

The RIA Challenge: Balancing Scale, Service, and Change

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Today's RIAs stand at the intersection of disruption and opportunity. Market volatility, evolving client demographics, and advancing technology are redefining what it takes to run a successful advisory firm. Advisors are not just adopting technology; they are rethinking how automation can boost operations and grow their business while keeping the trust and personalization that set their firms apart. These tools help advisors respond faster, streamline operations, and stay competitive.

As advisors start considering how to achieve balance, they should focus on three key areas: scale, service, and change.

Technology Is Now an Expectation

"68% of RIAs are using AI to improve client communications, analysis, and operational efficiency."¹

Using technology in an advisory firm is no longer a differentiator; it is expected. According to the 2025 RIA Benchmarking Study by Charles Schwab, 68% of RIAs use AI for client-facing and operational purposes to increase efficiency, innovation, and scale.¹ By automating routine tasks, advisors can free up time to focus on what matters most: their clients.

Leading firms leverage AI-driven analytics and integrated wealth management platforms to deepen advisor-client relationships and uncover actionable insights that deliver the seamless digital experiences clients expect. These tools enhance personalization, enabling advisors to focus on strategy, meaningful conversations, and high-value interactions. Intelligent technology and dependable solutions allow firms to scale efficiently without compromising service quality. By blending automation with human empathy, scaling and outsourcing no longer mean sacrificing client-first service, but instead redefining how trusted advice is delivered.

Navigating Change

As advisors refine operations and scale effectively, they must also recognize that change is constant. From regulatory developments to cybersecurity threats, the wealth



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management landscape is rapidly changing, requiring firms to remain adaptable while safeguarding client trust. A survey of compliance professionals found that 57% of those working at RIA firms identify AI usage as their top compliance concern, followed by anti-money-laundering readiness (41%) and cybersecurity controls (38%).²

Innovation brings new capabilities but also new risks. Firms that align technology adoption with robust risk management practices strengthen both resilience and client confidence. Advisors who identify emerging risks and apply technology wisely are better positioned to guide clients and anticipate their needs.

The Next Era of Wealth Management

Technology is no longer optional. It is reshaping how advisors deliver trusted advice. The next era of wealth management will reward adaptability and bold leadership. The challenges of rising complexity, client demands, and market uncertainty are considerable, but so are the opportunities for differentiation and deeper relationships.

Firms that view technology not as a threat but as a force multiplier are better positioned to achieve deeper engagement and greater independence. In a market that continues to evolve, purposeful innovation is more than a strategy; it is essential to remain competitive. ■

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Learn more at www.assetmark.com, assetmark.com/blog, and LinkedIn.

Sources

1. 2025 RIA Benchmarking Study | Charles Schwab (ungated)
2. AI Tops Compliance Concerns for RIAs, Survey Finds; *InvestmentNews*; 7/22/25

