eBill — Handbook for Network Partners

Introduction and Onboarding

Change History

Version	Date	Amendments
3.3	05.04.2024	Adjustment to Chapter 2.3 due to the introduction of the specific QR code for subscription to an invoice issuer and enhancements to Look-up
3.2	05.04.2023	Adjustments to Chapters 2.3 and 4 due to the deactivation of the externally hosted subscription forms
		Adjustments to Chapter 3.2: "Test and acceptance procedure", in particular in Figure 6
3.1	20.10.2022	Revisions to Chapter 2.4 "Submitting eBill business cases"
3.0	01.10.2021	Addition to "eBill donation requests" and "eBill for Business Software"
2.3	06.04.2021	Adjustment to Chapter 2.2: "Anomaly detection and invoice issuer suspension"
2.2	10.12.2020	Addition to Chapter 2.3: "Differences between the official name and the display name of the invoice issuer" Addition to Chapter 2.3: "Deactivation of externally hosted subscription forms"
2.0	18.06.2020	Addition to Chapter 2.3: "Subscription to the invoice issuer" Addition of a new Chapter 2.2: "Anomaly detection and invoice issuer suspension"
1.6	28.01.2020	Addition to section 2.3: "Handling of Domicile Address". When registering business customers, a hyphen (-) should be used if the street and house number are not available.
1.5	10.01.2020	Revision to Version 1.5 (added requirements for subscription forms and information about submission of invoices with no amount in connection with QR-bill)
1.4	30.08.2019	Revision to Version 1.4 (adjustments due to the eBill for Business feature)
1.3	31.05.2019	Revision to Version 1.3 (some content transferred to Rulebook and Operating Agreement)
1.2	08.02.2019	Revision to Version 1.2
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0.3	20.08.2018	Revision to beta version 2
0.2	30.04.2018	Revision to beta version
0.1	31.01.2018	First draft

Information

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If you find any errors in this document or have any suggestions for improvement, we would be grateful if you could send us your feedback by e-mail to support.billing-payment@six-group.com.

Target group

The Handbook for Network Partners is aimed at providers of services relating to electronic invoicing that wish to make the eBill service available to their customers (invoice issuers) via the central eBill infrastructure.

Purpose

The Handbook for Network Partners provides an overview of the eBill service and the between ecosystem participants: network partners, financial institutions, invoice issuers and the eBill infrastructure. It also outlines the organizational onboarding process for network partners.

Limits

The Handbook for Network Partners describes only the functions and processes that concern the eBill service. The EDI eBill and Workflow eBill services are not included in the infrastructure services. Other handbooks should be consulted for documentation regarding the direct debit service.

The Handbook for Network Partners provides an introduction to the topic and refers to other, more detailed documents.

Contents

1. Introduction

The eBill service is the digital solution for various business cases and enables electronic invoicing, invoice receipt and invoice payment, as well as the electronic receipt of donation requests. More than a million users are already receiving their digital eBill business case transactions via online banking and paying their invoices conveniently, reliably and on time in the same way. The eBill service encompasses all forms of electronic invoices, reminders, credits, notifications and, in the near future, also donation requests. These communications and transactions are known collectively as "eBill business cases", and are sent to the eBill infrastructure by network partners and received online by invoice recipients. With eBill, network partners can choose the most efficient way of invoicing, enabling them to expand their range of digital services for their customers.

The benefits include the following:

– eBill is the secure alternative to invoicing via e-mail

– Participating in eBill is easy

– Searching for and finding customers wishing to switch to eBill is easy

– Integrating eBill in ERP and e-commerce solutions is simple thanks to standardized interfaces and processes

Network partners are part of the eBill network and thus can enable their invoice issuers to send electronic eBill business cases to online banking users. Network partners communicate with the eBill infrastructure via a simple interface. This interface allows communication with the eBill infrastructure on part of the network partner, which makes it a central point of entry for submitting digital invoices to the banking channel.

eBill for Business/eBill for Business Software

eBill for Business/eBill for Business Software are extensions of eBill dedicated to business customers. eBill for Business/eBill for Business Software should allow companies and corporate-like eBill users to authorize other corporate users to view, approve and reject eBill business cases on behalf of the company and/or to process them further with their own business software. In order to identify business invoice recipients when subscribing or cancelling a subscription, performing a look-up and submitting business cases, the network partner should generally use the business identification number (UID).

1.1 Documentation

File	Description
Framework Network Partner Agreement	Agreement between SIX and the network partner on the connection to the eBill infrastructure for the invoice issuer.
Rulebook	Annex to the Agreement. It sets out the obligations, rights and responsibilities of the network partner with the aim of providing a consistent eBill service.
Operating Agreement	Annex to the Agreement. It sets out the scope of the service provided by SIX to the network partner.
Price List	Annex to the Agreement. It sets out the invoicing of the eBill service to the network partners.
Handbook for Network Partners — Introduction and Onboarding	This document. It describes the eBill functions and onboarding processes. Target group: product and IT management teams of network partners.
networkpartner-api-doc.pdf	Detailed technical NWP API documentation. Target group: software architects and developers.
networkpartner-api-swagger.yaml	OpenAPI specification for the NWP API.[1] Target group: software developers and code generators.
Network Partner Onboarding — Technical Instructions	Detailed technical documentation for the onboarding of network partners. Target group: software architects and developers.
Testing Manual for Network Partners	Detailed documentation for testing and acceptance.

Table 1: List of documents for network partners

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[1]   Note: the best way to view the OpenAPI specification is using an editor such as https://editor.swagger.io.

1.2   Roles involved in the invoicing process

The following overview illustrates the roles involved in the invoicing process. For context, it also shows roles and other persons that are outside the scope of eBill.
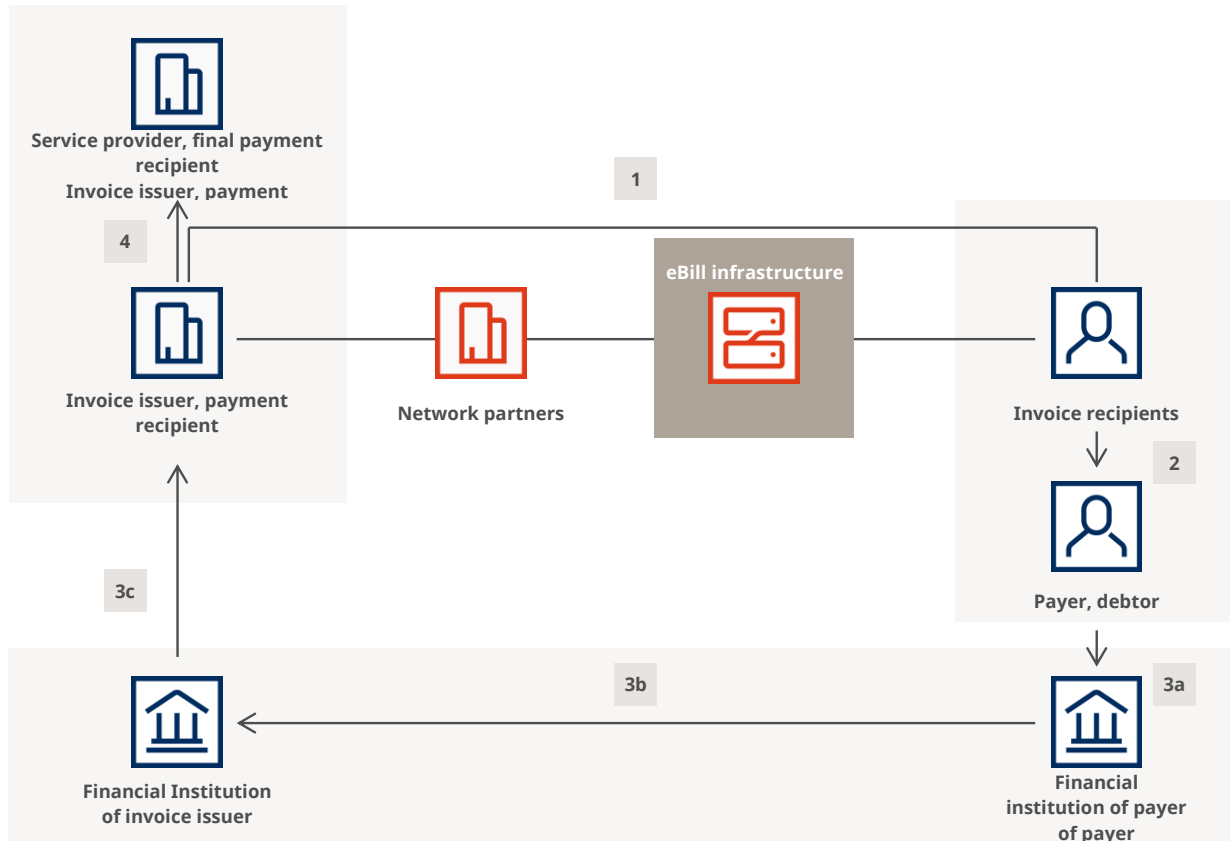

Figure 1: Parties involved

It is possible that the parties listed within an area of the same color are identical. For example, the invoice recipient and the person who ultimately pays the invoice are often one and the same.

1.   The invoice issuer sends eBill business cases to its recipients via invoice issuer's network partners.

2.   The invoice recipient approves the eBill business case and the payment information is sent to the invoice recipient's financial institution. In general, the invoice recipient and the payer are the same person.

3.   Outside the scope of eBill, the payer submits payment via their financial institution and the invoice issuer's financial institution transfers the corresponding amount to the invoice issuer's account.

   a)   A financial institution charges the account of the payer.

   b)   The financial institution of the payer carries out the transfer to the financial institution of the invoice issuer.

   c)   The financial institution of the invoice issuer sends a credit note to the invoice issuer.

4.   Outside the scope of eBill, the invoice issuer informs the ultimate creditor that payment has been received.

1.3 Participants in the eBill ecosystem

The chain of eBill services comprises five types of system participants. These are shown in Figure 2.

The invoice issuer (creditor) and invoice recipient (debtor) are usually parties to the applicable Agreement and require electronic invoice exchange or participation in electronic payment transactions. A specialized implementation is provided for donation requests.

To this end, the network partner offers the eBill service to registered invoice issuers, enabling them to submit eBill business cases to invoice recipients.

The invoice recipients receive access to the submitted eBill business cases via the online banking application of their financial institution.

The infrastructure acts as a central hub, offering its partners (network partners and financial institutions) basic services that enable the provision of end-client services.
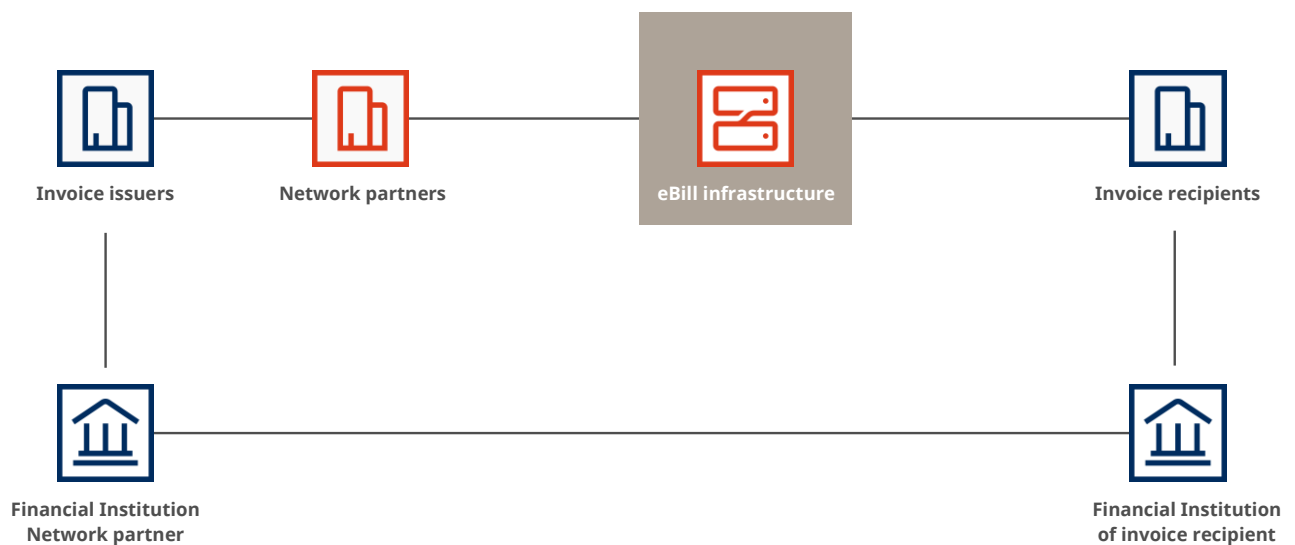

Figure 2: System participants

1.3.1 SIX/eBill infrastructure

SIX is the operator of the eBill infrastructure. SIX develops, maintains and monitors the infrastructure. The eBill infrastructure is the system platform for operating the eBill service. Its primary purpose is to manage system participants and process business cases, and it encompasses all components required to operate the service, such as hardware, software and operating systems.

1.3.2 Network partners

Network partners are parties to the agreement with SIX, technically and contractually linked to the eBill infrastructure and, at the same time, parties to the agreement with the invoice issuer. They convert the business cases of invoice issuers into the standard eBill format and send them to the eBill infrastructure on behalf of the invoice issuer.

1.3.3 Invoice recipients

Invoice recipients are natural or legal persons that receive, check and approve for payment all business cases that occur in the context of their customer relationships with financial service providers via the SIX eBill Portal or the online banking systems of their financial institutions, or the relevant systems of other financial service providers.

1.3.4 Invoice issuers

Invoice issuers are legal persons that send business cases to network partners in any form (e.g. paper, electronic) for submission to the eBill infrastructure.

1.3.5 Financial service providers of invoice recipients

Financial service providers of invoice recipients grant invoice recipients access to the eBill infrastructure so that they can view and edit business cases. Financial service providers present invoices, issue approvals or rejections and create payment orders on behalf of their customers and invoice recipients, or initiate the settlement of invoices or reminders.

1.3.6 Financial service providers of invoice issuers

Financial institutions of invoice issuers process and settle the payment orders initiated by the invoice recipients' financial institutions and present invoice issuers with credits or debits as applicable. Financial service providers of invoice issuers have no direct involvement with the eBill infrastructure.

1.4 Interfaces with the eBill infrastructure

Participants in the eBill service can access the eBill infrastructure via a range of interfaces. The most significant ones are shown in Figure 3 and explained in brief below.
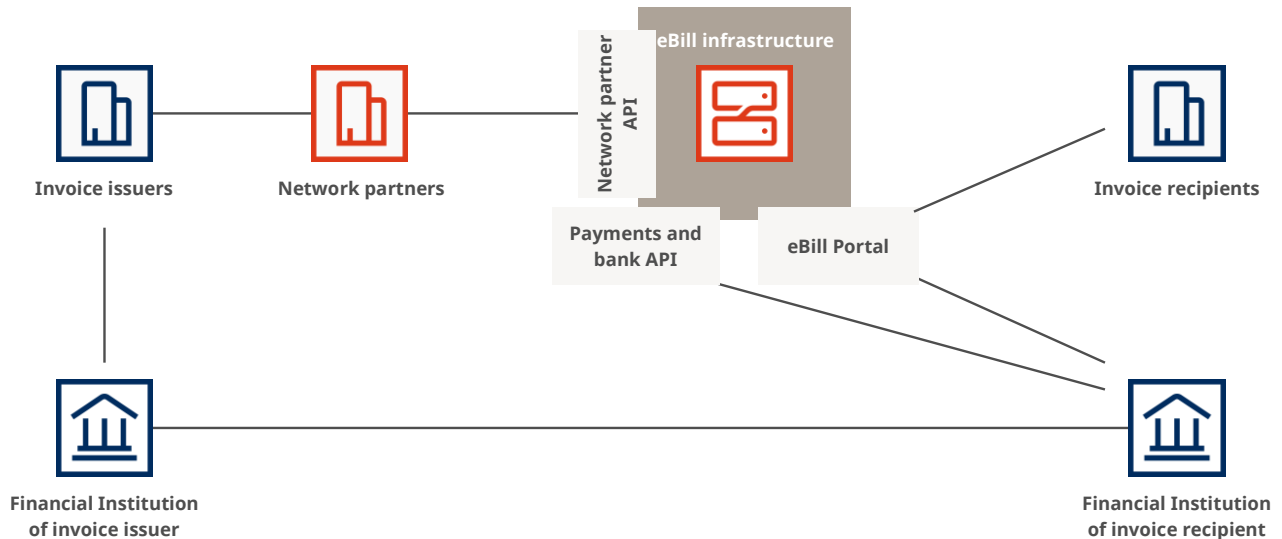

Figure 3: Interfaces with the eBill infrastructure

1.4.1 Network partner API

Network partners are connected to their customers via the network partner API (NWP API). This interface is used to exchange all messages with the participants (e.g., business cases, status reports, registrations).

1.4.2 Bank API

The bank API is a web service interface for the invoice recipient's financial institutions enabling them to link their online banking systems to the eBill infrastructure.

1.4.3 Payment transaction interface

The financial institution of the invoice recipient receives payment information from the eBill infrastructure via the payment transaction interface based on the approved business cases.

1.4.4 eBill Portal

The eBill Portal is a central web application for invoice recipients that can be used by all participating financial institutions. It enables invoice recipients to use eBill functions over the Internet. The eBill Portal is always accessed from the online banking system of the invoice recipient's financial institution by using the eBill function.

1.4.5 Note on customer portals (not shown)

A network partner can use a customer portal for invoice issuers to provide functions enabling the invoice issuer to manage its own master data and execute actions in connection with business cases. Whether a customer portal is offered, and the extent of its functionality, depends on the services offered by the network partner.

The eBill infrastructure itself does not offer a customer portal for invoice issuers.

2. Invoicing processes with eBill

This chapter describes the three most important processes involved in invoicing with eBill for the network partner. These are: registering an invoice issuer with the network partner and in the eBill infrastructure, logging an invoice recipient into the invoice issuer's system, and submitting business cases.

2.1 Registering an invoice issuer with the network partner
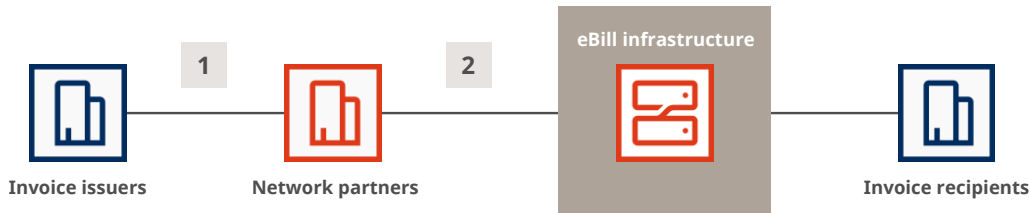

Figure 4: Invoicing process

Depending on what the network partner offers and the situation regarding its agreement with the invoice issuer, the process of registering an invoice issuer may take the following form:

1. The invoice issuer learns about the offer and registers with the network partner for a service that includes eBill.

2. Once the invoice issuer has passed an identity check by the network partner, that network partner forwards the invoice issuer's data to the eBill infrastructure and receives a new invoice issuer identification.

   a) Once the invoice issuer has been assigned its identification, it can start using the eBill service right away.

   b) The smooth interaction between the processes means that the activation of an invoice issuer can be completed in a matter of minutes, and the invoice issuer can then send electronic eBill business cases (in particular invoices) to its customers.

If the invoice issuer has already registered with a different network partner, it will need to specify which network partner is the primary network partner authorized to manage its master data in the eBill infrastructure. Detailed specifications can be found in the Rulebook for Network Partners.

2.2   Anomaly detection and invoice issuer suspension

To ensure that eBill business cases recipients are not affected by unjustified eBill business cases, SIX has introduced an anomaly detection process.

Network partners are required to define a monthly limit of eBill business cases that each new invoice issuer can submit per month.

The limit should be based on the invoice issuer's "ordinary business". To assess the "ordinary business", network partners can use criteria such as number of employees or turnover/the number of (paper) invoices, etc. within the previous year.

The network partner can define the limit at their own discretion. The default setting of SIX is the limit of 500 transactions per month. Based on this limit and on the business cases submitted, SIX measures the utilization of the limit. Only primary network partners can request information on the limit and on its current utilization per invoice issuer.

When business cases are submitted, the network partner receives a notification whenever the limit has been exceeded. The submission is rejected.

If the invoice should still be submitted, the network partner can override the threshold validation per submission. The network partner must verify in advance whether it is reasonable to exceed the limit. In case of doubt, the submission must be deferred and the invoice issuer must be contacted.

If eBill business cases are not submitted based on the clarification from a relevant network partner, SIX must be informed accordingly. Subsequently, SIX contacts the network partner and suspends the invoice issuer if needed.

If the limit is deemed to be insufficient in the long term, it can be adjusted by the primary network partner.

To increase the limit, a non-primary network partner must contact the invoice issuer, who then initiates the limit increase with the primary network partner.

2.3 Subscription and cancelling subscriptions of invoice recipients

In order for electronic eBill business cases to be sent from an invoice issuer to an invoice recipient, a connection must be established between the two parties. This connection is referred to as a "delivery permit" and the process is referred to as "subscription". There are various methods for completing the subscription process:

1. Subscription initiated by invoice recipient
   – Subscription via eBill Portal
   – Direct subscription through online banking
   – Subscription to an invoice issuer
   – Subscription via a specific QR code

2. Subscription initiated by invoice issuer
   – Look-up

The aim of the selected architecture for invoice recipient-initiated subscriptions is to not change existing invoice-issuer interfaces and to provide a process for new network partners that can be implemented with minimal effort.

When creating the specific QR code, the invoice issuer has the option to use specific data of the invoice recipient (for details, see "Technical Documentation"). This data may only be used if it has been legitimately collected by the invoice issuer and if the collection of data also permits such use of the data. It is recommended that the data categories used to create the QR code be disclosed to the invoice recipient if an accompanying letter, etc. is sent.

It is not permitted to use particularly sensitive personal data to create the QR code.

The aim of invoice issuer-initiated subscriptions is to significantly increase eBill conversion rates, as subscriptions can also be initiated by the invoice issuer.

The invoice recipient is uniquely identified by an e-mail address in the case of eBill for private individuals and by an enterprise identification number (UID) in the case of eBill for Business/eBill for Business Software. To make full use of the invoice recipient search functionality, it is recommended that the invoice issuer collects the e-mail addresses or UIDs of its customers in advance and declares at the time of data collection that this information may also be used for eBill. There is an option to enter the date of birth or postcode to narrow down the results. In any case, even with the look-up function, the invoice issuer can only use the email address or UID of its own customers for the search if the data has been legitimately collected by the invoice issuer and if the collection of data also permits such use of the data.

Details on subscription processes can be found in the technical interface description.

Difference between the legal name and the display name of the invoice issuer

The legal name is used in the invoice overview in the eBill Portal for reasons of consistency, as the invoice issuer is obliged to use its legal name in the attached PDF invoice.

On the contrary, the legal name is not used in the overview of the available invoice issuers, as the legal name is not always known to the invoice recipient and the search for an invoice issuer is rather performed with a known display name.

Requirements for invoice recipient subscription

It is recommended that the network partners configure their invoice issuers so that they can run the standard subscription via eBill (i.e., without a subscription form). With a standard eBill subscription, the following details of the invoice recipient are collected:

- Name:
  – Private customers: First name & last name
  – Corporate customers: Company name

- Participant type (Private or Corporate)

- Address

In special cases, financial institutions do not have street names for the domicile address of business customers (e.g., associations). In such cases, a hyphen (-) may be used to represent the missing information.

- Identification:
  - Private customers: E-Mail address
  - Corporate customers: eBill User Business UID (if available)

- Invoice Recipient Mailbox (PID)

- Correspondence language

If the invoice issuer needs additional customer information for the processing of the invoice-recipient subscriptions, the network partners can define up to 3 customizable additional fields for such invoice issuers. The invoice recipient must fill in those additional fields when completing their subscription. To ensure user-friendliness at all times, network partners are encouraged not to use any additional fields where possible, and to use more than one additional field only in very exceptional cases. In addition, it is possible to display an invoice issuer-specific information text for the invoice recipient on the subscription form. Only plain text may be used for these user-specific additional and information fields. Links are not supported. Information text and additional fields can only be used for the subscription via the eBill Portal, not for direct subscription via online banking.

Details on the form approach can be found in the technical documentation.

Special features when subscribing to non-profit organizations

In general, the subscription of an invoice recipient enables an invoice issuer to submit all types of eBill business cases. However, donation requests can only be submitted by eBill invoice issuers that have been verified and labeled by the network partners as non-profit organizations (see Rulebook for Network Partners). The subscription methods are generally the same as for eBill invoices. There are differences in the following areas:

- Look-Up: NPOs can find potential donors via look-up and send them requests for donations. However, the look-up for donation requests must be retrieved separately from the existing look-up via opt-in. If an invoice recipient only wishes to receive donation requests from the selected organizations they have explicitly subscribed to, then the look-up for donation requests can be deactivated. Donation requests via look-up can only be submitted by NPOs that already have a relationship with an invoice recipient (see Rulebook for Network Partners).

- Subscription in the Portal or on the NPO website: it is similar to the subscription for eBill invoices and allows the NPO to record the recipient, frequency, purpose and amount of the donation on their own website and then to submit a one-off or regular donation requests in eBill format.

- Subscription via search: Invoice recipients can retrieve a list of NPOs in the eBill Portal or via e-/m-banking and search for the desired organization. It is possible to subscribe to an NPO using the search function. Similar to subscribing to an invoice issuer, the NPO receives information about the subscription and can now send a donation request. If required, there is the possibility of entering the information about the amount, the purpose or the frequency of the donation from the invoice recipient when completing the subscription. To do this, the relevant customizable additional fields, including the dropdown, must be set up for subscription.

- Direct subscription: The direct subscription is similar to that for eBill invoices. NPOs can use the reference number in the payment to determine the type of donation and send future donation requests via eBill.

2.4 Submitting eBill business cases

A standard format for electronic eBill business cases has been defined for the submission of business cases by a network partner to the eBill infrastructure. The eBill infrastructure will only process this format and will not convert from other formats. Transformations from other reporting formats to eBill format may be offered as services by the network partner.

The definition of this format involves consistently ensuring that only the attributes necessary for processing in the eBill infrastructure and the banking channel are requested.

QR-bills can easily be converted to eBill invoices. Please note that QR-bills with the amount "0.00" that are not intended for payment can only be transmitted to the eBill infrastructure as notifications. With the introduction of the QR-bill, invoices without an amount can also be received by the eBill infrastructure. SIX recommends that network partners offer invoice issuers the option of submitting their QR-bills in such a way that the network partner performs the conversion to the standard format and submits the invoices to the eBill infrastructure.

The following special features apply to donation requests:

- An NPO can optionally provide a list of donation purposes (e.g. environment, children, project). The invoice recipient can choose a purpose from this list when making their donation approval. The selected purpose is then transmitted to the network partner. From 1 to 20 such purposes can be specified by the invoice issuer for the invoice recipient. For reasons of usability, the number of purposes should be kept as small as possible. In case of doubt or if nothing is specified by the invoice recipient, this always means "No specific donation purpose".

- An NPO can provide a list of suggested amounts, which are proposed to the invoice recipient when they approve their donation. A donation request with amount options cannot be approved via a standing payment order but can only be approved manually. The invoice recipient must actively select the amount when making their approval.

- The minimum amount for a donation is 5 CHF.
- An NPO can send donation receipts within eBill using the "Notification" use case. The due date is not displayed to the user as a due date per se, but rather as a "Donation date".
- Submissions of donation requests as well as successfully approved donations are shown as separate items on the monthly invoice.
- Donation requests will show the total amount to be invoiced through the network partner for the relevant invoicing month. The corresponding price item does not contain details about the number or total amount of successfully executed donation requests. Network partners are advised to record donations resulting from a successful donation request by actively managing the events of the *GET/events/business-case-status-changed* endpoint.

3. Network partner onboarding and testing

3.1 Registering a network partner for the eBill service

A network partner wishes to provide the eBill service to its customers for the first time and, after signing the service agreement, is registered in the eBill infrastructure as a new network partner.

The connection type, i.e. the basic services for the connection to the eBill network and the procedure for activation, are defined at a briefing. The network partner develops its own interface for connecting its system to the eBill infrastructure (network partner API) and implements the entry point for the eBill service in its system.

Activating a network partner is a complex process involving many technical interdependencies. Experience shows that it can take up to 12 weeks to fully activate a network partner. Making contact early is therefore essential.
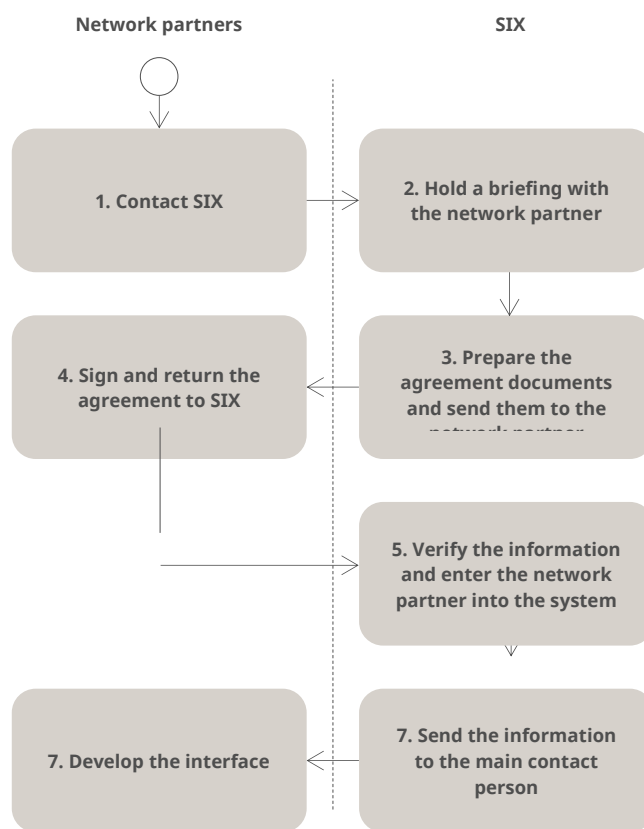

Figure 5: Business process for SIX to register a network partner

1. The network partner contacts SIX by telephone or e-mail.

2. SIX holds a briefing with the network partner.

3. SIX prepares the agreement documents and sends them to the network partner along with the Handbook for Network Partners and all other key development and implementation documents.

4. The network partner checks the agreement documents, adds the required information to the agreement and returns it to SIX. The network partner also appoints the main contact person and a deputy.

5. Having received the agreement, SIX checks it, and, if there are no outstanding issues, adds the network partner to the eBill infrastructure.

6. SIX informs the appointed main contact person as soon as the network partner is registered.

7. Once the registration is complete, the network partner can begin developing the interface.

3.2 Developing and approving the interface

A network partner develops and tests the interface with the eBill infrastructure independently using the documents received from SIX. Upon successful completion of independent tests, the network partner works with SIX to conduct an acceptance test and activate the productive operation. The network partner must be registered in the eBill infrastructure as an eBill participant and have received the documents for developing the interface. SIX alone decides whether to activate the network partner for active productive operation.

The development and approval of the interface with the eBill infrastructure is divided into two phases:

1. Integration test by the network partner
2. Collaborative acceptance test

In the first phase, the network partner independently validates and tests its implementation using the test infrastructure provided by SIX (blue area in Figure 6).

In the second phase, a collaborative acceptance test is performed to ensure that the interface can be approved for the productive operation (grey area in Figure 6).
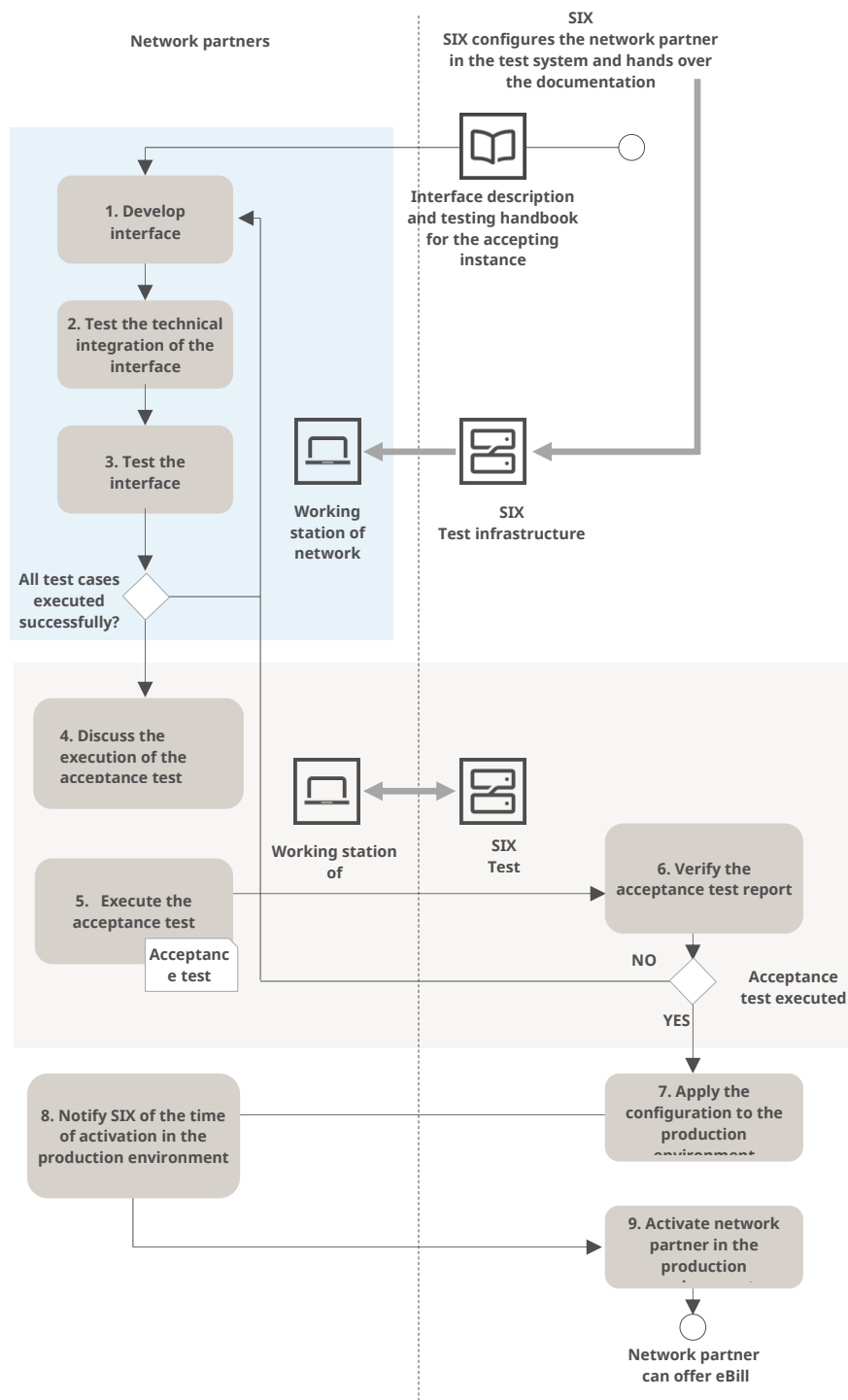
Figure 6: Testing and acceptance process for network partner implementation

1. The network partner develops the interface with the eBill infrastructure based on the documents provided.

2. The network partner conducts a technical integration test on the interface.

3. The network partner uses the test system to test the interface that it has developed.

4. Once all test cases have been completed and successfully tested, the network partner contacts SIX to perform the acceptance test.

5. The network partner executes the acceptance test independently and documents the results in the acceptance test report.

6. SIX verifies the acceptance test report.

7. SIX transfers the test environment configuration to the production environment.

8. The network partner specifies the time for the approval for the production environment and notifies SIX accordingly.

9. SIX activates the network partner for the production environment at the appointed time.

10. Once this process is complete, the network partner can offer the eBill service to its customers (electronic invoices, reminders, credits and notifications).

3.2.1   Test infrastructure for integration testing

The interface implementation by the network partner is not monitored or supervised by SIX and is entirely the responsibility of the network partner in question.

The network partner is given access to a comprehensive test infrastructure (test system) for support.

In general, the following levels of the eBill infrastructure are available to the network partner:

Level	Description
XE	External acceptance/development stage. It contains the current development release stage of the eBill infrastructure. New features are delivered every three weeks and can be used immediately for integration.
XP	External acceptance/production stage. It contains the same release stage as the current production environment.
P	Production

The test environment corresponds to the "external acceptance" test level and comprises a nearly complete eBill system environment. Accordingly, all necessary related systems are configured and available. However, the availability of the test system is limited compared to the production system. The test environment is available to all network partners, and user authorizations and access rights do not correspond to operational requirements.

With access to the test system, the network partner can verify the interfaces with the eBill infrastructure independently. This means that the network partner can run their own end-to-end checks on business processes. The test system can also be used for backward compatibility tests. The basic test data and a set of test invoice recipients are provided by SIX. It is not allowed to use confidential data on the test system; in particular, testing with operational data sets is expressly forbidden. The test system is not designed for unannounced performance or stress tests. Appropriate testing requirements must be agreed upon with Support in advance and incorporated into planning. The network partner generates the invoice issuer and transaction data (reports) itself:

a) Invoice issuer data — via the application functions.

b) The network partner makes its invoice issuer test data available for creating transaction data. This can be used to import test results into the system in all defined and permissible forms via the network partner API.

3.2.2 Acceptance test

Once the network partner has completed the development and successfully tested the implemented functionalities end to end, it will conduct an acceptance test in agreement with SIX. The test consists of relevant test cases which are defined in the "Test Handbook for Network Partners". The relevant and applicable test cases are aligned with the implemented functionalities. The test cases applied must cover at least the network-relevant functions.

The test results are recorded in "Acceptance Test Report for Network Partners". If test cases are not run, the reason must be given; likewise if a test is run and fails, the reason must be given.

The acceptance test report is delivered to SIX for verification. Missing or incorrect test cases without sufficient justification, or those with inadequate documentation, must be repeated or re-documented. If all relevant tests have been successfully completed and any discrepancies are well justified and traceable, SIX and the network partner's test manager will recommend that the network partner releases the implemented functionality into production. Once this recommendation has been made, it is at the network partner's discretion when to start the productive operation.

3.2.3 Retesting Network-Relevant Functions

Retesting is performed whenever a new network-relevant function is introduced or an existing one is changed. The network partner tests the new functionality or changes to the network-relevant functions independently and then performs an acceptance test under the direction of SIX. The acceptance retest follows the same procedure as the acceptance test described in Chapter 3.2.2 for activating the network partner for the productive operation (gray area in Figure 6). However, it only applies to the new or changed functions.

4. Functions of the NWP API

This section describes the eBill functions of the NWP API. All details such as resources, technical operations, payload definitions, validation information, etc. can be found in the detailed technical specifications of the Open API and in the documentation of the content of the structured information of the eBill format.

Invoice recipients are registered for the eBill functions via the financial institutions and the registration process is therefore not explored in more detail in this document.

Overview of the functions of the NWP API (network-relevant functions are indicated with an * and must be implemented by the network partner):

Function	Description
Querying the system status	Requests information about the system status (it can be used as a health check for the eBill infrastructure).
Querying sectors	Sectors are valid across the system and are managed in the eBill infrastructure. The network partner assigns one or more sectors to an invoice issuer during data entry.
Querying invoice issuers	The network partner searches for an invoice issuer by sending invoice issuer search criteria to the eBill infrastructure. Invoice issuer data can be viewed in full only by the primary network partner. All other network partners can query a limited set of invoice issuer data (the invoice issuer's subscription and logout URLs are hidden; the primary network partner is not shown).
Registering invoice issuers*	This use case is a central element of the services provided by SIX and enables the onboarding of invoice issuers to the eBill service. This function is network relevant. The network partner is bound by contractual obligation to implement it.
Editing invoice issuer data*	This use case is a central element of the services provided by SIX and enables the invoice issuer data to be kept up to date. This function is network relevant. The network partner is bound by contractual obligation to implement it. Invoice issuer data can be managed in full only by the primary network partner.
Deregistering invoice issuer*	This use case is a central element of the services provided by SIX and makes it possible to deregister an invoice issuer from the eBill service. Invoice issuer deregistration can be performed only by the primary network partner. When an invoice issuer is deregistered, it is not deleted but set to "inactive" in the system. As a result, it can no longer submit business cases or be found on the list of invoice issuers in the eBill Portal. This function is network relevant. The network partner is bound by contractual obligation to implement it.
Submitting a supplementary invoice issuer document	This use case is a supporting element of the services provided by SIX and enables the network partner to create supplementary invoice issuer documents that must be attached to all business cases (e.g. price lists) with just one submission.
Querying a supplementary invoice issuer document	This use case is a supporting element of the services provided by SIX and allows the network partner to see which supplementary documents its

Function	Description
	invoice issuers have, e.g. to determine the validity period of a supplementary document.
Deleting a supplementary invoice issuer document	This use case is a supporting element of the services provided by SIX and enables the network partner to delete supplementary invoice issuer documents.
Querying Invoice Recipients*	This service is a central element of the services provided by SIX and supports a simplified (invoice issuer-initiated) process of subscribing an invoice recipient to the invoice issuer for obtaining electronic invoices. This operation is also referred to as "invoice recipient look-up". Only invoice recipients that have consented to the look-up process or have an active relationship with the invoice issuer can be found. This function is network-relevant. The network partner is bound by contractual obligation to implement it.
Submitting business cases*	This use case is a core element of the services provided by SIX. It ensures that business cases are sent from the network partner to the eBill infrastructure. Business cases can be submitted via any network partner. A submission results in business cases being placed in the data rooms of the network partners and the invoice issuers involved. This function is network relevant. The network partner is bound by contractual obligation to implement it. Support for the "donation request business" case type is entirely optional for network partners.
Querying business case data	This use case is a supporting element of the services provided by SIX and allows the network partner to request information concerning business cases that it has submitted.
Querying business case processing events	This use case is a supporting element of the services provided by SIX and allows the network partner to request information concerning transaction processing events and forward this information to its invoice issuers.
Retrieving subscription data*	When an invoice recipient subscribes to an invoice issuer, the network partner can obtain detailed information from SIX (standard subscription details and details specific to an invoice issuer as in Chapter 2.3 above). This can be used to inform the invoice issuer directly of the subscription (subscription events with the option of additional fields) or to pre-populate subscription forms. Depending on the type of subscription, the subscription data also includes a reference number (e.g., QR reference) and the credit account of the invoice issuer (direct subscription). This function is network-relevant. The network partner is bound by contractual obligation to implement it and to forward the subscription data to the invoice issuer.
Querying cancellation events	This use case is a supporting element of the services provided by SIX and allows the network partner to obtain events for the delivery permit created between the invoice recipient and invoice issuer and to forward the information to its invoice issuers. By processing of these events, validation errors during submission can be avoided.

Function	Description
Subscription to invoice issuers	An invoice recipient may subscribe to an invoice issuer on the invoice issuer's website. This functionality is available in the network partner's API and each network partner can offer this functionality to its invoice issuers.