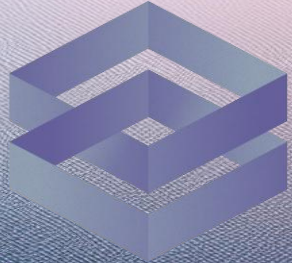


# RPA & Machine Learning

*Presented by:*  
Gail Gray, CPA



## Today's Agenda

Why AI matters for Finance

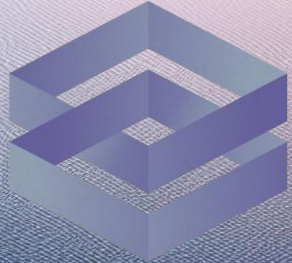
AI Foundations: What it is (and Isn't)

Generative AI, Copilot, and Governance

Risk, Controls and Responsible Use

AI, RPA, and Real-World Finance Automation

Readiness, Myths, and Next Steps



## Gail Gray, CPA

- CEO – GrayLopez
- 30+ years in public-sector finance
- RPA/AI strategic leader
- Speaker
- Retired Partner LSL CPAs





# AI FOUNDATIONS *FOR FINANCE*

# Why We're Here Today

AI is already  
changing how  
work gets done

Finance teams  
are being  
impacted first

This session  
focuses on  
understanding,  
not hype

Good decisions  
start with  
shared  
language

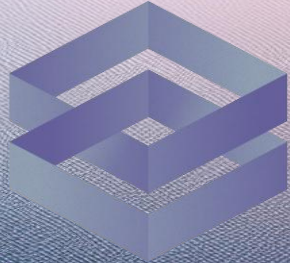


# Why Are We Talking About AI Now?

- AI adoption is accelerating across all industries
- Finance teams are already using AI, intentionally or formally
- The question is no longer if, but how
- Today is about understanding before adopting

*This session is not about replacing people, it's about understanding what's already here and how to use it responsibly.*





## POLL #1

How familiar are you with AI tools in your day-to-day work?

**Answer Options:**

- a) Very familiar — I use them regularly
- b) Somewhat familiar — I've experimented
- c) Aware, but not using them
- d) Not familiar at all

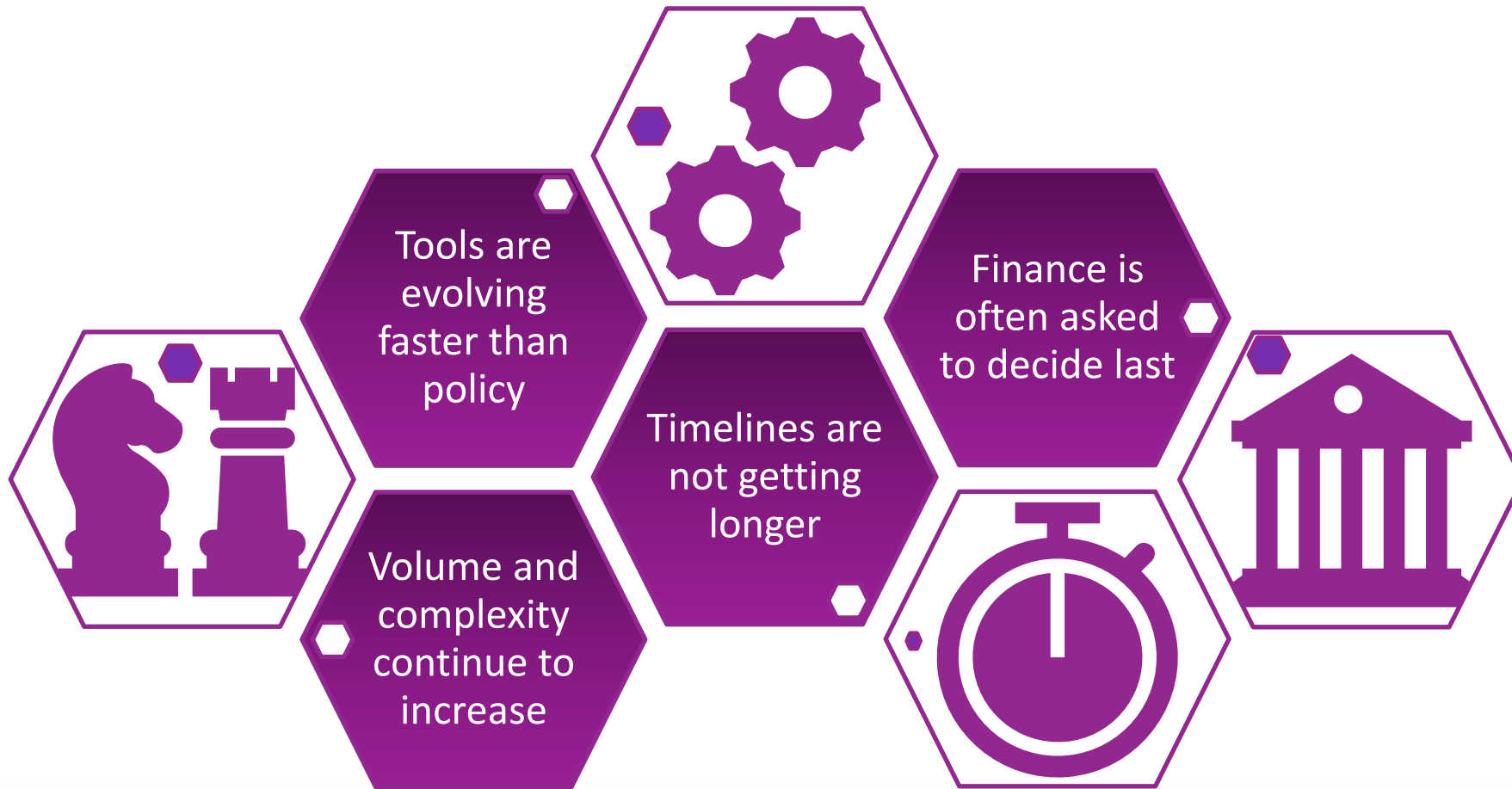
# What Is Artificial Intelligence?

*AI doesn't 'know' things  
it predicts the most likely answer.*

- Systems that perform tasks requiring human-like intelligence
- Recognizes patterns, makes predictions, and generates recommendations
- AI does not think, it calculates probabilities
- Output quality depends on data, rules, and context provided



# Why AI Is a Finance Conversation



# What Is Generative AI?



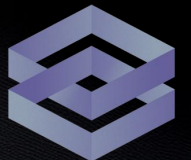
*Examples:  
ChatGPT, Copilot,  
Gemini*

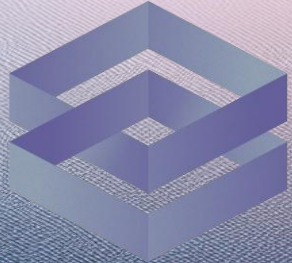
- Generates new text, images, summaries, and code
- Learns patterns from massive data sets
- Responds to natural language prompts



# Why This Technology Feels Different

- Uses natural language
- Produces work instantly
- Sounds confident and authoritative
- Challenges how expertise shows up





## POLL #2

What about AI feels most different compared to other technology tools?

**Answer Options:**

- a) It uses natural language
- b) It produces results instantly
- c) It sounds confident and authoritative
- d) I'm not sure yet

# ChatGPT: A General-Purpose AI Assistant

## *Characteristics:*

- Works with natural language
- Good at drafting, summarizing, and explaining
- Not connected to your systems by default
- Requires human review



## *How to use:*

- Excellent for first drafts
- Powerful with good prompts
- Dangerous without review
- Value comes from how you use it

# ChatGPT vs Copilot

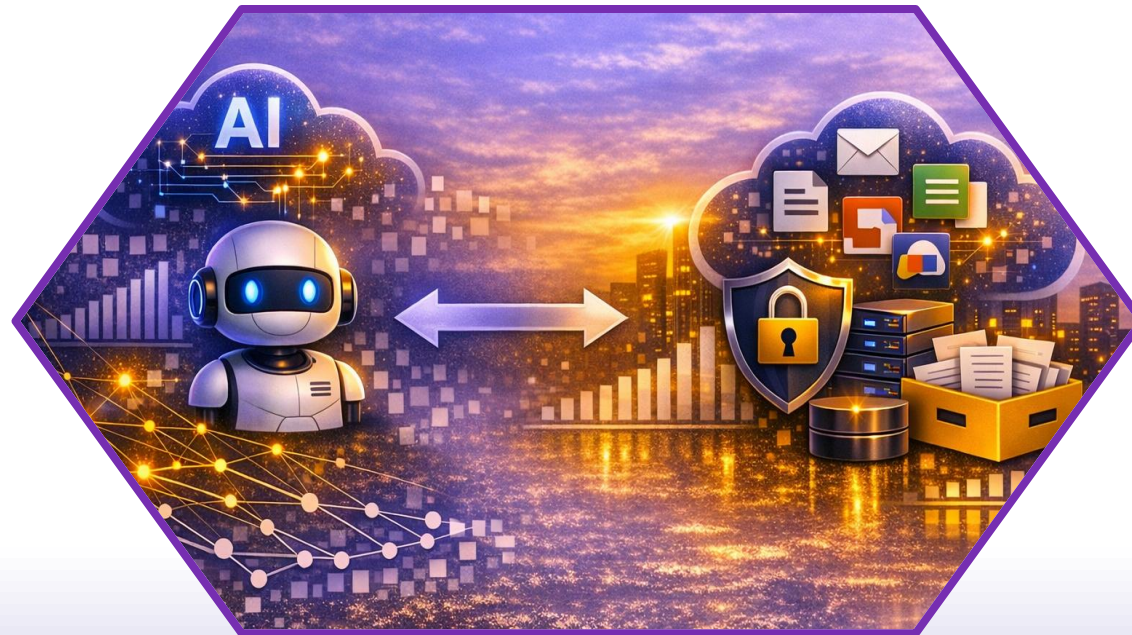
CHAT GPT

Broad, flexible, standalone

COPILOT

Secure, contextual, embedded

*Different tools for different needs Governance matters*



# Copilot: AI Inside Your Environment

*Same Engine  
Different Guardrails*



Uses your  
data context

Embedded  
in Microsoft  
365

Respects  
security and  
permissions

Designed for  
enterprise  
use



# What Are AI Hallucinations?

- AI can generate confident but incorrect answers
- This happens when information is missing or unclear
- Risk increases without verification
- Human review is required



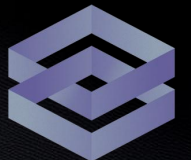
# Where You Must Be Careful

Confident tone does not mean accuracy

Citations may be fabricated

Context must be provided

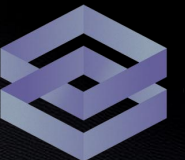
Outputs must be reviewed

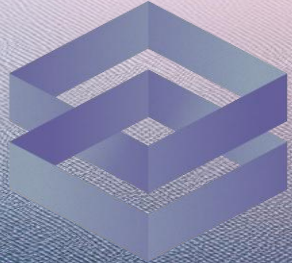


# Where Chat Tools Stop

- They answer
- They don't execute
- They don't verify outcomes
- They still need a human owner

*Output is not the same as outcome*





## POLL #3

Which statement best matches how AI tools are used in your organization today?

**Answer Options:**

- a) Only approved, enterprise tools (like Copilot)
- b) A mix of approved tools and public AI tools
- c) Mostly public AI tools used informally
- d) Not sure / no clear guidance

# What AI Is NOT



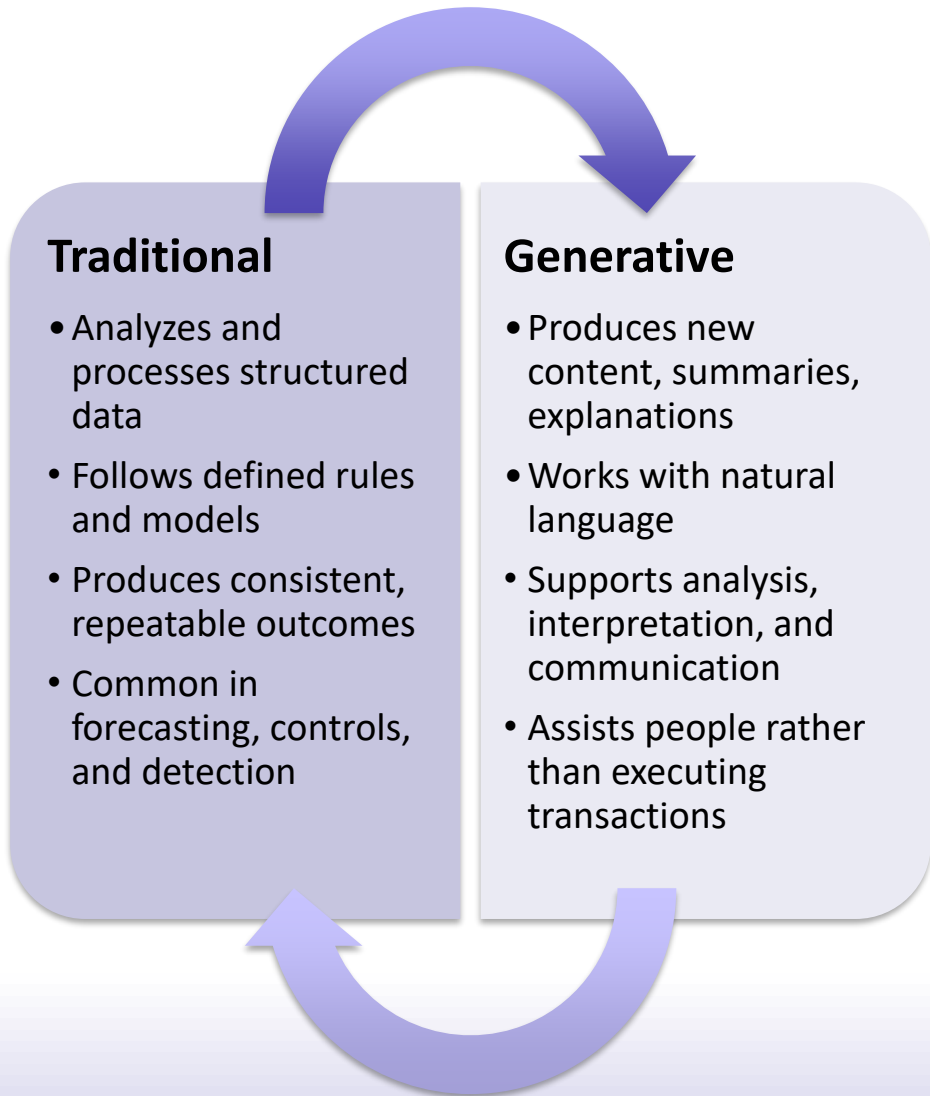
AI is not always correct

AI does not replace professional judgment

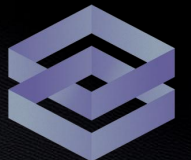
AI does not understand context unless you provide it

AI should not be trusted blindly

# Traditional AI vs. Generative AI



*Both AI types complement each other in modern business and finance.*



# Traditional AI: Already in Finance

*You're already using AI; it just hasn't been branded that way.*

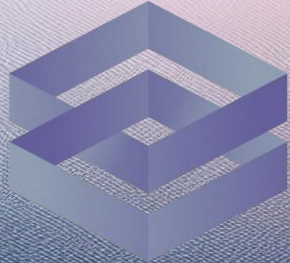
Fraud detection

Anomaly detection



Forecasting and trend analysis

Rules-based approvals and controls



## POLL #4

What do you see as the biggest risk when using generative AI in finance?

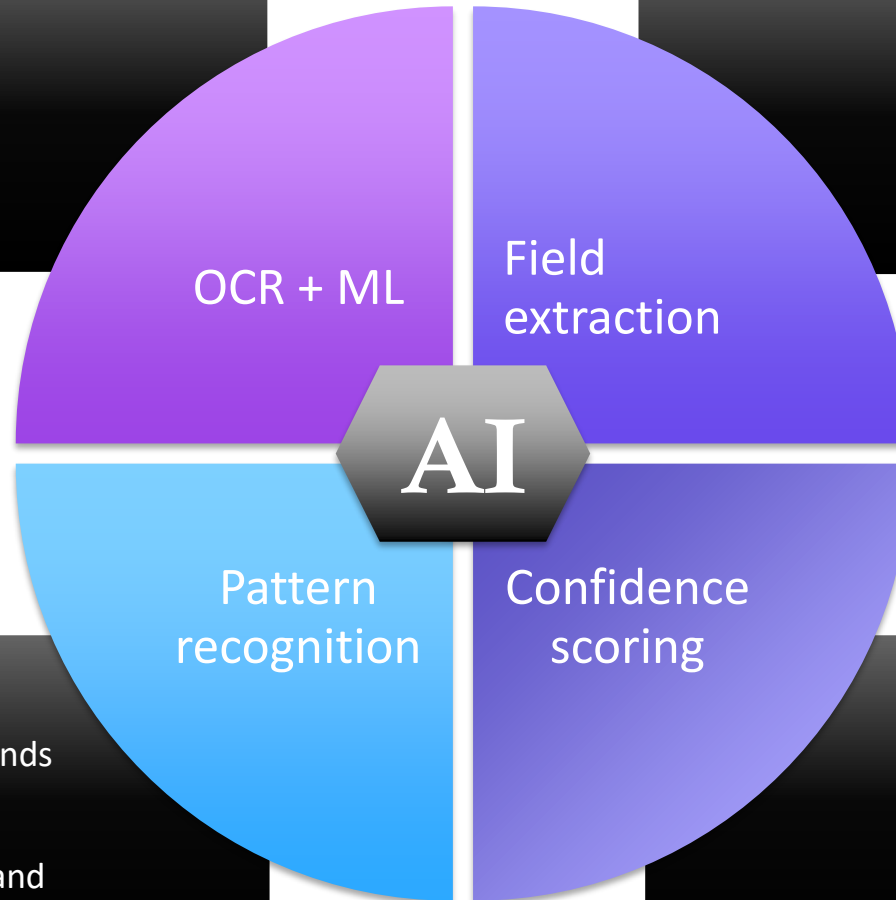
**Answer Options:**

- a) Inaccurate or incomplete information
- b) Overreliance without human review
- c) Lack of context or poor prompts
- d) Data security or governance concerns

# AI Utilization

AI reads invoices by converting PDFs and Scans into machine-readable text.

AI identifies and pulls key data automatically



AI learns from thousands of vendor invoices, recognizing layouts, repeating structures and exceptions.

Every field extracted is assigned a confidence score, letting the bot know what values are reliable



# What is Machine Learning (In Plain Finance Terms)?

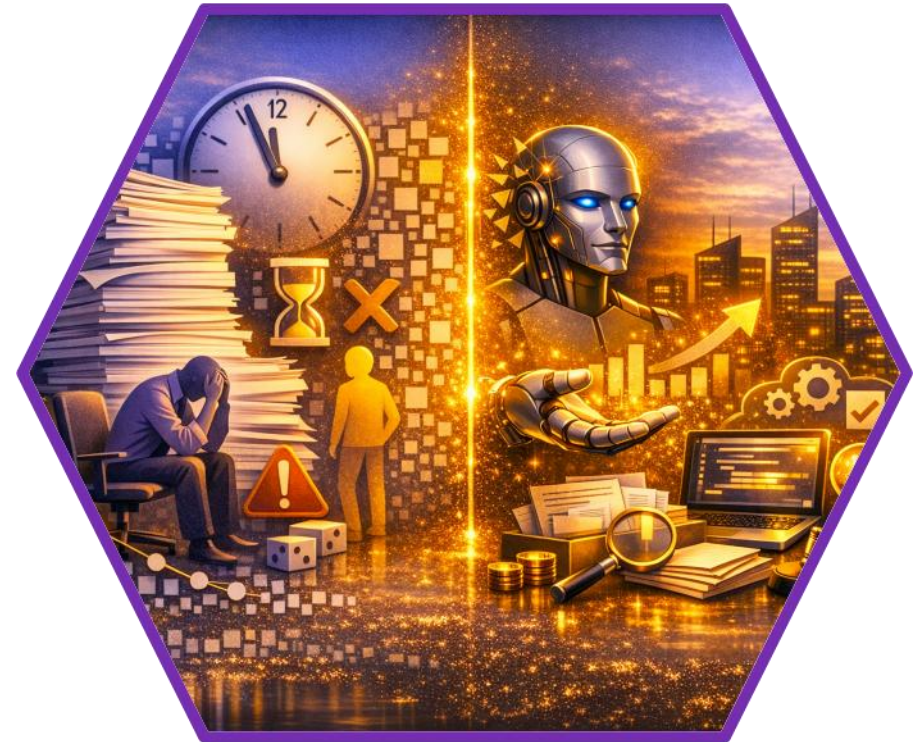
- Machine learning learns patterns from historical data
- It improves accuracy over time as more data is processed
- It supports classification, predictions and confidence scoring
- It does not make decisions, it informs them



# What is RPA

## *(Robotic Process Automation)*

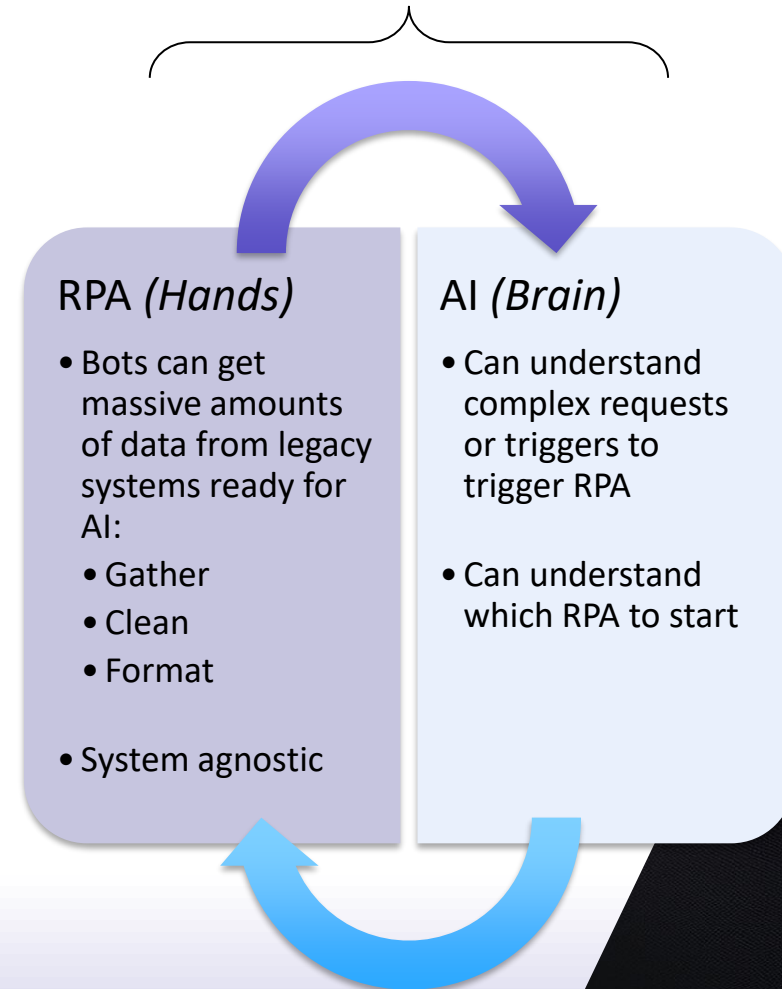
- Bots follow rules
- Repetitive tasks
- High Volume
- Computer-based
- Highly Manual
- Cross-system execution
  - *Bots move data across all systems end-to-end*
- Human middleware reduction
  - *Automation eliminates manual “copy-paste” work between those systems*



# RPA & AI: Complementary Roles

- RPA executes defined processes
- AI supports decisions and judgment
- RPA delivers consistency.
- AI delivers adaptability
- AI manages exceptions intelligently, and RPA manages the structured steps.

## Intelligent Process Automation (IPA)



# When to Use RPA vs. Machine Learning

## Use RPA when:

- Steps are known and repeatable
- Rules are stable
- Outcomes must be identical every time

## Use Machine Learning When:

- Patterns matter
- Confidence and probability help prioritize review
- Inputs vary

# Possible Impacts of AP Automation

- Dramatically reduced AP Processing time
- Fewer manual touchpoints -> less rework and fewer delays

Operational Efficiency



- Real-time tracking of invoices across departments
- Stronger, consistent audit trail

Visibility & Control



- Team shifted from manual entry to higher-value analytical work
- Less burnout; greater capacity to absorb volume growth

Staff Experience

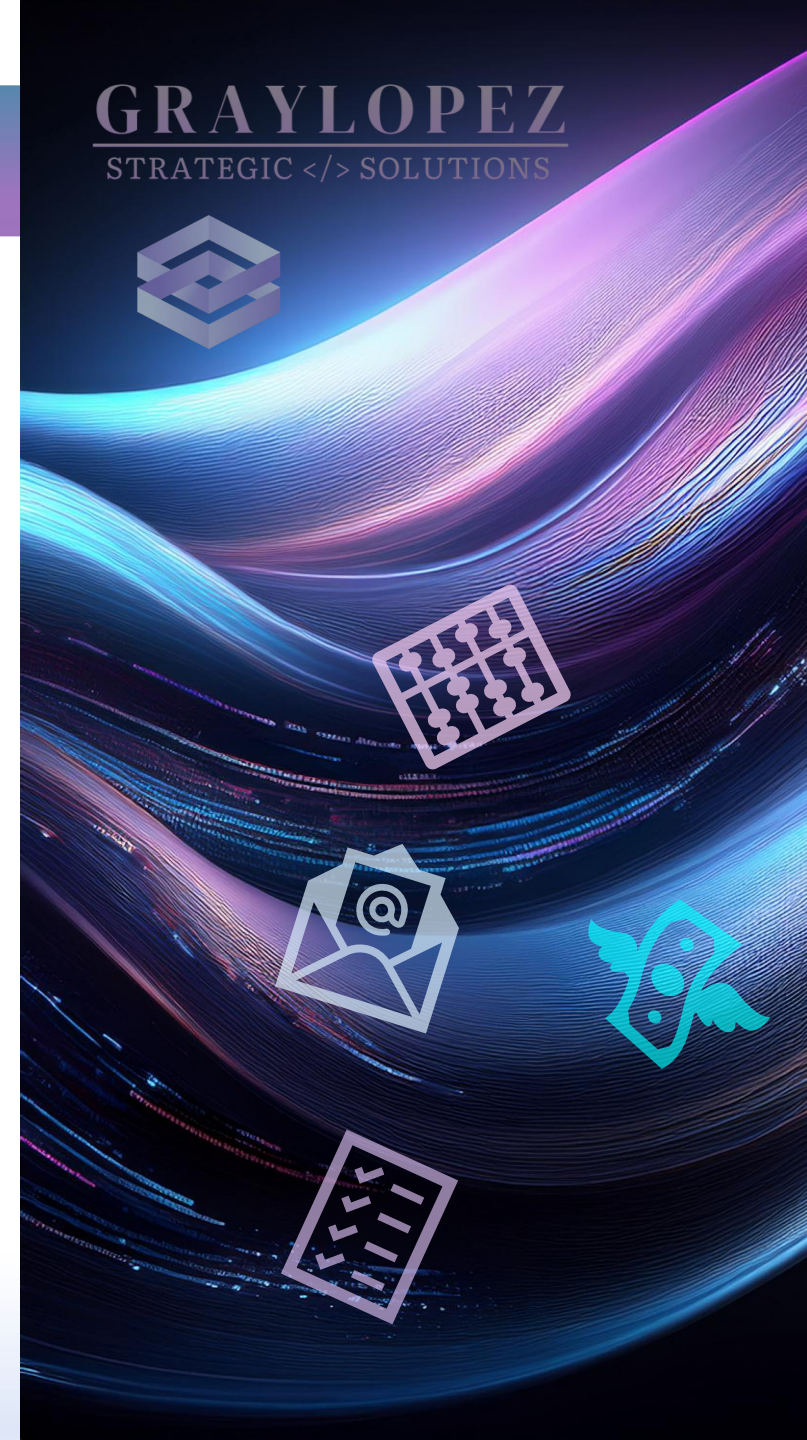
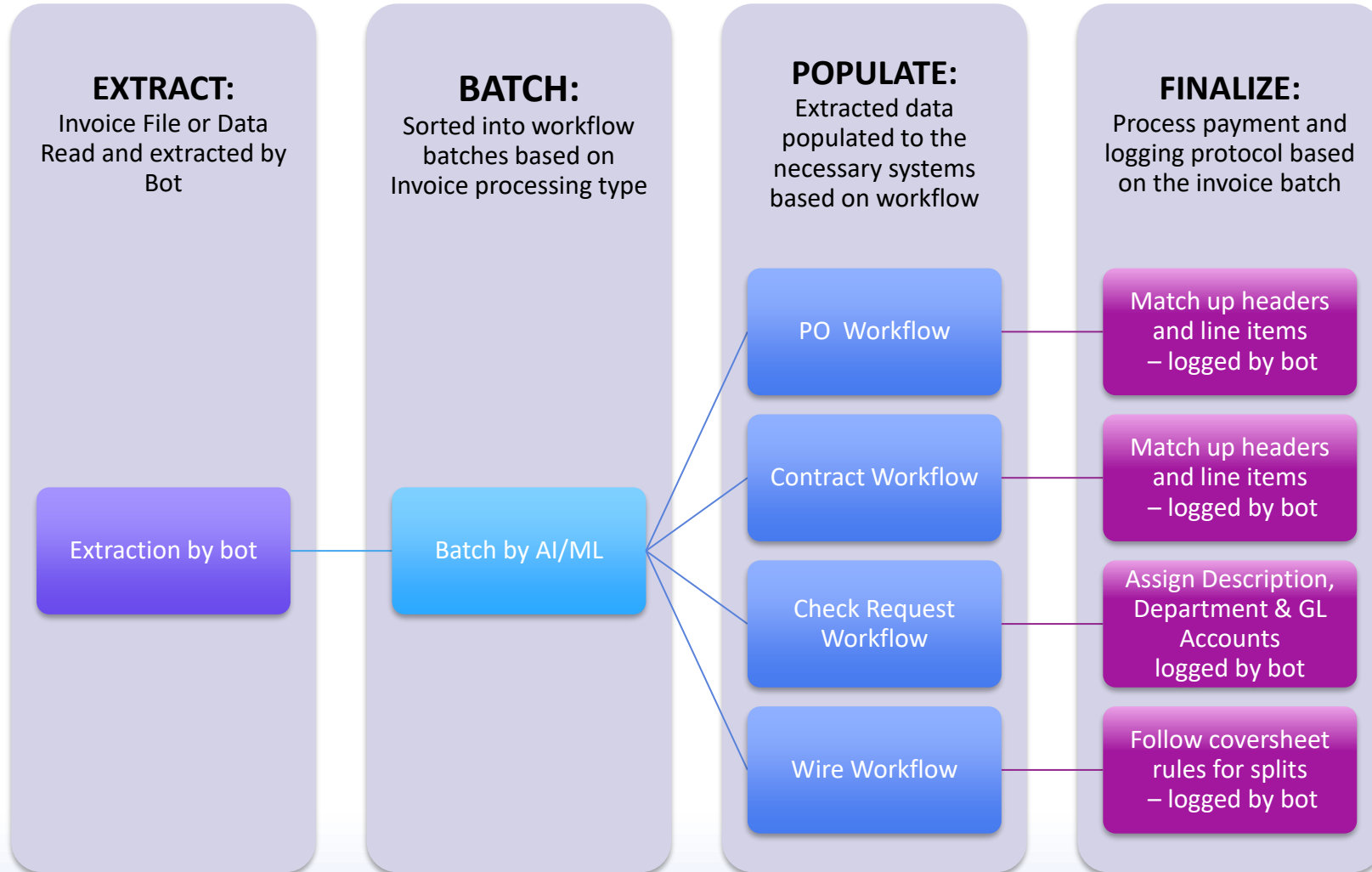


- Cleaner inputs, standardized extraction, and fewer exceptions
- Uniform application of rules and GL coding

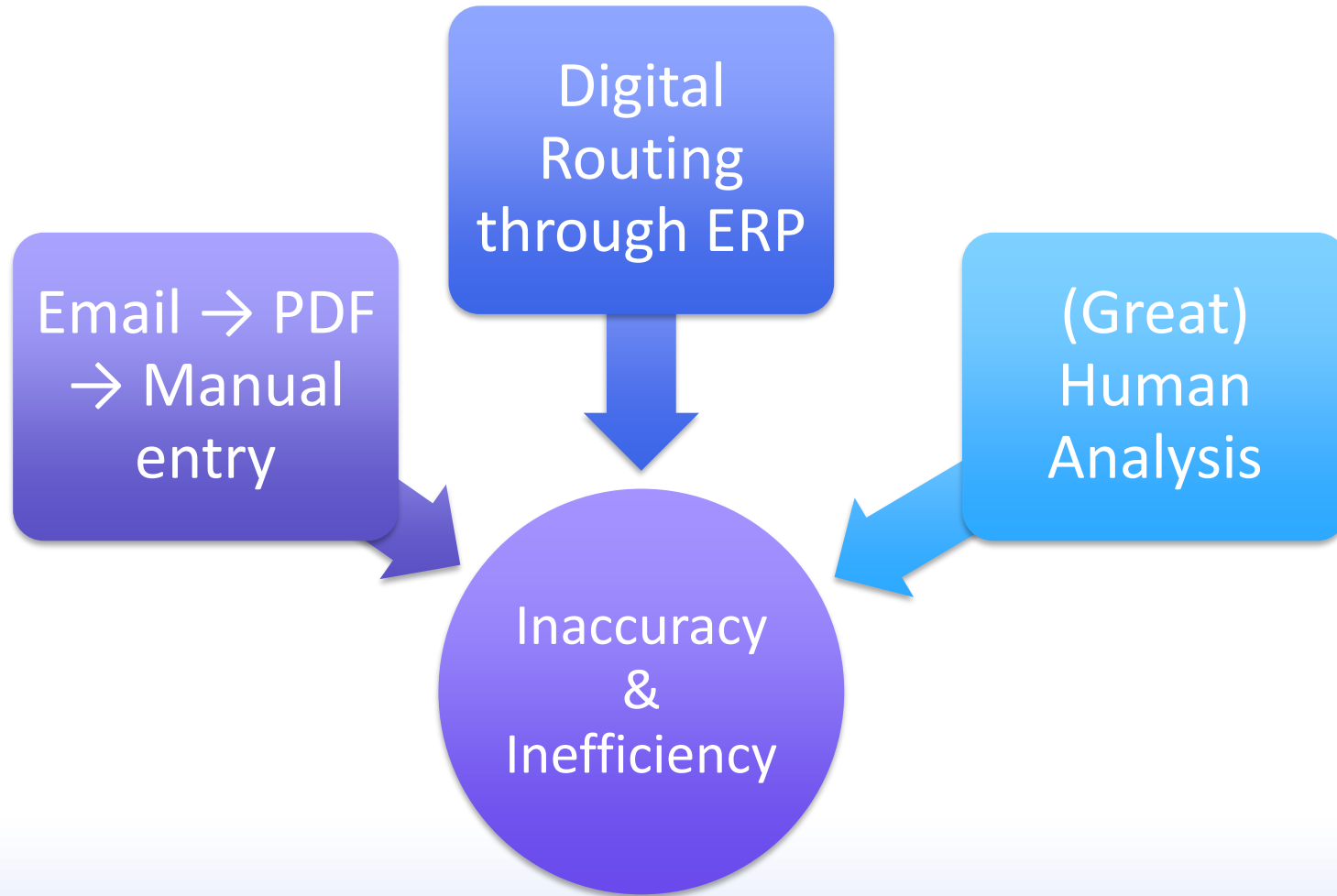
Data Quality & Consistency



# CVWD AP Automation



# AP Invoice Workflow (Before)



# AP Workflow (After Automation)



*AUTOMATION  
WALKTHROUGH:  
VIDEO  
HIGHLIGHTS*



- Favorites
    - Inbox
    - Sent Items
    - Drafts
    - Deleted Items
  - [Redacted Folder]
  - Inbox
  - Drafts
  - Sent Items
  - Deleted Items
  - Junk Email
  - Notes
  - Archive
  - Conversation History
  - Power Automate
  - RSS Feeds
  - Search Folders
- APIInvoices
    - Inbox
    - Drafts
    - Sent Items
    - Deleted Items

**Inbox** ★ [Refresh] [Sort]

July

- CVWD Automations  
You've joined the CVWD... 7/14/2025  
Work Brilliantly Together Welcome t...

**Send** [Dropdown]

To: \_\_\_\_\_ Bcc

Cc: \_\_\_\_\_

Add a subject

[Compose Area]

# Why This Matters for Finance Teams



Volume of data continues to grow



Deadlines are not getting longer



Staff shortages and turnover persist



AI can reduce low-value work





**From Insight to Execution:**  
Applying AI to Do the Work

# What AI Will Evaluate

Mapping consistency

Numbering patterns

Classification logic

Structural anomalies



# What Changes and What Doesn't for Controls & Audit

*Automation strengthens consistency*

*Logs and audit trails increase*

*Judgement remains human*

*Accountability does not shift to the tool.*



# From AI Tools to AI Agents



Agents take action



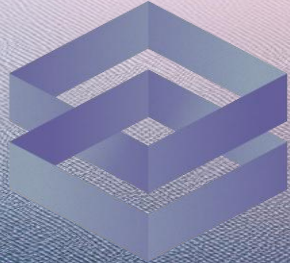
Agents follow instructions



Agents operate within workflows



Agents require governance



## POLL #5

What do you see as the biggest barrier to automation in your organization today?

**Answer Options:**

- a) Process inconsistency
- b) Data quality or availability
- c) Staff capacity or change readiness
- d) Governance / decision alignment

## *You must have these to begin your Automation Journey:*

### **Engaged Staff**

Staff understand the “why,” participate in discovery, and contribute to the process

### **Stable Processes**

Documented, consistent workflows that automation can reliably execute.

### **Understanding of Data**

Know where the data relevant to the processes comes from and how it is typically sourced.



# Why Readiness Matters

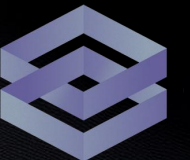
*Automation amplifies existing processes*

*Data quality drives outcomes*

*Process stability enables scale*

*Governance reduces risk*

*Readiness determines success*



# *Automation Readiness Reality*

Clean, reliable data

Defined, stable processes

Clear ownership & governance

Executive alignment

Realistic expectations



# The 5 Steps of Your Automation Launch

## 1. Automation Workshop

- ✓ For Leadership + Operations
- ✓ AI
- ✓ ML
- ✓ RPA
- ✓ How to ID Automation-ready processes
- ✓ Best Practices

## 2. Process Selection

- ✓ Analyze workflows
- ✓ Stakeholder Interviews
- ✓ Process Mapping
- ✓ Uncover High-Value Opportunities
- ✓ Initial Assessment of impact & feasibility

## 3. Pipeline Creation

- ✓ Build pipeline that ranks opportunities by impact and ROI
- ✓ ID “Quick Wins”
- ✓ Guides for long-term projects
- ✓ Enable scalable growth

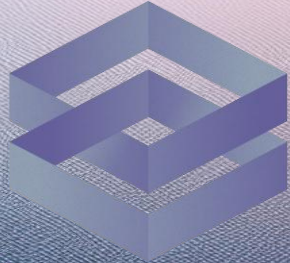
## 4. Process Recording

- ✓ Involves stakeholders and operators for maximum understanding
- ✓ Detailed recording and process mapping
- ✓ Results in workflow documentation that will be included in Roadmap Doc

## 5. Roadmap Document

- ✓ Ready for Executives and Decision makers
- ✓ Ready for Launch
- ✓ Process prioritization
- ✓ Implementation timeline
- ✓ Costs + Licensing Estimates
- ✓ Recommended Infrastructure
- ✓ Clear ROI
- ✓ Savings forecast





## POLL #6

What best describes your organization's next step with AI or automation?

**Answer Options:**

- a) Exploring and learning
- b) Identifying pilot processes
- c) Actively automating processes
- d) Scaling and optimizing automation

# *AI, Machine Learning & RPA: Myths vs. Reality*

## **Myth:**

1. AI and machine learning replace finance professions
2. Automation removes controls and increases risk
3. Machine learning makes decisions we can't explain

## **Reality:**

1. AI and machine learning reduce low-value, repetitive work so finance professionals can focus on analysis, judgement, and oversight.
2. Automation strengthens consistency, increases logging, and improves audit trails, while judgement and accountability remain human.
3. Machine learning provides confidence scores, classifications, and predictions; humans decide how to act on them.

*Tools assist the work; accountability stays with us!!*

# Q&A

# How to Reach Us

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