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A Meeting of Minds – Wealth Management & Private Banking

The Scene Setter Results

Thursday 12 June 2025

The following research headlines were captured from a quantitative survey carried out amongst the participants at this Meeting of Minds.

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SECTION ONE:

Strategic insights



How bullish are you about the year ahead?



Last year, you remained steady at 6.8 on our sentiment index. This June you have dropped by 0.1. In other words, over the last four Meetings, you have remained more or less flat.

We are not actually seeing a lot of positivity out there ... but equally we are not seeing sentiment fall off a cliff.

Your COOs are the only group we have polled so far this year who have registered a tiny increase.

A flatlining world!

The strategic challenges which most concern you



Sourcing new clients 15 People - finding and keeping them Achieving greater productivity Geopolitics - market volatility 12 It's the economy, stupid! Cyber attack 10 Regulation Reducing costs Innovation - keeping up The future of work - our culture and working environment Changing client demographics Disruptive new entrants to the industry Reputational threat Diversity, Ethnicity & inclusion Ensuring your company is practicing good ESG 12 0 2 8 10 14 6

It would appear that your strategic challenges are also remaining flat.

Your top four concerns have been the same for the past year.

The only nuanced changes seem to be that "It's the economy, stupid" and "Cyber attack" have nudged upwards and "Regulation" has dropped.

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■lun-17 ■lun-18 ■lun-19 ■Sep-20 ■lun-21 ■lun-22 ■lun-23 ■lun-24 ■lun-25

Average bullishness/ respondent

How does this compare with other distribution channels?

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UK Asset	Private Banks, EAMs and Wealth Managers					UK Financial Advisers								UK Mortgage		JK Retail Banks				
Management	Swiss COOs		UK COOs		UK CEOs	l	JK Gatekeepers		Large Advisory Distributors	1	Mid-sized advisers (South)		Mid-sized advisers (North)	Paraplanners			Distributors		and Brands	
Cost/income pressures	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	¢	Productivity	=	Sourcing new clients	↑ ↑	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	↑	Attracting & retaining talent	=	Productivity	=	Productivity	=	Productivity	††	Productivity	И	State of the economy	
Sourcing new clients	Productivity	$\uparrow\uparrow$	Cost/income pressures	П	Attracting & retaining talent	=	Sourcing new clients	↑ ↑	State of the economy	$\uparrow\uparrow$	Innovation - keeping up	↑ ↑	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	↑↑	Innovation - keeping up	=	State of the economy	↑ ↑	Attracting & retaining talent	
State of the economy	Changing client demographics	Ļ	Innovation - keeping up	=	Productivity	¢	Regulation	Ļ	Productivity	¢	Attracting & retaining talent	=	Attracting & retaining talent	î	Attracting & retaining talent	††	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	¢	Innovation - keeping up	
Regulation	Attracting & retaining talent	$\uparrow\uparrow$	Attracting & retaining talent	II	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	↓	Attracting & retaining talent	Ŷ	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	\leftarrow	Regulation	=	State of the economy	††	Changing client demographics	¢	Innovation - keeping up	↑	Regulation	
Geopolitics - mkt volatility	Regulation	=	Sourcing new clients	1	The state of the economy	$\downarrow\downarrow$	Innovation - keeping up	↓↓	Innovation - keeping up	$\uparrow\uparrow$	Future of work	Ļ	Changing client demographics	↓↓	State of the economy	=	Attracting & retaining talent	↑↑	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	
Cyber attack	Cyber attack	¢	Cyber attack	¢	Cyber attack	$\downarrow\downarrow$	Productivity	î	Regulation	¢	Sourcing new clients	=	Cost/income pressures	↓	Regulation	††	Cost/income pressures	↑↑	Changing client demographics	
Attracting & retaining talent	Disruptive new entrants	$\uparrow\uparrow$	Changing client demographics	$\downarrow\downarrow$	Regulation	↓	State of the economy	=	Cost/income pressures	=	Cost/income pressures	=	Innovation - keeping up	↓↓	Future of work	=	Regulation	Ŷ	Practicing good ESG	
Innovation - keeping up	State of the economy	¢	The future of work	=	Cost/income pressures	↓	Changing client demographics	††	Future of work	î	Changing client demographics	↓↓	Regulation	=	Geopolitics - mkt volatility		Disruptive new entrants	=	Cost/income pressures	
Productivity	Cost/income pressures	=	Disruptive new entrants	=	Innovation - keeping up	↓	Disruptive new entrants	††	Changing client demographics	$\downarrow\downarrow$	State of the economy	¢	Future of work	=	Sourcing new clients	$\downarrow\downarrow$	Future of work	=	Productivity	
Disruptive new entrants	Sourcing new clients	↓↓	Geopolitics - mkt volatility	=	Future of work	$\downarrow\downarrow$	Cost/income pressures	=	Cyber attack	¢	Disruptive new entrants	=	Cyber attack	=	Cost/income pressures	=	Changing client demographics	И	Future of work	
Reputational threat	Innovation - keeping up	↓↓	State of the economy	\rightarrow	Changing client demographics	=	Cyber attack	Î	Disruptive new entrants	↓	Cyber attack	↑	Disruptive new entrants	¢	Disruptive new entrants	↓	Sourcing new clients	↓	Sourcing new clients	
Climate change	Practicing good ESG	↓↓	Regulation	=	Disruptive new entrants	¢	Reputational threat	Ļ	Reputational threat	1	DE&I	↑	Reputational threat	=	DE&I	↓	DE&I	$\downarrow\downarrow$	DE&I	

* KEY: N = new entrant; \uparrow = rise over past 6m; \downarrow fall over past 6m

A SWOT analysis of your business



Client-Centric Service

Transparency and high-quality personal service Bespoke solutions to high-end clients Client focus Service ethic

Client Relationships & Retention

High client retention rate + consistent track-record Our ability to offer personal longer-term relationships Financial Planning-led close client relationships

STRENGTHS

People & Creativity Our people and their ability to be creative

Business Resilience & Strength Capital resources / flexibility Limited outflows in periods of market stress Low-cost business model

Reputation & Differentiation

Operational & Structural Challenges Lack of agility; Compliance constraints; Slow onboarding of clients Small size and inability to scale versus bigger players Innovation & Technology Limitations Not grappling with AI, thinking it's been oversold Productivity & Focus Issues PE consolidators for the industry

External Environment Sensitivities Geopolitical and economic developments outside of our control

Clients losing money due to market downturns and deciding to avoid investing as a result

Cultural & Change Resistance Integration with new business acquisitions is always challenging

Service & Client Experience Weaknesses Product pushing, poor service/performance

WEAKNESSES

Market Opportunities & Trends

New markets / volatility / financing of Al-driven industries Wealth transfer (both generational and through business sales) Growing demand as clients seek a more personal

and professional service Weak competition

Technology & Innovation Al adoption; digitisation Industry need for integrated tech

Strategic Positioning Active management; strategic partnerships Our independent status should attract great talent disenfranchised by rapid consolidation Increased scalability through new mutual fund offering

Client Engagement & Experience Improving how we communicate with customers The opportunity to guide clients through more widespread uncertainty

OPPORTUNITIES

Technology-Related Risks

Al (both its disruptive potential and adoption lag) Competitors incorporating Al better Technology and its influence on the next generation of clients Cyber attacks

Market & Economic Volatility Markets & lack of acquisitions by PE to create liquidity Geopolitical risk to markets

Regulatory & Compliance Burden The burden of dealing with overbearing regulatory bureaucracy Excessive and disruptive changes to taxation

Organizational & Strategic Risks

Being too slow to change; unclear brand Reputational risk Employees leaving

Competitive Pressure

Passive investments (potential shift from active management strategies)

THREATS

Using your crystal ball, imagine the UK economy in 12 months' time across the following KPIs owenjames



- 43% of you think **GDP will grow slightly** but some 30% think there might be some contraction.
- You are fairly split on **inflation:** half thinking it will increase compared with 41% thinking it will decrease slightly.
- Almost universal agreement that the bank rate will start to drop slightly.
- The majority of you see **little change** in the rate of **employment**.
- 43% predict slight growth in new home construction but you are not particularly bullish when it comes to house sales with only 23% anticipating slight growth.
- 43% of you think there will be a slight contraction in consumer spending and the same percentage thinks industrial production will also decrease slightly.

Not a lot to make our Rachel feel particularly happy.



SECTION TWO: Regulation



What would you change if you were in charge of the Regulator for the day?



Reform, reform, reform ... and simplify

- Simplify all regulations; reduce reporting requirements
- Significantly reduce box-ticking reports (e.g., value for money regime)
- Cancel transaction and quarterly COB reporting
- Scrap SDR labelling
- Bin Consumer Duty
- Commission urgent rewrite of the handbook to cut its length by at least 50%
- Completely rethink regulation of small wealth/investment
 managers
- Sort out the sheer amount of conflicting regulatory rules
- Enhance EU passporting for regulated activities

Talk to the industry (and not always the same people in the industry)

- Improve communication & timing of responses with private taxpayers/corporates
- Ability to speak directly and frequently to a dedicated team member
- Connection with the C-suite (not just Legal & Compliance)

Improve support for Small Firms & enact a pro-growth policy

- Support small businesses
- Continue to promote pro-growth strategies
- Account for limited project-handling capacity of boutique firms



If you could change one rule or regulatory obligation, what would it be?



- New **FIG** regime
- Make MPS providers more accountable and transparent already with the FCA
- MIFID2 costs & charges & implicit costs
- No more capital requirements like in the US; less onerous capital adequacy requirements
- Level playing field for capital ratios
- Roll back Consumer Duty; relax Consumer Duty reporting
- Significantly reduce box ticking reports such as Value for Money regime
- Eliminate the need for firms to undertake **transaction reporting** themselves for trades which are carried out over a regulated exchange; reporting requirements
- **PRIIPS** which is being changed
- GDPR



The cost of regulation: how does your expenditure on regulation compare with other peer groups.



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Do you feel your concerns and aspirations about UK regulation are being well represented?



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Industry representation with the regulator - how do you compare?



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SECTION THREE:

Business strategy



What are your plans as a business from a growth perspective?



■ Wealth Managers ('25) ■ Wealth Managers ('24) ■ Wealth Managers ('23) ■ Top 100 Advisers ('23) ■ Mid-sized advisers ('25) ■ Mid-sized advisers ('24)

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What do you think are the three biggest risks associated with M&A at a business level?





What is the most important cost transformation objective in your organisation?



27% 0% 36% 23%

On average, you are looking for a cost reduction of 6%.

- Cost Reduction
- Cost Scalability
- Cost Flexibility
- Cost Transparency
- All equally important

Cost Scalability is clearly your main transformation objective followed by Cost Flexibility.

However, nearly 30% of you feel that all objectives are equally important.

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SECTION FOUR:

Your technology



THE TECH PECKING ORDER – responses in full and comparison with other channels



											Swiss COOs (2024)		COOs	(2024)		
TECHNOLOGY INNOVATIONS	managem	ealth nent CEOs 2024)	Wealth management CEOs (Nov 2023)		Large advisory distributorCEOs (June 2024)		Mid-sized Southern Advisers (Oct 2023)		Mid-sized Northern Advisers (Apr 2023)		From Private Banks and Wealth Managers		From Large Advisory and Wealth Managers		Gatekeepers (Oct 2024)	
		Rank	Average weighting/ respondent	Rank	Average weighting/ respondent		Average weighting/ respondent	Rank	Average weighting/ respondent	Rank	Average weighting/ respondent	Rank	Average weighting/ respondent	Rank	Average weighting/ respondent	Rank
Al use of client data to enable contextualised personalisation by adviser	3.7	I	0.9	10	4.9	I	4.8	I	2.7	I	3.0	I	3.2	I	3.3	I
Advanced cybersecurity	3.1	2	2.0	3	1.5	4	2.3	4	1.9	6	1.8	4	1.4	5	0.6	13
Goals based financial planning and simulation tools	2.0	3	1.5	7	2.3	2	2.9	3	2.6	2	1.9	2	1.9	3	1.8	2
Biometrics and digital ID	1.6	4	1.5	5	1.2	8	1.5	8	1.0	9	1.0	10	1.3	7	1.1	7
Modern and lean core technology platforms	1.5	5	1.4	9	0.8	П	2.0	5	1.0	8	1.7	6	0.9	10	0.7	12
Client Lifecycle Management Technologies	1.4	6	2.9	2	1.4	6	1.7	6	2.1	5	0.6	12	1.1	8	1.5	4
Digital signatures	1.1	7	3.5	I	1.4	5	3.5	2	2.2	4	1.1	9	0.9	10	0.8	П
Cloud computing	0.8	8	1.9	4	0.5	14	1.6	7	0.2	17	0.6	12	0.8	14	1.3	5
Fraud detection algorithm	0.8	8	0.6	П	0.4	15	1.0	11	0.2	17	0.3	14	0.3	17	0.5	15
Manage client channels / instant client response	0.8	8	1.5	7	1.6	3	1.2	10	2.3	3	0.2	16	0.4	15	0.9	8
Virtual remote engagement, live audio chat and video e.g. WeChat, Chatbots	0.8	8	0.0	16	0.3	16	1.0	11	0.6	12	0.1	17	0.0	18	0.2	16
Blockchain/Distributed ledger technology	0.7	12	0.6	11	0.2	18	0.1	18	0.5	13	1.2	8	0.9	10	0.8	9
Augmented and virtual reality	0.6	13	0.0	16	0.8	П	0.2	16	0.4	14	0.9	П	0.3	16	0.0	17
Open API's / Open banking (allowing cross-banking communication)	0.5	14	0.3	15	0.9	9	1.2	9	1.4	7	1.3	7	2.3	2	0.5	14
Enterprise data analytics for data driven insights	0.4	15	1.5	5	0.8	10	0.8	13	0.7	11	1.8	4	1.9	3	1.5	3
Machine learning algorithm to drive client cross selling through adviser alerting and next best action	0.4	15	0.5	13	1.3	7	0.7	14	0.9	10	1.9	2	1.3	6	0.8	9
Working with ecosystems of technology partners	0.4	15	0.4	14	0.8	П	N/A	N/A	0.4	15	1.3	7	1.1	8	NA	NA
Intelligent Robot advisory	0.2	18	0.0	16	0.3	16	0.5	15	0.4	15	0.0	18	0.9	10	1.3	5
Social Listening	0.2	18	0.0	16	0.0	19	0.2	16	0.0	19	0.3	14	0.0	18	0.0 age 22	17

Where are you prioritising spending your technology spend?





COOs - Wealth Management ('25) CEOs - Wealth Management ('25)

Mid-sized Advisers (North) - '25

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Think of me as the Tinkerbell of Technology! In which areas of your business would you like me to wave my magic wand?



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Technology & Digital Tools

Al suitability Al/financial planning note-taking tools Portfolio analytics & Al usage Digitisation & Al expertise Live data across business KPIs Cloud, CRM, onboarding Client app (onboarding, payments, APP) System integration

Operational & Data Efficiency

Standardization of PMS (Portfolio Management Systems) Better communication between IT and Commercial teams Project Management Data collation Data quality Data presentation quality Client planning productivity

Market & Vendor Frustrations

Stop price gouging by Microsoft Stop price gouging by Index Providers Make technology deliver

Poor Tinkerbell!

It is said that 70% of the tech projects fail. What do you think are the biggest blockers to success?



How has your technology budget changed over the past 12 - 18 (over the past 12 - 18)





SECTION FIVE:

Your clients



Your clients under the microscope





What are the most important considerations for your clients?



I.Trust & Relationships

- Trust and trusted adviser relationships
- Feeling that they matter
- Close and personal relationships
- Safety and security of assets

2. Investment Performance & Financial Security

- Strong, stable investment performance
- Capital preservation and transparency
- Financial security in an uncertain world

3. High-Quality Service

- Consistently good service
- Personal service and attention
- Confidence in being looked after

4. Reliability

- Dependability in managing finances
- Consistent delivery and communication

How concerned are you about losing assets to the following?





Right now, you are most concerned about losing clients as your existing clients pass the baton to the Millennials or to (presumably) their wives.

RMs moving to competitors is also a concern. However, you seem less bothered at the prospect of losing clients due to poor service or on price.

* NB: we have highlighted the top two concerns each channel has for losing assets in their business

When it comes to sourcing new clients where is your greatest focus over the next 12 - 18 months?



CEOs - Top 100 IFAs (Jun '24)

Mid sized advisers (South) - Oct '24
 Mid sized advisers (North) - Apr '25
 CEOs - Wealth Managers & Private Banks (Jun '24)
 CEOs - Wealth Managers & Private Banks (Jun '25)

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SECTION SIX:

Your investment strategy



When selecting funds/ outsourced solutions, what is the key criteria the company uses?





Track record continues to be your key criteria when selecting funds, followed by performance. Indeed, Track Record is the key criteria for all with the exception of the Paraplanners. Unsurprisingly, Service is their key criteria.

FM Reputation has increased in importance and Service has decreased.

Investment solutions – Client demand versus quality available

		Client	demand		Quality of investment solutions available						
INVESTMENT SOLUTIONS	High	Moderate	Limited	NA	High	Moderate	Limited	NA			
Global (ex-UK) Equities	50%	45%	5%	0%	58%	33%	0%	8%			
Multi-Asset (Active and Passive)	50%	20%	20%	10%	67%	25%	0%	8%			
Corporate Bonds	25%	55%	20%	0%	50%	42%	0%	8%			
UK Equities	21%	37%	37%	5%	58%	25%	8%	8%			
Liquid Alternatives	16%	32%	42%	11%	18%	36%	27%	18%			
Alternatives:	16%	26%	37%	21%	20%	30%	20%	30%			
Sovereign Bonds	15%	45%	40%	0%	50%	25%	17%	8%			
Emerging Mkts Equities	11%	42%	42%	5%	55%	45%	0%	0%			
Structured Products	10%	20%	45%	25%	8%	50%	8%	33%			
Private Markets	10%	15%	55%	20%	25%	17%	25%	33%			
Thematics	5%	45%	45%	5%	8%	67%	8%	17%			
Emerging Mkts Bonds	5%	25%	65%	5%	17%	50%	25%	8%			
Risk Premia	0%	25%	65%	10%	9%	55%	27%	9 %			
Real Estate/Infrastructure	0%	25%	55%	20%	8%	42%	25%	25%			
Hedge Funds (Does NOT include Liquid Alternatives)	0%	16%	63%	21%	8%	42%	25%	25%			
ESG	0%	15%	80%	5%	17%	50%	25%	8%			

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INVESTMENT RISKS – Over the next 6-12 months, please rank the biggest investment risks from a fund selection perspective?



How do you expect portfolio construction to evolve for high-net-worth (HNW) and ultra-high-net-worth (UHNW) clients?



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CEOs - Wealth Management (Jun '25)


SECTION SEVEN:

Working with providers



What support are you looking for from a strategic partner?



	CEOs									
Areas of support	Wealth Mgrs & Private Bks - (Nov 'Jun '25)	Private Bks -	Large Advisory Distributors - Nov '24	Mid-sized Advisers (South) - '24	Mid-sized Advisers (North) - '25	Mortgage Distributors ('24)	Paraplanners (May '24)	Wealth Mgmt Gatekeepers (Mar '25)	UK Wealth Mgmt COOs (Mar '25)	Swiss Wealth Mgmt COOs (Nov '24)
Asset allocation expertise	11%	6%	0%	10%	26%	N/A	7%	36%	7%	33%
Full Service	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	14%	22%
Lead Generation	42%	22%	25%	19%	16%	33%	0%	43%	14%	22%
Marketing support	21%	17%	25%	19%	16%	58%	7%	29%	7%	33%
Products	21%	22%	25%	33%	16%	50%	36%	21%	7%	22%
Recruitment and induction	0%	17%	25%	10%	16%	25%	7%	0%	21%	11%
Risk analytics	21%	22%	8%	14%	32%	25%	21%	43%	14%	11%
Technical and compliance support	16%	6%	33%	71%	42 %	42%	50%	21%	29%	67%
Technology - back end	26%	28%	42%	71%	37%	50%	50%	21%	64%	56%
Technology - front end	37%	33%	58%	43%	47%	42%	36%	21%	64 %	33%
Training	0%	17%	58%	57%	47%	58%	36%	29%	14%	0%
Average	19%	19%	30%	35%	29%	43%	25%	26%	23%	28%
None of the above	0%	28%	8%	5%	11%	0%	14%	21%	21%	11%

NB we have highlighted the two largest areas of support each channel is looking for from a strategic partner and the higher the average the more help sought. Page 38

How many bps do you anticipate the end client allocating to the following parts of the value chain in the next 24 months?



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advisers!



SECTION EIGHT:

Your business



Please define your business?





Asset Manager

- Building Society
- Chartered Financial Adviser/Planner
- Discretionary Fund Manager (DFM)
- Execution Only Investment Service Provider
- Financial Adviser (IFA)
- Multi Family Office
- Network
- Private Bank
- Private Client Investment Manager
- Research/Investment Rating House
- Retail Bank
- Retirement/Pension Specialist
- Robo
- Service Provider
- Single Family Office
- Wealth Manager

Your people under the microscope





Your business:



What percentage of your business in discretionary, advisory or XO?

What business model does your firm adopt?



Average FUM of firms at this MOM: £4.5bn

What service propositions do you offer to private clients?





SECTION NINE:

The sponsors



How well do you know our sponsors?



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■ Never heard of them ■ Know them by name ■ Have a vague idea of their services ■ Know them very well ■ We have do

We have done business together (in the past or currently are doing so)



INTERESTING DATA FROM NOVEMBER 2024: Your Productivity



How efficient do you consider your business currently?





These scores have been taken across the past two years.

You feel you have dropped slightly in terms of your efficiency, as do the Swiss Wealth Managers (they were on 5.9 a year ago).

It will be interesting to see how your COOs feel later this year.

How much of your client relationship managers' time do you estimate is spent on 'golden/value-add' client engagement time? owenjames



FRONT OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY - What are the biggest barriers holding back productivity of your RMs/advisers?



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BACK OFFICE PRODUCTIVITY - What are the biggest barriers holding back productivity of your RMs/advisers? owenjames



"Unreliable data" has moved up the leader board but "outdated or lack of tech" and "disjointed processes" are still featuring at positions I and 2.

A year ago you also cited "Operating in silos"

4.0

4.5

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PRODUCTIVITY ENABLERS - What are the biggest enablers that will improve productivity across your business?



How do YOU perceive your resource numbers? Do you think your resources are the right size?



■Too few ■About right ■Too many ■Not sure

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We hope you found this research of interest. If you would like to discuss any aspect of it, do please call James Goad at Owen James on 01483 861334 or email him at jamesgoad@owenjamesgroup.com

