Share costs clearly across teams

Understand which team owns a cost, how to handle shared services and what to do when ownership is unknown. A practical guide with a worked example.

01 Which team owns this cost?

A bill often combines several uses. The aim is to connect each cost to a team or shared service so you know who can explain it and act on it. This does not necessarily mean sending an internal invoice to each team.

Start with information you actually have: an account dedicated to a team, a project name or a list of services in use. When information is missing, keep the amount visible in a category called “To clarify”.

02 A simple allocation example

> Fictional example: the monthly bill is €1,000. A project used only by the Product team costs €600. Another, used by the Data team, costs €250. A shared database costs €150.

The allocation is Product €600, Data €250 and Shared services €150. The total is still €1,000. The €150 stays in the shared category until another rule has been agreed. These figures are illustrative and do not represent customer results.

Next: checks to make on your own figures.

Check your own figures

01 Understand 02 **Check** 03 Act

03 Write a rule everyone understands

A rule states what you identify in the report and which team receives the cost. For example: "Costs for the Store project go to the Product team." Use information that is visible and stable in your reports.

- ✓ Identify the account, project or service involved.
- ✓ Name the team that confirms its use.
- ✓ Record the rule's start date and the person who approved it.

If two rules match the same cost, decide which applies first. Verify what your tool actually does: a cost must never be counted twice.

04 Decide how to handle shared services

A common service can remain in a "Shared services" category. You can also agree to divide it between teams if you have a reliable basis, such as measured usage for the same period.

> Fictional example, continued: the teams agree to divide the €150 equally. Each receives €75. Product becomes €675 and Data €325; the total is still €1,000. The shared category then becomes zero.

An equal split is an organizational choice, not a measure of consumption. Record the agreement. If nobody can justify a split, retain the shared cost. This method does not guarantee that your tool applies the split automatically.

Next: choose an action and verify its result.

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Decide what to do next

01 Understand · 02 Check · **03 Act**

05 Keep unknown amounts visible

A new account appears and nobody recognizes its spending. Put it temporarily in “To clarify” and give one person responsibility for investigating. Do not assign it arbitrarily just to complete the chart.

> Separate fictional example: on a €1,000 bill, you know who owns €900. There is €100 left to clarify. The total you present is still €1,000, with the €100 clearly identified.

- ✓ Find out who created the account or project.
- ✓ Keep the amount, period and report reference.
- ✓ Set a date to confirm the responsible team.

06 Check the total before sharing

Add the costs assigned to teams, services kept in the shared category and amounts still to clarify. The sum must equal the selected report’s total, using the same treatment of discounts and taxes.

- ✓ Every cost appears exactly once.
- ✓ Shared services and unknown amounts remain visible.
- ✓ The relevant teams have confirmed the rules.
- ✓ A person and date are assigned for the next review.

Keep a dated version of the rules. When a team changes or a new service arrives, review the allocation and explain what changed.

Find this guide and the detailed methods on our website.