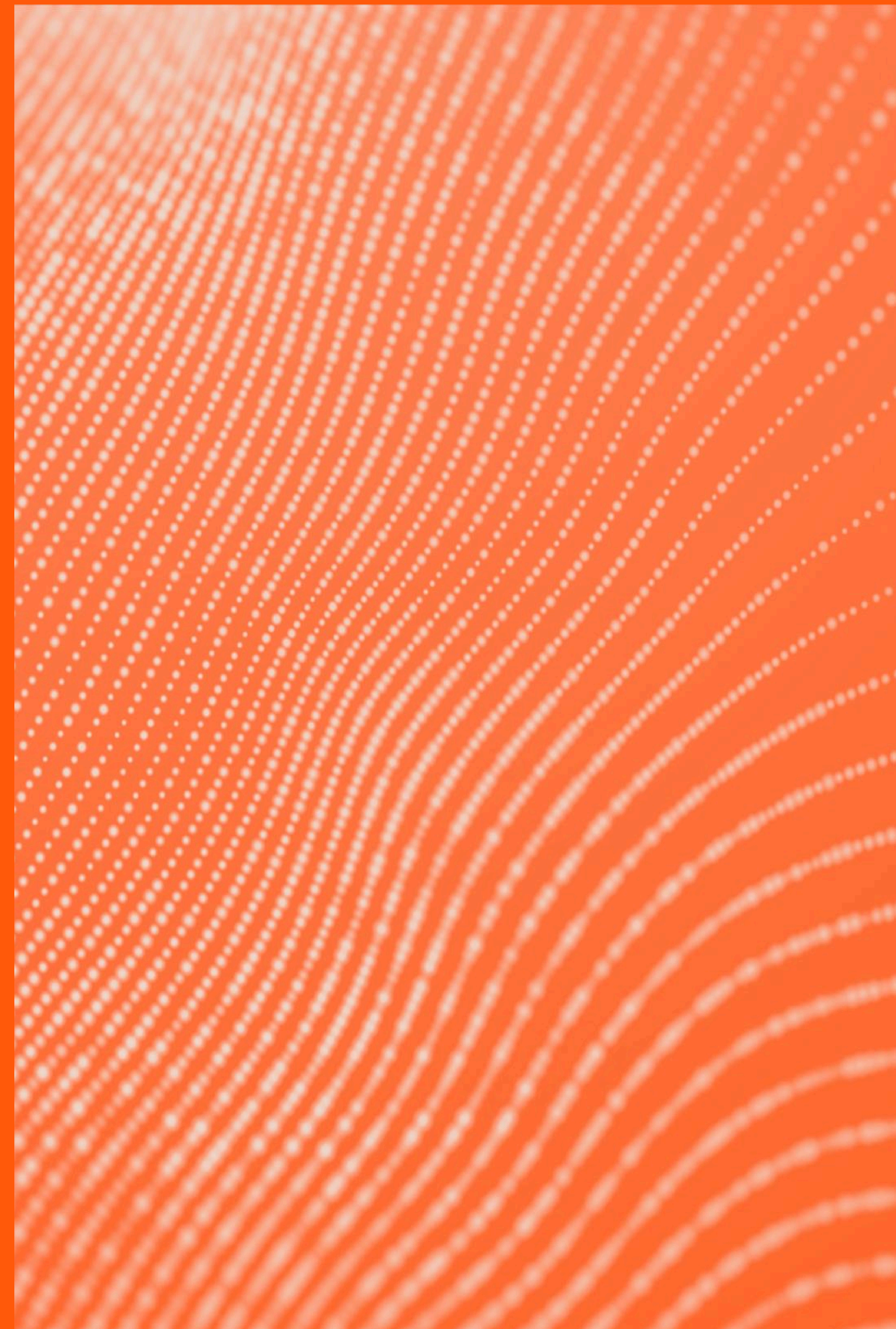
bill

Bringing AI to accounting

How to leverage technology to help build a more profitable accounting firm



Introduction

Every decade, a new form of technology is introduced that helps to increase productivity and efficiency in businesses around the world. From the invention of the sewing machine in 1851 to Henry Ford's perfection of the moving assembly line in 1913 to the first business computer in 1951, history–and business–has been repeatedly disrupted by the latest and greatest technology.

For the past few years, there have been rumblings and rumors that AI is emerging as the next revolutionary tool to support both personal and business endeavors. And while there's still a long way to go in terms of the overall use case for this technology, it's already having a transformational impact in one area: accounting.

The manual, repetitive tasks often involved in running AP and spend and expense management for clients, along with the critical need for accuracy, make accounting an ideal field for AI. In this eBook, we'll explore the current iterations of AI so you can leverage it to support your firm and clients.

Contents

What is Artificial Intelligence (AI)?

Before we explore the benefits of AI, it's essential to provide a solid definition.

Artificial Intelligence (AI) refers to the simulation of human intelligence in machines that are programmed to perform tasks that typically require human intelligence. It involves the development of computer systems capable of performing tasks such as learning, problem-solving, reasoning, perception, understanding natural language, and making decisions.

AI encompasses various subfields, including machine learning, deep learning, natural language processing, computer vision, robotics, expert systems, and more. Machine learning and deep learning are crucial components of AI, in which algorithms enable machines to learn from and adapt to data without being explicitly programmed. This allows AI systems to improve their performance over time through experience.

While AI is still in its infancy, the past few years of research have led to massive strides within the industry. A Stanford Report developed in partnership with McKinsey & Company found that AI processing power has been doubling every 3.4 months on average since 2012.[1]

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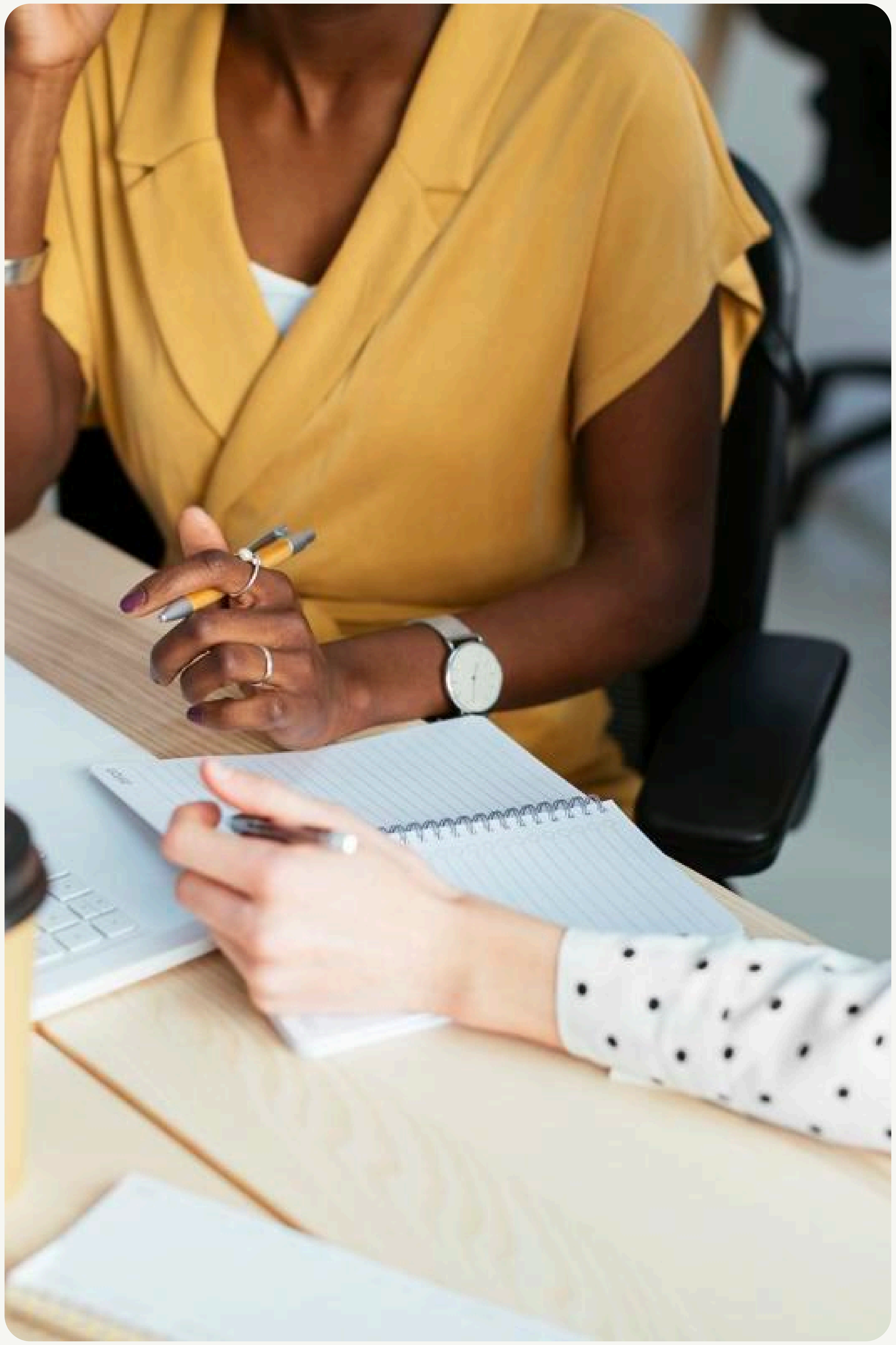
AI and accounting

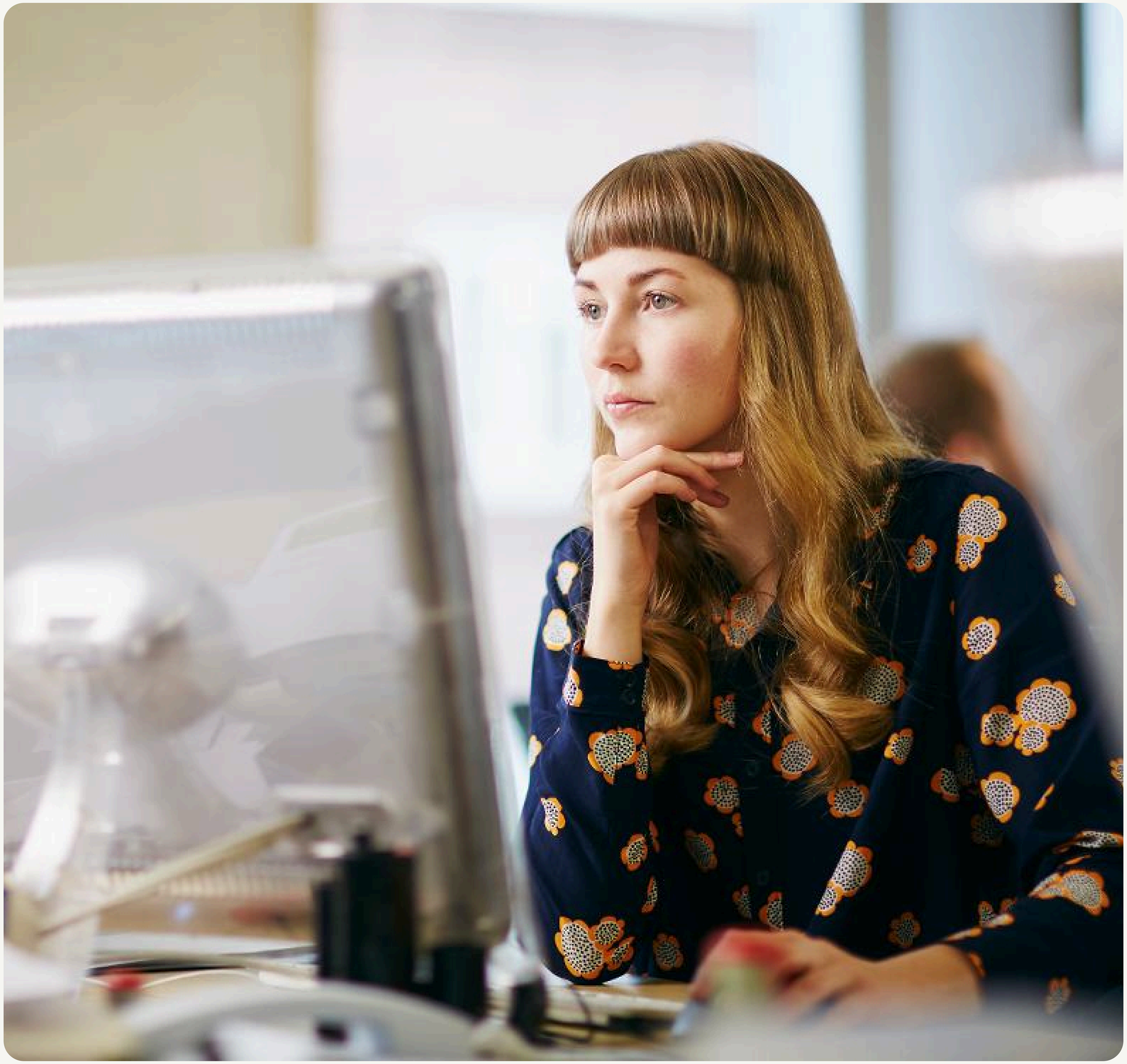
As with automation, AI helps you enter the playing field on third base. Applying AI to accounting can create cost and time savings by automating tasks, reducing the time spent processing data, and analyzing financial information quickly.

The operational benefits are attractive to accounting firm leaders, who face challenges including finding and retaining qualified talent and effectively utilizing existing staff.[2]

Beyond internal benefits, AI offers a new route to enhance client services. The AI demand from small and midsize businesses is evident, according to a recent survey of financial business leaders.[3] The study found that 85% are enthusiastic about using AI for their business, viewing AI as a beneficial tool for both strategic planning, everyday operations, and giving employees time to focus on more important tasks. Firms knowledgeable in AI and its use can not only benefit internally on service delivery, but also help their clients benefit from the resulting efficiencies and savings.

85% of finance leaders at businesses are enthusiastic about adopting AI for better decision-making.[3]





Here's how AI can support your accounts payable process:

Invoice extraction/ bill creation

BILL AI can extract key critical invoice details from documents, such as invoice date, number and amount, and it uses that information to populate fields within a bill.

Identifying duplicate invoices

BILL can detect and warn customers if a duplicate invoice exists, so you can worry less about accidentally paying the same bill twice.

Scan for anomalies or fraudulent activity

AI accounting software can review data in virtually real time and pinpoint anomalies that could point to fraudulent activity.

How AI supports spend and expense management

For any business, an efficient spend management system is crucial to success. Yet most are still manually entering financial data into spreadsheets, an outdated process that's difficult to maintain, time consuming, and prone to error—plus a nightmare for accountants.

Streamlining spend and expense management with AI cuts out some of the busy work, helping your clients to minimize time spent while improving control and visibility. AI can provide extra safeguards and verifications for their expenses without the need to hold on to paper receipts or manually assign each transaction to departments or cost centers and spend categories.

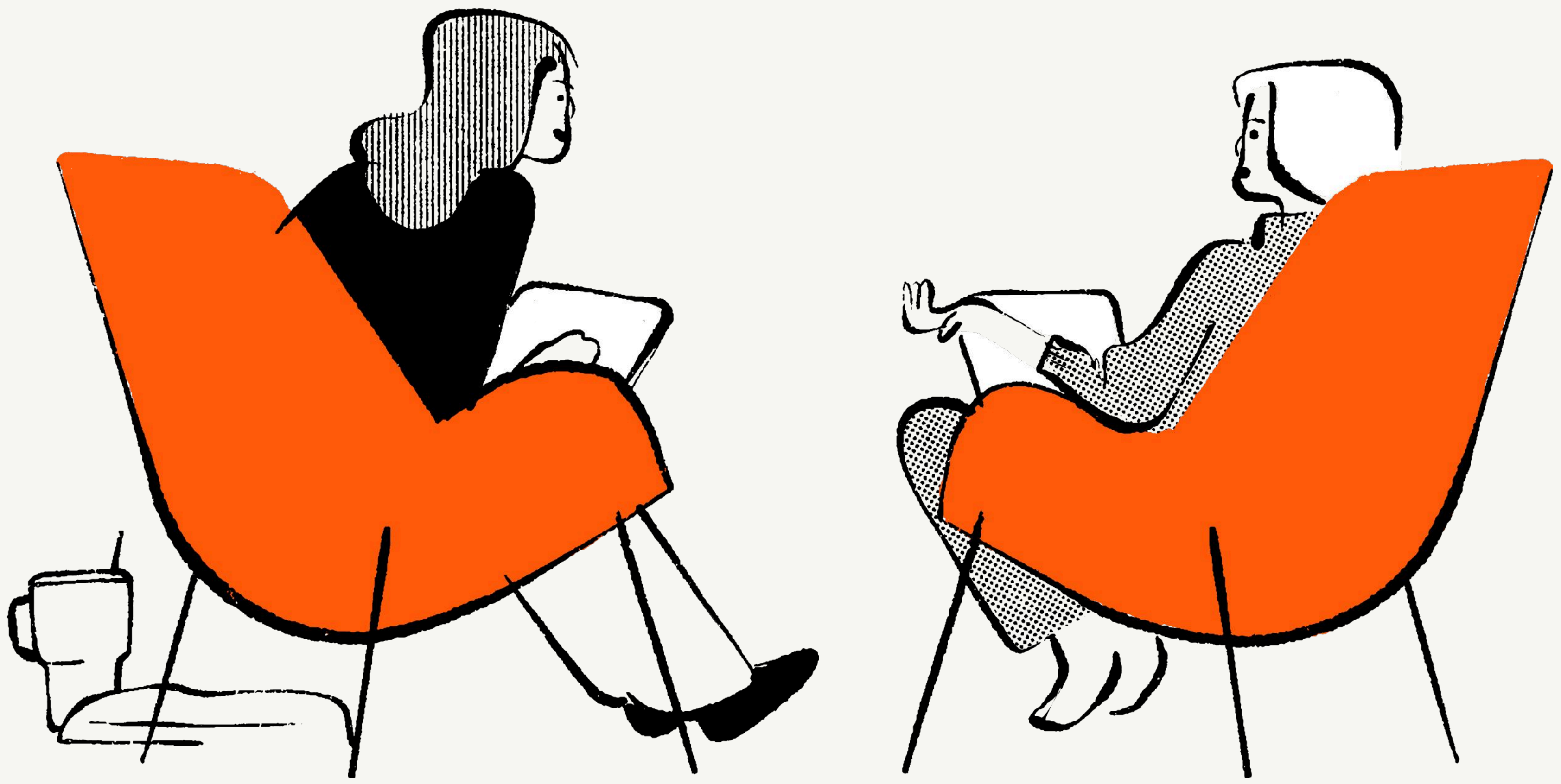
Our AI engine has been trained on our proprietary data assets, including more than 300 million transactions and over half a billion documents.

Here is how BILL's AI can support spend and expense management:

Auto categorization

AI helps code transactions in BILL Spend & Expense, saving reconciliation time and improving accuracy. It will populate categories in expense transactions, analyzing the merchant, transaction information, and the history of selections. It then will populate the field based on probable candidates.

If there isn't a probable match, our AI will leave the field blank. It will also note and learn from corrections made to an automatically categorized field.



How AI supports document management

AI can also benefit the organizational processes of your clients, helping to organize and store documents for future reference. This can support the day-to-day operations for your clients and ensure that necessary AP and spend and expense information is on-hand for tax season or audits.

While document management can be handled manually, it creates the risk of misplacing important documents and prevents your firm and clients from scaling efficiently. Accounting firms should leverage digitization whenever possible to add another layer of backup storage for their documents. Having a digital library of invoices, vendor information, and receipts makes it easy for your team and clients to find needed information, whether they're in the office, working from home, or traveling.

BILL's AI extracts data from about 220,000 documents every day.

Here are two ways that BILL's AI supports document management:

Document splitting

BILL uses AI to detect and automatically split documents that have multiple invoices on multiple pages into individual bills.

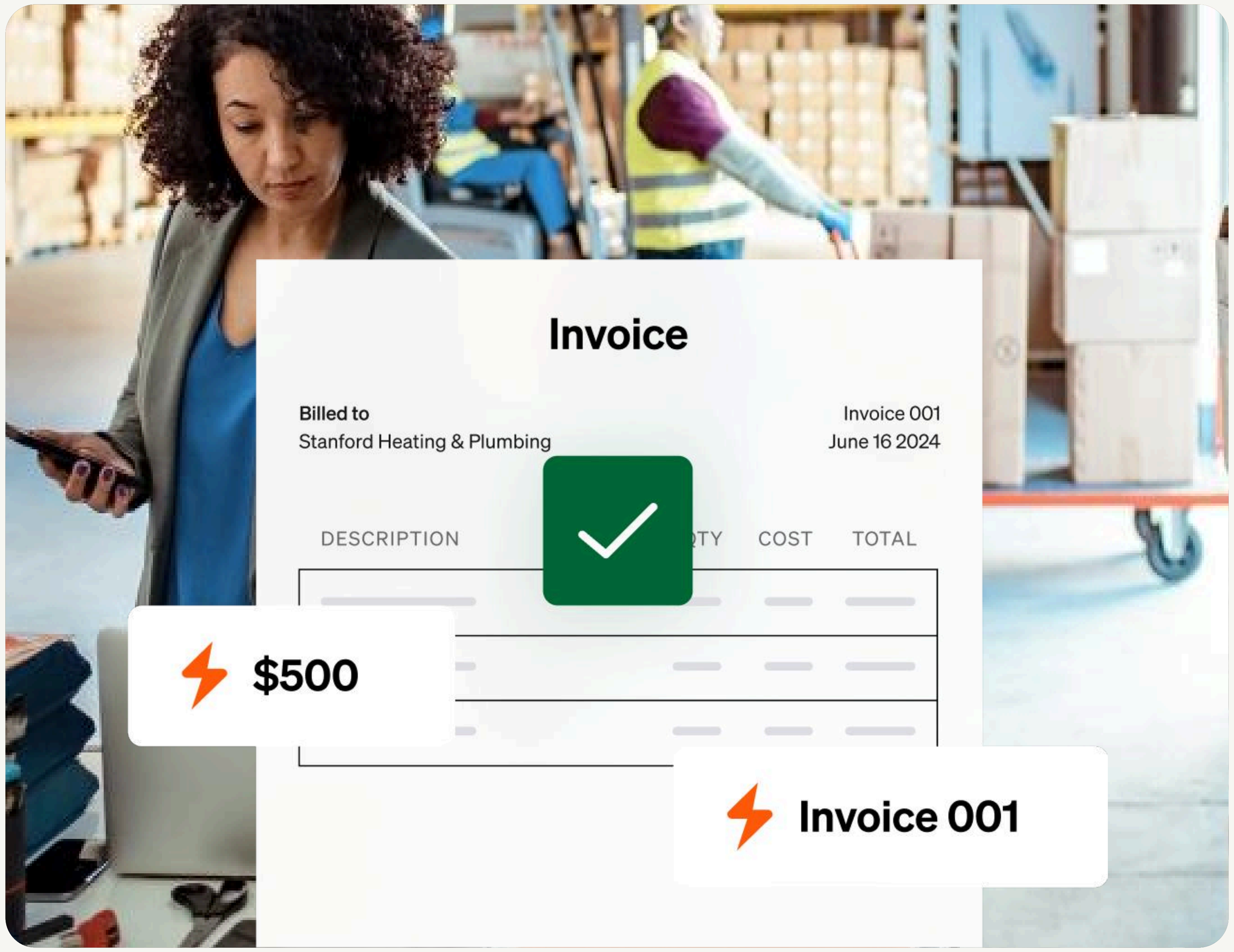
Vendor profiles

BILL's AI can help identify vendor address information from incoming invoices, which helps customers streamline the process of creating new vendor records in BILL.

See how BILL's AI helps our customers save time

"BILL AI auto-reads, extracts data, and enters it all automatically. It's a huge time saver and maintains data accuracy."

Manoj Bhutani, Director of Business Development, Furey



AI helps our customers:

Save time!

Help your team focus on what matters. Our surveyed customers report saving 50% of time on accounts payable[4] and an average 12 hours per month on expense management.[5]

Increase visibility

Have a backup process to scan for unusual transactions. BILL's AI searches for duplicate or unusual invoices and flags them for verification.

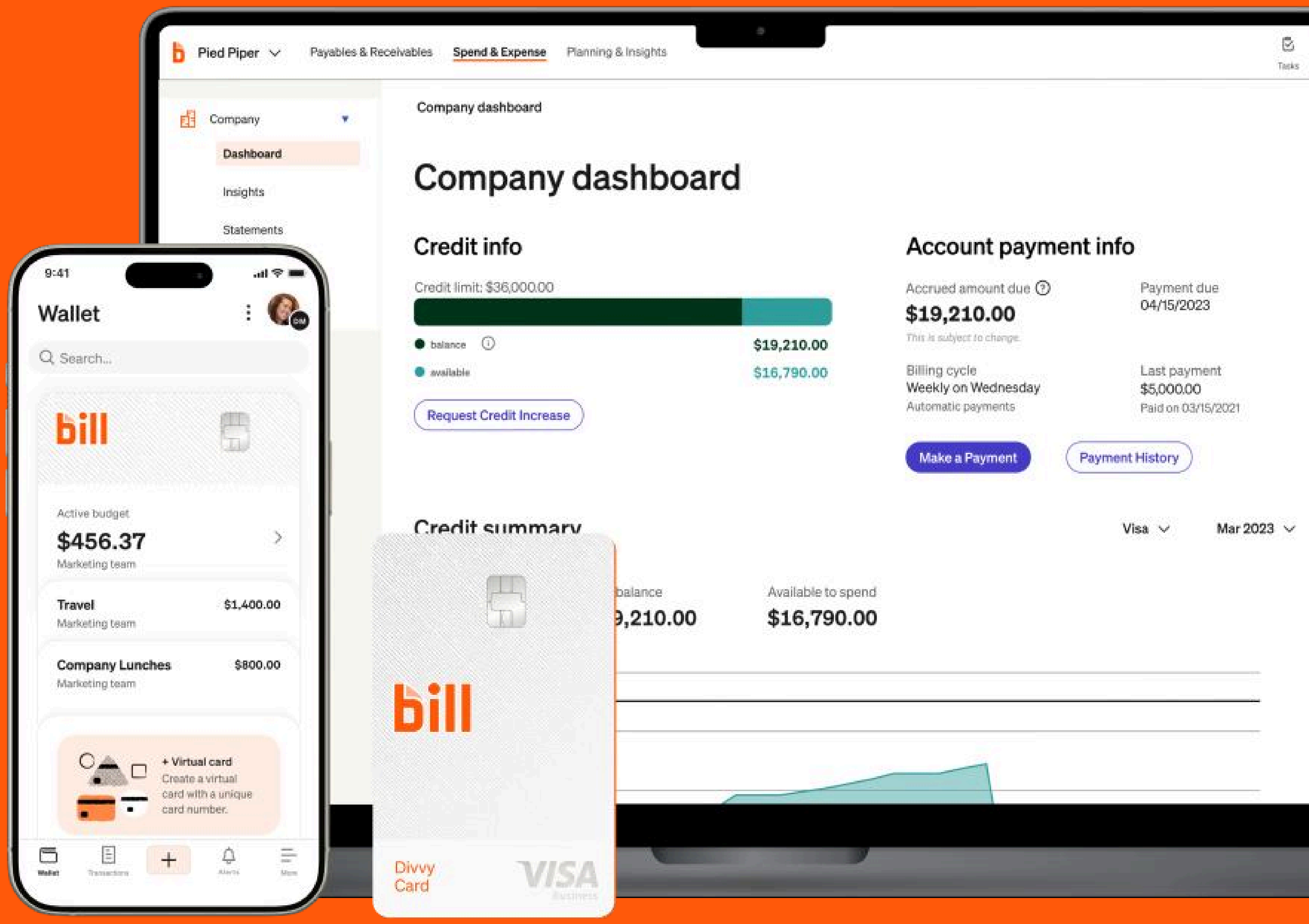
Streamline your clients' operations

Document management, category management, and vendor profiles help your team store information where they need it.

Ready to bring AI to your accounting firm?

Take a demo with BILL to experience AI for AP, AR, and spend and expense management.

Request Demo



[1] Computer Weekly, Stanford University finds that AI is outpacing Moore's Law.
[2] Finding qualified staff tops ranking of CPA firm top issues
[3] The State of Financial Automation Survey
[4] Based on a 2021 survey of over 2000 BILL customers.
[5] Based on a survey of 127 BILL Spend & Expense users conducted by UserEvidence in March 2022.
Card issued by Cross River Bank, member FDIC.
The BILL Divvy Card may be issued by one of Divvy Pay, LLC's bank partners. The BILL Divvy Card is not a deposit product. For your specific lender, see your Card Agreement. 28687-4252