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SCHWAB

Creating your own formula for the Modern Office

Four ways RIAs are solving for
the future of work

Own your tomorrow.



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“When COVID-19 disrupted business as usual, many independent advisors didn’t just shift gears to a more tech-driven practice. They shifted mindsets—prioritizing their core values, building exceptional cultures, and taking care of clients in creative ways that strengthened relationships.”

—Tim Oden

Managing Director, Advisor Services Business Development & New Client Acquisition,
Schwab Advisor Services

More than four walls

Since the first advisors broke away to forge their own Registered Investment Advisor (RIA) firms decades ago, the ability to create and run a business with complete freedom and to seek to make decisions in the best interest of clients has been a defining feature of the independent model. The power to call the shots—to build a brand name, a physical space that could be so much more than four walls, and a business that resonates with investors—was the driving force for those advisors. And it still is.

But now a new generation is defining the modern RIA playbook in response to a changing world. They're adopting innovative technology sooner and reinvesting more frequently.¹ They're bringing ideals and values into the workplace or going to firms where they have the freedom to do so.² They're prioritizing what the Capgemini Research Institute calls "WOW factor," which hyper-personalizes the client journey through product recommendations, custom portfolios, and value-added services.³ They're upskilling their workforces and recruiting accordingly. Most important, they're building firms that meet clients' needs now while positioning their service models for a very different future. We call these independent advisory firms Modern Offices.

These firms are the ones to watch as they outpace peers and leverage the flexibility and control that the RIA model offers.



of RIA firms invested in new tech and 61% adopted digital tools at a faster rate than ever in 2020.⁴

Many advisors expect to see more changes in how they communicate and where teams work. The top three permanent changes predicted include:



Regular use of video calls with clients (62%)



More staff working remotely (40%)



Less need for office space (33%)⁵

Getting creative quickly

Modern Office builders take a proactive stance toward innovative technology. Amid disruptions like the pandemic, they're ready to scale investments in tech to help mitigate impacts and refocus on clients.

"When COVID-19 hit, the transition out of the office was very simple for us," says Tyler Boon, president of Jupiter Wealth Management in Denver, Colorado. "All of our software and infrastructure was already in the cloud, including our phones. We had a rotating office schedule for filing, mail, and other required in-person activities. Sure, we missed seeing each other face-to-face, but we had regularly scheduled video calls. If we were calling a client or a vendor from home, we could use our desk phone the same way we used it in the office. Setting up a laptop for an employee to go remote was easy. Essentially it meant just logging in. We automatically downloaded all the software programs and the monitoring and sent them on their way."

In contrast with firms built on aging technology, Jupiter Wealth Management could pivot on a dime.

"Other than the location of our people, nothing really changed, and I don't think that's true with most big firms and certainly most wirehouses," Boon says. "For larger firms like wirehouses, there were lots of hurdles to having the capacity to go from 100 people a day working remotely to 6,000."



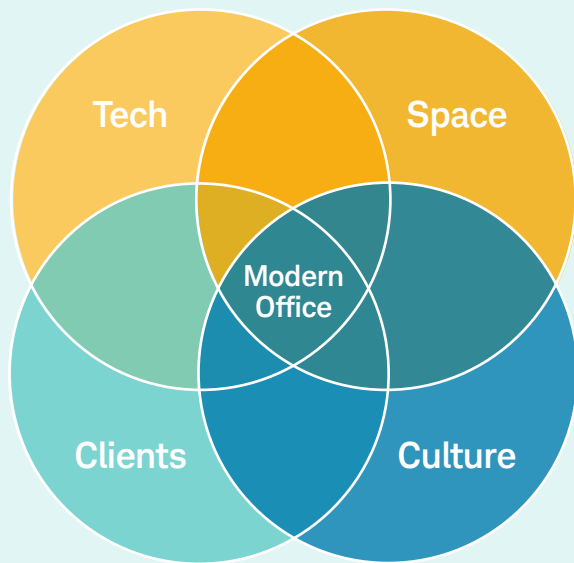
Tyler Boon
President, Jupiter
Wealth Management

Once home offices were set up, many advisors in captive models realized they enjoyed working more independently. Wirehouse advisors learned that they could

adapt and still focus on clients despite falling levels of support and complex compensation grids. Some independent broker-dealers started to feel that paying for empty office space wasn't worth it.

"It's remarkable," says Janelle Ward, director and technology consultant at Schwab. "We're seeing advisors from captive channels use work-from-home and hybrid office environments as an opportunity to explore independence. They see how attractive the economics are in the RIA model, and they're deciding to go independent to build the kind of office and tech stacks that can give them the freedom and flexibility to work the way they want."

That willingness to build strong systems and prioritize the client experience—even in extraordinary times—is at the center of the Modern Office.



What makes a Modern Office?

The four key elements:

- + **Technology**—Modern Offices adopt state-of-the-art technologies that simplify workflows and personalize client experiences.
- + **Space**—Modern Offices leverage their office space, whether virtual or physical, as a strategic differentiator for attracting prospective clients and talent.
- + **Clients**—Modern Offices serve a well-defined client base, and an advisor's value is always defined from their clients' perspective.
- + **Culture**—Modern Offices design with their culture and team in mind, prioritizing flexibility, accessibility, diversity, data, and security.

How the right custodian can help you leapfrog—and lead

Experienced custodians like Schwab can work with advisors to help them find their modern edge. Whether you're considering going independent as an RIA or evaluating different custody platforms, you'll want to ensure that your custodian shares your values and vision of success and can offer the tools and resources to help you realize it.

Look for a custodian that has the following:

- Extensive experience helping advisors transition to the RIA model and their platform
- Digital tools and resources to help you complete critical tasks like move money requests and account opening
- Specialized expertise to help advisors navigate open-architecture investment products with confidence
- A commitment to third-party tech integrations that allow advisors to work the way they want
- End-to-end consulting capabilities to help advisors envision their ideal firm, work toward a smooth account setup and transfer, navigate tech considerations, and unlock insights that help their firm continue to grow and evolve

Doubling down on tech to shape work and relationships

The RIA model helps you build a client-first service experience through technology, freeing you up from day-to-day tasks so you can spend more time with your clients. And thanks to your custodian's technology consultants, you don't have to be a computer programmer to do it.



The ability to select preferred technology systems (35%) and having greater autonomy (46%) are major factors for potential breakaway advisors considering independence.⁶ While the pandemic accelerated technology innovation and may have driven adoption rates in the RIA channel,⁷ other advisors were forced to wait on senior management to make technology investment decisions.

Modern Office builders have the power of choice. They can select best-of-breed technology and automate routine tasks. Advisors can tap new digital marketing platforms to share licensed content that helps turn clicks into conversions. If they want, advisors can leverage automation to do the heavy lifting on everything from content creation to distributing newsletters to keeping clients informed with personalized communications. There are so many ways to engage with clients and open up new lanes for organic growth. First-of-their-kind digital account open tools are allowing clients to open and fund accounts in minutes from anywhere. All of this can save time and afford you the ability to offer hyper-personalized services to your clients.

The level of service RIAs are now able to provide is becoming something clients expect—even demand.



High-net-worth (HNW) investors have more choices of whom to work with and what services to pay for than ever before. According to Sháka Rasheed, managing director of Capital Markets U.S. Financial Services at Microsoft, exposure to algorithm-driven experiences outside of financial services has trained investors of all sizes to expect personalization. “Investors are searching for the same intuitiveness, personalization, and proactive interactions they have with BigTechs from their wealth management firms,” Rasheed says in Capgemini’s *World Wealth Report*

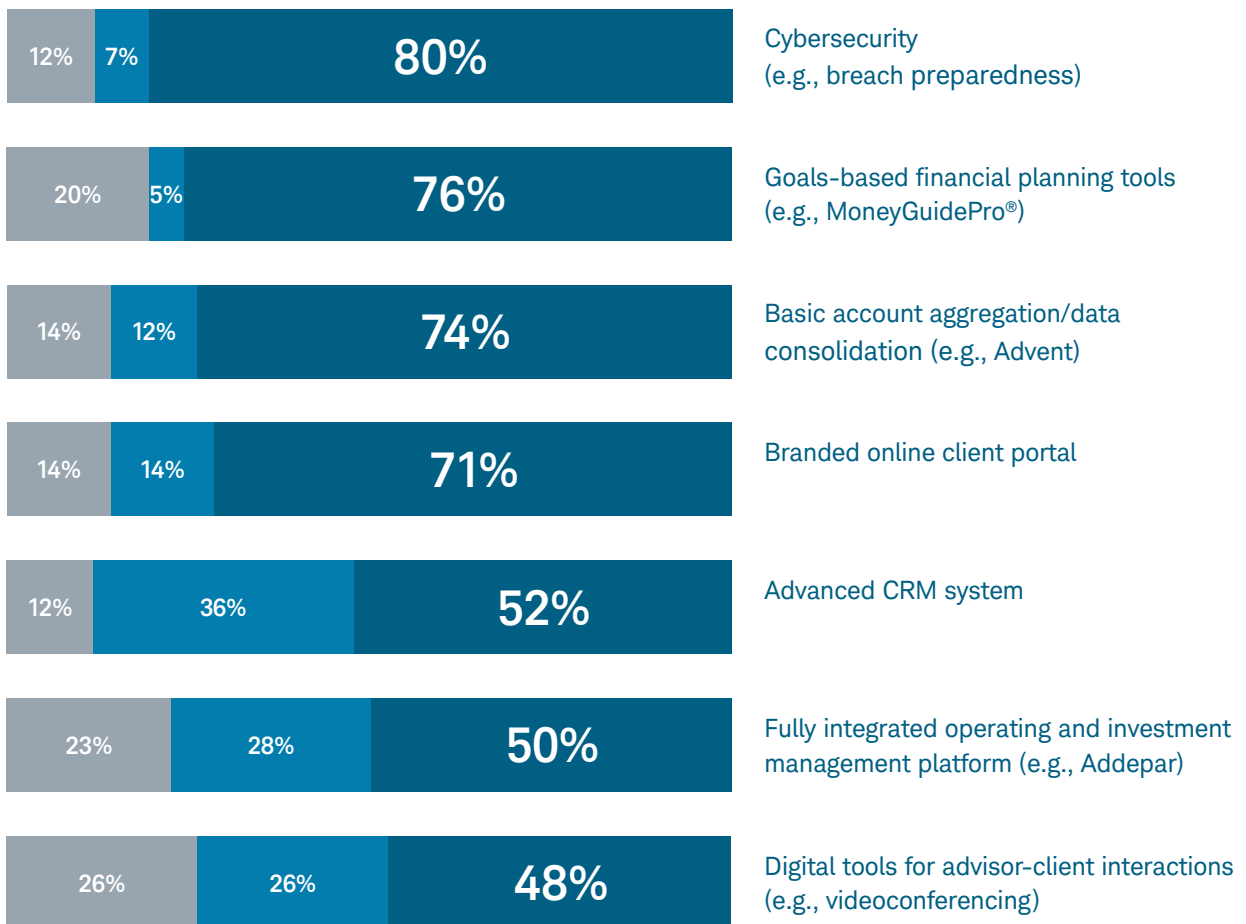
2021. “Through technology, we are able to simplify a client’s financial life,” says Erik Morgan, senior partner at Freestone Capital Management. “Offering integrated services through a digital platform has a considerable impact on a client’s life. And it gives you, the advisor, important insights on how to customize your advice and tailor the experience for your clients.”

According to Cerulli, attention is turning toward execution: “With firms beginning to focus more on how services are delivered than simply on which services to offer, Cerulli expects investments in operational technology to grow considerably at firms across the board.”⁸

HNW practices: Current tech offerings and plans

HNW practices have spent significant time and resources on enhancing their technology systems, including cybersecurity, goals-based planning, and account aggregation.*†

- Currently offer
- Plan to introduce in next three years
- No plans to offer



*The Cerulli Report, U.S. High-Net-Worth and Ultra-High-Net-Worth Markets 2020: Implications of Wealth Concentration, Exhibit 1.07, Cerulli Associates, December 3, 2020.

† Percentages may not total 100% due to rounding.

“When you go independent, you can choose the best financial planning software, the best risk-analysis software, the best CRM, the best trading interfaces. ... It’s been so much better, and our clients recognize it.”

—**Brad Goodwin**
Founder and CEO, San Luis Wealth Advisors



What clients want out of advisors’ technology

As much as clients want the convenience of self-service and fast, easy access to their accounts, they are not willing to give up personal interactions or meaningful conversations with their advisors. According to data from Cerulli Associates, only 4% of investors express interest in purely digital platforms without human support.⁹ That means some of the most important digital tools advisors will adopt, at least in the near term, are those that allow them to connect with clients.

When it comes to choosing your firm’s technology, consider these attributes:

- + **Customization**—Your technology solutions, whether reporting or financial planning tools, should be customized to clients’ needs and goals.
- + **Ease of use**—Your client-facing solutions (e.g., client portal) should be intuitive and easy to navigate.
- + **Accessibility**—Your technology solutions should be accessible online and across devices.



What advisors need out of their technology

The unexpected pivot to remote work during the pandemic revealed the strengths and flexibility of RIA firms—as well as the gaps in other advisor channels, says Ward. As a director and technology consultant at Schwab, Ward helps advisor teams understand their technology needs and the options available. With her assistance, they can build the best service platform for their client service strategy.

“I think, more than ever, people expect a modern experience, one that’s easy and readily accessible. Anything less might actually detract from the overall relationship,” says Ward. “More and more advisors are coming to us because they hear frustrations from clients about inadequate reporting and the inability to customize. We often hear that their current end-client portal is not modern or intuitive enough. And their brand isn’t front and center, which certainly is not an ideal experience.” In other words, clients of advisors in the captive models feel they’re engaging with the larger firm, not the advisor.

Unlike other models, RIAs have the freedom to tap a host of third-party applications and create a fully customized client experience. Eric Clarke, founder and CEO of Orion Advisor Solutions, calls this end-to-end custom experience “the tech-enabled fiduciary process.” He believes it gives independent advisors a distinct advantage when it comes to differentiating themselves from their captive environment counterparts.

“Now you can transform the advisor-client relationship using technology,” says Clarke. “Advisors looking to build a Modern Office can prospect, plan, invest, and achieve their vision through personalized reporting—all within a single, connected, technology-driven experience.”



Janelle Ward
Director and
Technology Consultant,
Schwab Advisor Services

Fully digital experiences like the one Clarke advocates for can be especially helpful for tailoring investment strategies to clients’ goals. It also makes it easier for advisors to track progress on those goals.

“A tech-enabled process is a better, more scalable way of doing business—and for engaging prospects and clients,” says Clarke. Instead of signing into multiple portals and dealing with cluttered interfaces, clients can access all these vital functions in one place. Making things easier and more transparent for clients can help deepen trust—“especially in today’s remote service world where digital-first impressions matter,” he adds.

Whether you’re a breakaway advisor or looking for tech that better fits your growing business, start with the client experience in mind.

Schwab’s Janelle Ward says to always ask yourself:

- Who are your clients?
- What’s their current digital experience with your firm?
- What elements of the current experience need to continue?
- What aren’t you able to deliver that, in an ideal world, you would?



Do you need to be a tech specialist?

Tailoring your firm's tech stack to your needs and those of your clients is not a technical process. It's a team process. Modern Office advisors lean on the expertise available to them from industry experts and their custodian.

When an RIA custodies with Schwab, there's no expectation that advisors need to know every service provider or be able to determine which solutions best fit the equation. To help make a plan, the Schwab Advisor Services™ team digs in with advisors to understand their vision and needs. That plan may include bringing in a third-party specialist—whatever it takes for the RIA to feel confident with the option they select.

Selecting a technology platform and transitioning clients were two key issues that had long stalled Brad Goodwin's decision to start an RIA firm. He wanted the control and flexibility he'd been lacking at a wirehouse. So Goodwin reached out to Schwab for guidance.

“I was surprised by how well our plan worked. The planning made it feel easy.”

—**Brad Goodwin**
Founder and CEO, San Luis Wealth Advisors



Turning your office space into a growth accelerator

Not all RIA firms are alike—nor should they be. Your office space can be a powerful recruiting tool for new team members and clients. But, as many independent advisors are discovering, it doesn't have to be an office in a high-rent high-rise. In fact, flexibility is a draw of the RIA model, especially now as advisors in captive models question whether or not to renew their current leases.



For the breakaway advisor, going independent has always presented the opportunity to build a brand and design an office space that brings that brand to life. Virtual interactions and newfound flexibility may be game changers, but as many advisors would probably agree, there is no substitute for an in-office experience.

68% of top-performing RIA firms have a documented ideal client persona, and 75% have a documented client value proposition.¹⁰

Modern Offices go a step further and build a brand experience around those strategic documents. They create a space where the ideal prospective clients see themselves and their interests reflected. With documenting an ideal client persona and client value proposition as key drivers of growth,¹¹ many advisors are paying closer attention to how their physical office environments and client experience reflect their brand.

Modern Office space as a tool for differentiation

These are the elements that build your brand identity.





Kristine Porcaro, President
Michael Tucci, CEO
Co-founders,
Lexington Wealth Management

Kristine Porcaro, president of Lexington Wealth Management in Lexington, Massachusetts, has set her firm apart by creating an office environment that helps alleviate client stress. She and co-founder Michael Tucci have built their firm around the

concept of “connecting the head and the heart of wealth management,” an idea meant to serve each client’s personal—and financial—well-being.

“We purposely built our new office space with a very open, airy, bright layout,” she says. “We have exposed brick, very high ceilings, and not many private offices. When clients walk in, they say they feel very comfortable. We intentionally avoid national news stations on the TV screens. Instead, we have the Travel Channel or the Food Network on because we want clients to understand that they should enjoy the things in life that they want to enjoy, and we’ll worry about those things that we need to worry about.”

Returning to a new and improved office

As stay-at-home orders pushed her colleagues to work remotely, Porcaro started thinking about the silver linings and how a more flexible office could resonate with clients and staff well into the future.

“As our firm grows and adds more employees, I think about flex time and how it makes a ton of sense for families to have more balance,” she says. “I also think about flex office space and the opportunity to bring on more people and maybe not have to take on more real estate—to have people more in motion, moving around the office and coming up with ways to structure the day. It’s really an opportunity to tailor work to people so they can thrive and be their best selves.”

Home at the office

When the pandemic hit, independent advisors flexed their agility and responsiveness—two defining attributes of the RIA model. Owners set their team members up for success by providing them with the proper tools to work remotely, from dual monitors to ergonomic keyboards to powerful workflow software that allowed their advisor teams to collaborate and be more productive and accurate. To avoid inbox overload, firms adopted instant messaging software and digital processes quickly became the new normal. “It’s hard to imagine backing off of that efficiency,” says Schwab’s Janelle Ward.

“We’re all going to continue to work more virtually than we ever had in the past,” explains Ward. “More advisors will be more reliant on the tools that they’ve adopted, like web and videoconferencing tools and some of the internal digital chat and communication software that make it easy to connect and communicate and then collaborate on shared work.”

In fact, 37% of independent advisors saw the ability to leverage technology infrastructure to work remotely as one of the biggest opportunities for their business in 2020.¹²

Finding the sweet spot in a hybrid office

While there is the potential for work-life balance and cost savings in working from home full time, many RIA industry experts agree that the future of work is moving to more hybrid formats.

“Most of the advisors we work with aren’t thinking about abandoning office space,” says Scott Cohen, director of Business Consulting at Schwab Advisor Services. “The focus is pivoting more towards flexibility, dependent on the types of clients that they work with.”

Cohen’s team guides advisors on their business strategy for launching an independent RIA firm. As part of his role, he leverages peer insights from RIAs to help advisors create a blueprint for their vision. During the pandemic, Cohen says, “Modern Office builders have had the unique opportunity to test, iterate, and optimize the way they work best.”

“Younger advisors with a younger client base may not have the same need for or desire for office

space. They can plan to be either 100% remote or have essential staff in the office so the advisor doesn’t have to be there all the time,” he says. “Alternatively, they can have an executive suite that they leave fully furnished, and they can use it when they need it for client meetings. But they don’t have to be there regularly if they don’t want to be.”

As these new work arrangements take shape, it’s clear that workspaces do not have to be as big as they used to be. With the power to control their P&L, independent advisors can choose to downsize, resize, and align their offices to the needs of their staff and clients. For teams that favor flexibility, shared workstations or “hot desks” are one option that is gaining popularity.

However, there will always be advisors who prefer to have their own space. And the advantages of having a distinct office are obvious.



CASE STUDY:

SignatureFD's Modern Office



Heather Robertson Fortner
CEO, SignatureFD

“When you first visit our office, it looks like a café, and it feels like home,” Robertson Fortner says. “There’s a couch, a fireplace, and refrigerators stocked with food and drinks. It’s a space where dining tables are set up for people to join in and share meals. We’ve created a completely open area. There are no offices, only communal meeting spaces.”

Robertson Fortner believes this approach meets her clients’ desire to feel involved in the financial decision-making process and be part of a purposeful team. Moreover, she says, SignatureFD’s willingness to use its communal space for local events has helped bring and create referrals.

“Our whole philosophy is that community is where business happens,” she says. “Everyone belongs to some sort of community somewhere. And if they don’t, they’ll seek out that experience, because having a sense of belonging is a basic human need.”

“We believe that creating inviting spaces where people feel they belong is how we’re going to continue to grow and serve more clients.”

—**Heather Robertson Fortner**
CEO, SignatureFD

SignatureFD asks every client and prospect, “What’s your Net Worthwhile?”™ The firm makes sure everyone gets an idea of the firm’s mission—to enrich lives with more meaning, more satisfaction, and more of what’s worthwhile in life—from the moment they walk through the door.

True to its philosophy, SignatureFD redesigned its offices to create a warm, inclusive space where people could connect as part of a community.

Thinking through the design of your office space

Your office space can boost productivity, promote collaboration, and catalyze growth when it resonates with your ideal client base and reflects your firm's values.

To get started bringing your dream office to life, ask yourself:

Client service experience

Where will most client review meetings take place?

How do most clients prefer to engage with you between client review meetings?

What type of client service experience will most of your clients come to expect?

Team experience

What kind of team culture do you want to cultivate?

What do your employees value most?

Where do you prefer your employees to work?

Where do your employees prefer to work?

Office environment

Describe your current office location(s) as well as your desired location(s) three years from now.

What kind of office atmosphere will your clients expect?

When clients walk into your office, how do you want them to feel?

What special features would your clients and staff appreciate?

Where is your current office located (high-rise, office park, historic district, etc.)?

What are the benefits of your current location? What are the drawbacks?

When they visit your office, what will clients experience?

How often will you need access to your physical office?



Designing with culture in mind + +

As the saying goes, culture eats strategy for breakfast. It's what keeps people connected in a dispersed work environment and is the engine behind superior client experiences. This is especially true when it comes to crafting the RIA workplace of the future.



“When you consider why advisors typically leave the broker-dealer channel,” says Cohen, director of Business Consulting at Schwab, “most research tells us that the company culture is the motivating factor. When advisors take their practice out of that environment and stand it up as its own business, they get to define their own culture. You go from an employee mentality to a business owner mentality.”

According to Cerulli Associates, 41% of advisors identify the desire for more personable culture as a major factor for breaking away to independence.¹³

While more traditional firms focus on competition, regulation, and profitability as their primary drivers of change, Modern Office builders tend to prioritize their firm’s values.

At an RIA, advisors define their firm’s culture, rather than the other way around.



Mobile flexibility

Whether it’s to have more time with family or to avoid a daily commute, most employees express a desire to work from home, at least part of the time, after the pandemic.¹⁴ Nearly a third (30%) of employees said they would likely switch jobs if required to return to fully on-site work.¹⁵ While those preferences may change, aspiring Modern Office builders are encouraged to talk with their staff to find out what their employees want for the future and what they value now.

Accessibility

Clients and advisors value being able to readily access one another. After all, greater autonomy and more control of investment decisions are some of the biggest draws of the RIA model for breakaway advisors.¹⁶ And with videoconferencing and software that allow advisors to view real-time balances, positions, and history, those benefits are even more pronounced.

For Becky Krieger, managing director of Accredited Investors Wealth Management® in Minneapolis, working virtually has allowed for more client touchpoints and higher-quality conversations with clients who live across the country. “Technology puts everybody on the same playing field. Clients are inviting us into their homes, and we can often create a more convenient experience for them,” she says.

“We used to have a very rigid process for scheduling client meetings, based on a regular meeting cadence. Now we are implementing standards of care that enable conversations to occur more organically,” Krieger continues. “We are using technology like Tamarac for our client-facing portal as well as secure document sharing. And the ways in which we’ve pivoted to utilize those digital tools within virtual meetings have proven very effective. We have been able to review potential options, brainstorm with clients, and continue to be flexible within client meetings during this pandemic. I think that will continue to evolve and be the new norm going forward.”

Security and privacy

The safekeeping of data and assets is paramount for RIA firms and their clients. It’s why so much care goes into the evaluation of custodians. As more and more business is conducted online, the risk of cybersecurity threats heightens.

Trustworthiness and security are now the two most important factors for choosing investment guidance, according to Gartner’s High-Income Consumers’ Wealth Management Priorities in 2021 study.¹⁷ The Modern Office needs a custodian that not only keeps up with new cyber threats but also provides updates and tips to help reinforce your firm’s defenses.

Today, 95% of RIA firms provide employee cybersecurity training, but Modern Offices extend safety education to clients.¹⁸ Roughly half (51%) of RIA firms invest in this extra layer of defense.¹⁹ Educating clients about safe behaviors and the firm’s cybersecurity program is a practical next step for advisors who are building out their Modern Office and want to provide the kind of peace of mind that draws in more assets and new business.

Holistic approaches to talent

In this new era of work, there's a growing emphasis on work-life balance and wellness. Independent advisors are taking the lead by caring for their people and making their workday work better for them.

“One of the trends that we're certainly seeing is the emergence of flexible work schedules,” explains Cohen. “The nine-to-five may not be critical if it's not a client-facing role. It's more important that the work gets done in a high-quality way than it gets done within these predetermined windows.”

Modern Office builders can design systems that mitigate burnout and remove administrative burden from their people and themselves. For example, almost half of top-performing RIA firms (48%) have standardized workflows within their CRM for over 50% of their tasks.²⁰ That translates to massive time savings.

While other channels seem like they have been churning during the pandemic, advisors at independent RIAs are building businesses to last. Advisors are sharing equity as a way to retain top talent and support their succession strategy.²¹

They're also taking advantage of new remote-working environments to build their benches. Almost half (49%) of RIAs find it easier to recruit from wider geographies, and 31% believe the lasting effects of remote work will make it easier for them to hire more diverse talent.²² As they diversify and build bench strength, successful independent advisors are providing career paths that support staff development. With a vision their team can rally behind, Modern Office builders are creating exceptional places to work and further separating themselves from legacy players and models.



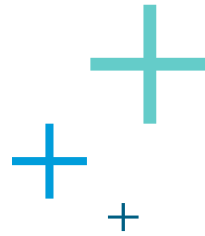
Upgrading the client service model

Client profiles and expectations are shifting.
And RIA firms are the ones pushing new business
and operating models to gain an edge.



Modern Offices are adapted for change. Much of that is made possible by the RIA model, which offers a growing number of resources and options to help customize the experience for both client and advisor. Consider the different approaches to ownership. If an advisor wants to own and control every aspect, they can. If they don't want the responsibility of building out the client experience, they can join an existing RIA that shares their vision of service and infrastructure—and still own their business. If they want something more turnkey, they can choose supported independence with a third-party platform provider. If they want to start a firm and later merge to access new capabilities and service sets for their clients, there's an expanding market for that as well. From platforms to strategic acquirers to capital partners, there's a host of options for executing independence. It comes down to your style and what you believe is best for your current and future clients.

As investment advice continues to be commoditized, RIA firms are separating themselves from the pack by forging creative combinations of value-added services that simplify their clients' financial lives and win new business.



Adding services, driving value

Forty-seven percent of independent advisors believe that the RIA industry has not fully matured and that it will continue to grow at a higher rate than the market.²³ Half of independent advisors acquired more new clients in 2020 than in any previous year.²⁴ What fueled that? Bernie Clark, executive vice president and head of Schwab Advisor Services, explains: “The independent advice industry has reached a new growth tipping point, driven by investors who appreciate the value of fiduciary advice and advisors who continue to raise the bar in creating the ideal client experience.”

Modern Offices define themselves by what more they can do for clients. RIAs increasingly offer services like lifestyle management and family education to deepen their value propositions. And they are being rewarded with referrals from their clients.²⁵

Consider what led San Luis Wealth Advisors founder Brad Goodwin to go independent.

As Goodwin’s business grew, so did his frustrations with the wirehouse model. He noticed his opportunities to add value for clients were limited. He wanted the flexibility to share the same investment strategies and opportunities he used for managing his own finances.

“So here I am working with clients and saying, ‘We can buy stocks and bonds and traditional things. My own money? It’s over here, and I can’t help you with that,’” he says. “So that was a problem.”

Every one of Goodwin’s clients decided to move their accounts to San Luis Wealth Advisors, and he exceeded his top-line projections by 50% in nine months.

“Referrals accelerated,” he says, “because it was like, ‘Holy cow. My guy now does this, this, and this for me.’”

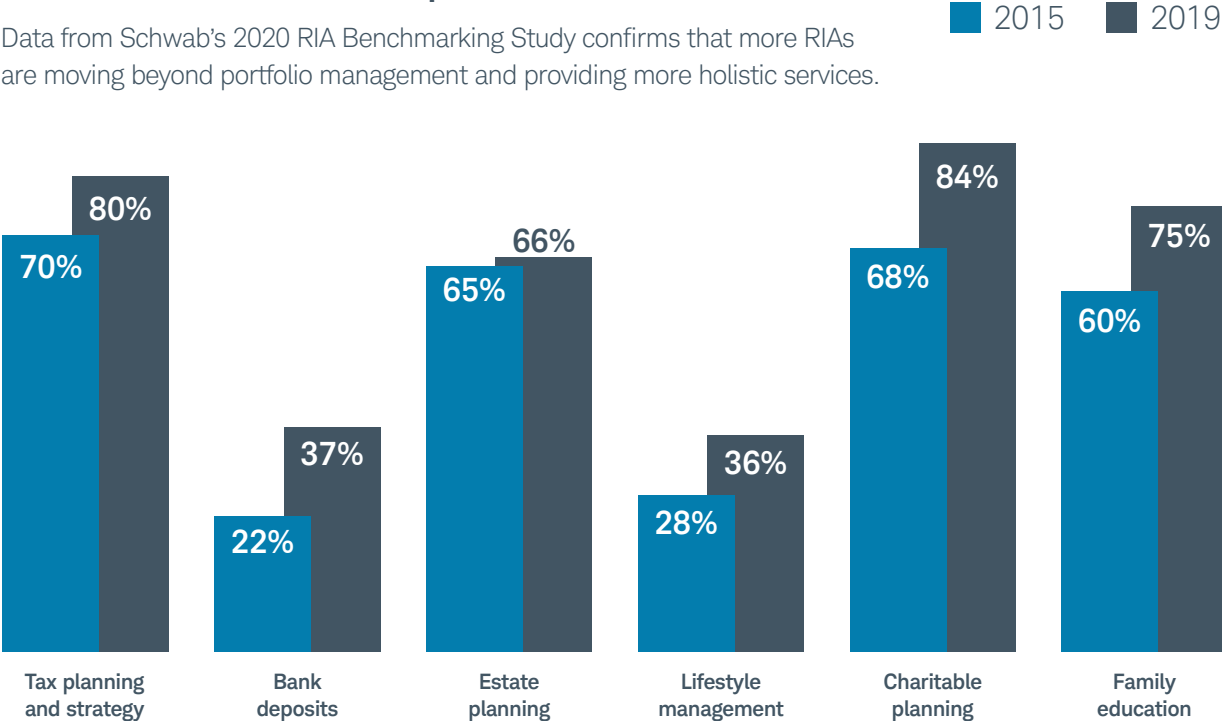
Whereas some advisors like Goodwin go independent to add capabilities that help their clients build wealth more efficiently, others may do it to help transfer it to future generations.

In response to the \$70 trillion intergenerational wealth transfer expected over the next 25 years,²⁶ RIA firms are developing new service models to engage entire families and help next-gen clients manage wealth responsibly—and meaningfully.

Becky Krieger’s RIA firm specializes in financial planning and helping entire families engage in purposeful wealth transfers. To meet demand for family education, her firm staffs up on next-gen talent and advisors of all different backgrounds.

The move to broader and deeper services

Data from Schwab’s 2020 RIA Benchmarking Study confirms that more RIAs are moving beyond portfolio management and providing more holistic services.





Becky Krieger
Managing Director,
Accredited Investors
Wealth Management

“Each client family works with a dedicated team of four professionals,” Krieger explains. “It’s important to have different personalities on each team because clients are looking to see who they will feel comfortable sharing their emotions with and how they think about wealth in our family discussions.”

Given the firm’s longtime focus on helping clients understand the opportunities their wealth can create, Accredited Investors Wealth Management is considering a new offering: next phase of life purpose planning. In a group setting, small communities of clients going through similar phases of life would work through what their next phase could look like. “People are living longer and considering how to stay engaged in their community,” Krieger says. “Life purpose planning is a hot topic with our clients. There’s a need out there.”

As families transfer wealth and the growing technology economy creates new classes of earners, the typical client is changing to include younger and more tech-savvy investors. With that comes other changes. According to Capgemini’s Global HNWI Survey, 50% of HNWI investors under 40 would like the option to select virtual advice from their firm, compared with 39% of HNWI investors overall.²⁷ To appeal to a new generation of investors, RIAs can start by adding robo-advice to their service offerings and embracing modular financial planning services. They can evolve fast—and they have.

The world has changed. And with the freedom and flexibility to tailor services, advisors at RIAs are changing with it.



Modern from the start

For more than 30 years, Schwab has supported advisors on their journeys to independence. More than 13,000 RIA firms of all sizes look to Schwab Advisor Services™ for specialized support, transition guidance, technology expertise, research, and insights that help bring their visions to life.²⁸

Don't just dream it, build it

Embrace the power of choice that the independent RIA model offers and Schwab helps navigate. Let's start building your Modern Office with a confidential conversation.

Contact a Schwab Business Development Officer at advisorservices.schwab.com/contactus or call **877-687-4085**.

1. *Independent Outlook Study, Part I: Technology*, Schwab Advisor Services, October 2020.
2. *The Cerulli Report, U.S. RIA Marketplace 2020: Exploring Drivers of Change, Exhibit 4.01*, Cerulli Associates, January 2021.
3. *World Wealth Report 2021*, The Caggemini Research Institute.
4. See note 1 above.
5. *Independent Outlook Study: Wave 29*, Schwab Advisor Services, June 2021.
6. See note 2 above.
7. See note 1 above.
8. *The Cerulli Report, U.S. High-Net-Worth and Ultra-High-Net-Worth Markets 2020: Implications of Wealth Concentration, Exhibit 7.06*, Cerulli Associates, December 3, 2020.
9. "Differentiation in Financial Services Will Be Defined by Customization," Cerulli Associates, July 15, 2021.
10. 2020 RIA Benchmarking Study From Charles Schwab, fielded January–April 2020. Median results for all firms with \$250 million or more in assets under management (AUM). The study contains self-reported data from 1,010 firms and was not independently verified. Participant firms represent various sizes and business models categorized into 12 peer groups—7 wealth manager groups and 5 money manager groups—by AUM size. Past performance is not an indicator of future results.
11. See note 10 above.
12. See note 1 above.
13. See note 2 above.
14. Andrea Alexander et al., "What Employees Are Saying About the Future of Remote Work," McKinsey & Company, April 1, 2021.
15. See note 15 above.
16. *The Cerulli Report, U.S. RIA Marketplace 2020: Exploring Drivers of Change, Exhibit 4.01*, Cerulli Associates, January 2021.
17. "High-Income Consumers Wealth Management Priorities in 2021," Gartner, February 23, 2021.
18. See note 10 above.
19. See note 10 above.
20. See note 10 above.
21. See note 10 above.
22. See note 5 above.
23. See note 5 above.
24. See note 5 above.
25. See note 10 above.
26. *The Cerulli Report, U.S. High-Net-Worth and Ultra-High-Net-Worth Markets 2019: Multigenerational Shifts in Wealth, Exhibit 2.11*, Cerulli Associates, November 25, 2019.
27. See note 3 above.
28. As of February 28, 2021.

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1. As of February 28, 2021.

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