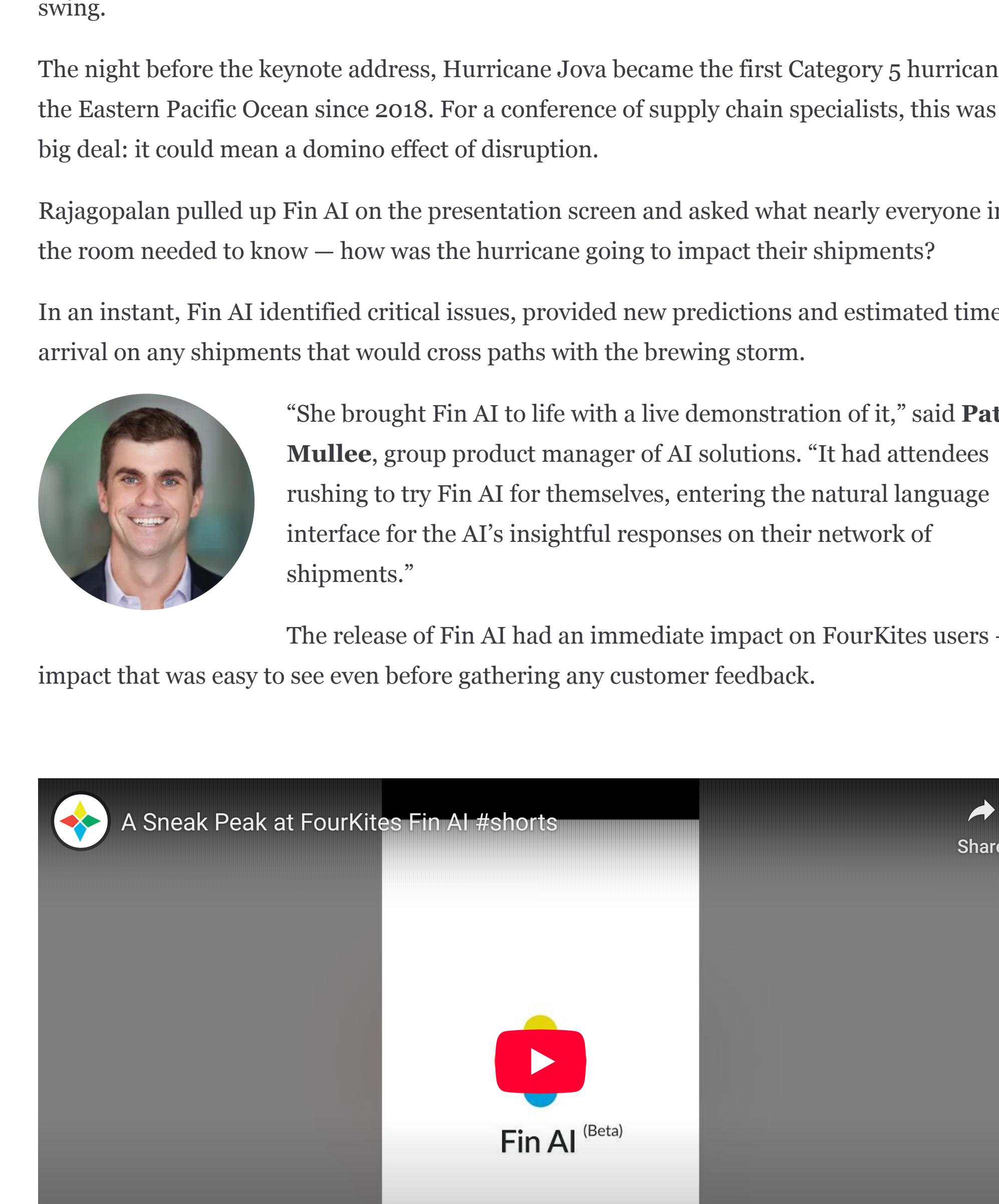


How FourKites is Using Gen AI to Help Move Supply Chain Management From 'Hindsight To Having Foresight'

FourKites' product team paves the way with a generative AI solution to finding answers in a sea of supply chain data.

Written by Taylor Rose
Published on Feb. 07, 2024

built in BRAND STUDIO



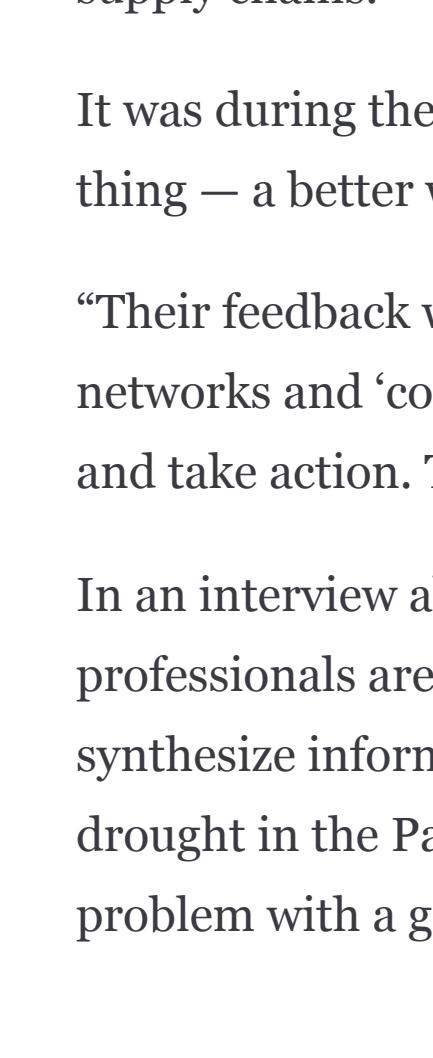
When Pat Mullee found his seat at the FourKites Visibility Conference's product keynote, it felt like the air was vibrating and crackling with energy.

FourKites Chief Product Officer Priya Rajagopalan took the stage to show a demonstration of the company's latest evolution — a generative AI for the supply chain industry called Fin AI. Rajagopalan started small, showing how Fin AI can handle simpler questions like "Why isn't my package tracking?" Then Rajagopalan cleared the bases with a question that took a big swing.

The night before the keynote address, Hurricane Jova became the first Category 5 hurricane in the Eastern Pacific Ocean since 2018. For a conference of supply chain specialists, this was a big deal: it could mean a domino effect of disruption.

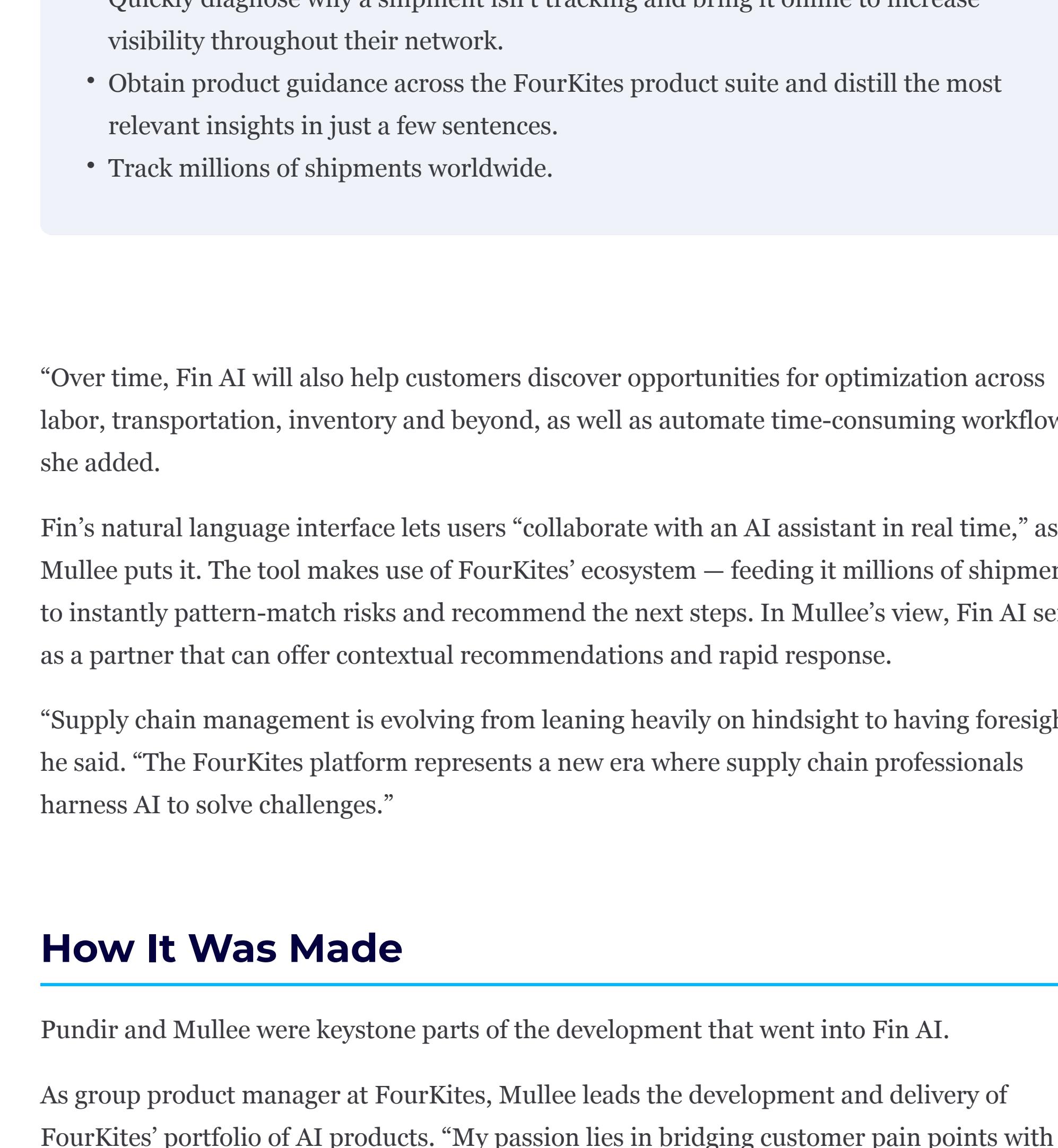
Rajagopalan pulled up Fin AI on the presentation screen and asked what nearly everyone in the room needed to know — how was the hurricane going to impact their shipments?

In an instant, Fin AI identified critical issues, provided new predictions and estimated times of arrival on any shipments that would cross paths with the brewing storm.



"She brought Fin AI to life with a live demonstration of it," said **Pat Mullee**, group product manager of AI solutions. "It had attendees rushing to try Fin AI for themselves, entering the natural language interface for the AI's insightful responses on their network of shipments."

The release of Fin AI had an immediate impact on FourKites users — impact that was easy to see even before gathering any customer feedback.



The massive amount of data that Fin AI accesses and delivers is staggering.

FourKites tracks millions of shipments worldwide and has the largest repository of supply chain data, encompassing more than 6,000 data points per shipment. The company provides over 18 million estimated times of arrival per day and tracks more than 62 billion miles per year.

"With Fin AI, FourKites is driving meaningful progress toward eliminating today's pervasive data silos by using generative AI — paving the way toward a revolutionary method of exploring, monitoring and leveraging supply chain data for real-time, data-driven decision-making," said **Vandana Pundir**, associate product manager of AI solutions.

How Fin AI Began

The supply chain disruptions of the last five years were a wake-up call for Mullee, Pundir and the product team. Mullee notes that looking back on this time revealed the fragility of global supply chains.

It was during these disruptions that many FourKites customers began asking for the same thing — a better way to make sense of a complex, dynamic supply chain.

"Their feedback was clear," said Mullee. "They required a way to navigate opaque global networks and 'connect the dots.' They needed a tool that could rapidly cut through the noise and take action. That gave rise to Fin AI."

In an interview about Fin AI, Chief Product Officer Priya Rajagopalan noted that supply chain professionals are being told to drink from a firehose of data, making it nearly impossible to synthesize information quickly. In an example like a supply chain being interrupted by a drought in the Panama Canal, being able to make decisions quickly is essential. Solving this problem with a generative AI tool also democratizes the data, as Rajagopalan points out.

WHAT FIN AI ALLOWS USERS TO DO

Pundir explained that Fin AI helps FourKites users:

- Assess the impact of disruptive events on their supply chain.
- Quickly isolate impacted shipments and take action.
- Quickly diagnose why a shipment isn't tracking and bring it online to increase visibility throughout their network.
- Obtain product guidance across the FourKites product suite and distill the most relevant insights in just a few sentences.
- Track millions of shipments worldwide.

"Over time, Fin AI will also help customers discover opportunities for optimization across labor, transportation, inventory and beyond, as well as automate time-consuming workflows," she added.

Fin's natural language interface lets users "collaborate with an AI assistant in real time," as Mullee puts it. The tool makes use of FourKites' ecosystem — feeding it millions of shipments to instantly pattern-match risks and recommend the next steps. In Mullee's view, Fin AI serves as a partner that can offer contextual recommendations and rapid response.

"Supply chain management is evolving from leaning heavily on hindsight to having foresight," he said. "The FourKites platform represents a new era where supply chain professionals harness AI to solve challenges."

How It Was Made

Pundir and Mullee were keystone parts of the development that went into Fin AI.

As group product manager at FourKites, Mullee leads the development and delivery of FourKites' portfolio of AI products. "My passion lies in bridging customer pain points with visionary technology," he said. "I lead a team of innovators who share this vision for AI transformation."

Pundir, who is part of that team of innovators, launched the initial ideation and design of the feature from its inception.

"As a product manager, I played a pivotal role in launching Fin AI," she said. "I presented multiple use cases that could become integral components of the feature in the long run."

Pundir led Fin AI through the production journey and determined its capabilities and boundaries.

"To ensure that cross-functional collaboration was seamless, I implemented a variety of strategies," said Pundir, noting things like facilitating real-time communications on a large scope and frequent collaboration sessions.

"The development of Fin AI leaned heavily upon FourKites' digital planning, direction, execution and documentation tools to promote quality and team member efficiency," she added.

Pundir also oversaw the communication heavily between internal stakeholders like leadership teams and external-facing parts of the company like marketing, product operations and customer support.

FourKites

Staying Focused on the Customer

Mullee's team shared a surge of pride during the product keynote speech. "And maybe a few celebratory high-fives," he added.

"But our focus remained firmly on customer feedback," he continued. "We watched and listened intently as the world's biggest shippers interacted and voiced live feedback on Fin AI."

Mullee and the product team have been listening to customer feedback since that launch day. The product team at FourKites is now on a mission to pioneer AI solutions that help businesses navigate logistics complexities with ease.

"We foster constant collaboration between users and our development teams throughout the product life cycle," he noted. "Their feedback shapes every feature we build."

Instead, they instantly assess their exposure and take action," concluded Mullee. "By centralizing millions of global shipments, Fin AI users successfully cut through complexity. These wins and continued positive feedback have led us, and our customers, to confidently believe that Fin AI will continue to grow as a key component of the FourKites platform."

READ MORE

Global Supply Chain Issues? FourKites Engineers Have Big-Picture Perspective →

FourKites is Hiring | View 26 Jobs

Responses have been edited for length and clarity. Images provided by FOURKITES.

Recent Articles

What It's Like to Build a Tech Career at McMaster-Carr, Ownership and Long-Term Growth

ACCO Brands Completes Acquisition of EPOS for \$1.7M

How McMaster-Carr Builds High-Impact Engineering Teams

Built In is the online and tech news network for tech professionals.

and tech news network for tech professionals.

events.

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn

Facebook Twitter LinkedIn