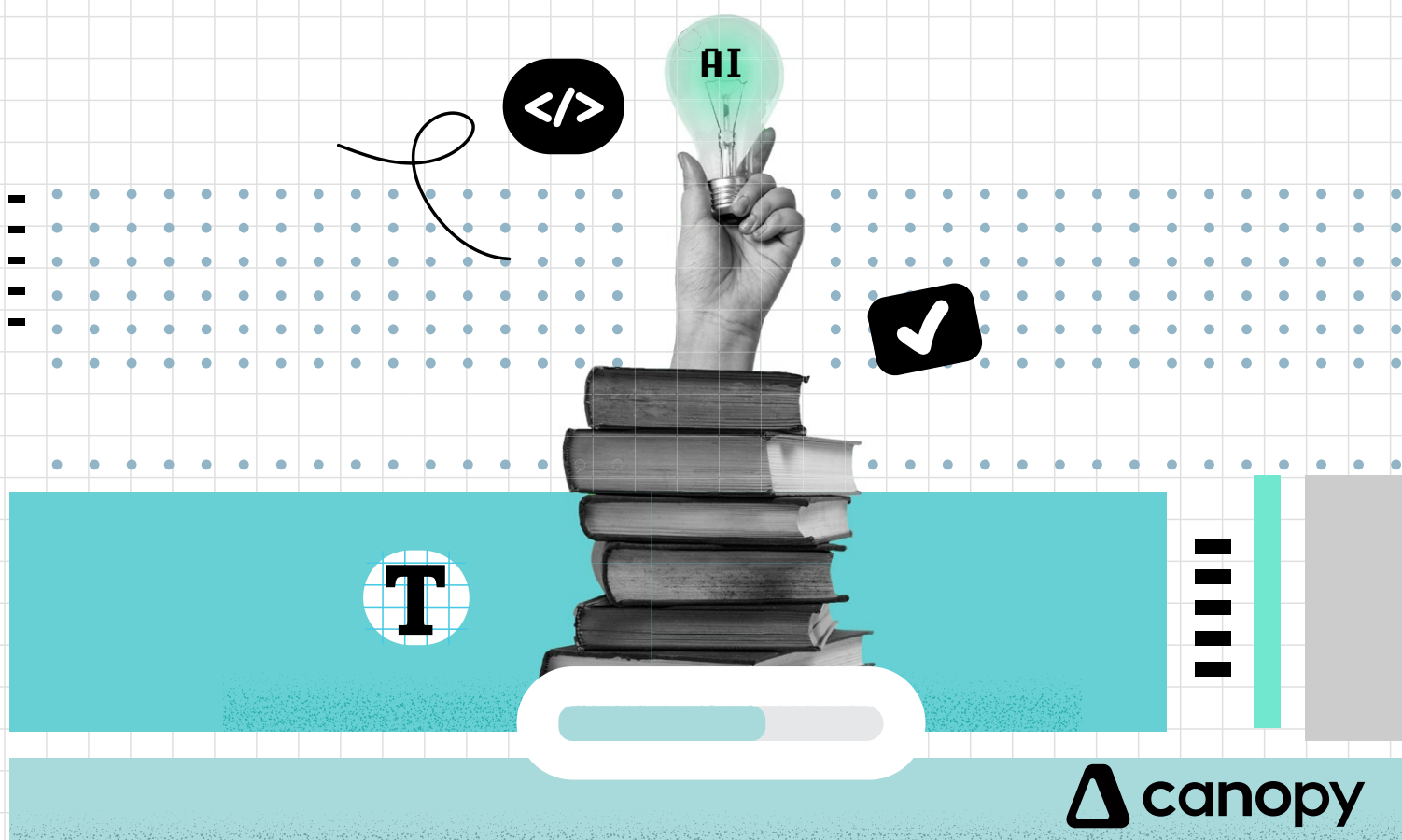


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# *The AI Handbook*

## FOR ACCOUNTING FIRMS

*Practical answers for firms  
figuring out what's next*



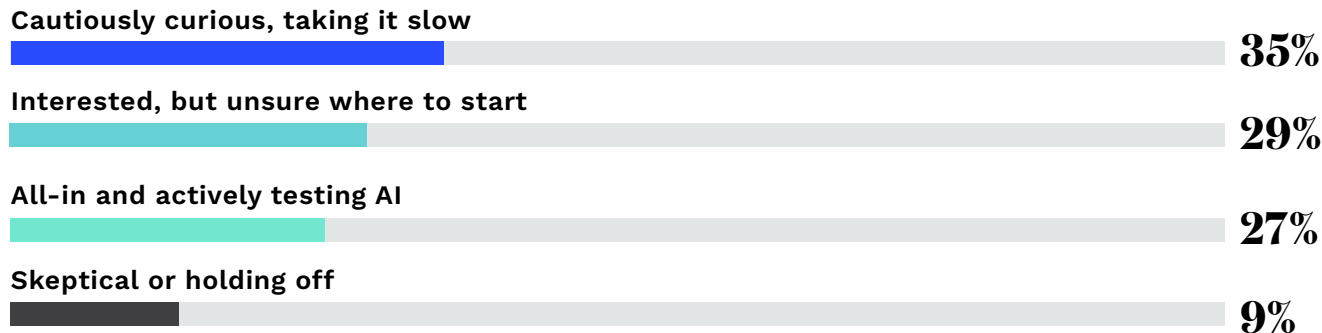
# Introduction

Eighty-eight percent of finance leaders say AI will reshape the accounting profession within the next two years, but only 8% feel well-prepared to actually use it, according to the [AICPA & CIMA Technology, Productivity & Skills Survey](#).

That gap, between knowing change is coming and knowing what to do about it, is exactly what this handbook is for.

In a recent poll of accountants and finance professionals conducted by Canopy, the picture got even clearer. Thirty-five percent described themselves as cautiously curious and taking it slow. Another 29% said they're interested but don't know where to start. Twenty-seven percent are already all-in, actively testing AI in their firms. Less than 10% are holding off due to skepticism and fear about the risks.

## WHERE FIRMS SAY THEY STAND ON AI



Poll conducted during a live webinar hosted by CPA Practice Advisor in partnership with Canopy, June 9, 2026.

That's more than 90% of accounting professionals who are interested in using AI in their practices, but most of them aren't sure where to start.

Wherever you personally land on that spectrum, this handbook offers practical hints to help your accounting practice take advantage of the latest in AI technology.

The firms moving forward with AI aren't waiting for it to be perfect, and they're not all tech geniuses with secret coding backgrounds. They're simply willing to dip a toe in the AI waters and test it out, starting now. They're using it to buy back time, serve clients better, and build practices that scale. This handbook will show you how to do the same.

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# Why AI, Why Now

Eighty-eight percent of finance leaders expect AI to reshape accounting within two years. Only 8% feel ready for it. That gap explains a lot of what firms are feeling right now: equal parts curiosity, urgency, and low-grade dread.

Jason Staats, founder of the accounting firm alliance Realize, put it well on a recent Canopy webinar: “I think people are feeling all the emotions about AI—simultaneously skeptical and excited and nervous, but also feeling like, ‘Can somebody just tell me what to do? What’s okay, what’s inbounds, what the rules are right now?’”

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*“People are feeling all the emotions about AI—simultaneously skeptical and excited and nervous, but also feeling like, ‘Can somebody just tell me what to do?’”*

— JASON STAATS

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The most important thing to keep in mind is that there’s no prize for waiting until AI is perfect. (In fact, that’s a great way to get left behind, and fast.) A record number of companies, coaches, and software vendors are racing to capture the AI hype wave, which has made it harder than ever to tell which products are real. Staats has one rule to help you cut through the noise: validate big decisions with your peers, not with a landing page or a YouTube video. The accountants who are actually using and having success with AI tools are your best source of truth. Find your peers, ask around, and let their experience do the vetting.

It's also worth noting what changed this year: the [IRS released guidance](#) on AI use in tax preparation, and it was refreshingly sensible. It confirmed that firms are already using AI, whether they've formalized it or not, and it laid out common-sense expectations: you're still responsible for the output, and you should be using secure, business-grade tools rather than consumer products.

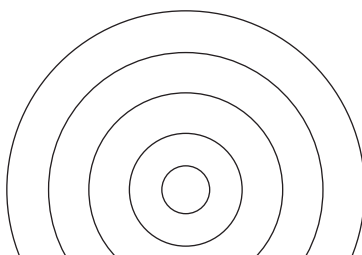
For firm owners who'd been quietly dreading a crackdown, the guidance landed as validation that a thoughtful, responsible approach to AI was the right one all along.

None of this means every firm needs to move at the same speed. Wherever you land on the spectrum between "all-in" and "skeptical," the biggest risk isn't in moving too fast. It's in staying still long enough that your team starts making these decisions without you, one unapproved app at a time.

To get real traction with AI, you don't have to painstakingly prepare a six-month rollout plan. Just be willing to try one small thing this week, see what sticks, and build from there.

#### A NOTE ABOUT EMBEDDED AI

Using the AI that's integrated into the tools you already use gives you a low-risk way to test the waters. Take Canopy Coworker, for instance, which is an AI execution layer that works across the entire practice management platform. Instead of learning prompt engineering or building automation flowcharts, you describe what you want to do in plain language, and Coworker builds the plan and shows you each step before it runs. It's one of the easiest ways to see what AI can actually do inside a system that already knows your firm.



# Getting Started with AI

If you're running a firm on your own, or with just a handful of people, jumping into AI can feel like starting an advanced college course with no syllabus. Nearly a third of the accountants Canopy polled said exactly that: they're interested, but they don't know where to start. So here's your onboarding plan.

## DAYS 1–30

### *Start with what annoys you.*

You don't need a firm-wide AI policy before your first prompt. Pick one recurring task that sucks up your time, whether that's drafting client emails, summarizing a long document, or untangling your calendar, and try a general AI tool on it this week.

## DAYS 31–60

### *Get your plan right before you go deeper.*

Once you've found a task or two that you'd like to automate, make sure you're on a business plan rather than a consumer one. Business plans come with a commercial agreement that keeps your prompts out of the model's training data, while the consumer tiers many people default to typically don't offer that protection. Chapter 4 goes deeper on this, but make sure to lock your systems down before you upload anything client-related.

## DAYS 61–90

### *Stop learning in a vacuum.*

Solo practitioners often assume they're on their own here, but the accounting world has gotten more connected. Entire communities of solo firm owners are comparing notes on what's working. Jason Staats put it directly: it's slower to learn AI by yourself, so find other solo practitioners doing the same thing and trade notes. A weekly call, a Slack channel, or even an active subreddit gives you a faster feedback loop than trial and error alone.

By the end of 90 days, you're not aiming for a fully AI-powered practice. You're aiming for one or two tasks that reliably save you time, a plan that's actually secure, and a couple of peers to keep learning from. That's a solid foundation, and it's more than most firms have.

### EASE INTO AI WITH CANOPY

Solo and small firms often assume automation tools are meant for bigger teams that have robust IT departments. But Canopy's practice management software is infused with AI capabilities across the platform that make adoption seamless. Your very first task can be as simple as asking Canopy Coworker, which already has full context on your firm's client data, to draft the follow-up email for a client who hasn't sent their documents yet. Canopy also has the ability to:

- > automate document prep, eSign placement, and email drafting
- > match and rename uploaded files using firm-wide rules
- > create tasks, reminders, and follow-ups based on client activity
- > auto-prepare 1040s while maintaining centralized communication
- > record and transcribe meetings, generating accounting-aware summaries and action items instantly

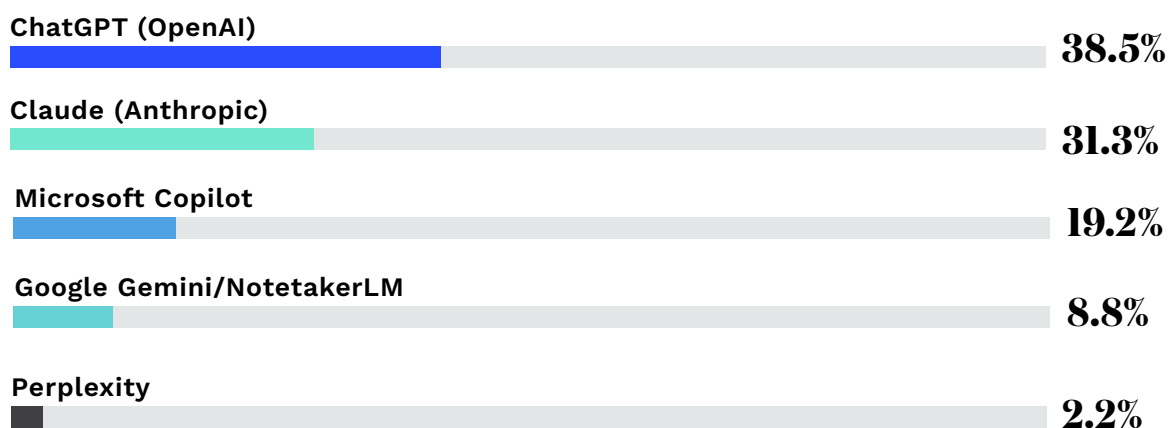


# Choosing Your Tech Stack

Ask 10 accountants which AI tool to use, and you'll get 11 opinions. This is the single most common question firms ask, and for good reason: there are real differences between these tools, and the best one for you depends more on what you're already using than on any objective ranking.

In a recent poll of 537 accounting professionals conducted during a Canopy webinar, here's how the most common generalist AI tools ranked in terms of usage:

## WHICH GENERALIST AI TOOL DO YOU USE MOST IN YOUR PRACTICE?



Poll of 537 accounting professionals conducted on July 14, 2026 by Canopy.

The webinar presenter, Jason Staats, only switched his own daily habit from ChatGPT to Claude a couple of months prior. This tells you that there isn't one tool that's objectively best. In fact, most firms are still running on whatever they tried first, not necessarily what fits best today.





Here's a quick breakdown of the major players, and how they compare.

## *Common AI Tools*

A list of the most common general-purpose AI tools used by accounting firms.

| TOOL              | BUILT BY      | QUICK DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                                   |
|-------------------|---------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>ChatGPT</b>    | OpenAI        | General-purpose AI assistant for drafting, research, and answering questions; the most widely used tool overall                                     |
| <b>Copilot</b>    | Microsoft     | AI assistant built into Microsoft 365 (Word, Excel, Outlook, Teams); strong fit for firms already on Microsoft                                      |
| <b>Gemini</b>     | Google        | Google's AI assistant, integrated with Gmail, Docs, and Sheets; strong at handling large amounts of text                                            |
| <b>NotebookLM</b> | Google        | Google's AI research tool that only answers from documents you upload; useful for extracting data from invoices and keeping outputs source-accurate |
| <b>Claude</b>     | Anthropic     | AI assistant known for careful writing and analyzing long documents, useful for reviewing contracts or financial reports                            |
| <b>Perplexity</b> | Perplexity AI | AI search engine that answers questions with cited sources, useful for quick research with a paper trail                                            |



Then there's the tax-specific question: is a dedicated tool like TaxGPT worth it alongside a generalist assistant? The truth is that any AI is only as good as the sources it pulls from. General AI has gotten much better at tax research, but there's a reason every AI tool includes a public-facing disclaimer:

- "ChatGPT can make mistakes. Check important info."
- "Claude is AI and can make mistakes. Please double-check responses."
- "Gemini may display inaccurate info, including about people, so double-check its response."
- Microsoft Copilot: "AI-generated content may be incorrect"

Take this as your reassurance that AI cannot totally replace you, with your specialized knowledge. Unlike the clients you serve, you have the ability and the know-how to double check AI answers against the same authoritative sources you relied on before 2023.

## *Point Solutions*

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In the accounting space, there are also dozens of point solutions that use AI to automate different aspects of your daily work, with new ones popping up all the time. These include:

### **GENERIC AI CHATBOTS AND COPILOTS**

General AI assistants like ChatGPT and Microsoft Copilot can draft, summarize, and answer questions once you bolt them onto your existing stack, saving you hours of time in both research and writing tasks. But wouldn't it be great if you could trust them with full visibility into your firm's actual clients, tasks, and workflows? That's where Canopy Coworker comes in. Using the full context of your firm (instead of a blank chat window), Coworker is able to plan and execute multi-step work directly inside Canopy, draft client communications and update task statuses on its own, and escalate anything that needs a human into a review queue. And it all happens inside a secure, enterprise-grade environment.

### AI MEETING NOTETAKERS

Consumer-grade notetakers like Otter.ai, Fathom, Granola, and Fireflies are great generalist notetakers that allow you to focus fully on client conversations, confident that comprehensive notes and action items will be automatically generated for you. There are also accounting-specific AI notetakers, like Vinyl and Ping, that have context-aware capabilities. But both hit that “workflow dead end” where the transcript doesn’t automatically connect to the client record. Canopy’s built-in solution, Notetaker, goes a step further, with the ability to turn commitments into accounting-specific tasks on the client record, inside the practice-management solution you’re already using.

### AI-DRIVEN INTAKE AND DOCUMENT-COLLECTION TOOLS

SafeSend Gather, Soraban, Stanford Tax, and Truss all provide solutions like predictive questionnaires, AI pre-fill, and auto document matching/renaming. Canopy’s embedded Smart Intake feature does all that as well, with the additional ability to auto-build checklists based on past returns, services, or CRM data; re-fill questionnaires with known data and scanned docs; and auto-match incoming files to checklist items and track completion in real time.

### AI TAX-PREP AND DATA-ENTRY TOOLS

Leading AI tax prep providers like Filed, Juno, and Byron excel at reading a client’s source documents and auto-populating a draft return, cutting out the manual keying step. With Canopy’s Smart Prep solution, which is powered by these and other leading AI tax prep providers, practitioners are able to generate a 1040 or business return draft directly from client documents; route it for staff review and approval before anything is finalized; and keep the return, sharing controls, and document sync all in one place.



### AI-POWERED TAX RETURN DELIVERY

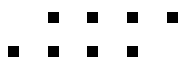
SafeSend and Truss offer dedicated but siloed features that auto-build branded client packets, extract tax return details, and distribute them via secure links with built-in e-signature and payment requests. With Canopy's Smart Tax Delivery, practitioners get a unified, AI-powered delivery experience built right into the platform. It enables accounting firms to create and deliver finalized tax returns in seconds through a polished, guided client flow that combines return review, e-signature collection, payment processing, and completion tracking.

### AI-POWERED BOOKKEEPING ANOMALY DETECTION

Double built its following by scanning the general ledger for anomalies like uncategorized transactions and missing vendors, which can save hours of manual effort. Likewise, Canopy's Close Automation tool is able to deploy 11+ AI-powered data monitors against the GL in real time; merge flagged anomalies straight into Canopy; and generate a Books Health Score for every client, all without leaving the platform you already use for managing the rest of your clients' accounting work.

### AI REPORTING AND BI TOOLS

Standalone business intelligence tools can turn your billing, time, and task data into easy-to-digest dashboards, but they usually require you to export everything out of your practice management system first. Canopy's embedded Insights feature is able to answer plain-English questions about your firm's data on demand; track KPIs like billed revenue and realization in live dashboards; and let Coworker turn that same data into proactive alerts and recommendations, all without a single trip to Excel. And it's all protected by Canopy's SOC 2 Type II compliance framework, the gold standard for enterprise security.



## Canopy's Embedded AI

How AI functions inside Canopy's accounting practice management software.

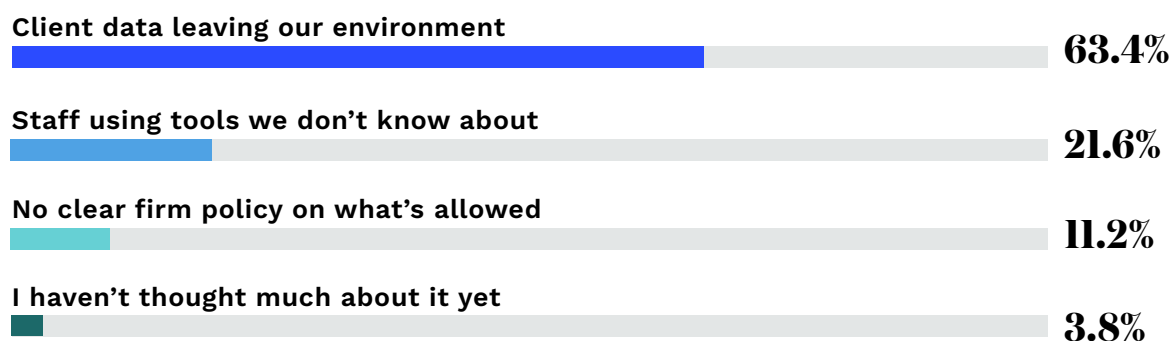
| CAPABILITY                        | WHERE IT LIVES                              | QUICK DESCRIPTION                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                                           |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------------------|-------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <b>Coworker</b>                   | Platform-wide (Canopy's AI execution layer) | Canopy's flagship AI "digital coworker" — plans, executes, monitors, and escalates work across tasks, workflows, client communication, and time and billing. Runs your "Monday Morning Audit" automatically, flagging stalled work, budget overruns, and unassigned tasks before you even open your laptop. |
| <b>Notetaker</b>                  | Client communications                       | Joins your calls, transcribes and summarizes them, and turns commitments into linked tasks on the client record.                                                                                                                                                                                            |
| <b>Smart Intake</b>               | Client onboarding and document collection   | Builds document checklists and questionnaires from a prompt, pre-fills known client info, and auto-matches and renames uploaded files to your firm's naming rules.                                                                                                                                          |
| <b>Document prep and eSign</b>    | Workflow and document management            | Preps documents, places signature fields, and drafts client emails without manual setup.                                                                                                                                                                                                                    |
| <b>Task and reminder creation</b> | Workflow                                    | Generates tasks, reminders, and follow-ups automatically based on client activity, so nothing falls through the cracks.                                                                                                                                                                                     |
| <b>AI-powered Insights</b>        | Reporting                                   | Surfaces custom dashboards and real-time KPIs like profitability, workload, and productivity.                                                                                                                                                                                                               |
| <b>Smart Prep</b>                 | Tax workflow                                | Auto-prepares 1040s while keeping communication centralized in Canopy.                                                                                                                                                                                                                                      |
| <b>Smart Delivery</b>             | Tax workflow                                | Auto-populates the return delivery with refund/owed amounts, invoice, paywall, and e-sign in one client package.                                                                                                                                                                                            |

*All Canopy AI features run inside Canopy's SOC 2 Type II compliance framework with 256-bit encryption, role-based access, and MFA.*

# Security, Privacy, and PII

When we poll accountants about their biggest concerns regarding AI, security consistently ranks at the top. After all, you're handling people's most sensitive financial information, and getting this wrong isn't a minor mistake. Here are five tips to help you mitigate the risks.

## WHAT'S YOUR BIGGEST SECURITY CONCERN ABOUT USING AI AT YOUR FIRM?



Poll of 528 accounting professionals conducted on July 14, 2026 by Canopy.

## DON'T USE THE FREE PLAN

Of all the ways you could deploy AI within your organization, the option that could put you most at risk (while simultaneously giving you the worst results) is using a free consumer AI plan, which will definitely be training its model on your prompts and data. So, regardless of what tool you try, opt for a business plan, which should include an agreement that explicitly states that your prompts are never used for training. Business plans start at around \$20 per user, per month, depending on the platform.

## BEWARE OF SHADOW AI

You might think that by banning AI entirely, you'll be safe. But that opens you up to the risk of staff quietly using tools you haven't approved—and that you may not even be aware of. A 22-year-old who relied on AI all the way through their accounting degree is going to find a way to work faster, policy or not. The only real fix is giving your team secure, business-tier access so they're not solving the problem on their own, with their own personal accounts, on your clients' data.

### DON'T RELY ON REDACTION

You've likely encountered the advice to redact all PII before uploading any invoice, receipt, or statement to AI. Not only would this be an unreliable and error-prone process (it's too easy to overlook a detail here or there), it's also so time consuming that it would offset any gains you'd get from using AI in the first place. The safer rule: only use an AI tool in situations where it's genuinely fine to upload the real, unredacted document. And only use secure, enterprise-approved AI solutions.

### LOOK TO THE IRS

If you're waiting for more clarity before making any of this official, consider the [IRS's recent guidance](#) on AI in tax preparation. It landed as close to common sense as a government release gets: you're still responsible for the output, ignorance of how an AI tool works is not a defence, and security is not optional.

### WHATEVER YOU DO, DO SOMETHING

Inaction can feel like the safe choice. It usually isn't. A firm with no policy and no visibility into what staff are already doing is often in a riskier spot than one that's made a deliberate, if imperfect, decision.

The practical takeaway: get your team on business plans, understand your tool's organizational security settings, and loop in IT (whether a staff member or a consultant) to review what "secure" actually means for your specific setup.



## *Feel Secure with Canopy*

In Canopy, all client and firm data is protected by the same enterprise-grade security standards required by the most regulated industries in the world.

Under the hood: SOC 2 Type II compliance, 256-bit encryption, role-based access controls, multi-factor authentication, and audit logging. Sensitive data (including client PII, financials, and SSNs) never leaves Canopy's secure environment to train external AI models. You can also set Context Permissions to limit what Coworker can access by client, workflow, or service line. And every action runs through a transparent "Plan, Act, Review" loop with a full audit trail, so higher-risk actions land in an approval queue instead of executing on their own.





## The IRS Weighs in on AI

On June 24, 2026, the IRS Office of Professional Responsibility released its first formal guidance on AI in tax practice. The headline: your ethical obligations don't change just because AI did the drafting. Six existing Circular 230 provisions now explicitly apply to AI use:

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**Due diligence  
(§10.22)**

Verify every AI-generated fact, citation, and calculation before it reaches a client or the IRS.

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**Fees (§10.27a)**

Don't bill for time AI didn't actually take. Disclose AI use and pass efficiency savings to clients.

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**Competence  
(§10.35)**

You need to understand how your AI tool works and where it breaks, not just the tax law.

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**Compliance  
procedures  
(§10.36)**

Firm leadership must have written policies covering staff training, data handling, and vetting of third-party AI tools.

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**Written advice  
(§10.37)**

Treat AI output as a draft. Unverified AI projections or citations don't meet the "reasonable basis" standard.

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**Confidentiality  
(IRC §6713,  
§7216(a))**

Use only secure, enterprise-approved AI. Uploading client data to unsecured tools risks civil and criminal penalties.

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The IRS also pointed to a cautionary, real-world example: [Deloitte Australia](#) had to partially refund a government contract after an AI-assisted report included fabricated quotes and citations.

***Bottom line from the guidance: AI is a tool, not a substitute for professional judgment. Final decisions stay with a qualified human.***

# Where AI Actually Pays Off

How do you know if AI is really paying off, versus just keeping you busy with a shiny new tool? The answer depends on which part of your practice you're asking about. A third of accounting firms are already using AI in some form, and more than half of accountants expect it to meaningfully reshape the profession, but neither number tells you where the return on investment will manifest in your specific situation.

Here's a list of areas where the ROI tends to show up most clearly, organized by the work itself rather than by which app happens to be doing it. Just remember: the number that matters most will be the one you measure yourself, when you find a real before-and-after example in your own practice.

## *Tax prep*

This is where AI's ROI is easiest to see and measure. Instead of manually keying in every line from a client's documents, AI can extract and map the data directly into your workflow, generating a draft return for your staff to review. No more building it from scratch! The time you save will compound across every return you touch during the season.

## *Workpaper generation and document review*

AI is well-suited to scanning source documents and pulling out what belongs where, whether that's building supporting workpapers or generating the client-facing summaries that used to consume hours of your day. AI doesn't replace the reviewer; it gives them a draft to start from instead of that dreaded blank page.

## *Bookkeeping and reconciliation*

Month-end close is a natural fit for continuous monitoring by AI, offering an escape hatch from the once-a-month scramble. Instead of having to resolve each and every uncategorized transaction and duplicate expense during close week, AI-powered monitors can flag them as they happen, all month long.

## *Client communication*

Drafting follow-up emails, status updates, and document requests is exactly the kind of repetitive writing AI handles well, and it's often the fastest win a firm sees, because it requires no new workflow. It's just a faster way to do something you were already doing by hand.

## *CAS pricing and advisory*

AI can help build the consistent pricing frameworks and analysis that CAS work depends on, though this is more about structuring your thinking than automating a task outright.

### *How will AI affect what you charge?*

If a client pushes back on your fees because they assume AI made the work faster, just remember that this isn't a new problem. People asked the same question the day TurboTax first appeared on shelves. As AI becomes more common everywhere, having a real, live human review your work becomes more valuable, not less. Trust that you have the kind of expertise that's worth paying for, regardless of how the return gets prepared. (But remember the new IRS guidance: don't bill clients "for manual labor or time that was not actually spent.")



## *Capture ROI with Canopy*

Every function listed above already has a Canopy feature built around it. Tax Workflow Automation connects Smart Intake, Smart Prep, and Smart Delivery into one pipeline, moving a return from document collection to a reviewable 1040 draft to a signed, paid, delivered file, all without re-entering data at each handoff.

For bookkeeping and month-end close work, Close Automation scans your clients' live general-ledger data and generates the financial analysis, summaries, and narratives that used to consume an entire evening, pulled straight into a professional template instead of a blank one. That same monitoring runs 11+ data checks against the general ledger in real time and produces a Books Health Score for every client, so bookkeeping issues surface before month-end close instead of during it.

And then there's Coworker. Canopy's embedded AI execution layer is able to pick up the client communication load, drafting follow-ups, status updates, and document requests natively inside your inbox. Coworker also tracks firm-wide adoption by staff, action logs, and history, providing defensible ROI on the work that AI is actually doing.



# Building Team Buy-In

When it comes to getting a whole firm on board with AI, skip the mandate, and build a habit instead. Enterprise companies often require daily AI usage and track it, which tends to create the wrong incentive: people quietly faking usage to hit a quota.

One idea is to host a weekly AI challenge where everyone builds their own small experiment, sharing a short recap of what they made and what they learned, either by video or as a Slack update. Plenty of it doesn't work, and that's fine. The goal is turning AI from an abstract, vaguely existential threat into something your team is engaging with every week, so they're gradually building both comfort and competency.

## **DON'T BAN IT, SECURE IT**

Younger staff in particular will use AI to work faster, whether or not it's officially sanctioned, simply because they're used to it. The only way to actually reduce the risk of unsanctioned "shadow AI" is to give your team a secure, business-grade tool so they're not solving the problem themselves on personal accounts.

## **REFRAME THE JUNIOR STAFF CONVERSATION**

The worry that AI will eliminate the need for new hires is understandable, but cutting off the junior staff pipeline creates a real problem: where does your firm's future talent come from? Younger team members, who are often the most fluent AI users in the building, bring energy and comfort with the technology that more senior staff can pair with their own judgment and experience. This combination can create both diversity and opportunity for your firm.

## **USE IT TO RESTORE YOUR HUMANITY, NOT REPLACE IT**

When firms get busy, the first casualty is usually the client relationship: the check-in call, the personal conversation instead of a rushed email reply, the birthday acknowledgment. AI should be used to compress the production work so those touchpoints can come back, not so they disappear further. Clients can tell the difference between a firm that feels automated and one that feels attentive, and that matters more in this profession than most. Bonus: automating the busywork and deepening client relationships can also open up pathways for offering more advisory and other services.

**EMBRACE THE MANAGEMENT OPPORTUNITY**

With more of the time-consuming, manual tasks taken care of by AI, leadership can lean into imparting soft skills. Use your time gains to mentor and train staff more intentionally, in ways that strengthen the business as a whole—from analysis and communication to emotional intelligence, negotiation, and more.

**ADDRESS THE REAL OBJECTION FROM RESISTANT PARTNERS**

When an older partner balks at connecting a CRM to their email, the concern is rarely the technology itself. It's usually about who can see what. That's a permissions conversation, not a philosophical one. You're better off having a direct discussion about it, rather than accepting their initial objections as final or assuming it will eventually resolve itself.

**GET CLEAR WITH CANOPY**

Coworker's role-based permissions mean team members (and partners, too) only see what their access level allows, which directly answers the "who-can-see-my-email?" objection above. And because every AI-drafted item runs through a review queue before it executes, junior staff get to work faster without senior staff worrying that unsupervised AI is making decisions on a client's behalf. That transparency is often what turns a skeptical partner into a curious one.

Hi, I'm Coworker!  
How can I help you today?

- ✦ Help me optimize my work week >
- ✦ Help me rebalance my firm's workload based on current capacity and at risk work >
- ✦ Help me track down clients that we haven't heard back from recently >

*How can I help you today?*



## Appendix: An AI Governance Template for Your Firm

Several firms told us they already have “an AI policy,” but they weren’t sure what should actually be in one. Use this as a starting worksheet, not a finished document. Fill in each section with your firm’s actual answers.

### 01 Approved tools

Which AI tools are staff allowed to use, and on which plan tier?

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Who approves a new tool before anyone uses it with client data?

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### 02 Data Handling Rules

What client data is never allowed in any AI tool, regardless of plan?

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What’s the process for verifying a tool is on a business or commercial plan before use?

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### **03 Review and Oversight**

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Who reviews AI-drafted client communications before they go out?

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What gets logged, who checks that log, and how often?

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### **04 Training and Onboarding**

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How do new hires learn your firm's AI rules?

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What's your cadence for revisiting this policy as tools change (monthly? quarterly?)

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### **05 Incident Response**

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If client data is accidentally exposed to the wrong tool or the wrong person, who gets notified first?

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What's the immediate next step?

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**SHADOW AI CHECK-IN**

Ask your team directly, at least once a quarter: what tools are you using that aren't on this list? Treat the answer as useful information to build future firm policies around, not a violation.

**MAKE GOVERNANCE EASY WITH CANOPY**

Several of these categories map directly onto controls already built into Canopy Coworker. Context Permissions let you limit AI access by client, workflow, or service line, covering the data handling section above. The review queue and full activity log give you a built-in answer to the oversight questions, since every higher-risk action routes to a human before it executes, and every action is recorded for later review. Rather than building an approval workflow from scratch, many firms use Coworker's existing guardrails as the first draft of their own governance policy.



# About Canopy

Canopy is the award-winning, all-in-one practice management software designed to help accountants build an autonomous firm. It brings together client management, CRM, document management, workflow, time & billing, engagements, proposals, and more in one place. At the center is Canopy Coworker, Canopy's everywhere AI, which helps make work across the platform simpler, faster, and more automated.

**REQUEST A DEMO**

## Weekly Task Capacity

Based on a 40 hour work week

| Budgeted Hours       |        |      |         | Available Hours |                 |                |                 | Due Date       |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
|----------------------|--------|------|---------|-----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Staff                | Client | Task | Subtask | 01/29/2024      |                 | 02/05/2024     |                 | 02/12/2024     |                 | 02/19/2024     |                 | 02/26/2024     |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
|                      |        |      |         | Budgeted Hours  | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours | Budgeted Hours | Available Hours |
| ▶ (Null)             |        |      |         | 8.00            | 32.00           | 3.00           | 37.00           | 0.00           | 40.00           | 0.00           | 40.00           | 3.00           | 37.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Andy Dufresne      |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Angela Martin      |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                | 0.00            | 40.00          |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Ben Wyatt          |        |      |         | 3.00            | 37.00           | 8.00           | 32.00           | 6.00           | 34.00           |                |                 |                |                 | 27.00          | 13.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Brad Rigby         |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Count Von Count    |        |      |         |                 |                 | 0.00           | 40.00           | 0.00           | 40.00           | 0.00           | 40.00           | 0.00           | 40.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Cristinne Nordgren |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Emily Gilbert      |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 | 20.00          | 20.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Evan Stallings     |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Ikie Earnest       |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Jonathan Timothy   |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 | 5.00           | 35.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ KC Brothers        |        |      |         | 0.00            | 40.00           | 5.00           | 35.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 | 0.00           | 40.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Lav Rose           |        |      |         |                 |                 | 0.00           | 40.00           |                |                 |                | 0.00            | 40.00          |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Layni Learning     |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Leonie Smith       |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Liz Scott          |        |      |         |                 |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |
| ▶ Malcolm Felt       |        |      |         |                 |                 | 5.00           | 35.00           |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |                |                 |

