

BILL Builds AI-First, Business-Focused Talent Acquisition



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BILL is an intelligent financial operations platform that helps growing businesses move, manage, and maximize their money. With more than 8 million network members and serving nearly 500,000 business customers, around 1% of U.S. gross domestic product flows through BILL every year.

Headquartered in San Jose, California, BILL was founded in 2006 as CashView and completed its initial public offering in 2019.

Meeting the Demands of a Dynamic, Competitive Talent Market

As BILL expanded hiring across the business following the post-pandemic hiring boom, talent acquisition (TA) leaders recognized that outbound recruiting was evolving. Applicant volumes were high, competition for niche skill sets was intense, and a new recruiting playbook was needed.

"Everyone is going after the same candidates, and those individuals are still in very high demand," said Daryl Escoto, BILL's Head of Talent Acquisition. "Recruiting dynamics have changed, hiring has changed, and our recruiters need to become much more specialized in how they're approaching, engaging, and discerning candidates."

Escoto identified specific objectives for using AI: improve candidate quality at the top of the funnel, become more efficient in managing inbound candidates, and free recruiters to spend more time on high-value conversations and human interactions. To accomplish this, BILL's TA team needed to better translate external labor market trends into the capabilities the business required.

AI made that fundamental shift possible. The opportunity wasn't just to speed up individual recruiter productivity but to redesign the end-to-end recruiting workflow and redefine

Summary

Challenge

- Acquiring high-demand capabilities amid high-applicant volume and intense competition.
- Improving candidate quality while streamlining inbound application review.
- Developing deeper insights into external markets and internal capabilities.

Solution

- Focused recruiter work on candidate and hiring manager interactions by automating transactional tasks.
- Implemented Findem, an AI-based talent platform, to streamline inbound applications and deliver market intelligence.
- Reimagined the recruiting workflow end to end, using AI to automate intake, sourcing, and interview preparation.

Results

- Accelerated inbound candidate processing and pipelining by threefold and improved interview decisions completed within 15 business days from 40% to 83%.
- Elevated candidate satisfaction scores from 74% to 90% and achieved an 86% open rate on newsletter campaigns.
- Increased hire quality, offer acceptance, and recruiter performance.
- Upleveled recruiter roles to become more strategic, data-informed advisors embedded in broader business discussions.

TA from a function focused on filling roles and meeting headcount plans into a strategic business partner. That means bringing market intelligence, talent insights, and workforce data into the decision-making process to help the business achieve its broader objectives.



Traditional recruiting has completely evolved. The future of our profession will look very different—and that's exciting.

Daryl Escoto, Head of Talent Acquisition, BILL

Building an AI-First, Business-Centric Talent Acquisition Team

Escoto and his leadership team undertook a comprehensive redesign of BILL's TA function to create what he calls "repeatable excellence" across industry-facing recruiting teams.

As part of TA's position as a center of excellence, Escoto centralized internal mobility, giving industry recruiters more time to focus on hiring and building relationships with external candidates and business leaders. The TA leadership team also emphasized using AI for automation, analytics, trends, and insights needed to support a new operating model.

The objective was to evolve the recruiter roles into data-informed talent business partners with a profound understanding of both business needs and external market dynamics, enabling the TA team to engage organizational leaders in a strategic, consultative capacity. This would in turn lead to stronger candidate engagement, evaluation, and hiring decisions.

"Our mission is to enable not only our recruiting team but to ensure our business and all of its departments have everything they need to be able to attract, hire, and onboard the best talent in the fastest way possible," Escoto said. "Our first focus was to automate, streamline, and operationalize everything."

Improving Candidate Screening with AI

To improve the efficiency and quality of inbound candidate screening, the team integrated Findem's AI platform into its existing talent tech stack, alongside Greenhouse for applicant tracking and BrightHire for interview intelligence. BILL recruiters now use all-source analytics across their platform to map skills from LinkedIn profiles of top performers and surface viable candidates.

The new platform provides what Findem calls "insights-first AI," built on expert-labeled data and integrated with internal systems to improve the accuracy of search, engagement, and talent analytics across every recruiting channel.¹

"You get hundreds of applicants per role, and without AI, the recruiter will go to the first ten," Escoto explained. Instead, with the AI talent platform, all candidates are automatically assessed against detailed, specific success criteria that go beyond keywords on a resume to factors like experience in a high-growth company, leadership potential, and expertise in specialized domains.

During the first few months of implementation, nearly 70% of inbound applicants reached the review stage, and close to 30% were shortlisted. BILL attributed successful hiring directly to the platform's ability to identify stronger candidates and improve the precision of talent decisions.

Broadening Use of "Warm" Sourcing Channels

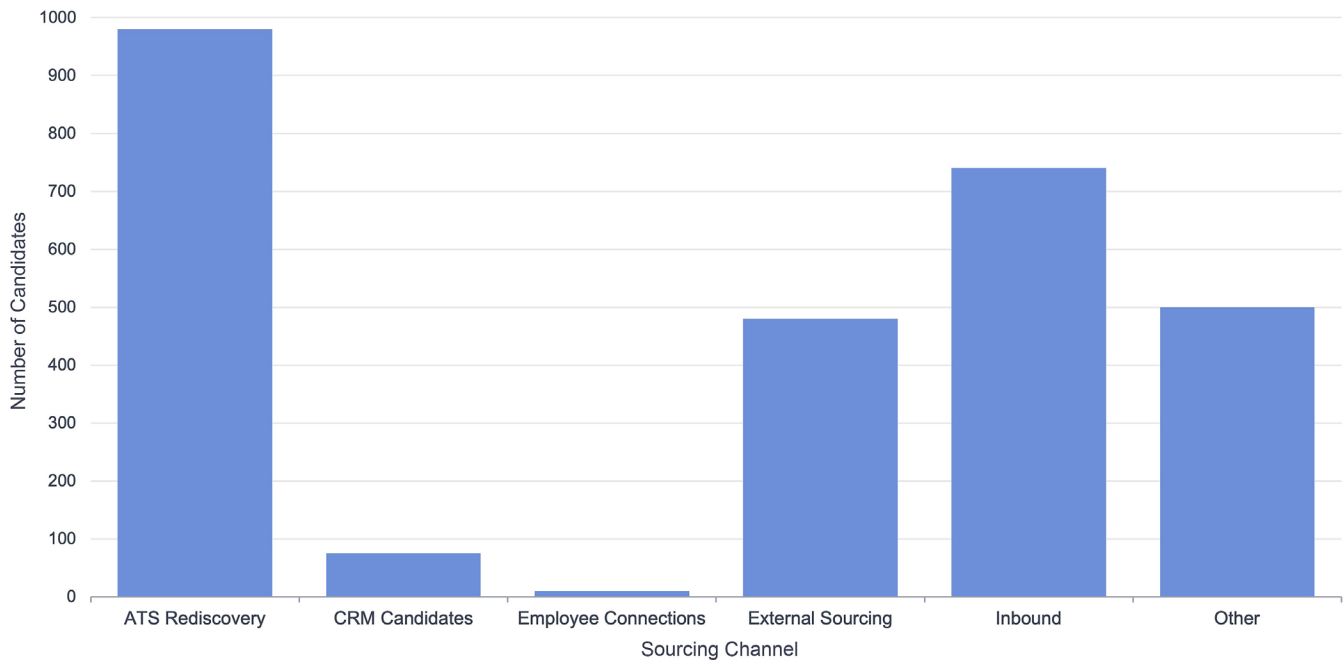
Greater efficiency in evaluating inbound applications allowed the TA team to expand its focus on applicant tracking system (ATS) rediscovery. By targeting "silver medalists"—previously shortlisted candidates who were not yet hired—and former employees, the team shifted from relying primarily on external sourcing to a broader, multichannel recruiting strategy (see Figure 1 on the next page).

To nurture "warm channels," the team uses its CRM (customer relationship management) platform to send targeted quarterly newsletters to engineering, revenue, sales, and finance candidates. This strategy boosted external candidate response rates by 5% to 20%, outperforming industry benchmarks.

By utilizing enhanced profile insights, recruiters have moved beyond keyword matching to develop a deeper understanding of candidates' capabilities and expertise. This enables more personalized outreach and more effective engagement with high-potential talent pools.

¹ *Insights-First AI: Better and Explainable People Decisions*, Kathi Enderes, PhD/The Josh Bersin Company, 2026.

FIGURE 1: Multichannel Sourcing Strategy



Source: BILL and Findem, 2026

Supporting AI Adoption with Data

Adoption of the AI-based technology across the talent acquisition team was a key priority for Escoto and his leadership team. To track engagement, the team built a dashboard of recruiter-specific usage metrics and made individual results visible across the team—a transparency-first approach designed to drive consistent adoption (see Figure 2 on the next page).

“Managers have reports pushing them to push their teams to use it,” Escoto said. Visibility into platform usage also helped recruiters share successful approaches and identify leading practices. For example, a recruiter who ran a successful campaign could explain what worked and help others avoid common early mistakes.

Shifting to an “AI-First Mentality”

Shifting recruiters toward a more data-informed, consultative role requires considerable change management. The TA leadership team reinforced a simple message: “We’re an innovative talent acquisition team. We’re not afraid to experiment. We’re trying different things,” said Escoto.

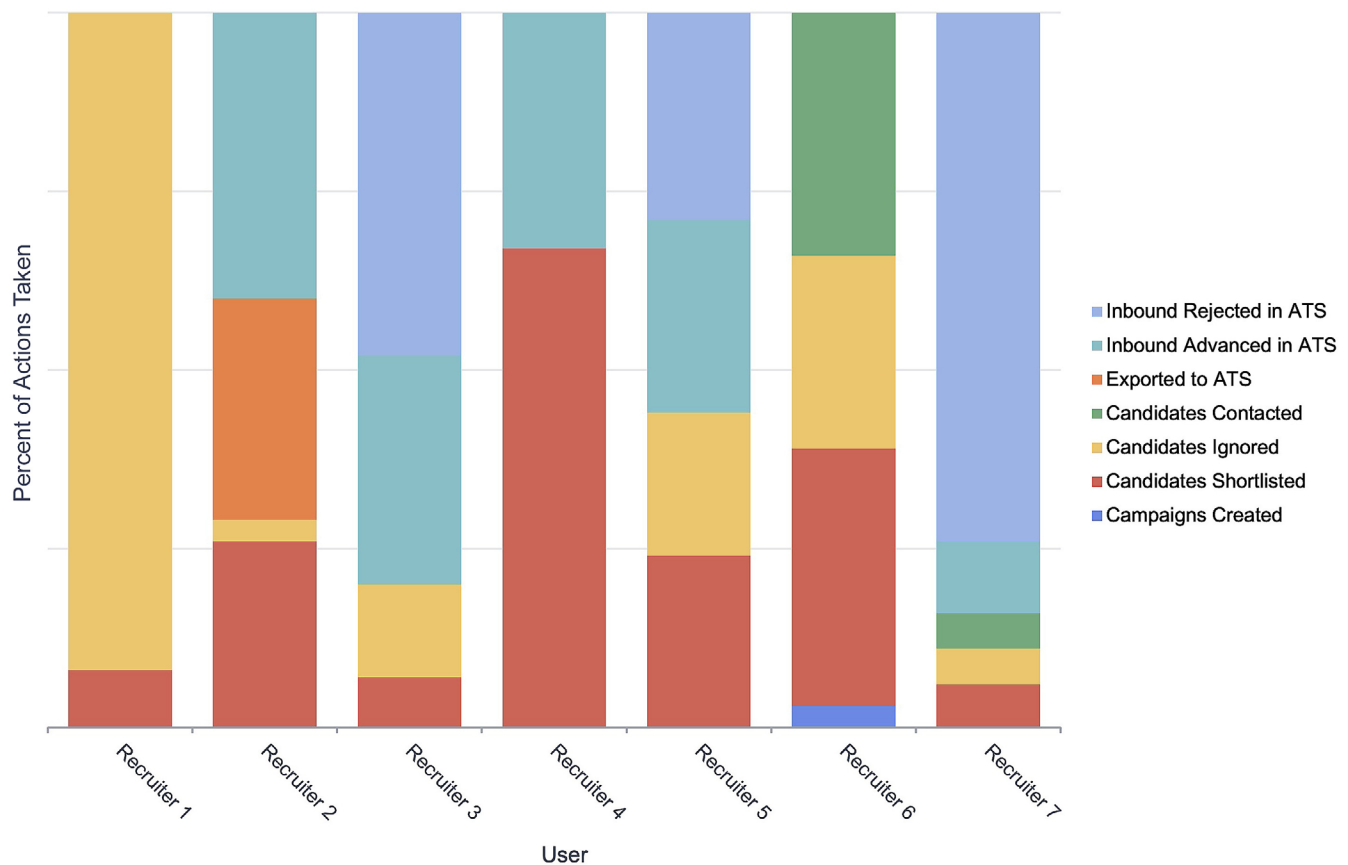
A key part of that transformation was adopting an “AI-first mentality,” Escoto said, including leveraging agentic AI capabilities and integrating AI across the technology stack to allow recruiters to work more proactively.

Rethinking Workflows and Roles

One of the most significant outcomes of the AI-first redesign was the automation of the recruiting workflows. Nearly 2,400 hours of manual tasks—including writing interviewer prebriefs, scheduling interviews, and documenting debriefs—were eliminated, freeing recruiters to focus more on candidates and hiring managers rather than administration.

The shift to AI-first also transformed the job-intake process. AI-generated transcripts from hiring manager conversations now result in automated behavioral interview questions, interviewer prebriefs, and interview rubrics using job-level guides, career ladders, and performance review criteria pulled from the performance management system.

FIGURE 2: Recruiter Use Dashboard



Source: BILL and Findem, 2026

“Now when a requisition is created, we have a deep understanding and calibration on that role’s capabilities,” Escoto said, “We’ve defined what excellence looks like for the role, mapped against the job level. We’ve aligned our interview process with our performance management system, and we’ve automated all of the details and logistics behind it.”

Beyond Efficiency: Using AI for Better Insights and Proactive Business Support

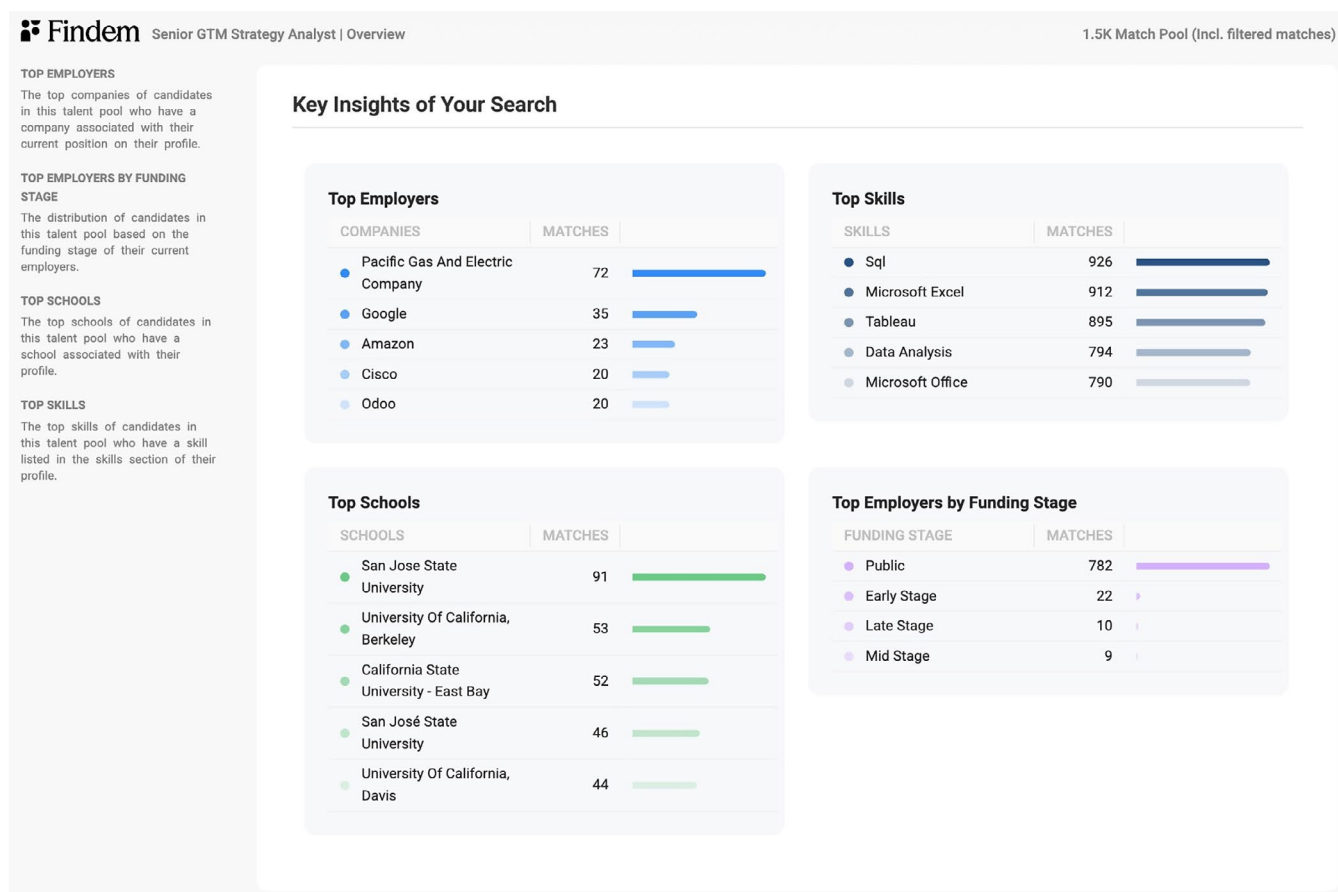
AI and data-based insights delivered more than just operational efficiency. “One of the big advantages of AI is its ability to give us data and insights,” Escoto said.

Through the AI based platform, recruiters now have access to granular analytics on candidate performance and external market dynamics that they can bring into proactive conversations with business leaders (see Figure 3 on the next page).

“The system actually learns as you’re using it and gives you more and more insights and analytics,” Escoto said. “Now you can go back to your hiring leaders and really have a deeper conversation about talent and business success.”

This has strengthened TA’s role as a strategic business partner. Rather than reacting to open requisitions, recruiters now arrive at workforce-planning discussions with market intelligence at hand, ready to advise business leaders.

FIGURE 3: Sample Candidate and Market Insights



Source: BILL and Findem, 2026

“We’re now able to go back to the business and say we understand not just current deliverables but future needs—and we’ve already got the pipeline running.”

Daryl Escoto

Results: Faster, Better, More Strategic Hiring

The redesigned TA team and the focus on AI and automation contributed to dramatic improvements across the entire recruiting process.

Speed and efficiency. Time to review inbound applications and make hiring decisions decreased by more than 233%. More

than 83% of applications now reach a completed interview decision within the company’s target of 15 business days.

Candidate and hiring manager experience. Candidate experience improved significantly: 90% of candidates rated the process positively (up from 74%). Newsletter campaigns generated an 86% open rate, a signal that the content is reaching the right people with relevant, engaging content.

Hiring managers noticed improvements as well. They reported better-calibrated candidates and time savings throughout the hiring process. Automating earlier stages of recruiting reduced interview rescheduling requests. “We’re automating so much that we’re giving time back on earlier steps to interviewers and hiring managers, and they are reinvesting that time to focus on what matters most—interviewing and selection,” said Escoto.

Effectiveness and impact. Quality improved alongside speed. During the first month after integrating new tools, 51% of the quarter's offers were accepted. "We're definitely seeing not just the speed but also the pipeline health and the quality improve," Escoto said. "It's one thing to fill the role fast, but we don't want to fill it with the wrong person and have to backfill soon. Now we're filling positions with the right people."

Enhanced TA team capabilities. The transformation also reshaped the recruiting team, along with new capabilities. Several team members worked with the CIO and engineering team to learn prompt engineering and AI agent-building before returning to train the broader HR staff. That cross-functional training accelerated BILL's AI program: "That was how we were able to leapfrog our AI program," Escoto said.

At the same time, richer intelligence from platforms such as Findem has enabled the TA team to move from a reactive fulfillment approach to a proactive, data-informed approach, advising the business on the best options to address capability gaps—which may or may not involve hiring a new employee.

“*I'm pushing everyone to spend as close to 100 percent of their time in front of candidates and stakeholders, reviewing data points to find trends, and strategizing. If we can get to this point, the rest will drive itself.*”
Daryl Escoto

Next Steps: Sharing Market Expertise across the Business

While Escoto's team continues to automate and enhance BILL's new centralized internal mobility program, the recruiting team is also expanding how they support the business.

"The way we've become specialized has enabled other opportunities, including translating TA into other business objectives we never used to be involved with," Escoto said.

Because the recruiting team developed AI expertise early, it now plays a leading role in helping other business functions adopt AI. "The recruiters here understand there's a technical component to their job where they're understanding, identifying trends and opportunities, and using AI to automate. But I'm also using AI to build out some of our capabilities for the business," said Escoto.

Lessons Learned

BILL's proactive approach to leveraging AI streamlined and reimaged its talent acquisition functions. Key lessons include:

- **Emphasize repeatability and scale.** Redesign talent acquisition as a center of excellence model that enables a wide range of use cases for automation and AI, including streamlining and standardizing intake and top of recruiting funnel work.
- **Drive adoption through change agility.** Introduce more advanced and insights-focused capabilities to a group of superusers first, then encourage broader adoption by sharing successes and usage across the recruiting team.
- **Work closely with technology partners.** Find the right vendor partners and collaborate closely to identify and develop new data sets and features. "When we have consistent trends, we've gone to our tech partners and said 'Hey, I have a use case,'" Escoto said.
- **Leverage AI for enterprisewide impact.** Consider the TA team as a leader in not only adopting AI for its own internal processes but also as a vanguard for the enterprise. Build TA capabilities and confidence through cross-functional training, events such as an AI enablement day, and an AI-first mindset. "We've really embedded AI into our daily behaviors," Escoto explained.
- **Think big and reinvent with AI beyond efficiencies.** Use AI to reimagine the recruiting process end to end, creating better outcomes for the business, rather than simply making existing workflows more productive.

About the Author



Kathi Enderes, PhD

Kathi is senior vice president of research and global industry analyst at The Josh Bersin Company, supporting CHROs, their teams, and HR technology providers with evidence-based insights and advisory across all areas of HR, including strategy and operations, learning, talent, analytics, employee experience, technology, and AI. She is a keynote speaker, author, and thought leader. Her passion for making work better and more meaningful is grounded in over 25 years of global management consulting experience with Deloitte, IBM, PricewaterhouseCoopers, and Ernst & Young, where she led large-scale HR and talent transformations. Kathi also served as a talent executive at McKesson and Kaiser Permanente. She holds doctoral and master's degrees in mathematics from the University of Vienna, Austria. Originally from Austria, Kathi has lived and worked across various countries and now lives in Palo Alto, California.

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