

billtrust

Unleashing the Power of Al Assistance

An introduction to Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot

In the fast-paced world of financial operations, the quest for efficiency and accuracy is unending.

As the gatekeepers of cash flow, accounts receivable (AR) professionals bear the weight of ensuring timely payments while juggling multiple tasks. Imagine a world where mundane tasks are automated, where data-driven insights are just a query away, and where your tools seamlessly work together, freeing you to focus on strategic initiatives. This isn't a distant future—it's the reality that Al assistants are bringing to the forefront of AR operations.

In this eBook, we'll delve into the transformative role of AI assistants in accounts receivable (AR), exploring their capabilities, impact, and potential to revolutionize the way you work. We'll uncover the limitations of traditional BI analytics and showcase the power of Generative AI in driving proactive decision-making and data storytelling. You'll discover how AI assistants can streamline invoice-to-cash processes, payment reminders, and reconciliation, enhancing efficiency and accuracy while reducing the risk of errors.

We'll also introduce you to Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot, a comprehensive AI-powered platform designed to address the unique challenges faced by AR professionals. From interactive invoice data queries and analyzing payment trends to personalizing communication with customers and detecting anomalies in payment patterns, Finance Co-Pilot offers a holistic solution that integrates analytics, data, and AI to streamline AR operations.

As you navigate through this eBook, you'll gain insights into the latest advancements in AI technology and how they can be applied to accounts receivable (AR). You'll learn about the benefits of successfully implementing AI assistants in your organization. By embracing an AI assistant, like Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot, you'll be well-equipped to drive meaningful change, enhance efficiency, accuracy, and overall financial health within your team and across your organization.



What you'll learn

- Traditional BI analytics are no longer sufficient
- 2 The role of AI assistants in accounts receivable
- Why Al assistants satisfy business needs
- The ROI of implementing AI assistants in AR
- Billtrust's systematic approach for analytics, data and Al
- Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot
- A sneak peek in the future of Al and the Billtrust Unified AR platform



Traditional BI analytics are no longer sufficient

Today, while traditional Business Intelligence (BI) analytics remain widespread, their limitations - like reactive analyses and intricate setups or interfaces - have hindered their effectiveness. It's now crucial for everyone to ascend the analytics ladder and welcome AI/ML-powered analytics into the mix.

Generative AI is changing the way we approach data analysis within BI. Historically, Business Intelligence (BI) has leaned on past data to spot trends and patterns. But Generative Al breaks that barrier. It delves into tomorrow by crafting realistic future scenarios from present datasets.

The emergence of so-called Generative BI (the combination of Generative AI and traditional BI) heralds a fresh era in data-driven decision-making and makes it possible for working professionals - not just trained data scientists - to extract insights and excel in a data-centric environment.

Generative BI tackles the issues of traditional BI directly by offering:



Proactive and tailored insights



Enhanced decision-making speed



Seamless integration into current workflows

This newfound ability to explore future possibilities through data opens the door for a more impactful way of presenting information: data storytelling. In today's environment, data stories are quickly becoming the most popular way of interpreting data. Gartner even claims that by 2025 data stories will be the most widespread way of consuming analytics.

Data storytelling involves conveying data through narratives but is typically carried out manually. Generative AI lends itself perfectly for the automatic crafting of compelling narratives around the data. It has the ability to generate fresh content, including text, images, and even voice and video, drawing from the knowledge it has acquired or the data it possesses.

Powered by GenAI, AI assistants possess the capacity to go beyond just boosting analytics. You can pose natural language questions tailored to specific use cases, and in return they produce personalized reports, elucidate data through visualizations and actionable insights, and fundamentally transform how your organization grasps and harnesses business data.



The role of Al assistants in accounts receivable

You might be wondering, 'Can AI really make a difference in my accounts receivable (AR) department?'

Consider a typical day in the life of Sarah, an accounts receivable specialist. Sarah starts her day by manually generating invoices, a process that is prone to errors and often consumes a significant amount of her time. Throughout the day, she is constantly interrupted by phone calls and emails from customers inquiring about their account status or disputing invoices. These interruptions disrupt her workflow and make it difficult to focus on more strategic tasks, such as analyzing payment trends or identifying at-risk accounts.

Now, imagine if Sarah had access to an Al assistant that could automate and streamline AR tasks, send personalized payment reminders to customers, and reconcile accounts with minimal human intervention. With these mundane tasks off her plate, Sarah could dedicate more time to analyzing payment data, identifying patterns, and making data-driven recommendations to improve cash flow and enhance customer relationships.







In another scenario, John, a Finance Manager, is responsible for overseeing the AR team and ensuring that the company's cash flow remains healthy. John often finds himself overwhelmed by the volume of data generated by various AR processes and struggles to extract meaningful insights from this data. He wishes he had a tool that could help him analyze payment trends, identify at-risk accounts, and provide actionable recommendations to improve cash flow.

With the help of an AI assistant, John could gain access to real-time analytics, predictive insights, and personalized recommendations tailored to his specific needs and challenges. This would enable him to make informed decisions quickly, optimize AR processes, and drive business growth.

No wonder financial professionals like John and Sarah would like to lean more towards utilizing AI assistants as their initial point of contact, moving away from delving deep into accounts receivable software. AR software dashboards have constrained space, unable to handle all data presentations and types without complexity or cater to diverse user needs. While generating intricate reports or running queries is feasible, it's often challenging unless you're a data scientist.

Have you considered how an Al assistant could revolutionize your role in accounts receivable?

As with John and Sarah, it's worth pondering whether integrating an AI assistant into your workflow could not only streamline operations but also enhance accuracy and efficiency. How much value could this add to your role and, by extension, to the broader financial strategy of your organization?

To determine the potential impact an AI assistant could have on your AR team, consider these scenarios.

The list of questions could go on and on depending on your exact role, but if these questions evoke uncertainty, integrating Al into your finance operations could offer the clarity and analytical depth you're seeking. An AI assistant would have the capability to not only generate reports on these metrics but also provide predictive analysis and identify areas for improvement, enabling you to make informed decisions swiftly and with greater confidence.



Are you currently able to assess how your Days Sales Outstanding (DSO) from the past year compares to this year's figures, as well as how both align with industry benchmarks?



Do you have the analytic insight to **identify** the single largest contributing factor to any changes in your DSO during that time period?



Can you isolate critical patterns or trends in your AR process that could be optimized to accelerate payment collection?



Do you have the foresight to see which invoices are most likely to be paid late? And what tends to cause these payment delays?



Why Al assistants satisfy business needs

Al assistants excel at rapidly sifting through vast data repositories in real time, pinpointing trends, and offering insights that guide strategic decisions, enabling organizations to maintain a competitive edge. They are designed with the modern business in mind, embodying efficiency, automation, and unification in the AR process. Here's why it stands as a premier choice:



Leveraging advanced machine learning algorithms, AI assistants automate routine accounts receivable (AR) tasks with unparalleled precision. This automation frees up valuable human resources, allowing teams to focus on strategic initiatives rather than administrative duties.



Enhanced accuracy

By minimizing human intervention, AI assistants significantly reduce the potential for error, ensuring that financial records are accurate and reliable. This accuracy is crucial for maintaining compliance and making informed business decisions.



Proactive engagement

Through predictive analytics, AI assistants identify potential payment issues before they become problematic. They enable businesses to engage customers proactively, fostering positive relationships and encouraging timely payments.



Customizable communication

Understanding that every business and its customers are unique, many AI assistants offer customizable communication templates. These ensure that payment reminders are not only timely but also reflect the brand's voice and ethos.



Comprehensive integration

All assistants should seamlessly integrate with existing financial systems, providing a unified platform for managing all aspects of accounts receivable. This integration simplifies data management and provides a holistic view of financial health.



Empowering teams

Al assistants equip your team with the knowledge and tools they need to excel in their roles. With the mundane tasks handled and time freed up, your team can focus on developing specialized skills and expertise that contribute significantly to AR success.



The ROI of implementing Al assistants in Accounts Receivable (AR)

Cost savings & efficiency gains

- Automation savings → Getting things done, faster than before
- **Error reduction** → Minimizing human errors in retrieving AR data
- **Time savings** \rightarrow Al Assistant 24/7 available, getting better with time
- **Increased productivity** → Focus on strategic initiatives

Improved cash flow

- **Faster AR flows** → Get cash faster in the door
- **Predictive analytics** → Proactive management of AR

Enhanced customer relationships

- **Personalized engagement with customers** → Stronger relationships
- **Timely payment reminders** → Reduced late fees

Data-driven decision making

- **Better actionable insights** → Better informed decisions
- **Faster root cause analysis** → Preventing future issues

Scalability & competitive advantage

Business growth → Without adding headcount

Compliance & security

- **Reduced compliance risks** → Avoid costly regulatory issues
- **Enhanced data security** → AI forces to get your data house in order



Billtrust's systematic approach for analytics, data, and Al

Billtrust offers a comprehensive and systematic approach to analytics, data, and AI, addressing the limitations of traditional predefined dashboards and standard analytics frameworks. Our vision integrates analytics modules with Generative AI to provide timely insights as needed.

We view AI and analytics as interconnected components of a unified platform. Our curated analytics spans from benchmarking and analytical metrics to prescriptive, predictive analytics, and cognitive workflows. The journey begins with transactional reporting and analytics dashboards, allowing for initial insights and paving the way for more in-depth analysis that streamlines processes.

Doug Appelson: "There's a lot of information out there, but your system has to be designed in such a way as to have that information source as part of the dataset. That's why we are always talking to our customers, understanding their pain points. We employ a phased approach to systematically embed Al workflows into our products, ensuring they meet evolving business needs."

"You can surface things you wouldn't know how to get to."



Doug Appelson
Product Manager, Analytics & Al
Billtrust



Billtrust vision for AI/ML, analytics, and data

Transactional Reporting

Real-time visibility into financial transactions enables monitoring of individual payments and invoices.



Analytics **Dashboards**

Data-driven insights identify patterns, anomalies, and opportunities for improvement.



Analytical (OLAP) Database

Peer Benchmarking

Benchmark performance metrics, processes, or practices against industry leaders or best-in-class companies.

Finance Co-Pilot

Utilize AI for generating insights, predicting trends, and automating data analysis, facilitating the ability to ask complex questions and receive actionable answers.



Finance Co-Pilot Advancements or Multi-Agent Al

An intelligent system capable of handling complex, multi-dimensional inquiries, providing holistic insights.



Vector

Common data models





It's all about trust in the data, and the way it's secured

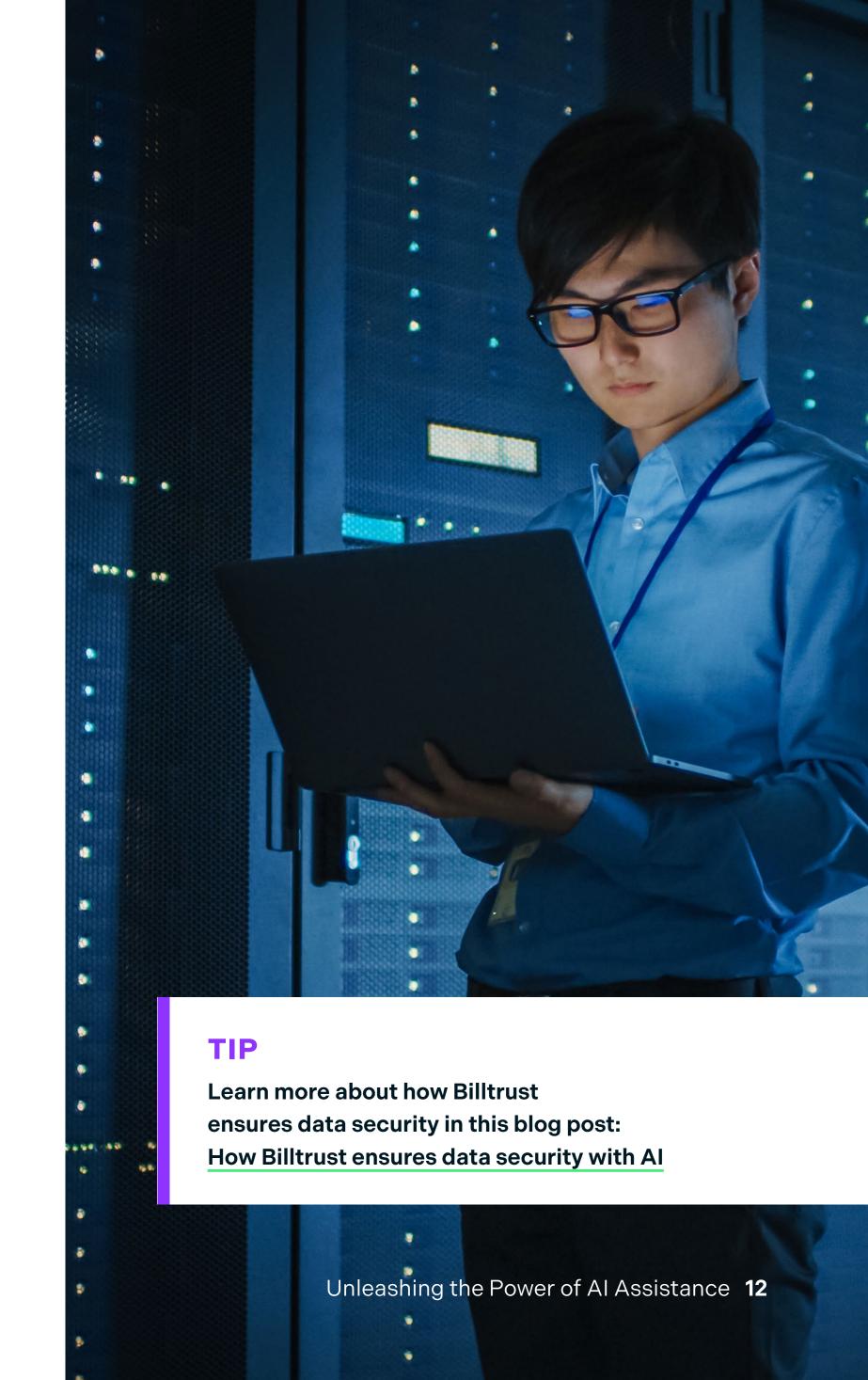
It's important to have proper guardrails in place to handle your data.

The backbone of your business's financial operations deserves nothing less than a pioneering approach, especially in today's digital age where data security and privacy is paramount.

At Billtrust, our primary focus is on advancing accounts receivable (AR) while maintaining stringent data security and privacy standards. We employ industry-leading foundation models like OpenAI Enterprise and Azure OpenAI, both of which adhere to enterprise-grade security measures, including data encryption at rest and in transit, strict access controls, and compliance with customer-specific data usage policies. These models never train on sensitive customer data such as personally identifiable information (PII) or credit card details.

Additionally, to access text data in a way that is compatible with LLMs, we utilize vector databases for retrieval-augmented generation (RAG), enhancing the quality of results without compromising data security. While we do share data for generative AI chats, we strictly limit this to data table structures and definitions, adhering to policies that prevent external training or unauthorized use. For data storage, we rely on secure, state-of-the-art cloud solutions like Snowflake and MongoDB, ensuring robust security and governance features are in place.

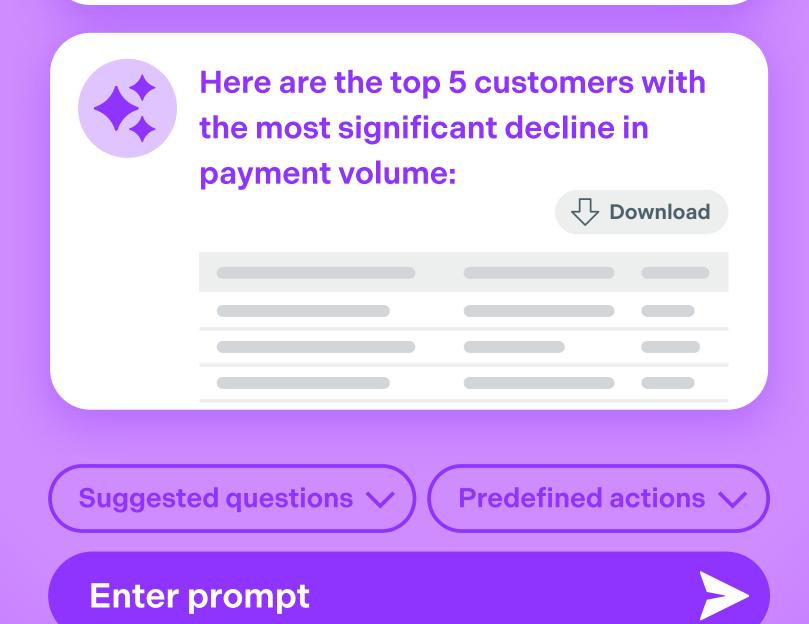
In essence, our analytics dashboards and AI agents handle data securely and privately, maintaining the integrity of information processing.





Over the last 12 months, which of my top 25% customers by payment volume have declined most significantly in payment volume?





Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot

What is Finance Co-Pilot?

Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot leverages AI for generating insights, predicting trends, and automating data analysis, allowing you to effortlessly address both common and more complex questions about your AR data, and receiving actionable answers.

Generative AI acts as a crucial link, bridging information gaps through a translation layer between the language model and data. It meticulously prepares and refines data, sifting through vast volumes that may otherwise impede progress.

Al facilitates multi-step inquiries into data

Which of my customers has significantly decreased their normal payment volume over the last month? How is my ACH volume trending against credit card volume?

Where has auto pay been turned off for my customers?

Which customers are trending slower in the time it takes to send payment?

How is

surcharging

impacting my

ACH to credit

card split?

Which accounts haven't been touched by a collector in 2 weeks?

Which customers are not providing concise remittance advice?

Which customers are changing their payment method?

How have my acceptance costs changed over the

last 12 months?

Which accounts receive their invoices via multiple delivery methods and what were those delivery methods? How much is scheduled to be paid tomorrow? This week?

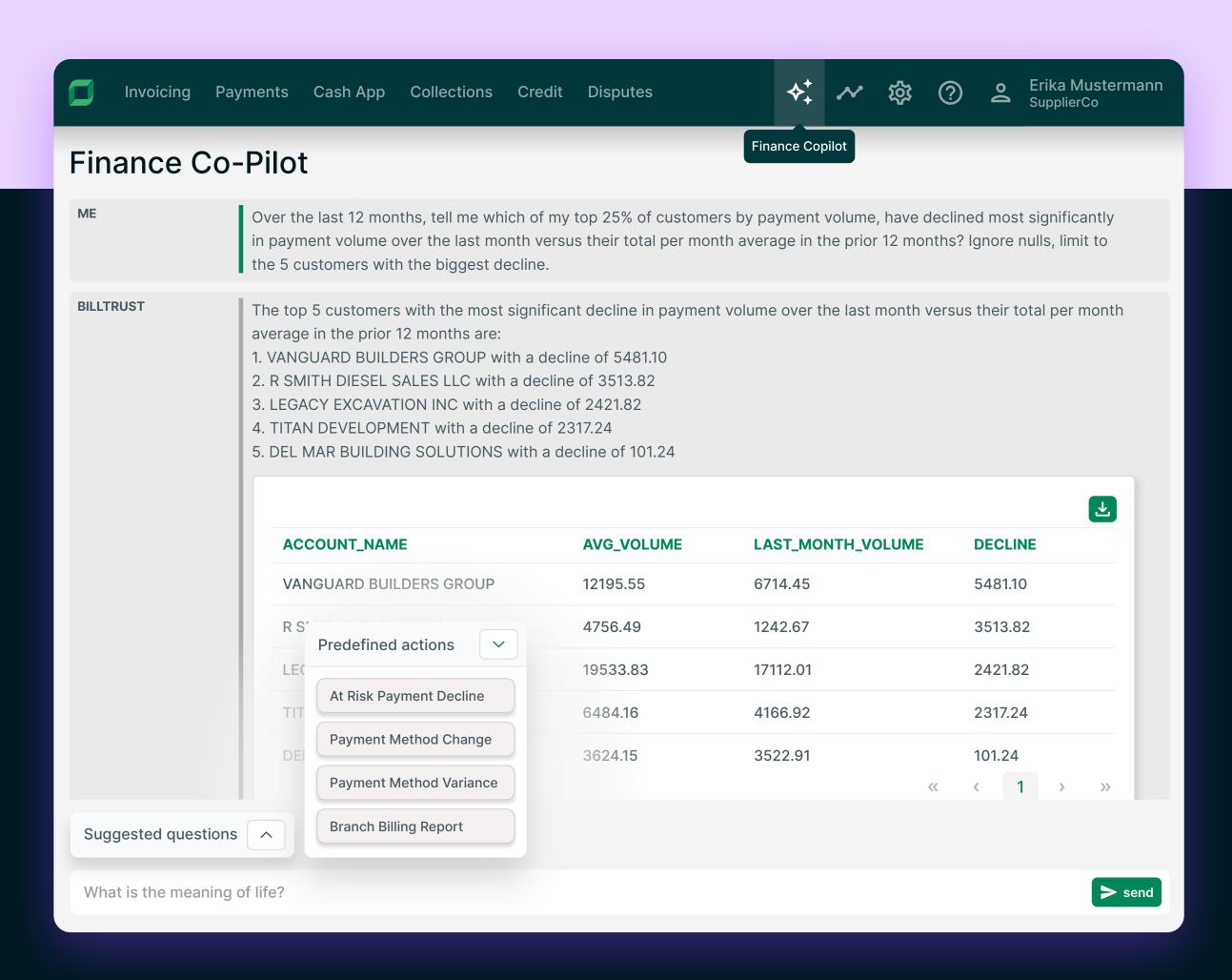
Which customers have started paying online and still receive paper invoices?

What is the total YTD invoiced amount for account X? How many invoices were sent and how were those invoices sent?



How does Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot work?

In the first phase, it works as follows:



- Similar to LLM assistants such as ChatGPT, you can type in questions you have about your AR data.
- We're not expecting or assuming you know how to prompt really complex questions. So, we'll present you with suggested questions and actionable insights via predefined actions.
- When you choose one of these suggested questions or 3 actions, a longer preconfigured prompt is generated.

Here's an illustration of the Predefined Action 'At Risk Payment Decline' which creates the following prompt:

"Over the last 12 months, tell me which of my top 25% of customers by payment volume, have declined most significantly in payment volume over the last month versus their total per month average in the prior 12 months? Ignore nulls, limit to the 5 customers with the biggest decline."

You can switch out some data for your own data, such as changing the time frame, numbers or percentages to get the answer you need. In our example you simply adjust the numbers in bold. You can also write your own prompts if you feel comfortable doing so. Hit enter and the answer is presented in a narrative format and can be downloaded as a table.



Interactive invoice data queries

Challenge: Difficulty in accessing and retrieving specific invoice data, leading to time-consuming manual searches and potential errors in AR operations.

Solution: The AI-powered invoice data querying capabilities of Billtrust Finance Co-Pilot enables you to ask detailed questions in an intuitive manner about invoices and invoice data, leading to improved efficiency, accuracy, and user satisfaction in AR operations.



Personalizing communication with customers

Challenge: Difficulty in personalizing communication with customers, leading to ineffective collection efforts, reduced customer satisfaction, and delayed payments in accounts receivable operations.

Solution: Billtrust Finance Co-Pilot can draft personalized communication, including urgent payment reminders and collection emails, tailored to each customer's payment behavior, locale, language, and historical correspondence. This leads to improved customer engagement, enhanced collection efforts, and optimized cash flow management in accounts receivable operations.



Analyzing payment trends and identifying at-risk customers

Challenge: Difficulty in identifying payment trends and at-risk customers in a timely manner, leading to cash flow challenges and potential revenue loss in accounts receivable operations.

Solution: Billtrust Finance Co-Pilot analyzes payment trends and identifies at-risk customers by processing historical payment data and providing actionable insights through natural language processing (NLP) and predictive analytics.



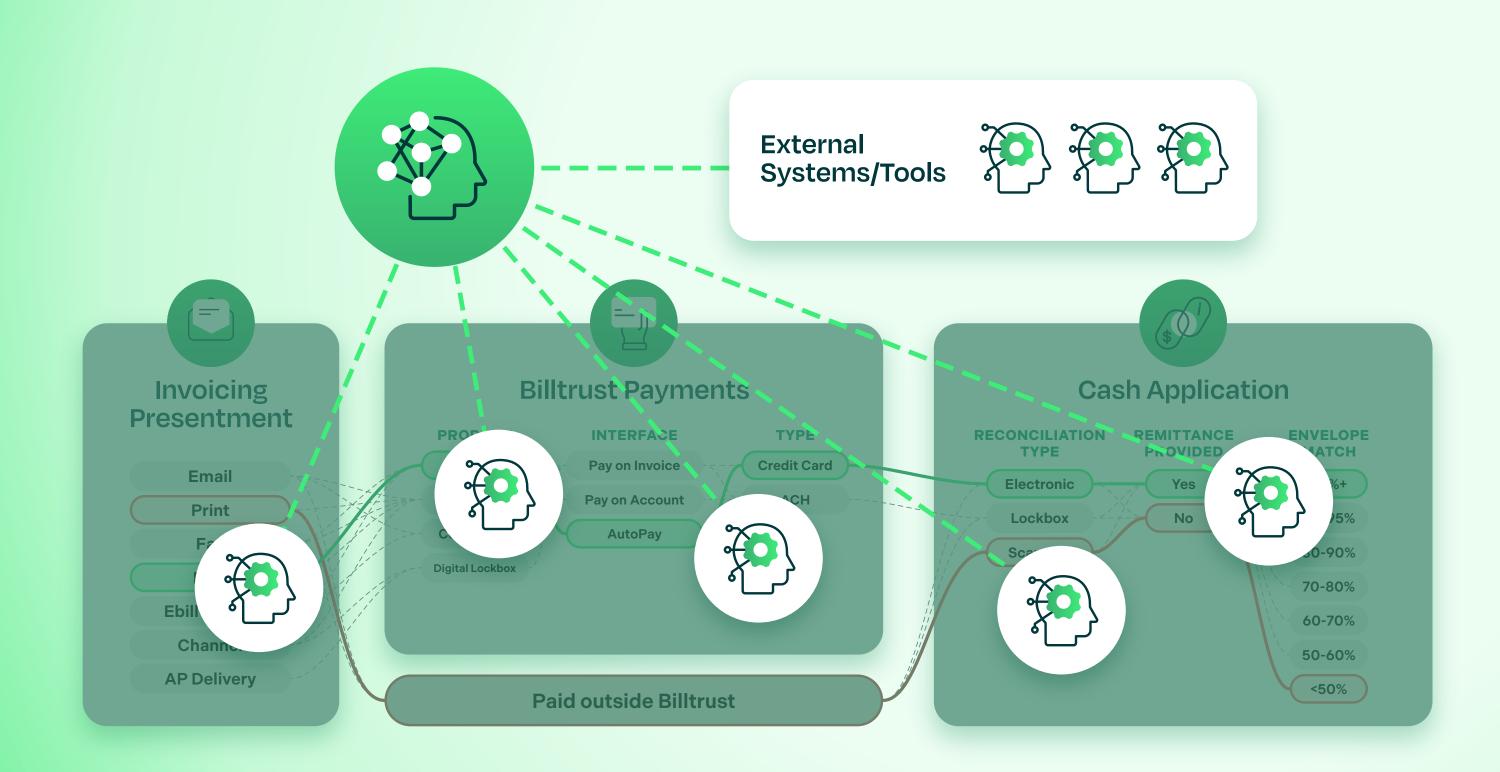
Detect anomalies in payment patterns

Challenge: Difficulty in identifying and addressing anomalous payment behaviors and patterns in a timely manner, leading to delayed detection of payment issues, reduced cash flow, and potential revenue loss in accounts receivable operations.

Solution: Al-powered anomaly detection capabilities enable financial teams to proactively identify and address payment issues by analyzing and reporting anomalous payment behaviors and patterns, leading to improved cash flow management, reduced revenue loss, and enhanced customer satisfaction in accounts receivable operations.



A sneak peek into the future of Al and the Billtrust Unified AR platform



Multi-agent framework

During the early stages of using Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot, you have the opportunity to explore both basic and complex elements of your AR data, with Al surfacing relevant information.

However, what lies ahead is set to revolutionize AR software as we know it. With Unified AR Analytics you'll gain comprehensive cross-domain insights into buyer behavior throughout the AR lifecycle. This involves a layer above individual processes, where Al acts as an orchestrator across various domains and can carry out tasks.

"When I think about Generative AI, it is almost like an add-on assistant. By integrating the human touch, Al optimizes processes and minimizes unnecessary overhead."



Ahsan Shah SVP, Analytics & Al Billtrust

Cross domain insights are on the horizon

This approach will optimize various steps in the AR process and wouldn't be possible without the seamless integration of analytics, data and Al and the shift toward agentic, or multi-agent Generative AI. These AI Agents, as part of a Multi-agent framework, look to surface the data, connect the dots, and churn out insights and recommendations. Together, they resemble an empowered team of data analysts. Tasks that once demanded extensive time can now be efficiently handled by these AI agents.

Ahsan Shah: "There's no reason to think that Al agents can't become multi-agent ecosystems. Picture this: an AI focused on payments engaging in conversation with another AI in the collections realm. But it doesn't end there. Even data outside the AR flow is within grasp. These AI Agents can comb through the web and various sources, extracting financial insights, company information, and quarterly reports."

While we have yet to reach that point, numerous guardrails are being implemented. However, the cross-domain and cross-functional applications of Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot could prove to have a compounding impact the higher up the stack you go. Ahsan Shah: "The end result could be a complete comprehensive analysis including written reports and graphs, but it also enables dynamic workflows such as personalized buyer communication - think about an email or a newsletter — or a self-service CSM (Customer Service Management)."

At Billtrust, we help suppliers tailor their Al and accounts receivable strategies. Ahsan Shah clarifies, "We pinpoint areas where buyers utilize suboptimal AR flows, offer personalized suggestions, assist in campaign management, and drive strategic decision-making. This marks a distinct move from isolated solutions to a holistic approach that maximizes the capabilities of Generative Al."



EXAMPLE

Multi-agent workflows

While the ideal scenario involves timely payment of all invoices, reality often falls short. This is where the collections department steps in to pursue the outstanding payments.

Ahsan Shah: "What if you knew, with the help from an AI assistant that an invoice might be forecasted to default? And you have this historical data about that customer, including communication, emails, and correspondence. It would be possible to feed a personalized recommendation to your buyer."

These multi-agent workflows, as we like to call them, combine personalization content with enterprise data. Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot could produce something like this:

Question:

You want to find the top 5 buyer accounts - as defined by your default buyer rule - and craft a personalized email using the health of the buyer account and historical trend. If it's a fairly well performing account you'd want the email to be soft/polite, and you'd want it to be more terse for cases where this is a collections risk.



Result:



The Average Days to Pay and Average Terms of the supplier Apotheke Supply are 37.47 and **33.97** respectively.

As an AR Director/Manager you'll get presented with your average Days to Pay and Average Terms, and your Average DTP index (benchmark). These analytics are based on the payments data that sits in your Billtrust platform.



The top 5 offending buyers (highest Average Days to Pay) where Average Days to Pay is less than or equal to 50 and total number of payments is greater than 5 are **SPREE**

CONSTRUCTION LLC, MEAD DEVELOPMENT, AARON BROS INC, SHARP BUILDING, and GOETZ CONSTRUCTION.

You'll also get your top 5 offending buyers based on your default buyer rule. Again, this is all payments data in the Billtrust platform.



Spree Construction LLC's financial performance is strong, with a gross margin of 53.0% and an increase in adjusted EBITDA of 11.4%.

We'll also have a look at their financial performance if this data is available externally. This information is helpful to determine risk.



Spree Construction LLC has traditionally been consistent with payments and has recently begun to default. Possibly consider adjusting terms.

In a next step we'll determine the payment behavior of these buyers. We'll tell you if they are historically consistent with payments to your business, and if their recent payment failure is a one-off. We'll also give a recommendation to maybe adjust the payment terms for this one time. The last two steps are intended for the collections team.

Soft and polite email

Subject: Friendly Reminder Regarding Payment

Dear Spree Construction LLC,

I hope this email finds you well. We kindly request that you make the outstanding payment at your earliest convenience. Alternatively, if cash flow is an issue this month, we are willing to consider extending the net terms from 30 to 45 days to accommodate your needs. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated. Thank you.

Best regards, [Your Name]

Terse and demanding email

Subject: URGENT: Account Delinquent - Immediate Action Required

SPREE CONSTRUCTION LLC

Your account is significantly overdue, and we cannot overlook this matter any longer. Immediate payment is required to bring your account back into good standing. Failure to remit payment within the next 48 hours will result in further action. Act now to avoid serious consequences.

Regards, [Your Name]

In a last action the Billtrust Finance Co-Pilot generates two personalized emails, a soft/ polite one where the payment terms are temporarily extended, and a more demanding one where payment is needed asap.





EXAMPLE

Expanded buyer risk analysis

Let's dive further into the future and see what an expanded buyer risk analysis can look like. Imagine getting a comprehensive buyer analysis to understand the complete picture. This in-depth analysis will leverage the power of multiple AI agents. These agents will work together to uncover hidden patterns within your data, weaving the information into a clear, easy-to-understand narrative.

While this advanced analysis isn't available yet, it showcases the exciting possibilities on the horizon for Billtrust Finance Co-Pilot. Possible outcomes could include:

Business Analyst-style reports

Let's say you want to compare invoicing data, payment counts and average days to pay, and search for trends and anomalies across invoicing and payments for the last 5 months, The article comes out with an analysis for the three parameters, a comprehensive analysis for all combined and a conclusion and recommendations.

Good and bad behavior talking points

Based on our analysis we can generate a customer appreciation call script that shows appreciation for their good payment behavior, highlights what is good and maybe offer some incentives as a token of gratitude. Likewise, we can do the same and have a discussion about their worsening payment history, and how timely payments are necessary to adhere to payment terms. We can offer assistance or alternatives.

Dunning letters

We can generate a dunning letter template for each customer based on the provided data, each letter is tailored to the specific details of the overdue invoice(s).

Dealer Financial Analysis Reports

We can also generate a Financial Analysis Report of dealers across the network



Al assistants will be instrumental to the finance function of the future

As you navigated through this eBook, you've gained valuable insights into the transformative role of AI assistants in accounts receivable. From automating routine tasks to offering predictive analytics and personalized insights, the potential for driving efficiency, accuracy, and overall financial health is vast.

They'll fundamentally change AR processes, starting with refining specific operations' efficiency. As their tools and capabilities advance, they'll extend their influence over a broader spectrum of accounts receivable tasks, making proactive suggestions and real-time insights the standard practice.

Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot exemplifies this transformation, offering a holistic platform that integrates analytics, data, and AI to streamline AR operations and empower finance professionals to make informed, strategic decisions.

As you continue to explore these innovative technologies and strategies, consider how they align with your organization's goals and objectives. Think about the opportunities for automation, the potential for leveraging data-driven insights, and the impact on your team's efficiency and productivity. By embracing these cutting-edge solutions and advocating for their adoption within your organization, you can play a pivotal role in driving meaningful change and setting a new standard for excellence in accounts receivable.

After all, in accounts receivable, it's not just about keeping pace; it's about setting the pace in financial management. So, take the next step on this journey towards digital transformation and discover how you can leverage Billtrust's Finance Co-Pilot to redefine the future of your accounts receivable.





Learn more

Visit billtrust.com or contact our sales team.

ABOUT BILLTRUST

Finance leaders turn to Billtrust to get paid faster while controlling costs, accelerating cash flow and maximizing customer satisfaction. As a B2B order-to-cash software and digital payments market leader, we help the world's leading brands move finance forward with Al-powered solutions to transition from expensive paper invoicing and check acceptance to efficient electronic billing and payments. With more than \$1 trillion invoice dollars processed, Billtrust delivers business value through deep industry expertise and a culture relentlessly focused on delivering meaningful customer outcomes.

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