

ECRS Terms and Definitions

Charge	Once a transaction is pre-validated and recorded in an ECRS database, it becomes chargeable to a client account or an in-house department. ECRS transaction records which are charged to valid, open, billable clients (based on the firm's criteria) are immediately eligible for loading into the accounting system. Exceptions are those transaction records in the ECRS which cannot be automatically charged to a valid client, account, department, or employee.
Cost	Generally accepted to be internally generated such as photocopy, facsimile, telephone, postage and other client charges not directly billed to the firm. Sometimes referred to as "soft costs" if not associated with an accounts payable voucher or a vendor's invoice. [see also "Disbursement"]
CSV	Comma-Separated Value
DBF	Ashton-Tate® dBase™ Database File
Disbursement	A valid charge loaded from an ECRS into the accounting database. In some applications these are also referred to as "costs", "cost cards" or "expense records".
EDI	Electronic Data Interchange
Expense	Usually refers to billing items from outside vendors; those items for which the firm receives an invoice (electronic or paper). These are client or departmental charges which the firm must directly pay and cannot absorb internally. Sometimes these are called "hard costs" because they are indirectly (or directly) related to a specific voucher in the accounts payable system [see also "Disbursement"]
ETL	Extract – Transform – Load
Format	Files of transactions on various media are most often flat, ASCII text files, however transactions are sometimes received in other types of file. (1)
LEDES	Legal Electronic Data Exchange Standard
Media	Transactions are submitted to a business in their "raw" format from a vendor (2)

Transaction	The initial cost incurred by a firm employee (3)
XLS	Microsoft® Excel™ Spreadsheet
XML	Extensible Markup Language

(1) Examples of file formats:

- 1) Delimited text files*
- 2) Fixed Format (aka "space delimited") text files **
- 3) Database file (usually FoxPro, Clipper or Ashton-Tate® dBase)
- 4) Spreadsheet (usually Excel)
- 5) Extensible Markup Language
- 6) Electronic Data Interchange

* generally in ASCII format

** often ASCII, sometimes EBCDIC or "signed over-punch"

(2) The transmission of transactions can be via:

- 1) Floppy disk
- 2) CD-ROM
- 3) E-mail attachment
- 4) Internet Download
- 5) Network file transfer
- 6) Direct data connection

(3) Transaction examples are:

- a) reproducing a photocopy
- b) sending a fax
- c) printing a document
- d) researching a topic
- e) making a phone call
- f) shipping a package
- g) eating a meal
- h) taking a plane trip
- i) using a taxi
- j) accessing a database
- k) delivering a message