



# Reimagine organic growth: High tech meets high touch

# Rethink your underlying business model

The long-awaited, much-discussed generational shift has arrived in the investment world, and organic growth is one of the first indicators of an industry amid serious change. The standard operating procedures for finding new clients and serving existing ones are not working like they used to.

What are today's ambitious wealth management companies supposed to do? This paper explores the challenges surrounding organic growth and offers clear insights into how to address them head-on.

Because Apex technology can enable a new business model called Augmented Advice™. And it's already showing measurable results.

## What is Augmented Advice™?

Augmented Advice is a ready-made combination of technology solutions that enable you to scale the number of investors you serve while retaining your personal touch, including:



**Digital client experiences**

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**Advisor tools**

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**Back-end automations**

# Why organic growth is slowing

Thanks to the confluence of a number of factors, the organic growth our industry has previously enjoyed is decelerating. The factors affecting your company may include:

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**Net new assets have declined.** In 2024, net new assets (NNA) dropped to their lowest rate in a decade — 2.2%,<sup>1</sup> compared to 4.3% in 2021.<sup>2</sup> Although Assets Under Management (AUM) and its associated revenues may still be stable for now, the drop in NNA could signal a change in the industry.

## What are Net New Assets?

Net New Assets are a measurement of growth and acquisition for wealth management firms. Positive NNA is an indicator of growth.

**NNA = Inflows – Outflows**

2

**Hybrid and robo business are winning new net flows.** Although these two business models have only been adopted by 2% of RIA firms, these businesses are attracting nearly one-third (32%)<sup>3</sup> of new flows.

3

**Organic growth is holding steady but not increasing.** From 2015 through 2024, organic growth accounted for 39% of AUM in U.S. wealth management firms.<sup>4</sup> During this time, the largest increase in net AUM (69%) came from market performance.<sup>5</sup>

4

**The Great Wealth Transfer is underway.** Younger generations are inheriting wealth — Millennials will gain the most (\$46 trillion) with Gen X inheriting the greatest portion of assets (\$14 trillion).<sup>6</sup>

5

**Aging investor demographics.** Baby Boomers, the historical drivers of investment inflows, are shifting from accumulation to decumulation. They're withdrawing funds for retirement and leaving fewer opportunities for growth within this segment.

6

**Market saturation at the top end.** High Net Worth (HNW, with at least \$5 million in investable assets)<sup>7</sup> and Ultra High Net Worth (UHNW, with financial wealth greater than \$50 million)<sup>8</sup> together make up only 2% of all households.<sup>9</sup> These households have reached financial advice saturation, leading to firms often competing for the same clients without creating significant new AUM for the industry.

**The result is a rapidly shifting industry where some traditional advisor interactions no longer resonate as they once did — or are not available at all.**

# Younger generations want something different

All of these organic growth challenges are further compounded by the different attitudes and values of the younger generations. These cohorts are starting to reveal their wealth management preferences, which include:

3 out of 4 Millennial and Gen Z investors surveyed believe it's "not possible to achieve above-average returns solely on traditional stocks and bonds,"<sup>10</sup> leading to **interest in alternative investments**

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Gen Zers who are 21 and older and Millennials hold **just a quarter of their portfolio in stocks**, compared with over half (55%) of portfolios of older investors<sup>11</sup>

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90% of Gen Z and Millennials consider **company sustainability policies** when selecting investments, compared to 44% of investors over 43 years old, who are largely Gen X and Baby Boomers<sup>12</sup>

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To say nothing of the fact that these younger generations have grown accustomed to a digital, instant world that emphasizes immediacy. But as we'll see in the next section, these up-and-coming investors also want human advice on occasion.

## There's still plenty of demand for human advice

As money passes down the generations, the financial advice market is as ripe as it's ever been (despite rumors to the contrary). According to a recent Intelliflo survey, 74% of American adults said they would value professional advice about financial topics.<sup>13</sup> The problem? Many potential investors aren't becoming clients due to familiar misconceptions:

*They're not sure how to find the right financial advisor for their needs*

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### BECAUSE

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*90% of them want personalized investment advice (not "standardized" advice). Dig deeper into the stats, and personalized advice is ranked as the number one priority by 67% of Millennials and 73% of Gen X<sup>14</sup>*

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### BUT

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*They don't believe they have enough money to hire professional help*

And this enormous group of investing-curious people are not wrong. While great progress has been made to democratize access to the stock market through robo technology, human advice doesn't scale as easily as an app on a smartphone.

# The new business model for mass-affluent investors

Some industry leaders call it “hybrid digital advice” or “online advice” — we call it Augmented Advice. Whatever the name, the concept is simple: count on robo technology to support investors while providing on-demand human advice to those who want it.

In early 2025, robo and hybrid digital advice providers:

- ▷ Represent about 2% of all fee-based financial advisors
- ▷ Attract 32% of net new flows
  - ▷ Robo has 8% of net new flows
  - ▷ Hybrid has 24% of net new flows<sup>15</sup>

Tiburon describes hybrid digital advice as a “niche market.” Maybe today it feels niche-y, but we believe it’s a business model that can drive organic growth for years to come.

## The case for Augmented Advice

The answer to organic growth challenges isn’t incremental change — it’s a significant rethink of how advice is delivered. This is where Augmented Advice comes into play.

In a nutshell, Augmented Advice can change the math at the heart of your advisory business — while keeping the heart at the center of the client experience. It is a plug-and-play suite of solutions that help you keep costs in check as you broaden your client base and instill investor confidence.

From an organic growth perspective, Tiburon predicts that this type of hybrid business model will drive upwards of 20% of net new flows by 2026.<sup>16</sup> And it’s available now as an add-on to your existing tech stack and custodian relationships.

### **The key benefit of Augmented Advice?**

Your ability to serve more clients at any levels of wealth, including white-glove treatment for those who command it and the ability to offer automated help for everyone else. Because if you can start engaging next-gen investors earlier in their wealth-accumulation journeys, you can earn their trust along the way.

# What's included in Augmented Advice?

This off-the-shelf suite of solutions from Apex is designed to help individual advisors serve more clients — and give wealth management companies additional opportunities to scale without staffing up.

Feature	Benefit
White-label client portals	Highlight your brand, not your custodian's
Real-time account opening and funding	Enable investors to onboard during your first call or meeting
Pre-built, real-time ledger	Avoid building and maintaining a shadow ledger or waiting for overnight data updates
Real-time cash management and money movement	Deliver a better client experience when funds and balances are available nearly instantly
Automated financial planning suite	Quickly identify areas to dig deeper with clients with workflow shortcuts and tools to help you
Actionable portfolio insights	Use system-generated prompts to deliver personalized proposals to investors
Model Marketplace	Get access to an integrated library of professionally created models by major asset managers
Direct indexing	Allow investment minimums as low as \$10k
Automated rebalancer	Rebalance down to the fractional share level
Multigenerational tools	Allow investors to track investments at the household level
Integrated business intelligence	Run your own reports with client-ready visualizations that can reduce meeting prep time
Pre-built client platform	Skip building a client-facing portal on your own
Billing tools	Upload files to get any type of management fee calculations through the Ascend Workstation UI
Third-party integrations	Create the ideal experience more quickly with pre-integrated third-party tools and workflows

# Success stories from early adopters

Augmented Advice isn't a theoretical concept. We're already seeing firms successfully implement this model in ways that point towards a sustainable and growth-filled future.

## Case Study 1

### First Affirmative: Lowering minimums sparks growth

*By reimagining their business model and implementing Augmented Advice, First Affirmative has successfully turbocharged their firm.*

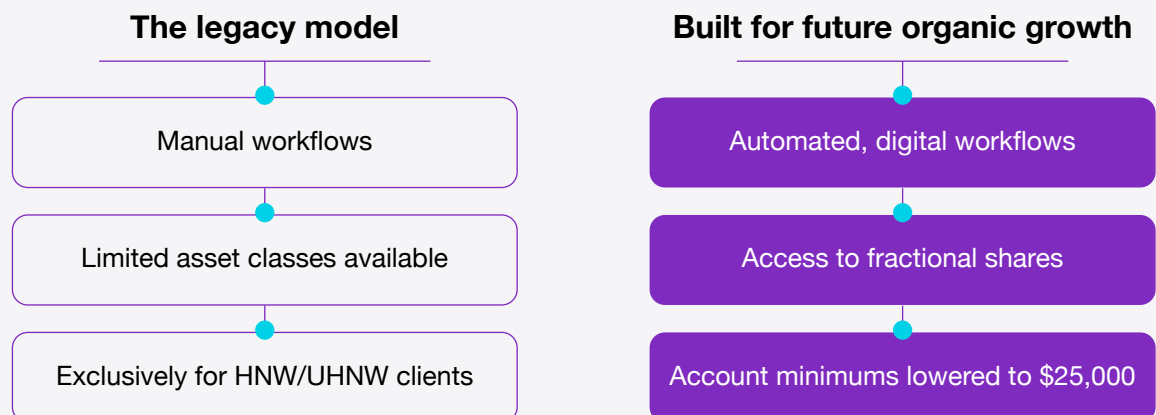
George Gay, First Affirmative's CEO and founder, needed a way to smooth out his internal processes and use that efficiency to address account minimums and organic growth. He realized that his legacy custodian's processes were simply too inefficient to scale effectively.

George realized that he needed to find a custodian that could deliver an ecosystem of operational efficiencies and modern automations. He chose to collaborate with Apex, which gave him the ability to reduce the cost of servicing clients and lower First Affirmative's minimum investment amount to \$25,000.

First Affirmative worked with Apex to implement an Augmented Advice model that streamlined workflows, implemented automations, and allowed operational efficiencies to drive improvements at scale. With this model, they reduced account minimums to \$25,000 — a drastic improvement from historical thresholds.

The result? A technology-fueled business model that has unlocked a stream of new clients and continues to support sustained organic growth today.

## First Affirmative before and after Apex



## Case Study 2

# Facet Wealth: One advisor serves 200 clients

*By focusing on measuring and minimizing non-value-driving advisor activities, Facet Wealth was able to use Augmented Advice to accelerate growth with a highly efficient new model.*

Anders Jones, CEO and cofounder of Facet Wealth, was obsessed with building for scale without losing the human touch. He focused on optimizing operational efficiencies, including self-service robo solutions, that would allow him to lower his costs and profitably deliver human advice to clients who want it.

Anders also quantified the time advisors spend on administrative, non-value-driving activities to enable conversations focused on reducing this rate.

The result? Thanks to his very intentional focus on value-driving advisor activities, Anders was able to grow his firm more quickly and now boasts approximately 14,000 clients — 80% of whom had never worked with a financial advisor before. And one of his advisors is now deftly handling 200 clients.

**80%** of new clients had never worked with a financial advisor

**1** advisor deftly manages 200 clients

## Case Study 3

# Orion: Building is slow, integrating is faster

*When a TAMP like Orion wants to offer a new business model, building an elegant solution can take a long time. By choosing to integrate with Augmented Advice instead of starting from scratch, Orion successfully accelerated their launch.*

Brian Towner, Orion's director of strategic planning, wanted to offer advisors a true end-to-end digital destination that could efficiently service and support clients, while also attracting new ones. Plus, Orion wanted to control the experience they built, so they were looking for modular solutions that supported their vision.

Enter Apex. While everyone else is trying to control the advisor desktop with their full-stack proprietary solutions, Apex offered the opposite.

***"Through their flexible and dynamic APIs, we're able to stand up a fully digital platform and highlight to our advisors what the future of the industry will be — a fully automated, digital, and paperless ability to open and fund accounts right away, easily move money, and quickly onboard new business,"*** Brian explains."

The result? By integrating rather than building, Orion launched their end-to-end solution quickly, giving them a competitive advantage with today's digital-minded companies and their clients.

# Your day-to-day can look more human with Augmented Advice

As you start to imagine what your revitalized business-of-the-future looks like, here are some of the new capabilities you can leverage.

**See your entire business on one screen**, minimizing inefficiencies from switching between siloed workflows

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**Share mirrored advisor and client portal views** to help keep both parties on the same page, making it easier to explain the details that investors want to know

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**Customize your own view** with drag-and-drop columns and modules

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**Offer new clients fully digital onboarding** so they can set up and fund an account within minutes

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**Provide personalization at scale** to help attract and engage the up-and-coming generations

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**Group accounts by type** for detailed campaign analysis and more efficient bulk actions

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**Use in-system spreadsheet capabilities** that reduce the need for data exports to handle routine analytics

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**Pick up right where you left off** with sticky views to help avoid rework

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**Get access to the right information at the right time** with role-specific system access

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**Give clients self-service solutions** so they can take care of routine updates without an advisor's help

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**Run your own reports**, create data visualizations, and leverage AI to help surface insights

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**Minimize the inefficiencies of tab-hopping** with built-in third-party tech integrations for common actions, such as rebalancing, tax-loss harvesting, fixed income investments, fractional trading, and more

# Reinvent, reimagine, reinvigorate — and do it now

Although it may be tempting to delay big business decisions, you can't wait too long. According to PwC, "one in six (16%) asset and wealth managers globally are expected to be swallowed up or fall by the wayside by 2027, twice the historical rate of turnover."<sup>17</sup>

Now is the time to pursue organic growth with the best technology and service you have at your disposal. This isn't just about adapting; it's about thriving in the digital-first era.

Let's talk about how Augmented Advice can help you successfully revitalize your business.

Let's Talk Growth

<sup>1</sup> Tiburon Strategic Advisors. The Future of Wealth and Investment Management. Page 5. April 24, 2025.

<sup>2</sup> Tiburon CEO Summit XLV Keynote Presentation. November 7, 2023.

<sup>3</sup> Tiburon CEO Summit XLV Keynote Presentation. November 7, 2023.

<sup>4</sup> Tiburon Strategic Advisors. The Future of Wealth and Investment Management. Page 16. April 24, 2025.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> Ibid.

<sup>7</sup> Cerulli Associates. U.S. Household Total Financial Wealth Exceeds \$90 Trillion. April 16, 2025. Link [here](#).

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

<sup>9</sup> American Society of Pension Professionals & Actuaries (ASPPA). 'Great Wealth Transfer' Underway, Expected to Hit \$124 Trillion. January 7, 2025. Link [here](#).

<sup>10</sup> Bank of America Private Bank. 2022 Bank of America Private Bank Study of Wealthy Americans. <https://mlaem.fs.ml.com/content/dam/ust/articles/pdf/2022-BofaA-Private-Bank-Study-of-Wealthy-Americans.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> Ibid.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Intelliflo. 84% of Millennials Say There Are Financial Topics They Need Professional Advice On, According to intelliflo Survey. June 28, 2023. <https://www.businesswire.com/news/home/20230628444139/en/84-of-Millennials-Say-There-Are-Financial-Topics-They-Need-Professional-Advice-On-According-to-intelliflo-Survey>

<sup>14</sup> Rockwood, James. Wealth Solutions Report. From Boomers to Millennials: What Investors Want From Advisors in 2025. March 2025. Link [here](#).

<sup>15</sup> Tiburon Strategic Advisors. Robo Advisors & Hybrid Digital Advice Providers. Page 20. May 31, 2023.

<sup>16</sup> Ibid. Page 152.

<sup>17</sup> PwC. One in six asset and wealth management companies will be swallowed up or fall by the wayside in the next five years: PwC Global Asset & Wealth Management Survey. July 10, 2023. <https://www.pwc.com/gx/en/news-room/press-releases/2023/pwc-2023-global-asset-and-wealth-management-survey.html>

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