their customers up and running in the shortest time possible. The system supports all subscription lengths, trial periods, freemium models, and usage metering. Vindicia Cashbox allows to test and refine your pricing over time you've calibrated it for your target customers.
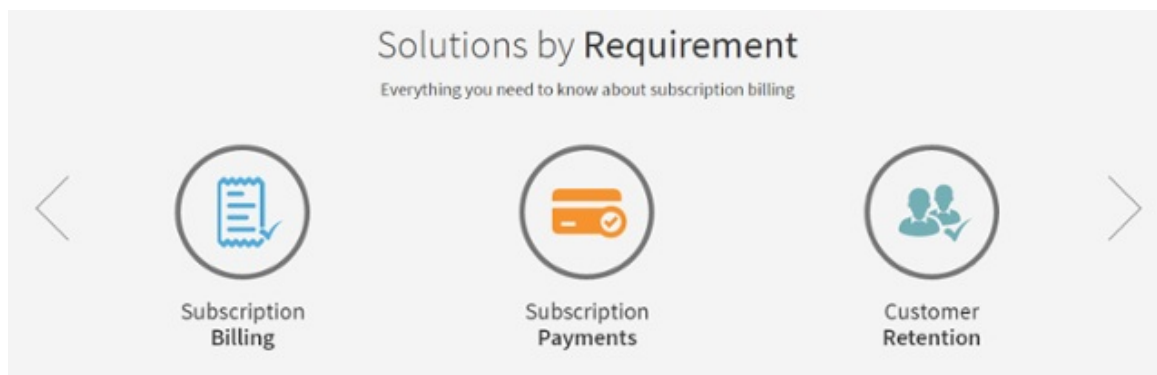

What Are They Great At?

Vindicia Cashbox's flexibility is its main selling point. It can be configured to meet different needs of different enterprise models. You can customize how customers are billed, what's included in different packages, and how usage is calculated for each billing type. You can also launch campaigns and test pricing with your customer using Vindicia's marketing and sales components.

What Are They Missing?

Though Vindicia Cashbox has a large number of features, it lacks dunning and APIs that would allow you to build easily on top of the platform. Integration is vital for SaaS success, so making it more difficult for users and other developers to integrate with your platform means Cashbox might not be the best option for companies that want to do their own customization.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

No dunning or revenue recognition options means that Vindicia lacks some features for strong subscription management. However, it can work as a payment gateway, meaning that you only need to tie it to a merchant account before you can use.
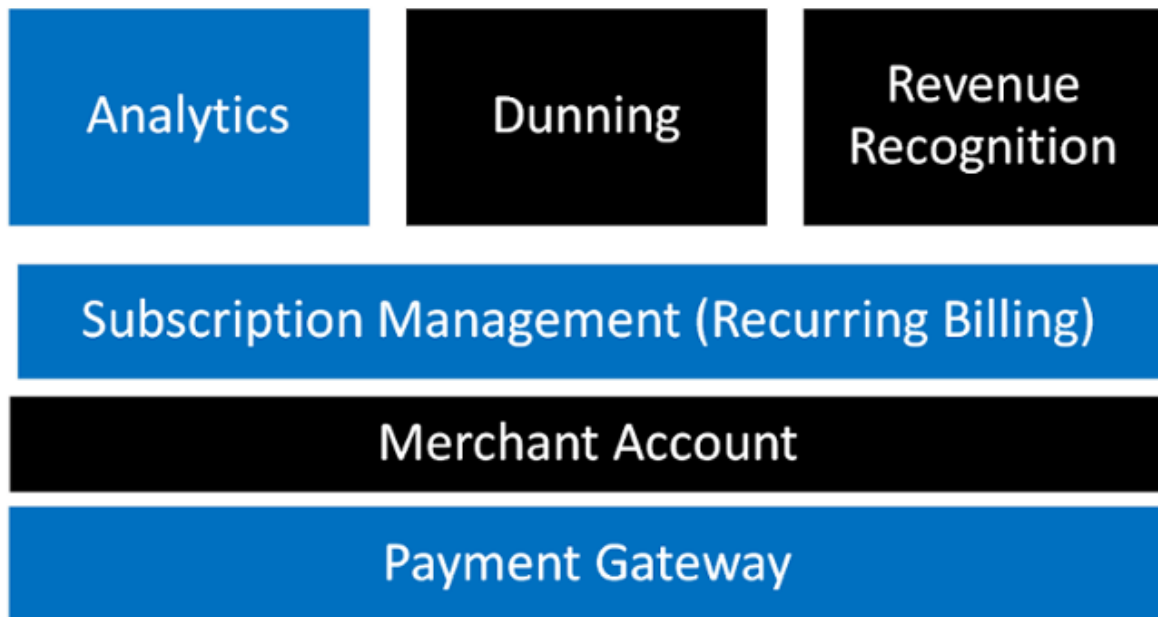

Company Size: Well beyond the growth phase.

Customer Size: The flexibility of Vindicia means you can serve most levels of customers.

Pricing Approach: Flexible pricing means you'll need a stack that is equally customizable.

Zuora

Zuora is a cloud-based subscription management system that helps track the entire customer lifecycle. They provide many categories of add-ons that allow you to easily mix-and-match features to design your unique subscription plan. You can start with a freemium plan and then have the option to add-on features as you find them necessary.
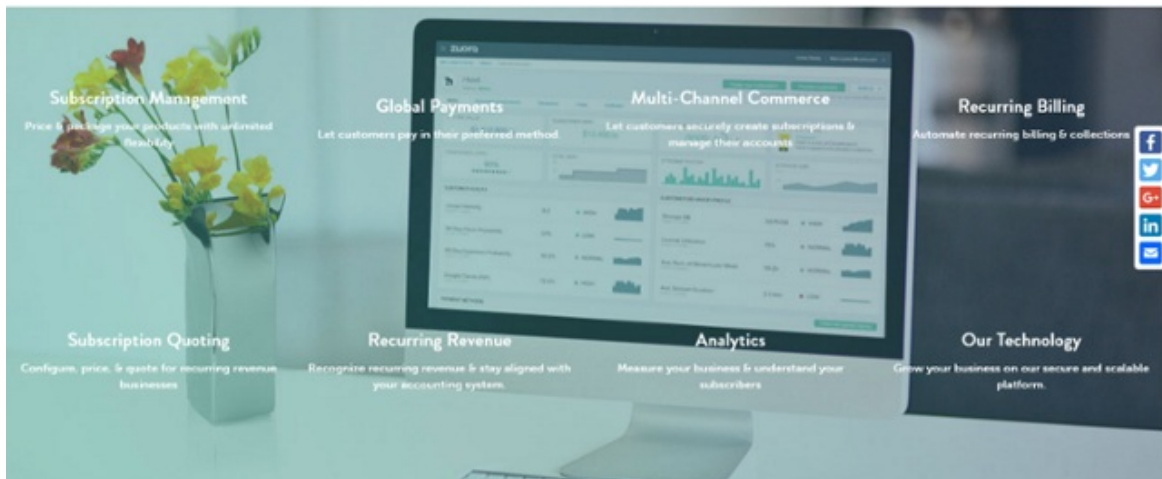
What Are They Great At?

Zuora focuses on providing "end-to-end" management of the entire customer lifecycle. Here's what they allow you to do:

- You manage the full payment lifecycle
- Your customers can manage their entire subscription lifestyle
- You have access to subscription quoting integration that connects with your billing, payment and revenue
- You can get insights on your company and your customers
- Similar customers are grouped to help to segment data
- Trigger interactions with customers based on insights
- Get a complete history of every subscriber to see how best to help them

The large range of features means you can easily add or remove options to create new plans and easily generate one-time unique invoices if necessary.

What Are They Missing?

Some users report that Zuora has a bit of a learning curve, especially around the reporting interface.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

Zuora is classified as a subscription management system because it still needs to be integrated with a payment gateway and merchant account. They support a large number of payment gateways to help round out your billing system. Zuora is our billing system of choice if you're above $20M ARR.
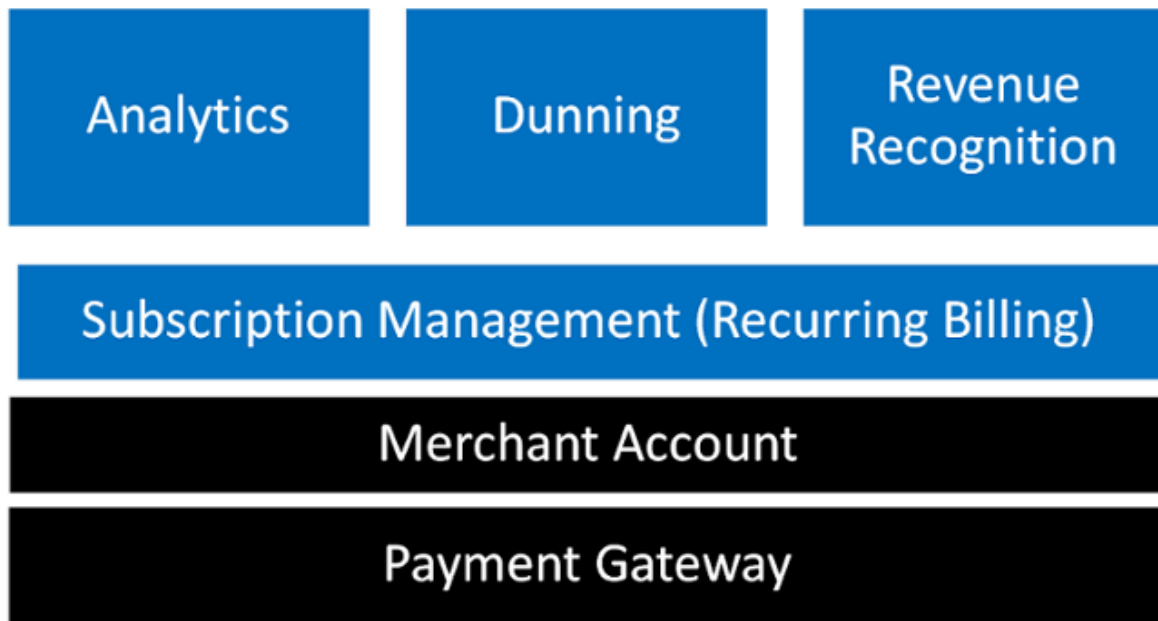

Company Size: Zuora is best for large, established companies. Their flexibility and customizability make it possible to address any scenario.

Customer Size: Your customers should be larger companies that will likely request more flexible services, but are also willing to pay higher prices for these custom plans.

Pricing Approach: Zuora's many add-on features allow you to offer customizable pricing plans that can easily be changed and updated when necessary.

Cleverbridge

Cleverbridge is a turnkey solution for billing that aims to put customer success and your monetization strategy at the heart of the billing system. But once you have the platform up and running, you can still customize each aspect of your pricing to fit in with your business goals.
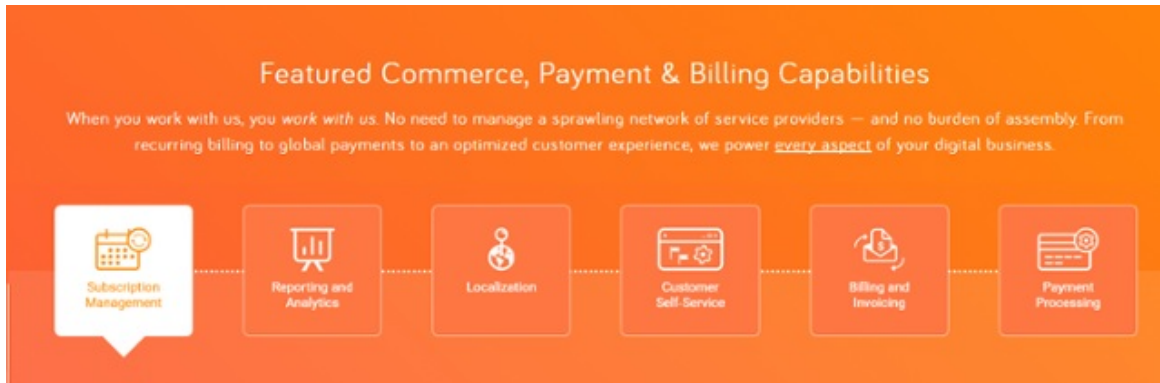

What Are They Great At?

Cleverbridge lets you plan your pricing strategy from start to finish within a single platform. In fact, the product is organized around your pricing strategy. This letsyou build out the tactical and technical aspects of your monetization—subscription management, analytics, processing—from there.

What Are They Missing?

Enterprise companies need to adhere to GAAP accounting practices, so the lack of revenue recognition within the system might be a turn off for some larger companies.

How Does This Fit In Your Billing System?

The lack of revenue recognition here means that you might need another tool for that job if you are truly moving upmarket. No merchant account or payment gateway also means you will need further products for those roles.
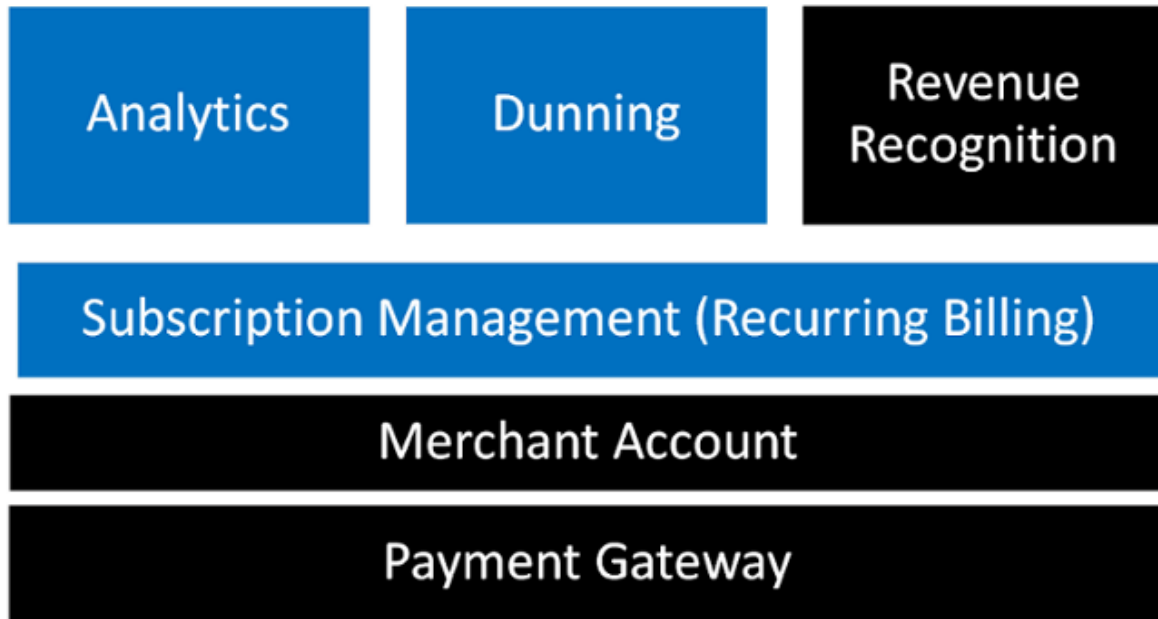
Company Size: Far enough along that you have a good pricing strategy to build your Cleverbridge pricing around. But not quite at the top level as revenue recognition isn't included.

Company Size: Mid-level companies that are still expanding.

Pricing Approach: This is an ideal platform for companies that have a pricing strategy already in place and are looking for the best way to implement it quickly.

Choose What Works for You

The most important thing when choosing a billing system is to find one tailored to your needs. When making your choice, keep in mind:

- The size and MRR of your company
- The size and revenue of your customers
- How customizable you want your billing system to be
- What integrations you need
- Who is managing your billing system

Rather than coding your own system or relying on a patchwork approach, selecting a strong billing stack that can scale with you ensures that you're set up for success and won't need to shift systems down the road.