



1.6M Cases Deflected,
€186M Saved:
**Inside SAP's
AI Search Strategy**

Michelle Lewis-Miller

Head of Digital Experiences and
Voice of Customer for SAP Customer Support



◆ SAP's Bold Bet on Unified AI Search

As a global leader in enterprise applications and business AI, SAP stands at the nexus of business and technology. For over 50 years, organizations have trusted SAP to bring out their best by uniting business-critical operations spanning finance, procurement, HR, supply chain, and customer experience.

For a company serving over 300 million cloud subscribers, every support case matters, and enabling customers to find their own answers instead of seeking assisted support is business critical. But SAP lacked visibility into their digital experience, and had little data to prove self-service's value. On top of that, a wide variety of customer search styles and content distributed across multiple systems presented a challenging series of obstacles.

"There's no commercialized search solution in the SAP suite," said Michelle Lewis-Miller, Head of Digital Experiences and Voice of Customer for SAP Customer Support. "We weren't hitting our self-service targets the way that we wanted to. We couldn't measure anything. We couldn't see what was going on."

Tasked with leading a search party for search, Lewis-Miller navigated both external vendors and SAP's own builder mindset. Few companies have ever met SAP's high expectations for third-party integration. After two or three years of convincing, Lewis-Miller added the Coveo AI-Relevance™ Platform to that esteemed shortlist in 2023.

◆ Results

1.64M

cases deflected since implementing
Coveo in SAP for Me (over 7 quarters)

€186M

annual capacity gains in SAP for Me

◆ Company Stats



Enterprise software, cloud computing



Headquartered in Walldorf,
Baden-Württemberg, Germany



300M+ cloud subscribers



€34B+ (non-IFRS) in FY2024



109,000+ employees across 157+ countries

◆ The Shocking Concur Pilot That Redefined SAP's Support Strategy

SAP Concur, a travel and expense platform, had already been using Coveo for years to deliver intelligent search across its support experience, long before the rest of SAP made the leap as well.

So, when the hype for generative AI began to trend, Lewis-Miller immediately saw that Concur could be an ideal testing ground for the new technology. SAP joined Coveo's design partner program to help shape the path that Coveo's Relevance Generative Answering would take.

"When we piloted Relevance Generative Answering in Concur, it went so well it was shocking," Lewis-Miller said. "We saw such a huge decrease in case submission that it changed our whole budget strategy for the next year."

Within six months, SAP Concur saw a +30% drop in customers submitting cases after self-service search attempts — an €8M reduction in annual cost-to-serve.

For many customers, this was their first experience with generative AI, and it was an immensely positive one, helping them find what they needed faster than ever before. Internally, agents received the same generative experience for faster knowledge discovery, shortening case resolution times.

As news of the success spread throughout SAP, leaders at all levels approached Lewis-Miller and her partners in IT about replicating that success for their own teams. The pilot also made SAP confident about greenlighting a much larger rollout.

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◆ The Ultimate Stress Test: Scaling Generative Search to SAP for Me

Despite the success of embedding Coveo into Concur's support experience, rolling out the AI search platform to SAP's self-service portal, SAP for Me, would be an Olympic-scale challenge. SAP for Me serves as a vital hub for millions of SAP customers, centralizing critical alerts, metrics, and insights related to an organization's complete SAP product portfolio through a single access point.

"That's where the complexity threw us some curveballs, even with an IT organization as unbelievably talented as our own to work on it. SAP for Me isn't the entryway for one product pulling from one body of knowledge. It's hundreds of products with between 14 to 20 bodies of knowledge," said Lewis-Miller.

"And you're trying to answer questions from a diverse audience: from engineers with 30 years of experience in SAP products, to Sally Jane from the deserts of Nevada who's wearing 10 hats for her general store. The personas could not be more different."

Incorporating generative AI into the portal would test SAP's ability to innovate within the bounds of its famously rigorous data privacy standards and vast IT architecture. Lewis-Miller and her project team were able to achieve a balance between strict compliance and customer-centric usability, thanks to the flexibility of Coveo's platform.

20 sources

of knowledge indexed for SAP for Me

4.2M

documents indexed for SAP for Me



◆ Wait, Is It Broken? Figuring Out How to Measure What Really Matters

When SAP deployed Coveo Relevance Generative Answering on SAP for Me, they anticipated that it would deflect simple questions.

“We expected it to address the low-hanging fruit,” Lewis-Miller said. “But it wasn’t at all like what we saw with Concur. In fact, we initially asked Coveo if something was broken in their backend.”

At first, SAP saw searches per session and its case submit rate go up among queries that received a generated answer — typically signs that the search was less relevant, not more. But by staying calm under pressure and partnering with Coveo to review the analytics, Lewis-Miller and her project team were able to root out the cause: Relevance Generative Answering on SAP for Me was tackling a different and far more complex set of queries than it had on SAP Concur.

“We were deflecting a more valuable subset of cases. It was so unexpected that we didn’t know what we were seeing when we first looked at the data. Instead of breaking it out by ‘I’m going to see if users who get a generated answer are more or less likely to submit a case,’ we learned that you have to look at all the data, generated answer or not,” said Lewis-Miller.

“When we did that — when we changed our perspective and our assumptions — and looked at the overall number, we saw that in reality the number of submissions had gone down, and the relevancy had absolutely gone up.”

Since launching in 2023, Coveo’s intelligent search has deflected 1.6 million cases, unlocking the equivalent of €186M in support capacity annually. And generative search is now adding millions more to those already staggering numbers.

SAP’s analysts use Coveo analytics to generate insights for executives and also find ways to improve the UX and influence content strategy. An unanticipated source of value was in Coveo-surfaced citations. Lewis-Miller described how the platform’s hybrid retrieval referenced a nuanced result set to not only respond with a direct answer but also deliver expertly curated source links.

The enhanced Coveo experience proved to be so effective that it even started to win over veteran engineers, who had previously preferred to entirely bypass search by using ID numbers or direct URLs.

“I’d tell them, imagine a world where you can just type in the specific piece of information you’re looking for, and it will pop up,” said Lewis-Miller. “They came around. One SAP-certified engineer with 15 years of experience with our products told me he uses it every time.”

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◆ Search That Customers Didn't Expect — But Now Depend On

With the Coveo platform, SAP simplifies searching across touchpoints like their SAP's built-in support application, community, customer support, and even internally — across all use cases, a total of 47 sources and 11.2M documents indexed.

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SAP’s AI search journey is more than a cost-savings story. It’s a story of cultural change inside one of the world’s most established technology companies, led by champions like Lewis-Miller and her visionary IT colleagues. It’s about proving that better customer experience doesn’t just reduce costs — it builds trust, resilience, and momentum for the future.

As Lewis-Miller noted, the biggest surprise wasn’t just the financial return. It was the customer reaction:

“The most common feedback was: this is cool, this feels like Google, and I don’t have to go to so many places anymore.”

For SAP, search is no longer a challenge to overcome; it’s a strategic enabler. With Coveo, every digital interaction is an opportunity to deliver clarity, value, and confidence at scale.





◆ About Coveo

Coveo brings superior AI-Relevance™ Platform to every point-of-experience and agent, transforming how enterprises connect with their customers and employees to maximize business outcomes.

For more information, visit: coveo.com

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