



Missouri
Quality
Award

1999 Award Winner

SPRINT Long Distance Billing Services



For 100 years, Sprint has been a growing force in the global telecommunications industry. A vision to be "the standard by which others are measured" has guided the company through years of growth and innovation. Located in Kansas City, Sprint serves more than 16 million business and residential customers. The company generated \$15 billion in revenue in 1998, of which \$8 billion resulted from long distance operations.

The Long Distance Billing Services group is committed to excellence in rendering monthly invoices for more than 7 million retail and wholesale customers within the Division. In addition, the organization plays a key role in product development processes, assuring that new products are available to be invoiced.

Billing Services is an organization of more than 750 employees, operating four billing centers across the country. This highly experienced, diverse group of professionals is led by Donna Morrison, Vice President, and a team of six directors.

Billing is managed as an end-to-end process, with Billing Services overseeing operations of other Sprint organizations and many external suppliers who contribute to billing success. The organization's mission includes a balanced commitment to customer satisfaction, market focus and financial responsibilities.

As a start-up in 1986, Sprint's Long Distance Division experienced customer acquisition and call volume growth far exceeding its billing system and process capability. By 1988, billing processes were inadequate. Although some stability had been achieved by 1990, the Billing Leadership team embarked on a search for methods to help produce substantial and sustainable improvements in billing.

The Billing Services executive team's willingness to learn, experiment and innovate is at the core of the billing change process that began in 1990 and continues today.

Over the past ten years, the Billing Leadership team has instituted a transformation of billing capability from among the worst rated in the industry to one recognized worldwide for best practices. Key components of the leadership system that have produced these dramatic results include:



 **Sprint.**

The point of contact™

- Clarity of mission and vision with linkage of business plans and improvement initiatives.
- Systematic work methods and measurements tied to customer- and shareholder-focused outcomes.
- Commitment to employee well-being and learning.

Distributed billing groups, acquired or formed with start-up ventures, have been brought together under Billing Services. These groups have remained geographically dispersed to retain subject matter experts and access to diverse employment pools. As each group moved into Billing Services, operations were evaluated, standardized and integrated as part of a long-term improvement program.

A strong, common culture that emphasizes process management, focus on customer and shareholder based results, and building a learning, team-oriented organization are reinforced with strong corporate values.



These are:

- Customer first
- Integrity in all we do
- Excellence through quality
- Community commitment
- Respect for each other
- Growth through change
- Productive work environment
- Representative work force
- Shareholder value

The leadership system is deployed using a concept of "leadership at every desk" which facilitates deep delegation of decision making using a fact-based decision model.

Price competition in the long distance business continues to drive the need for both marketing innovation and productivity gains to maintain market share and margins. Customers have many choices, and the speed of change in pricing and product continue to accelerate. Innovative, efficient, and effective billing processes today must be improved to meet the changing demands of the future.

These challenges require that the key measures of billing success - invoice quality, cost productivity, ability to grow revenue, ability to protect against revenue loss, and building a strong team - continue to improve as the industry experiences record-breaking rates of change.

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