

TELECOM BILLING - DISPUTES & ADJUSTMENTS

What is Dispute?

A dispute is a record of a query about an amount of money on an account. Normally, a dispute will be recorded when a customer queries some aspect of their bill. Disputes can be raised:

- Against an invoice on an account.
- Against a particular rated event on the account. For example, if a customer disputes a particular pay-per-view TV event due to a power cut.

Processing of Disputes:

After a dispute is recorded, it would be investigated, verified in order to either:

- **Accept:** If the raised dispute is valid from customer side, then the dispute would be accepted, and would be refunded to the customer.
- **Reject:** If the dispute found to be not acceptable, then the dispute would be rejected.
- **Cancel:** If the dispute is entered in error, then the dispute would be canceled.

Following points should be noted for the dispute and a billing system should support these points:

- Collections actions are not escalated while amounts have a dispute status of pending, but the collections are aged during this period.
- Disputed events are not included in collections calculation until they are billed. After this, the collections are aged as normal.

What is Adjustment?

An adjustment is a method of crediting or debiting an account with an arbitrary amount of money. Adjustments can be lodged against either an account as a whole or against a particular rated event on that account.

A Billing System allows to create different types of adjustments, which can be used in different situations and each adjustment flows through different stages of approval.

If a dispute is accepted, an adjustment is created to credit the account with the disputed amount. Adjustments should not affect the balance of an account until they are approved. Adjustments with a status of pending approval do not affect billing or collections.

Disputes and adjustments that are made for tax inclusive accounts are assumed to be inclusive of tax. The gross amount is entered and will be available for output on the bill.

What is Next?

Next chapter will explain different types of reports required for the management. There could be a list of reports available out-of-the-box and there may be some reports, which would need custom development.