

Practices for Lesson 15: Managing Budgets

Overview

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Lesson Overview

The term “budget” refers to a program that allows customers to pay a fixed amount rather than be subject to oscillating charges associated with seasonal temperature variations. Some companies also refer to this as “levelized payment plans.”

This lesson describes the management of budgets for customers.

Lesson Objectives

By the end of this lesson, you will be able to:

- Put a customer on a budget and review the financial effect.
- Describe how the system calculates a suggested budget.
- Explain how the system identifies anomalous budgets.
- Describe how the system “trues up” a budget.
- Identify what happens when a budget is canceled.

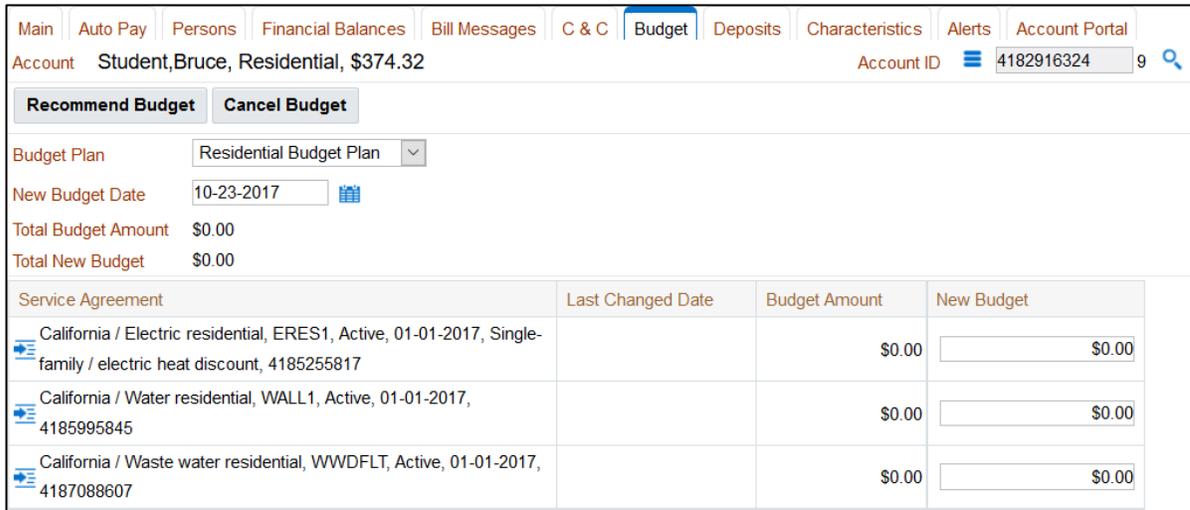
Practice 15-1: Put an Account on a Budget

Overview

In this practice you will put an account on a budget. In the day-to-day operations of a company, this may be done when starting service or at any time during the life of a service agreement.

Task

1. Search for your customer in **Control Central**.
2. Navigate to your **Account's Budget page**.

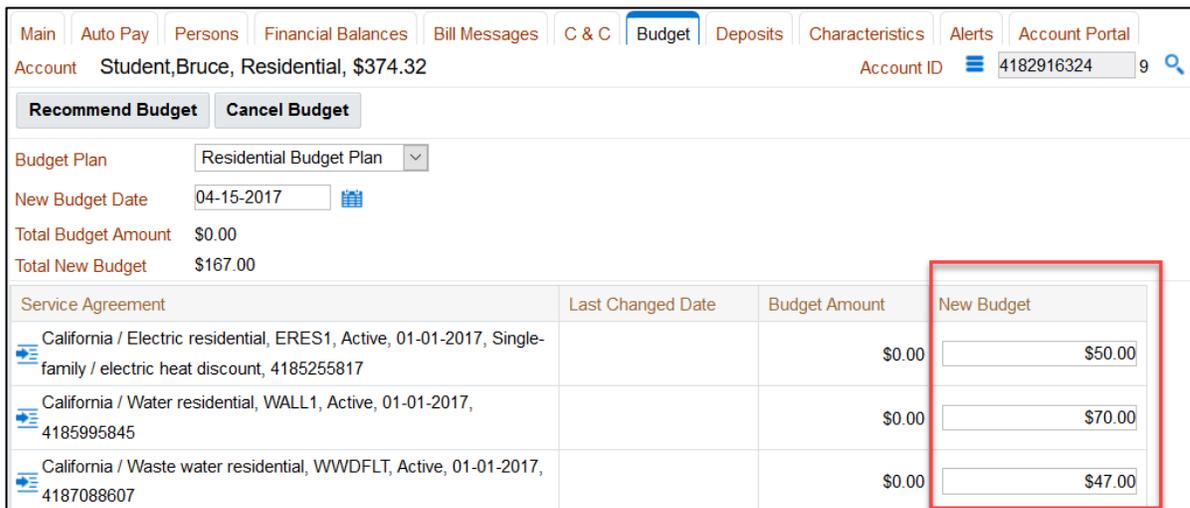


The screenshot shows the 'Budget' page for account 'Student, Bruce, Residential, \$374.32'. The 'Budget Plan' is set to 'Residential Budget Plan' and the 'New Budget Date' is '10-23-2017'. The 'Total Budget Amount' and 'Total New Budget' are both \$0.00. A table lists three service agreements with their respective budget amounts and new budget amounts, all currently at \$0.00.

Service Agreement	Last Changed Date	Budget Amount	New Budget
California / Electric residential, ERES1, Active, 01-01-2017, Single-family / electric heat discount, 4185255817		\$0.00	\$0.00
California / Water residential, WALL1, Active, 01-01-2017, 4185995845		\$0.00	\$0.00
California / Waste water residential, WWDFLT, Active, 01-01-2017, 4187088607		\$0.00	\$0.00

- Notice that there's a **Recommend Budget** button on this page. When clicked, it populates the **New Budget** column with a recommended amount for each SA.

3. Select the *residential budget plan*.
4. Enter a date of *04-15-2017* in the **New Budget Date**.
5. Click the **Recommend Budget** button.



The screenshot shows the 'Budget' page after clicking the 'Recommend Budget' button. The 'New Budget Date' is now '04-15-2017' and the 'Total New Budget' is \$167.00. The 'New Budget' column in the table is populated with values: \$50.00, \$70.00, and \$47.00. A red box highlights the 'New Budget' column.

Service Agreement	Last Changed Date	Budget Amount	New Budget
California / Electric residential, ERES1, Active, 01-01-2017, Single-family / electric heat discount, 4185255817		\$0.00	\$50.00
California / Water residential, WALL1, Active, 01-01-2017, 4185995845		\$0.00	\$70.00
California / Waste water residential, WWDFLT, Active, 01-01-2017, 4187088607		\$0.00	\$47.00

- Notice that the system populates the **New Budget** column for you to review.

6. Click **Save**.
7. Check out the change to the SA.

Even though you used the account transaction, you have actually not changed anything related to the account. Rather, you have added a Recurring Charge entry for the service agreement.

- Click the **Go To** button next to the **electric service agreement**. Then navigate to the **Chars, Qty & Rec. Charges** page.

		Effective Date	Characteristic Type	Characteristic Value
+	🗑️	01-01-2017	Contract Number	XX001
+	🗑️	01-01-2017	Special condition	SINGLE ELEC

		Effective Date	Contract Quantity Type	Contract Quantity
+	🗑️	01-01-2017		

		Effective Date	Recurring Charge Amount
+	🗑️	04-15-2017	\$50.00

Note: On the Account - Budget page, the system requires that all service agreements shown on the page be put on budget if one is put on budget. If the customer requests that only certain service agreements are on budget, the user can navigate directly to the service agreement's Budget Amount and change its amount there.

Practice 15-2: Bill an Account on a Budget

Overview

In this practice you will bill your account again and review the effect that the budget has on the bill.

Tasks

1. If it isn't already, please bring your main account into **Control Central**.
2. Add Meter Reads for your electric and water meters.
 - Create **meter reads** for *05-01-2017* of **Regular type** and including the following register reads:
 - **Electric: 4400**

Main | Characteristics | Meter Read Portal

Meter Read Meter XX-E1, Read 05-01-2017 12:00AM, 1 register read Meter Read ID 581961146947

Meter Configuration ID 5810202382 Electric - simple kWh, XX-E1, Eff 01-01-2000 12:00AM, Default Electric Configuration, 1 register

Premise 1066 Your Street, San Francisco, CA, 94102

Read Date/Time 05-01-2017 / 12:00AM Use on Bill

Meter Read Source Meter Reader

Reread Meter

Seq	Register Information	Read Type	Message	Register Reading	Previous Reading
1	KWH, format 5.0, 1.000000, Additive	Regular	Usage: 1,286, Valid Usage: 498 - 995, Valid Readings: 3612 - 4109	4400.000000	System Estima

- **Water: 10500**

Main | Characteristics | Meter Read Portal

Meter Read Meter XX-W1, Read 05-01-2017 12:00AM, 1 register read Meter Read ID 818927804931

Meter Configuration ID 8185855684 Water simple CF / CCF, XX-W1, Eff 01-01-2000 12:00AM, Default Water Configuration, 1 register

Premise 1066 Your Street, San Francisco, CA, 94102

Read Date/Time 05-01-2017 / 12:00AM Use on Bill

Meter Read Source Meter Reader

Reread Meter

Seq	Register Information	Read Type	Message	Register Reading	Previous Reading
1	CF, format 5.0, 1.000000, Additive	Regular	Usage: 1,915, Valid Usage: 2,003 - 4,006, Valid Readings: 10588 - 12591	10500.000000	System Est

3. Add a **Bill**
 - From the **Account Context Menu**, select **Go To Bill > Add**
 - When the **Bill** window appears, click **Generate**.
 - Set the **Cutoff Date** to *05-01-2017* and click **Calculate**.
(Don't allow estimates.)

Cutoff Date 05-01-2017

Accounting Date 10-23-2017

Allow Estimates

Billing Option Use Cut off Date

Your result should resemble the screen below. As you can see, the **Current Amount** for the **Bill Segment** matches the **Budget Amount**.

The screenshot shows a web application interface for bill management. At the top, there are navigation tabs: Main, Bill Segments, Bill Routings, Bill Messages, and Characteristics. Below the tabs, the 'Bill Info' section displays 'Date: , Pending, Due:' and 'Bill ID: 418779799971'. The 'Account ID' is 4182916324, and the account name is 'Student, Bruce, Residential, \$374.32'. The 'Bill Status' is 'Pending', and there is a 'Display Bill' button. A note states 'All segments are freezable.' The 'Due Date' and 'Bill Date' are both blank. The 'Create Date/Time' is '10-23-2017 06:48PM' and the 'Completion Date/Time' is blank. Below this information is a table with the following columns: Bill Segment, Current Amount, Status, and Remarks.

Bill Segment	Current Amount	Status	Remarks
California / Electric residential, Freezable, Period: 04-01-2017 - 05-01-2017, \$79.00, 4185255817	\$50.00	Freezable	
California / Water residential, Freezable, Period: 04-01-2017 - 05-01-2017, \$45.99, 4185995845	\$70.00	Freezable	
California / Waste water residential, Freezable, Period: 04-01-2017 - 05-01-2017, \$32.41, 4187088607	\$47.00	Freezable	

At the bottom of the table, there is a 'Total Generated Charge' of \$167.00.

4. Navigate to the **electric bill segment** by clicking the **Bill Segment URL**.
 - Review the **Current Amount** (the budget amount) and the **Payoff Amount** (the actual amount).

The screenshot shows the 'Bill Segment Details' page. The navigation tabs include: Main, Read Details, Items, SQ Details, Calc Lines, Financial Details, Bill Segment Messages, Sub Bill Segment, and Bill Segment Portal. The 'Bill Seg Info' section displays 'California / Electric residential, Freezable, Period: 04-01-2017 - 05-01-2017, \$79.00, 4185255817' and 'Bill Segment ID: 418581761707'. The 'Account ID' is 4182916324, and the account name is 'Student, Bruce, Residential, \$374.32'. The 'Bill ID' is 418779799971, and the 'Date: , Pending, Due:' is blank. The 'SA ID' is 4185255817, and the account name is 'California / Electric residential, ERES1, Active, 01-01-2017, Single-family / electric heat discount, 4185255817'. The 'Period' is '04-01-2017 05-01-2017'. The 'Bill Cycle' section shows 'Status: Freezable' and checkboxes for 'Closing', 'Estimate', 'SQ Override', and 'Item Override'. The 'Premise' is '1066 Your Street, San Francisco, CA, 94102' and the 'Create Date/Time' is '10-23-2017 06:48PM'. A red box highlights the 'Current Amount \$50.00' and 'Payoff Amount \$79.00'.

5. Navigate back to the **bill**, and **Freeze** and **Complete** the bill for *05-01-2017*.

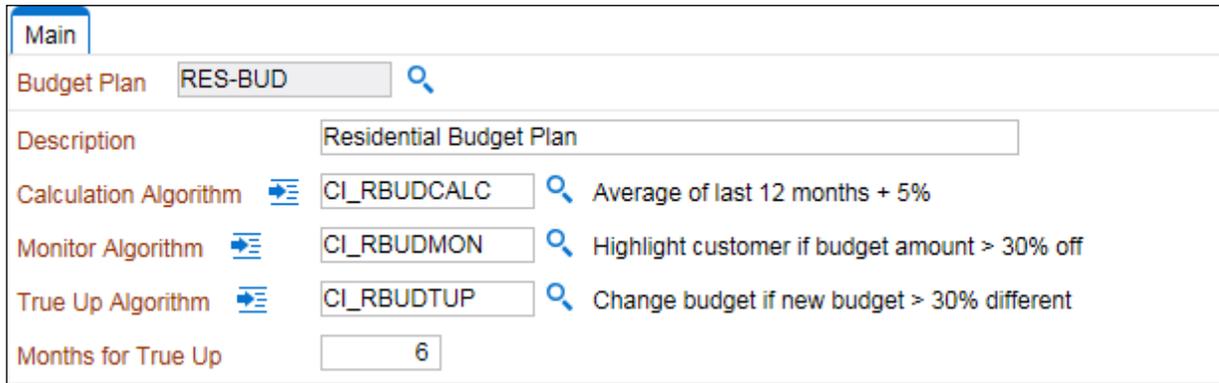
Practice 15-3: Review a Budget Plan

Overview

In this practice, you will review the setup of the Budget Plan linked to your account.

Tasks

1. Find the Budget Plan.
 - Navigate to **Admin > Credit & Collection > Budget Plan > Search**.
 - Find the **budget plan** for *RES-BUD*.



The screenshot shows a web interface for configuring a budget plan. At the top, there is a 'Main' tab and a search bar containing 'RES-BUD'. Below the search bar, the configuration details are displayed:

Description	Residential Budget Plan		
Calculation Algorithm	CI_RBUDCALC	🔍	Average of last 12 months + 5%
Monitor Algorithm	CI_RBUDMON	🔍	Highlight customer if budget amount > 30% off
True Up Algorithm	CI_RBUDTUP	🔍	Change budget if new budget > 30% different
Months for True Up	6		

2. Here you can review the algorithms that are indicated on the budget plan.

Review Questions

1. If a new customer asks for a budget when moving into an existing premise, the system will not be able to calculate a recommended budget amount due to insufficient history.
True/False
False. The base recommendation algorithm uses premise billing history to recommend a budget amount and therefore, if the prior tenant had sufficient billing history, the system will be able to calculate a recommended budget amount.
2. Current balance will typically differ from payoff balance for customers on a budget.
True/False
True.
3. An account may have some service agreements on a budget and some service agreements not on a budget. True/False
True. Only service agreements with Eligible for Budget set on their SA Type are allowed to be put on a budget. An account may have a mixture of different SA Types.
4. Budget amounts do not affect billing. True/False
False. The budget amount will overwrite a bill segment's current amount. This is only done if the bill segment's FT algorithm is written to do this.
5. Budget customers are exempt from credit and collection. True/False
False. If the current balance is not paid according to the credit process criteria, credit and collection actions will still take place.
6. The Monitor Budgets background process will review budget amounts that are "off" and update them with more appropriate amounts. True/False
False. The Monitor Budgets background process reviews budgets and simply reports those that are off. The True Up Budgets background process will update budgets with a more appropriate amount.
7. The frequency of true up could be annually, semi-annually, monthly or any other frequency you can think of. True/False
True. The frequency of review is defined on the budget plan (express as a number of months).
8. Name the different ways that a budget could get canceled.
1) Manually, 2) automatically through credit and collection activity, or 3) automatically by stopping the service agreement.