

CASE STUDY

Mission-Critical Subscription Billing for a Dynamic, Data-Driven Organization



With a dynamic and growing software-as-a-service business boasting 1,500 customers worldwide, SQAD knew it was time for a streamlined solution to manage the lifeblood of their business: their subscription and recurring contract billings. They partnered with Binary Stream to make it happen.

For nearly 40 years SQAD has been indispensable to the advertising industry, providing over a trillion dollars in transaction-based cost data that empowers leading brands and agencies to reach their target audience when—and where—it matters most.

SQAD meets the ever-increasing demands of the industry with innovative software applications including MediaCosts, MediaTools, and MediaLogic. With these applications, advertisers can easily access comprehensive media cost data across TV, radio, and digital media; synthesize trusted audience behavior analytics; and collaborate on effective media planning strategies.

As a fast-growing software-as-a-service business, SQAD knew it was time to ensure that their complex subscription billing services and processes were as seamless, efficient, and transparent as possible. A partnership with Binary Stream was the answer.

SQAD data, planning, and research services are indispensable to major brands like Pfizer, SCJohnson, Kraft-Heinz, and Kimberley Clark and agencies like Omnicom-MediaGroup and Horizon Media.

Situation

Efficiency and Time Savings

With a deep roster of innovative advertising and media offerings to service, SQAD could no longer efficiently manage their subscription billing system with a time-consuming and tedious manual spreadsheet process.



“We needed one all-encompassing subscription billing solution that could easily tie in to our Microsoft Dynamics GP accounting system.”

SQAD prides itself on being fun, people-focused, and solution-driven. But there was something taking a huge toll on those crucial values—the unwieldy manual spreadsheets used to track contracts, billing, and revenue for thousands of customers. “Even a simple change to a term in a customer contract could result in a tedious and time-consuming updating process,” said Joseph Racine, VP Financial Operations at SQAD.

“We needed one all-encompassing system,” said Racine. “It began with a desire to switch from a cash to accrual accounting system—to take advantage of more commonly-followed accounting rules

and standards like GAAP.” In 2014, with an acquisition that added the MediaPlanning solution to its best-in-class services, SQAD standardized their accounting processes on Microsoft Dynamics GP.

But even with a sophisticated accounting system in place, working with outdated subscription methodology and manual processes kept SQAD vulnerable to simple data entry errors and created days-long waits to recognize revenue.

Enter Subscription Billing from Binary Stream—a suite of comprehensive solutions that extend the capabilities of Dynamics GP—the ideal answer to the challenges SQAD faced. Given that Subscrip-

tion Billing comes embedded within the Dynamics GP interface and is developed using the same native programming language as Dynamics, it was a straightforward decision for SQAD.

The Subscription Billing suite of solutions delivered a smooth transition from SQAD’s old, cumbersome, manual system to an automatic, scalable billing system that is fully integrated with Dynamics GP.

“I was impressed with the level of support from Binary Stream to ensure everything was up and functioning properly for SQAD.” Racine remarked.

Adaptable to Any Revenue Model and Recurring Billing Scenario

Binary Stream easily accommodates SQAD's variety of customer contracts and complex pricing cycles. Billing charges based on subscriptions that vary from quarterly, semiannually, annually, or other customized time periods are easily serviced and invoiced. And usage-based fees for data consumption and price changes based on volume can also be automatically managed within the Subscription Billing suite. "It's all so seamless," said Racine.

Increased Efficiency in Revenue Recognition

In addition to being able to stay up to date and maintain accuracy across thousands of invoices, SQAD saw vastly increased efficiency in revenue recognition using the Binary Stream Advanced Revenue and Expense Deferrals solution. "We saw substantive revenue recognition improvement—going from days to just a matter of hours," Racine said. Moving to more real-time revenue insights means that SQAD is now able to accurately forecast revenue and effectively meet audit and compliance requirements, such as ASC 606, in a timely manner.

The Lifeblood of a Software-as-a Service Business

"We are a software-as-a-service business, so all we do is sell licenses or user seats. We need to bill accurately per our contracts: that's our revenue. It's the lifeblood of our business." Racine said. With a powerful solution saving them time, eliminating costly errors, and simplifying complex business processes, SQAD has never been more successful. "The Subscription Billing suite from Binary Stream is mission-critical to the running our business," sums up Racine. No longer bogged down by laborious spreadsheets and manual processes, SQAD can focus on what they do best—helping advertisers research and plan their media strategies.

After updating and streamlining their billing systems and processes with Subscription Billing from Binary Stream, SQAD has never been more successful.

