QR-bill
Simply Explained

Harmonization and digitization characterize the comprehensive transformation of Swiss payment traffic. They form the basis for automated, error-reduced and thereby efficient payment processing, also thanks to the QR-bill. What is behind it? Why, when and how does it work?

The QR-bill meets the requirements for digital processing that is free of media disruptions. Nevertheless, even those who prefer to continue receiving paper invoices profit by saving work caused by media disruptions in the process between invoicing, dispatching and payment instruction: the invoice recipient scans the QR code with his smartphone, for example, and then only needs to release the payment without making further entries. He no longer needs to make the bothersome effort to type account and reference numbers.

What is crucial is that a QR code containing payment information is imprinted on the payment part. This Swiss QR Code enables the triggering of payments at banks across all order channels, including counter payments. The payment part with receipt contains information needed to execute payments that are both digitally readable in the Swiss QR Code and contained in printed text. This enables the invoice recipient to check the accuracy of payment data after the invoice has been scanned and before its payment is approved and, if needed, also to manually enter payments.

Two New References
The QR reference corresponds to the current ISR and is intended for a simple reconciliation of invoices with payments for the invoice issuer. Existing ISR reference

numbers can continue to be used, whereby the seamless transition from the ISR to the QR-bill is possible. The QR reference may only be used with the so-called QR-IBAN, which is issued to customers by their bank. The Creditor Reference (SCOR) has the same function as a QR reference. The difference is solely that the calculation thereof follows a different logic. Furthermore, it can be used in international payment traffic, while the QR reference is limited to Switzerland and Liechtenstein. A prerequisite for use of the SCOR is the concurrent use of the IBAN.

Type 1: QR-bill with QR reference (replaces the ISR)

Type 2: QR-bill without reference (replaces the IS)

Optional Functions

The two most important optional functions, "Alternative procedures" and "Billing information", optimize the automated processing of great volumes both for invoice issuers and recipients: To be able to provide its bridging function to other payment procedures, the QR-bill offers the "Alternative procedures" field. Information that is needed for the usage of such can be entered there in a standardized form. For eBill, for example, this field can be filled in with the invoice recipient's e-mail address. This makes it possible for a QR-bill to be automatically converted into an eBill invoice.

The field "Billing information" enables to provide encoded information for the automated booking of a payment to the invoice recipient, independent of the processing of payment-relevant data. Swico, the ICT and online industry business association, has developed a syntax definition for this purpose.

How Can a QR-bill Be Generated?

QR-bills can be created and printed in just a few simple steps on one's computer whereby some design charac-

Type 3: QR-bill with Creditor Reference (new usage option)

teristics are to be adhered to in the process. It is even easier if an application offered by one of the many software vendors is used, enabling QR-bill creation and payment as of 30 June 2020.

ADVANTAGES FOR BILL ISSUERS:
– Invoices can be printed on white, perforated paper, i.e. no more need to order preprinted payment slips
– ISR reference numbers can be reused (QR reference)
– SCOR reference can be used (e.g. for payments in the SEPA zone)
– The combination of reference and message is possible (free text or use of Swico syntax recommendation)
– The fields for the amount or debtor can be left blank
– Alternative procedures (e.g. eBill) can be used

ADVANTAGES FOR BILL RECIPIENTS:
– Billing information can be obtained for automatic bookkeeping reconciliation
– QR code scanning replaces manual entering of payment data
– Data accuracy can be reconciled with text details in the payment part
– Payment channel can be freely selected: e-banking, m-banking or counter

Milestones

As of 30 June 2020, 600,000 companies in Switzerland may send QR-bills to their customers – companies or private individuals. Swiss people and smaller companies without their own software will be able to pay incoming QR-bills through their e-banking or m-banking applications offered by their bank. Especially companies with their own accounts receivable and payment processes must update their existing software solutions or have them updated by their software partners by mid-2020 at the latest.

QR-bill
Ready