

ADVISER SURVEY

The Hidden Cost of Disconnected Technology

Based on a survey of 120 UK financial advisers, this report explores how fragmented systems quietly absorb time, introduce inconsistencies and increase operational exposure.

Advisers have invested heavily in technology over the past decade. But despite that investment, many tell us their day-to-day experience still feels more fragmented than it should be: systems that don't speak to each other, outputs that don't always match, and an increasing amount of manual checking to keep everything consistent.

Technology should remove effort, not add to it. Yet for many firms, the tools designed to streamline the advice process now require advisers to bridge the gaps themselves.

This report explores how disconnected systems quietly absorb time, introduce inconsistencies and increase operational exposure, and what that means for adviser confidence, capacity and documentation quality.

What advisers told us

Our survey of 120 UK advisers highlights a clear pattern:

- **89% use three or more systems** across the advice journey
- **67% re-enter the same data** often or very often
- **Only 7% are very confident** their tools produce consistent outputs
- **89% agree** disconnected technology increases cost and risk in their business

The common thread across all the responses is simple.

The challenge isn't the number of tools — it's the lack of alignment between them.

And that misalignment shows up in very specific, very familiar ways for advisers.

Where's the friction coming from?

1. **Re-entering the same data:** Most advisers don't think of a quick rekey as a major issue. But repeated across CRM, planning tools and platforms, it adds up fast.

Manually entering 10 client fields typically takes two to three minutes including checks.

Multiply that across a working week and it becomes **one to three hours lost to admin noise** — time that adds nothing to advice quality.

- 2. Outputs that don't match:** advisers regularly encounter numbers that differ slightly between systems.

While the scale of these mismatches may not be cause for alarm, each one forces a pause: Which system is correct? Is this the most recent value? Does anything need updating?

These interruptions break flow and create a steady stream of low-grade rework that advisers learn to absorb.

- 3. Compounding error risk:** manual entry is accurate — but never perfect.

Industry benchmarks show a 1–4% error risk per rekey event. When the same information is entered across several systems, those small risks multiply.

Even a basic three-system workflow can push the probability of at least one error into the 3–6% range.

And once a mismatch appears, correcting it means retracing steps across systems, regenerating outputs and updating documents.

In practice, resolving a single inconsistent value can easily consume 20–30 minutes.

Why this matters

The friction created by disconnected systems isn't just operational. It has a direct impact on adviser time, confidence and documentation quality.

- **The impact on your working week:** across a typical week, advisers find themselves re-entering information, checking values between systems and correcting small inconsistencies before reports can be finalised.

Together these tasks consume hours of capacity that could otherwise support clients, preparation or new business.

- **Confidence and clarity:** when systems don't align, advisers naturally spend more time double-checking the numbers behind their recommendations.

The advice itself is still sound — but the reassurance that the underlying data is coherent and defensible takes longer to establish.

- **Audit trails and documentation:** regulatory expectations haven't changed: the FCA's focus is on the clarity and consistency of the audit trail. When system values differ, advisers — not the systems — must explain why.

Even small inconsistencies can lengthen compliance checks, trigger further queries or require document updates to ensure everything tells the same story.

- **Firm-wide drag:** what starts as small inefficiencies at adviser level scales across paraplanning, operations and compliance teams. It slows case progression, creates unnecessary back-and-forth and introduces variability into client outputs.

Over time, this quiet drag reduces capacity and affects the firm's ability to work efficiently.

Workflows that connect rather than duplicate

Advisers are moving away from tool-heavy, manually stitched-together processes and towards environments where information is entered once, reused throughout the journey and updated consistently wherever it appears.

The issue facing firms isn't a lack of technology. It's the lack of alignment between the systems they rely on every day.

As firms look to reduce noise and regain capacity, the meaningful efficiency gains lie not in adding new tools, but in removing the hidden effort that sits between the ones advisers already use.

Conclusion

The value of technology isn't defined by how many tools a firm uses, but by how well those tools work together.

When systems align, the entire advice process strengthens: workflows run more smoothly, errors fall away, audit trails become clearer and client outputs tell a more consistent story. Adviser confidence naturally increases because the data behind each recommendation is coherent, defensible and easy to explain.

And ultimately, that alignment delivers the outcome that matters most: advisers spending more time advising — and less time correcting, reconciling and repeating.

How much friction might disconnected technology be adding to your workflow?

Use our four-question checklist to find out. Scan the QR code or [visit our website](#).



Links to:
<https://www.defaqto.com/resources/adviser-workflow-friction-check>

NOTES

Key statistics

- Advisers using three or more systems: 89%
- Advisers who believe disconnected systems create hidden costs: 89%
- Advisers frequently rekeying data: 67%
- Advisers very confident in system consistency: 7%

Methodology

This report is based on a survey of 120 UK financial advisers conducted by Defaqto.

Respondents represent a broad range of firm sizes and business models. The survey focused on technology use, data management and the operational realities of working across multiple systems. Response volumes across individual questions ranged from 114 to 120.

The findings reflect real-world workflows and practitioner experience, rather than theoretical or strategic views of technology.

Survey questions (abridged)

The research was based on questions including:

- How many different software tools or platforms do you use across your advice process?
- How often do you need to enter or re-enter the same client or product data across systems?
- How confident are you that different tools provide consistent outputs?
- To what extent do disconnected systems make it harder to meet regulatory requirements?
- What impact do disconnected systems have on your day-to-day efficiency?

Data transparency note

All findings are based on responses from 120 UK financial advisers. Response volumes varied slightly by question (114–120 responses), which is consistent with typical survey completion patterns.

For more information

To find out more about Defaqto Unity, visit defaqto.com/connect.

For media enquiries, please contact pressoffice@defaqto.com.