

# GLOBAL SCHOOL OPERATOR PROCESSES INVOICES 60% FASTER WITHIN THE FIRST 3 MONTHS WITH AP AUTONOMY

## ABOUT HIGHER GROUND

**HEADQUARTERS:** CA, US

**EMPLOYEES:** 1,000+

**INDUSTRY:** EDUCATION

**MONTHLY INVOICE VOLUME:** 1,572



Higher Ground is a hyper-scaling, tech-enabled global school operator whose mission is to modernize and mainstream the international Montessori movement. As a global provider of Montessori-informed education and teacher training, Higher Ground's Guidepost Montessori network is the world's largest network of Montessori schools, with 100 school campuses across the US and Asia with at-home and virtual learning programs serving more than 7,000 families worldwide.

## THE CHALLENGE

As a technology-driven school operator with diverse stakeholders across geographies, Higher Ground saw an opportunity to digitally transform its operations and improve its accounts payable (AP) process. They were using disparate AP tools across the organization that were not integrated with Sage Intacct, the ERP system they used for approvals, limiting the organization's ability to benefit from improved efficiencies.

*"The AP team loves it! It really helps them to become reviewers instead of processors (of data entry)."*

**- Director of Accounting Operations**

Higher Ground also has a complex invoice approval process with people involved from all 100 campuses, which includes administrators both on the operational side and at school sites around the world, consisting of multiple approvers and time-consuming email correspondence. Opening more campuses adds even more complexity to their approval process. They were at their breaking point in terms of time and cost. If they could save on invoice processing, they could more easily fund more valuable learning programs for children across the globe.



## OUR SOLUTION

As a forward-thinking organization, Higher Ground sought an intelligent, automated solution to provide oversight and uniformity across their finance operation and free its administrators from manually-intensive processing and approvals. Today, Vic.ai is providing Higher Ground with a centralized end-to-end solution for their AP team to delegate a majority of the invoice processing to the artificial intelligence engine and a simplified approval process.

## THE RESULTS

Because Higher Ground's previous approval workflow required multiple back-and-forth emails when changes were needed, Vic.ai's autonomous approval flows have saved the company significant time. In contrast to their formerly time-intensive approval routing process, where invoices could take up to two weeks to get approved, Higher Ground is now approving invoices in one to two days with autonomous approval flows.

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Our complicated invoice approvals process was impeding everyone involved – from the administrators at our schools to the AP clerks at our headquarters. Routing approvals is now an easy process. Our AP team is no longer struggling to get invoices approved on time and leadership loves being able to compare previous bills on the go with the mobile app.

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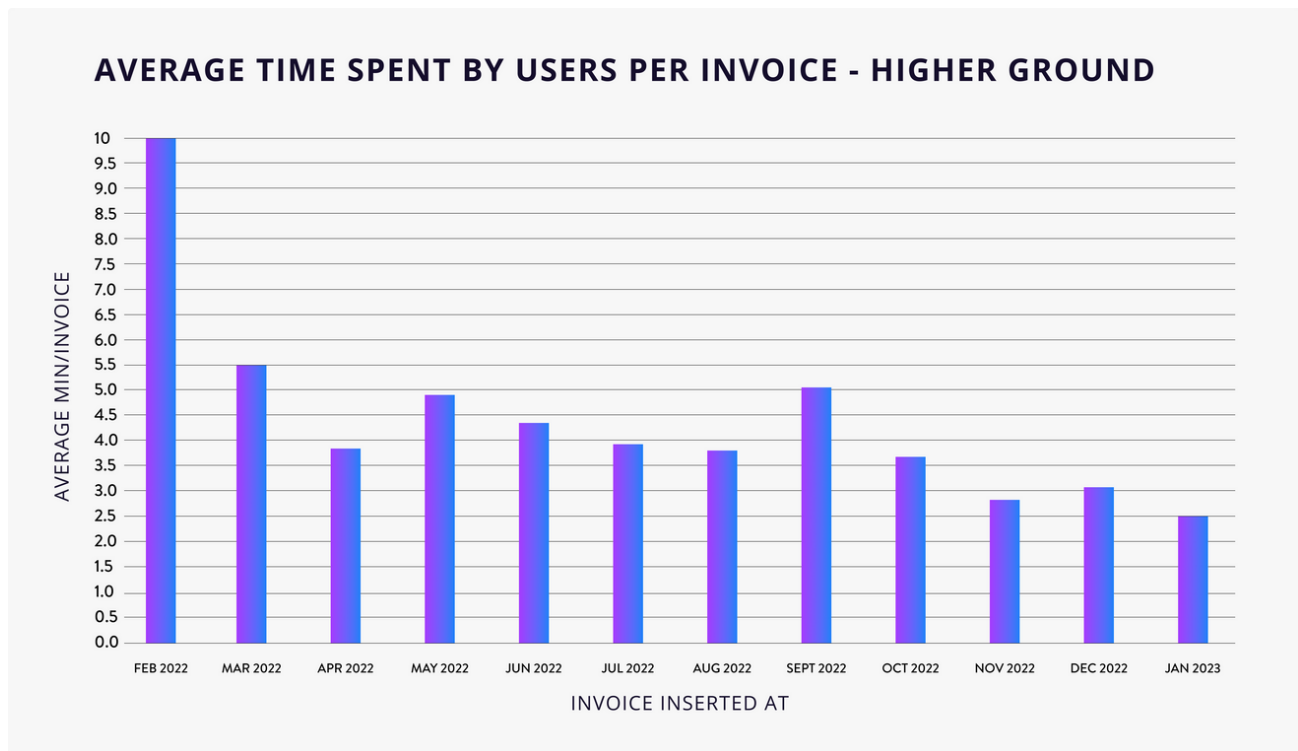


**Rachel Knapp**, VP, Financial & Accounting Systems  
Higher Ground Education

They also now benefit from real-time visibility into the status of those approval flows, and have been able to pinpoint where an invoice is in the steps of approvals to fast-track a payment if a due date needs to be met.

## FULLY-AUTOMATED INVOICES HAVE INCREASED DRAMATICALLY

Most importantly, Vic.ai's ability to process large volumes of data at high accuracy has also resulted in significant time savings for Higher Ground. The month before launching Vic.ai, Higher Ground's accountants were spending more than 10 minutes processing each invoice. Within the first 3 months, they were down to 3.7 to 4.8 minutes per invoice. After ten full months of leveraging Vic.ai, they are processing invoices 74% faster than before starting their AP autonomy journey. This is true even as invoice volumes increased, reaching more than 3,000 invoices in December of 2022 – meaning Higher Ground has processed even more invoices while reaching their fastest processing time of under 3 minutes.

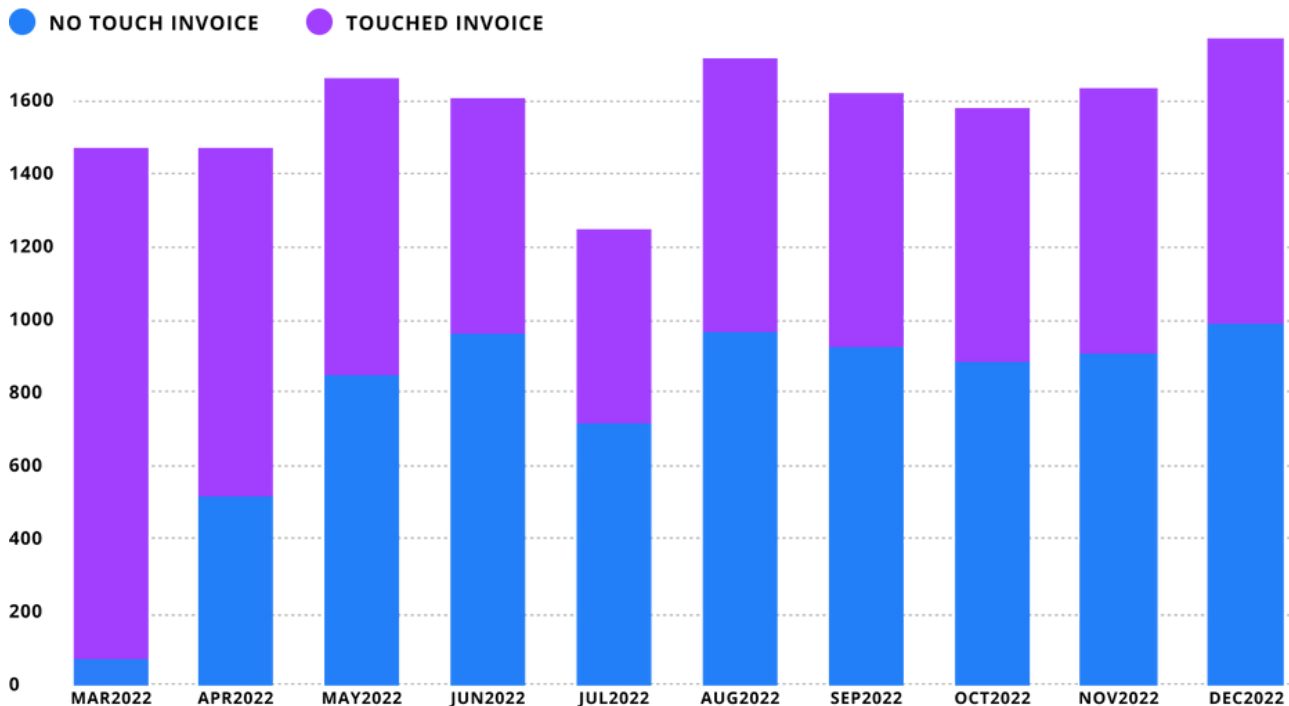


Today, Higher Ground has reached an invoice accuracy rate of 95% across all fields. They are also seeing significant growth in no-touch invoices, on average 54% per month since March of 2022, where no human updates are made to an invoice – meaning they were posted automatically to Higher Ground's ERP system, Sage Intacct.

## 54% OF HIGHER GROUND'S INVOICES REQUIRED ZERO HUMAN TOUCH

A no-touch invoice requires no human updates before posting the ERP. Also referred to as an STP invoice, a no-touch invoice can and often will be on Autopilot, but it's important to note that an invoice does not have to be on Autopilot to be considered "no-touch."

## NO TIME SPENT INVOICES - HIGHER GROUND



"The AP team loves it," says Margareta Marro, Director of Accounting Operations with Higher Ground. "It really helps them to become reviewers instead of processors [of data entry]."

And all that success is supported by Vic.ai's customer team, who support Higher Ground through onboarding and beyond.

"I've been blown away by the customer service," says Rachel Knapp, Vice President of Financial & Accounting Systems with Higher Ground.

"You get a very quick response, and the caliber of the support staff is fantastic - you can tell that they understand the issue well."

From employee morale to increased productivity directly impacting their bottom line, Higher Ground has clearly experienced a quick and significant ROI with Vic.ai. Imagine how happy their finance department will be a year from now when they reach the goal of one minute per invoice.

[BOOK A DEMO](#)

To see how other companies are benefiting from Vic.ai's intelligent accounting tools, visit our [Case Studies page](#).