



Legacy Planning Tops Value for the \$90T Wealth Transfer Reckoning

RESEARCH REPORT

DEVELOPED BY
De Pardo Consulting

COMMISSIONED BY
Everplans



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EXECUTIVE BRIEFING

The advice industry is entering its most unforgiving era.

Three forces are converging: The largest wealth transfer in human history, artificial intelligence commoditizing advice at speed, and legacy planning, the next advice frontier few firms have crossed — leaving clients exposed and advisors invisible when it matters most. This report examines all three — and the solutions that will define who wins the next decade of advice.

01 The Crisis

Client Attrition: The single largest involuntary attrition event an advisory firm faces isn't a market crash. It's a client's death.

THE ATTRITION CRISIS

The numbers advisors can't afford to ignore.

<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #1a2b4d;">73%</p> <p>of future beneficiaries — primarily widows and children — plan to leave their benefactor's wealth advisor.</p> <p><small>Cerulli, 2025</small></p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #1a2b4d;">62%</p> <p>of advisors don't expect to retain the majority of client assets through a generational transition.</p> <p><small>Source: InspereX, 2024</small></p>	<p style="font-size: 2em; font-weight: bold; color: #1a2b4d;">33%</p> <p>of clients with older children say those children don't work with their parents' advisor — and won't.</p> <p><small>Source: Absolute Engagement, 2025</small></p>
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02 The Threat

AI — The Advice Commoditization Accelerator: Almost half of clients are already open to replacing you.

THE AI RECKONING

53%

Just **53%** of Americans still trust humans over AI to develop a financial plan. That majority is shrinking — fast.

Northwestern Mutual, 2025

THE THREAT BENEATH THE NUMBER

Lower-cost digital solutions are proliferating — and growing more sophisticated.

The value of traditional financial advice is **eroding**. As technology replicates core advisory services, clients will increasingly struggle to differentiate between providers — human and digital.

THE VALUE GAP IS NARROWING

03 The Opportunity

In the age of AI, the most successful firms will build their own moats to protect, grow and differentiate.

THE APEX OF CLIENT NEEDS

Legacy planning sits at the apex of client needs — where advisors help clients define purpose and secure their legacy.

McKinsey's vision of the future advisor is clear: **less financial planner, more life coach**.

McKinsey & Company, 2026

Yet for most firms, holistic advice stops well short of legacy planning.

THE OPPORTUNITY FOR PREMIUM VALUE CREATION

CLIENT NEEDS HIERARCHY

The reckoning: advance to serve higher-order client needs, build a more sustainable business — or be outpaced by those who will.

A response to all three forces exists. Legacy planning and leading legacy planning technologies address generational attrition before it becomes a liquidation event, fill the crisis void that clients already feel and advisors cannot afford to ignore, and deliver a competitive edge built on client value that technology alone cannot commoditize.

Legacy Planning Tops Value for the \$90T Wealth Transfer Reckoning

The advice industry is entering its most unforgiving era.

The next decade will belong to advisory firms that climb the value chain — fast.

The skills that secured your present were not built for what is ahead. Areas of advice once considered 'holistic' have become table stakes.

AI tools and other market forces are accelerating advice commoditization, making it harder for clients to differentiate between providers. Simultaneously, the largest wealth transfer in history is in motion — moving assets to heirs who have no loyalty to the original advisor. Advisors will need to rapidly retool to maximize asset retention.

THE CENTRAL PRINCIPLE

To sustain growth and become irreplaceable, firms must address more complex, more human, higher order client needs that create a lasting competitive advantage.

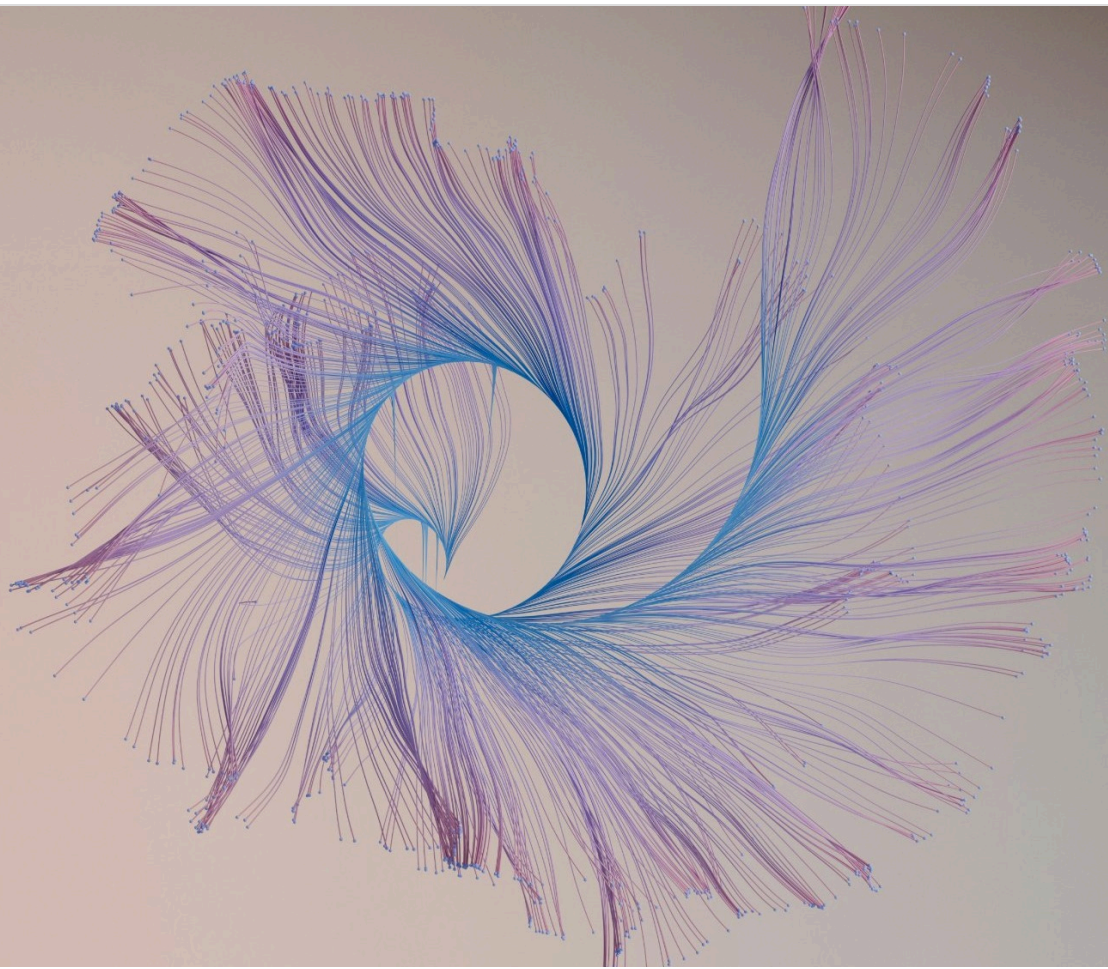
Legacy planning sits at the top of the client value pyramid. Much like Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs, in the world of advice, legacy planning addresses clients' ultimate needs: preserving family history and values, fulfilling final wishes, and transferring wealth across generations, making a lasting impact.

It is the most human work in advice — and the least replaceable.

Legacy planning is a new competitive frontier. Firms that evolve their services to include legacy planning will move up the value chain, guiding clients to their apex needs.

Will you be ready the day your best client dies? Most advisors won't be.

Developed by De Pardo Consulting and commissioned by Everplans, this report explores how legacy planning makes firms irreplaceable, creating deep client connections across generations, delivering critical support when families need it most, and building sustainable business value.



Legacy Planning: Preparing Advisors for the Biggest Transfer of Wealth in History

The single largest involuntary attrition event an advisory firm faces isn't a market crash. It's a client's death.

The Generational Wealth Transfer Crisis

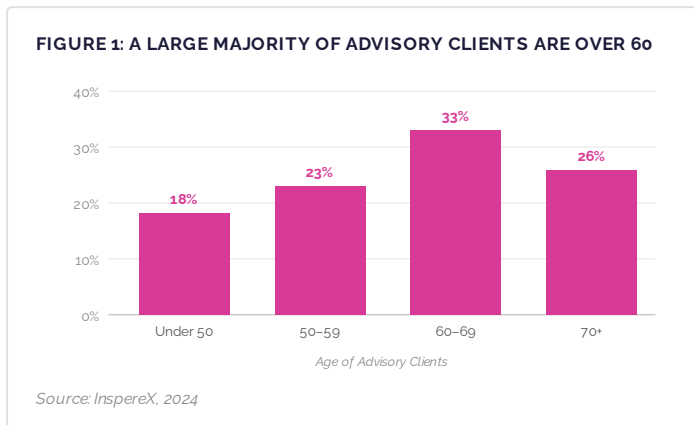
The single largest involuntary attrition event an advisory firm faces isn't a market crash. It's a client's death. A staggering 73% of future beneficiaries — primarily widows and children — plan to leave their benefactor's wealth advisor, walking away with their assets.^[1]

This attrition is not a failure of service. It is more damaging — a liquidation event. A generational shift is underway, described as perhaps the greatest threat to advisory firm value.

It is the 800-pound gorilla, the thinning out of client assets as wealth transitions to the next generation, moving away from the original advisors.

A sobering 62% of advisors do not anticipate retaining a majority of their clients' assets through the next generation.^[2]

On average, 59% of financial advisory clients are 60 or older, with just 18% under the age of 50.^[3] Yes, clients are aging out.



Advisors have become increasingly dependent on an older generation of clients, and, for most firms, it has been a rewarding strategy. Concentrated wealth combined with asset-based pricing has made this a highly profitable demographic to serve.

But as the saying goes, "no one is getting out of here alive."

In 2025, about one-third of collective net worth in the U.S. was held by individuals 70 years or older.^[4]

Three-quarters of collective net worth was held by individuals 55 years or older.^[4] Trillions of dollars are set to shift to a new generation of heirs. Over the next two decades, \$90 trillion in assets will transfer between generations.^[5]

Most firms have no answer to the defining question: how will they cross the generational chasm and retain client assets?

For advisory firms who are ill-prepared, the challenge will compound.

Few advisors currently work with the adult children of their clients. Just 25% of clients with children aged 25 years or older report that their advisor also works with their children.

One-third of clients with older children indicate that not only do the children not work with their parents' advisor, but they are unlikely to do so in the future.^[6]

73%

of future beneficiaries — primarily widows and children — plan to leave their benefactor's wealth advisor, walking away with their assets

62%

of advisors do not anticipate retaining assets across generations

25%

of clients have introduced their adult children to their advisor

[1] Cerulli, 2025 [2] InspereX, 2025 [3] InspereX, 2024 [4] Survey of Consumer Finances and Financial Accounts of the United States, 2026 [5] Cogent Syndicated, 2025 [6] Absolute Engagement, 2025

Advisors are Positioned to Drive Legacy Plan Readiness

Clients themselves are unprepared for a wealth transition, presenting an enormous opportunity for advisors who are ready to step in. Over 50% of high-net-worth investors say they want their advisor's help with these conversations.^[7]

Frank McAleer knows the competitive value of legacy planning. A 35-year industry veteran, Frank served as Senior Vice President at one of the largest independent investment banks and financial services firms in the U.S., where he spearheaded the firm's legacy planning program.

"We'd often hear about advisors gaining new clients after the client lost a spouse and their original advisor couldn't support the transition—saying 'we don't really get into that area of advice.' The clients would be furious."

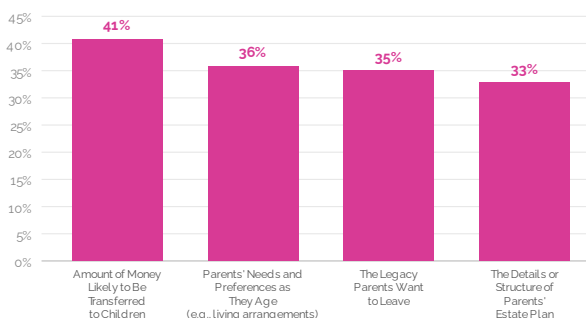
Frank McAleer, Industry Leader and Legacy Planning Expert

The need is great. In the U.S., 61% of all adults do not have a will, including 39% of older adults born before 1965.^[8] Among affluent investors, roughly one third do not have a will or trust.^[9]

Few Clients Share Legacy Plan Details with Family

Beyond a lack of formal documentation, many clients are failing to even informally share their intentions with their adult children regarding their plans to transfer wealth. Less than half of parents with adult children are sharing their preferences in the following key areas.^[10]

FIGURE 2: A MINORITY OF PARENTS HAVE SHARED THEIR LEGACY PREFERENCES WITH ADULT CHILDREN (% OF PARENTS WHO HAVE SHARED)



Source: Absolute Engagement, 2025

Nearly one-third (31%) of U.S. adults anticipate leaving an inheritance or making a donation to a charitable organization.^[11]

Forty percent of Americans who expect to leave an inheritance or a financial gift to a charitable organization say they have not had a conversation with their family about their plans. And 38% of Boomers have not had such a conversation.^[12]

Clients need help navigating these often-difficult conversations and the advisors who provide guidance will be the ones families remember, return to, and refer.

According to Gabriella Tucker, Principal and Financial Advisor at SYM Financial Advisors: "the role of an advisor is to remind clients, especially in an increasingly digital world, that access to critical information can be lost without the proper passwords and permissions. Without that access, families may be unable to navigate essential financial and personal matters during difficult times. We emphasize how important it is to ensure that the people they love not only have access to their information, but also clearly understand their wishes."

Gabriella Tucker · Principal And Financial Advisor, SYM Financial Advisors

Given the level of wealth to be transferred between generations over the next decade, there is increasing pressure for substantive family conversations about money, inheritance, responsibilities, and legacy intent.

Proactively Planning for Asset Capture

Legacy planning creates the essential bridge to the next generation and the right technology makes that connection deliberate, structured, and enduring.

A service like Everplans uses its unique "Deputy" network to connect a client's legacy plan and important wishes with their most important relationships, creating 'digital deputies' who have access to essential plan information at the discretion of the client.

The result: Irreplaceable value for clients and their families and a strong asset retention framework for the advisor.



Beyond Commoditization: The Irreplaceable Firm

What differentiated firms a decade ago is now just the price of entry. AI is the advice commoditization accelerator.

The AI Threat & The Path Forward

The value of traditional financial advice is eroding. AI is the advice commoditization accelerator. Almost half of clients are already open to replacing their advisor with a digital alternative. That number is growing.

What differentiated firms a decade ago is now just the price of entry.

In the age of AI, the most successful firms will build their own moats to protect, grow and differentiate.

This shift will mean moving mundane, easily replicated technical aspects of planning to AI as advisors move "up market" with deeper client conversations regarding long-term personal goals and life purpose.

Legacy planning and platforms such as Everplans will be vital differentiators in the move "up market" — strengthening competitive defenses and building enterprise value.

Holistic Advice or Minimum Standard?

Fee-based advice is no longer a differentiator – it is a default. In 2026 more than three-quarters (77.6%) of the wealth management industry operates on a fee-based model, an increase of more than five percentage points relative to just two years ago.^[13]

Advisors have adapted before. Relationship-based planning has become the central offer, shifting away from commissions and product-centered services. Commissions have declined to just 23% of the average advisor's revenue.^[14] At the same time, advisors are retooling technically with over one-third of advisors now CFPs relative to one in five two decades ago.

And now, advice must evolve again.

What Happens When AI Delivers Your Advice?

As technology replicates advisory services, clients will increasingly struggle to differentiate between providers, human and digital, creating pricing pressure.

Lower cost digital offerings will become more prevalent, and these solutions will become increasingly sophisticated. The value gap will narrow, and clients will vote with their wallets.

The Service Stack Has Evolved

The typical advisory practice, during its planning work for clients, now routinely covers 15 different topical areas.^[15]

The service models vary: financial planning, investment management, wealth management. The key services do not. For virtually all firms (85% or more), advice coverage includes retirement spending and distribution analysis, investments analysis, tax planning and social security planning.^[16] The market homogenizes.

Creating Value in New Ways

The emergence of AI-based technologies places additional pressure on advisors to differentiate their value offer in new ways. AI will undoubtedly automate the technical heart of advice such as retirement projections, tax optimization and risk assessments.

While 53% of Americans trust humans more than AI to develop a "tailored, robust financial plan", the remainder either trust AI more, about the same, or are unsure.^[17]

Technical advice knowledge will remain critical, but it will not be a differentiator for advisors. Clients will be increasingly challenged to distinguish whether their advice was provided digitally or by a human.

The path forward is clear: move upmarket and deliver irreplaceable human value that an algorithm can't replicate.

Despite the promise of AI, clients prefer the human touch. Almost 80 percent of affluent households surveyed indicate that they would pay a premium of 50 basis points or more for human advice rather than use a digital alternative.^[18]

The catch: advisors must demonstrate premium value.

Michelle Bryant, Managing Partner at Premier Planning Partners Inc., believes that legacy planning creates greater client value and a competitive advantage:

"Whenever you're doing something that is not mainstream, that the clients value, something unique, it makes you different. Everplans is definitely a positive in this regard."

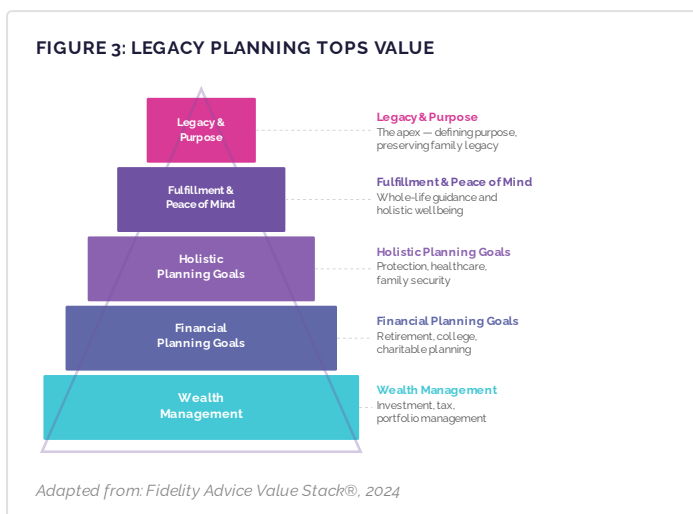
Michelle Bryant · Managing Partner, Premier Planning Partners

Irreplaceable Value Through Fulfillment & Legacy

If the future of advice is to focus on more complex, human needs that resist commoditization, The Advice Value Stack®, developed by Fidelity, provides a helpful framework for how this evolution will need to occur.^[19]

Managing client money is the foundation of the advice pyramid. Next, retirement, college and charitable planning goals. Higher still, is peace of mind. At the very top, fulfillment.

At the apex of this pyramid, advisors help clients define purpose and secure their legacy. This is the opportunity for premium value creation.



According to David Hanna, Senior Client & Advisor Experience Manager at Focus Partners Advisor Solutions:

"Traditional advisory services are already commoditized to some degree. At the bottom of the client value pyramid, you are more likely to compete with the likes of Vanguard and other lower cost offerings...As an advisor if you can move up the value pyramid, you can offer expanded value to your clients and insulate yourself against fee compression and client attrition."

For Focus Partners Advisor Solutions, long time legacy planning advocates and early Everplans adopters, the direction is clear. Hanna went on to share:

"We want our advisors to be able to move up the value pyramid elevating the client conversation. From a client experience standpoint, we want clients to know they can talk to us about all their needs. At the very top of the client value pyramid is legacy planning."

David Hanna · Senior Client & Advisor Experience Manager, Focus Partners Advisor Solutions

Legacy planning technologies such as Everplans can play a vital role for advisors to lead this evolution "up the pyramid", serving higher order client needs.

In the 2-year period from 2024 to 2026, adoption of legacy planning technology solutions increased at an annual average rate of 10%.^[20] At this rate, more than half of all advisors will have a solution by 2030.

Many, however, will not meet the mark.

THE LEGACY PLANNING GAP

Most advisors who claim to offer a legacy planning solution, really don't—59% rely on a "vault" function embedded within a general-purpose planning application^[21] — alternatives that lack high grade security, offer little or no guidance, with virtually none of the essential document sharing capabilities.

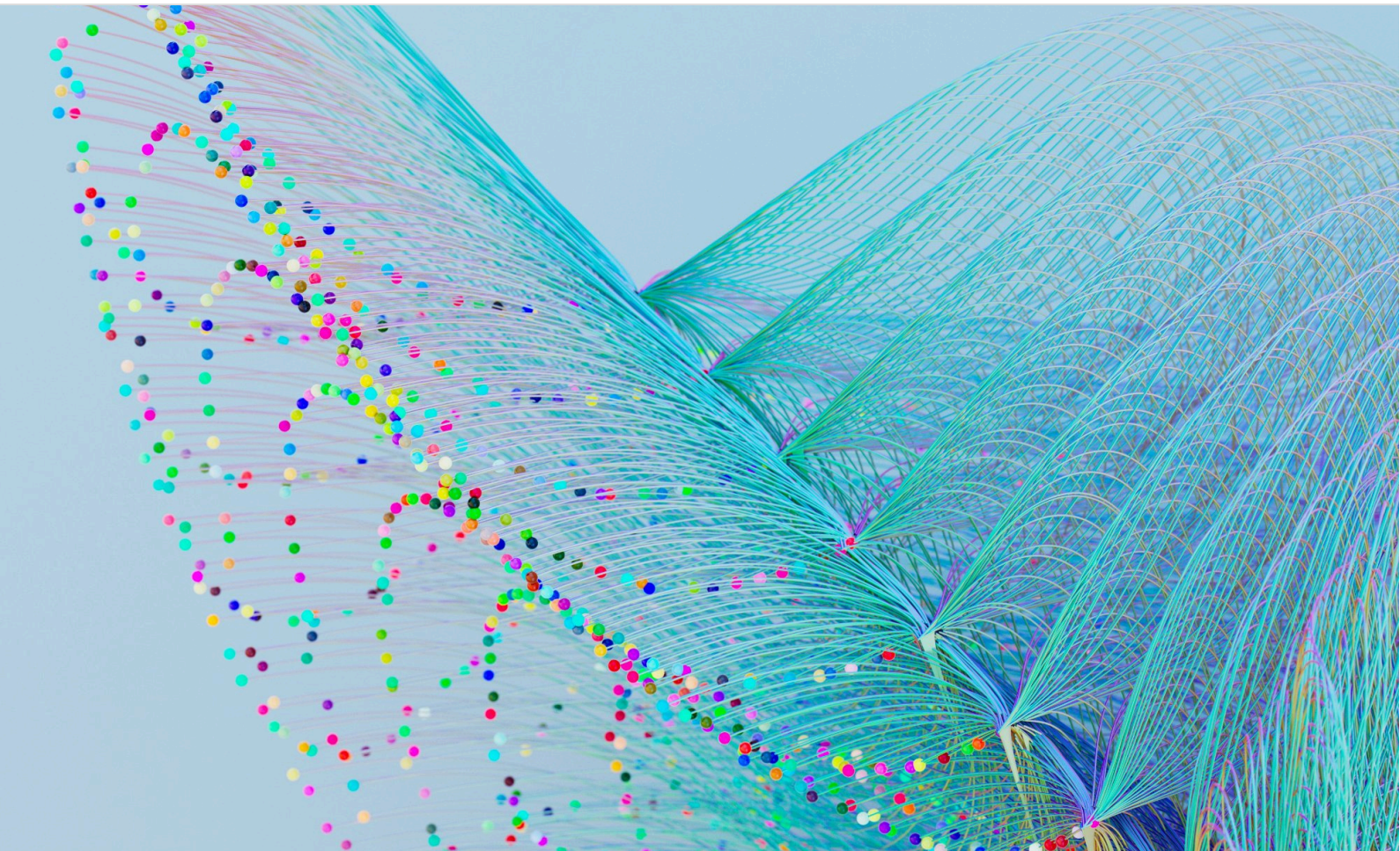
Bottom line, just 8% of all advisors currently have a legitimate technology solution for legacy planning.^[21] The remaining 92% will increasingly be left behind.

LEGACY PLANNING TECHNOLOGY GAP

8%

of advisors currently have a legitimate legacy planning technology solution

The remaining 92% are at risk of being left behind.



Filling the Crisis Void for the Modern Client

The 'crisis void' is the gaping hole between the delivery of advice and the mobilization of essential support when it's needed most.

The Rise of the Client Coach

"When something happens in a family, especially critical diagnosis or a near-death experience, one of the first calls is to the advisor; because that's where the money is."

Frank McAleer, Industry Leader and Legacy Planning Expert

Frank McAleer knows better than anyone that clients turn to their advisor in a crisis.

The 'crisis void' is the gaping hole between the delivery of advice, e.g., investment, tax, estate, insurance, etc., and the mobilization of essential support when the client's circumstances suddenly change, requiring an urgent response.

McAleer went on to share his own very personal experience, losing both parents within a short period of time:

"It is a period of deep grief and confusion. Without an advisor to turn to you don't even know what resource to go to.. When you're disorganized and have to react, the family just ends up spending money needlessly, to try to figure things out."

Frank McAleer, Industry Leader and Legacy Planning Expert

Few advisors are prepared to step into the crisis void and lead the client and their family through what will likely be some of their darkest days.

MCKINSEY & COMPANY

According to global management consultants, McKinsey & Company, the next ten years will "solidify the advisor's continued evolution from financial planner to life coach. In this world, advisors would guide clients not only on investment or tax strategy, but through life goals, intergenerational transitions, and emotionally charged decisions."^[22]

In just eight years, from 2018 to 2023, the share of investors seeking more holistic advice jumped from 29% to 52%.^[23] Yet for many firms, holistic advice stops short of legacy planning.

Legacy Planning. Defined and Delivered

For many advisory firms, legacy planning is an aspiration and an emerging discipline. Their legacy services are still to be defined. Firms have the instinct but not the infrastructure.

The Legacy Planning Framework that follows helps to close that gap — mapping the full constellation of client concerns and helping advisors to systematically address each component.

FIGURE 4: THE LEGACY PLANNING FRAMEWORK - FOUR DIMENSIONS OF CLIENT CARE



Platforms such as Everplans provide advisors and clients with a secure solution for organizing and coordinating essential access across each element of the Legacy Planning Framework.

The Trust Equation: Legacy + Peace of Mind

Client expectations for advisors to deliver legacy planning and simply "peace of mind" are already featuring prominently:

A 2025 study of more than 2,500 clients found that trust and peace of mind were the central theme for 12% of all client reviews, behind only personalized financial planning (38%) and long-term relationship and loyalty (13%).^[24]

A significant 74% of investors with at least \$500k in assets found it valuable for their advisor to help define "the legacy I want to leave"^[25]

Of affluent investors 61 years or older, more than one-quarter (26%) get the most value from advisors that help with achieving overall life goals or provide peace of mind. Among high-net-worth adults 60 or younger, this share rises to 31%.^[26]

Clients consistently emphasized that trust, and the peace of mind it brings, is a vital factor in maintaining a strong advisor relationship.

74% of affluent investors value advisor help defining the legacy they want to leave

Fortress Grade Data Protection

Legacy planning requires the coordination of highly sensitive documents, wills, trusts, medical directives, insurances, financial records and more. Not all legacy platforms protect them equally.

How secure is it? This is likely to be among the first questions a client asks when it comes to utilizing legacy planning technology. And advisors need to be unambiguous.

A platform like Everplans maintains HIPAA and SOC 2 compliance – the former a standard for personally identifiable health information and the latter a leading, banking grade standard for data protection, bringing tangible peace of mind to advisors and clients.

"We have a client who passed away, and his son lives in Japan. How else do you manage that? If it's all online, if it's in the cloud with Everplans you can access it from anywhere. So that was a huge motivating factor."

Michelle Bryant · Managing Partner, Premier Planning Partners

Advisors who provide life planning help beyond investments have significantly more satisfied clients: 49% of "very satisfied" clients receive this broader life planning guidance, compared to just 35% of "somewhat satisfied" clients^[27]

The key takeaway is that clients seek advisors they can trust with both their money and their legacy decisions.

Moving Beyond Table Stakes: The Next Frontier of Client Value

At First Western Trust, legacy planning represents an advice evolution, not just an add-on. Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary Brandon Summers explains:

"We think there are three key pillars to our guidance. Firstly, a financial plan for your life, secondly, a 'Break-The-Glass Plan' for your spouse, built for the moment something happens to you, and third, a legacy plan to distribute your assets after you're gone according to your wishes. And we put all three of those together as a wealth plan supported by Everplans."

Summers believes that the 'Break-the-Glass' offer and legacy planning are a new frontier for advice, a frontier that he encourages all the firm's personnel to embrace.

"To build our capability in legacy planning, we offer Everplans as a benefit to all our employees. It is just one way of getting our team fluent in legacy planning and talking about it and sharing their own stories."

Brandon Summers · Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary · First Western Trust

For advisors at Focus Partners Advisor Solutions, legacy planning has helped elevate client conversations. As David Hanna highlighted:

"We have some advisors that make legacy planning and Everplans central to their quarterly meetings with clients, making sure their documents are current and that deputies are also current. It has become a central touch point for their client meetings."

David Hanna · Senior Client & Advisor Experience Manager, Focus Partners Advisor Solutions

The highest-order client needs span legacy and family memory preservation, whole-life guidance, and readiness for both the crisis moment and the inevitable. Combined with the right technology, advisors can deliver on all fronts.



Deeper Connections, Stronger Retention

An advisor that manages money is valuable. An advisor who understands what the money means is unforgettable.

Transforming the Advisor-Client Dynamic

Beyond wealth and holistic planning lies something deeper: preserving the stories, values, and traditions that define family identity. Brandon Summers is clear on the importance of building deeper client connections:

"Our business is a people business. We want to be able to connect with clients on a personal level. This helps our client relationships grow closer and stickier."

Summers and the team at First Western Trust believe that being a great advisor means extending client support to family memory preservation:

"This is an area where we are expanding our thinking as a group. How can we help our clients safeguard their legacy letters? For some clients, it is 'how do I make sure that the story that my grandmother passed down to me from World War II gets transitioned to the next generation?' Everplans gives our clients a safe place to store their legacy letters."

Brandon Summers · Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary · First Western Trust

As an example, a well-populated Everplans account includes wills, important account information, investments and legal documents. But it also includes critical household information ranging from health care directives, digital passwords, family recipes, childhood photos and much more.

This aspect of legacy planning opens the door to deeper, ongoing client conversations that often form a part of every client meeting, naturally promoting client engagement and strengthening client retention.

An advisor that manages money is valuable. An advisor who understands what the money means is unforgettable.

Having worked with hundreds of advisors to deliver legacy planning with their clients, Frank McAleer has seen the impact firsthand:

"Advisors who embrace legacy planning are receiving some of the most heartfelt thank-you's I've ever witnessed from clients"

Frank McAleer, Industry Leader and Legacy Planning Expert

For Gabriella Tucker, Principal and Financial Advisor of SYM Financial, providing meaningful legacy planning support is all about family:

"For many of our clients, they are very close with their families, and those relationships come up often in our conversations. We feel a deep connection to the people and stories that matter to them. Because of that, we take the extra step to help preserve the meaningful pieces of their lives; their recipes, photos, personal stories, and so on, so future generations have something tangible that reflects who they were."

Gabriella Tucker · Principal And Financial Advisor, SYM Financial Advisors

For many clients, leaving a legacy is central to their values. Michelle Bryant explained that it's about how our clients want to be remembered:

"One of our clients has a donor advised fund. He contributes to the fund and has named a foundation. That donor advised fund will continue gifting after he's gone, basically in perpetuity because of the way that we have it set up. His alma mater and his church will benefit. The client's son was killed in a car accident when he was very young, and this church was very supportive."

Michelle Bryant · Managing Partner, Premier Planning Partners

Legacy planning has the potential to transform the advisor-client dynamic. Regular conversations about family history, values, and life transitions move the relationship beyond products and portfolios.

Too Valuable to Leave

A regular legacy plan review—facilitated through a platform such as Everplans—creates a natural collaboration point. Advisors ensure client documents are current, clients update their information and deputy roles, and touchpoints multiply — strengthening the relationship.

During a recent First Western Trust event in Boulder, a client raised their hand, to ask, "How can I be sure my wife knows where my trust document is?" It was something he was stressed about."

"We shared our Everplans solution, and the response was immediate and powerful. One client raised their hand and shared a personal experience—after her uncle passed away, his wishes had not been clearly communicated, which led to confusion and conflict within the family. Similar concerns surfaced repeatedly throughout the discussion, reinforcing just how real and widespread this challenge is."

Brandon Summers · Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary · First Western Trust

Having a solution to address such common, deep concerns was a genuine relief for clients.

"Over and over, we're hearing this same pain point. One of the clients from the event called back two times that same week just to talk about his Everplans account. At first there were more tactical questions like, how do I use it, and then he became excited. 'Now I have a solution for my family!'"

For Summers:

"Having a legacy planning solution gave us more touchpoints with the client than we'd probably had in 3 or 4 months, as the client was just coming in for a quarterly review."

Brandon Summers · Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary · First Western Trust

That frequency matters. Among clients with over \$500k in assets, 85% believe that increased frequency and/or personalized communication could significantly enhance their confidence in their advisor, and 88% indicate that this would sway their decision to maintain their services.

[28]

Higher retention drives greater practice revenue. The typical advisory firm has maintained 97% client retention over the last decade.^[29] But this is not likely to hold as the great wealth transfer accelerates.

Firms able to leverage legacy planning to sustain retention rates over the coming years will be well rewarded. And for firms able to grow client retention rates – even by one percentage point, the impact on practice revenue could be in the hundreds of thousands of dollars.

85%

of clients with \$500k+ believe more touchpoints would enhance confidence in their advisor

97%

typical advisory firm client retention over the past decade



Legacy Planning as a Business Growth Engine

The legacy planning universe is wide and deep — and the advisor who coordinates it becomes the most trusted relationship in the client's life.

Growth, Referrals & The Quarterback Role

The legacy planning universe of advice is wide and deep. From the coordination of foundational estate issues to life insurances, tax strategies and more - there will be necessary cross-over with attorneys, accountants, insurance agents, bankers and mortgage brokers alike.

The Center of the Client's Professional Network

Clients maintain relationships with multiple specialists but often lack someone to connect them. The advisor who sits at the center of the client's professional network coordinating the relationships, ensuring every legacy planning piece is in place — holds a position no other professional can claim.

Platforms such as Everplans reinforce the financial advisor as the central coordinator. The platform provides a complete view of each client's professional network and every third-party specialist involved.

The result: access to a greater number of professional relationships, the potential for more collaborative planning sessions and referral flow from specialists who also value working with organized, proactive advisors.

Your Role as the Client's Quarterback

In the same way, legacy planning can provide the advisor with a bird's-eye view and the ideal vantage point to spot advice gaps. As noted by Frank McAleer, this means more proactive advice and uncovering new opportunities:

"When the advisor goes into a client's Everplan dashboard, and sees that some of the categories are incomplete, they will bring that up with the client, and that's a value-add. 'Where are your legal documents? I don't see your trust and estate documents. When did you last update them?'"

Frank McAleer, Industry Leader and Legacy Planning Expert

A well-coordinated legacy plan on the right technology platform will also provide a complete overview of all the client's financial assets—all investment accounts, business interests, held away retirement accounts, real estate—the knowledge of which could potentially yield new asset management opportunities for the advisor.

The Digital Deputy Network

Executing a legacy plan means activating trusted family and friends. The plan won't execute itself – which is why the careful selection of legacy technology matters.

A platform such as Everplans includes the client's network of digital deputies, the key client relationships who are granted access to essential parts of the legacy plan at the discretion of the client.

Deputies witness firsthand how the advisor delivers value. With the proper introduction and client endorsement, they become warm prospects for the advisor.

"Keeping the Deputies current is an important part of the review."

**David Hanna · Senior Client & Advisor
Experience Manager, Focus Partners Advisor Solutions**

These discussions can surface changing family dynamics and identify deputies who may themselves need financial advice.

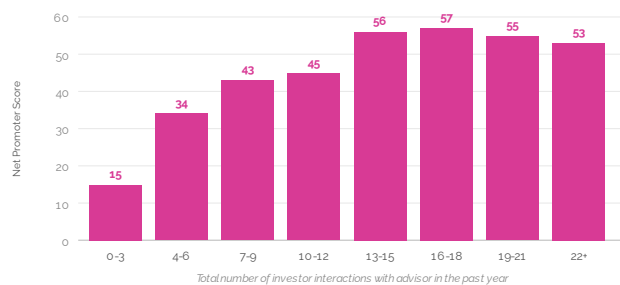
Frequency, Recency and Referrals

Legacy planning has the power to strengthen client relationships in ways that naturally generate satisfaction and referrals. The primary driver: frequent, meaningful touchpoints throughout the year rather than periodic reviews.

And frequency of client engagement influences a client's willingness to recommend.

Net promoter scores, a common measure of the likelihood clients will recommend their advisor to friends or colleagues, increase steadily as communication increases, peaking between 13-18 advisor-client interactions per year.^[30]

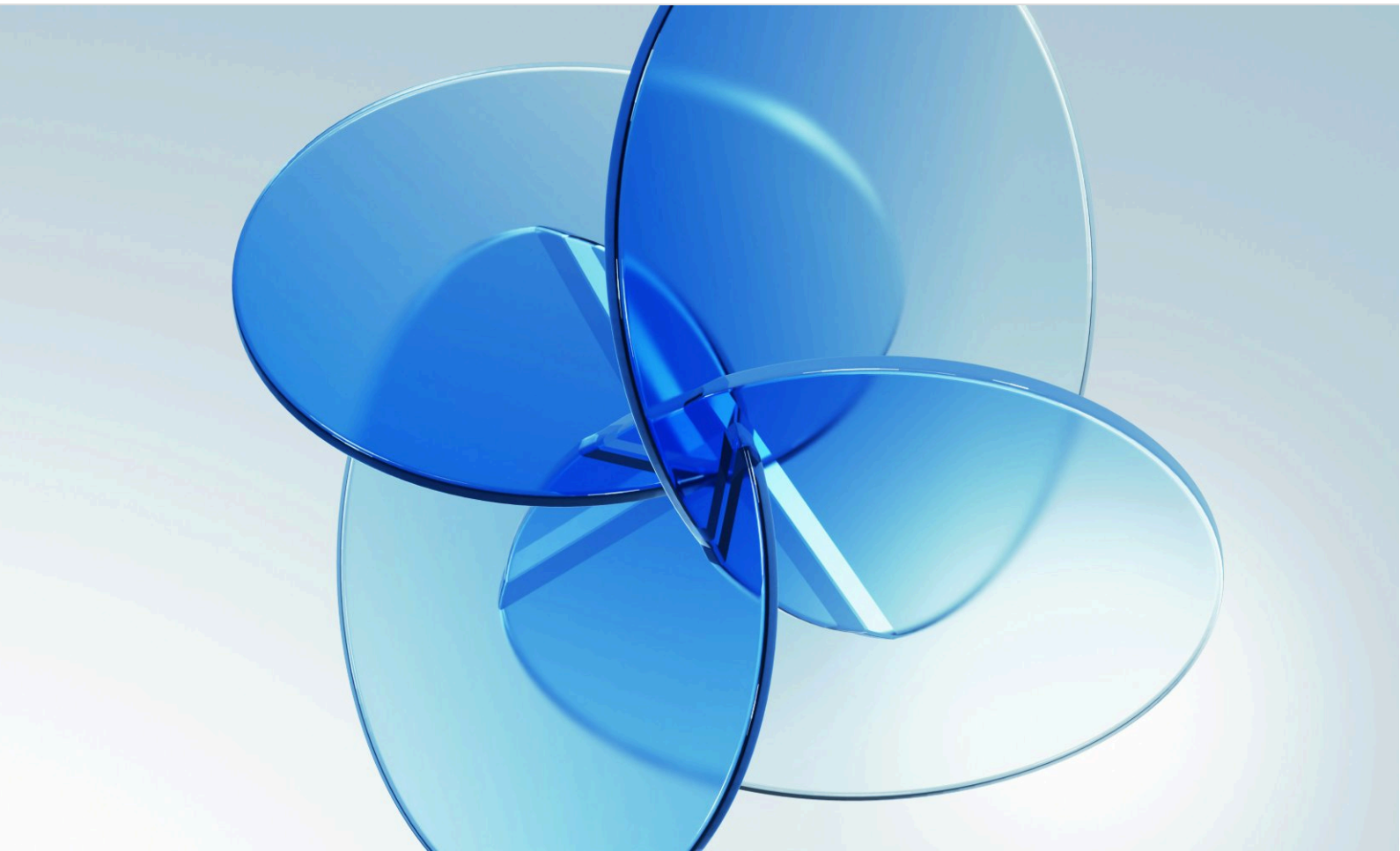
FIGURE 5: NET PROMOTER SCORES BY NUMBER OF INVESTOR INTERACTIONS



Source: Fidelity, 2024

Beyond the net promoter score, the case for more frequent, high value communication is clear and a proven motivator for client referrals. Among clients with over \$500k in assets, 89% believe increased communication and personalized outreach would motivate them to refer their advisor.^[31]

Platforms such as Everplans address the advisor touch point gap through legacy planning, creating natural, high-value client interactions throughout the year, the kind of engagement that builds closer, stickier, more referral-ready relationships.



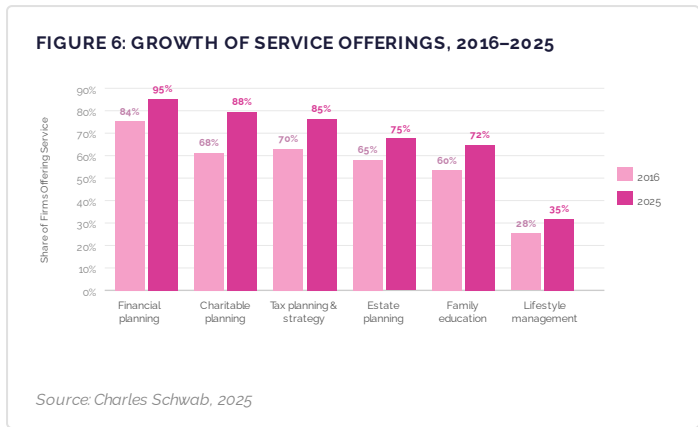
Expand Services. Deepen Value. Profitably.

How will advisory firms meet rising client expectations without eroding profitability?

The ROI of Legacy Planning

How will advisory firms meet rising client expectations without eroding profitability?

Despite no material change in fees charged,^[32] advisors are rapidly expanding their service offerings in response to client demands. The figure below shows notable increases in the share of advisory firms offering various, different services in the nine years from 2016 to 2025.^[33]



As advisors struggle to meet their clients' growing expectations, offering a legacy planning tool such as Everplans can be a low-cost, and unique way, to stay ahead of client demands for more comprehensive service.

In contrast with the general expansion of services, advisors are yet to broadly embrace legacy planning technology—just 8% offer clients a legitimate legacy planning technology solution.^[34]

As Brandon Summers, with First Western Trust states:

"There's an unfamiliarity with Everplans, which is part of why we like it. It's not something every other advisor is offering."

Brandon Summers · Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary · First Western Trust

Gabby Tucker, of SYM Financial Advisors, explains that while clients may be becoming more aware of the legacy planning space, they aren't readily aware of solutions. Adds Gabby:

"For us, proactively offering Everplans to our clients adds significant value, especially in reinforcing that we're thinking holistically about all aspects of their lives."

Gabriella Tucker · Principal And Financial Advisor, SYM Financial Advisors

With the right legacy planning platform, advisors can expand their client service set in this unique and valued way, but without breaking the bank.

George Williamson, Partner at Pierce Capital Management recognizes the value in effective legacy planning technology:

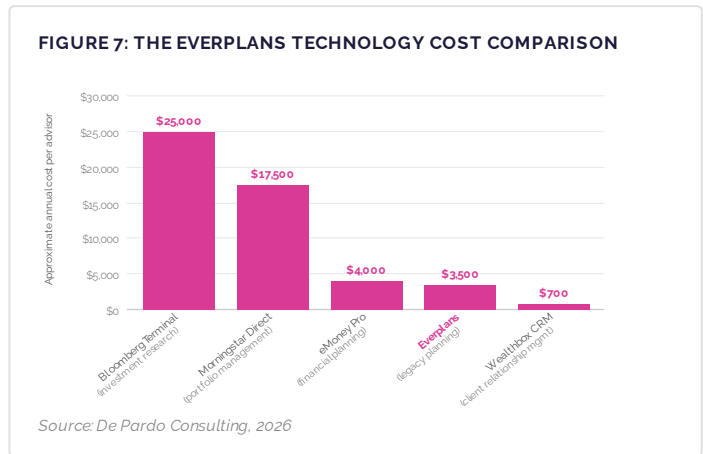
"We're always looking for things like Everplans, value adds that don't cost a ton but can provide a lot of value to the right client."

George Williamson · Partner And Wealth Advisor, Pierce Capital Management

Relative to overall technology spending, legacy planning software licensing costs are considered minimal.

A typical 5-member advisory practice spends about \$40,000 or 4% of its revenue on technology.^[35] As an example, for this practice, adding legacy planning technology would increase overall technology spending by a fraction—approximately one-third of a percentage share of revenues.

As shown in the figure below, a platform such as Everplans also compares favorably on a cost basis relative to other typical advisor technology solutions.



The ROI is clear. Legacy planning supported by the right legacy planning platform provides deeper client value at an investment level that makes sense, paying for itself through long term asset retention.

[32] Charles Schwab, 2025 [33] Ibid [34] Kitecs, 2025 [35] Kitecs, 2025

TECHNOLOGY & THE MODERN CLIENT

Clients are More Technologically Savvy Than They Are Credited

90%

of adults 50+ now own smartphones

94%

of 50+ adults connect with family via text messaging

63%

of 50+ adults use technology-enabled devices for banking

'My clients aren't savvy when it comes to technology—how will they ever embrace a legacy planning technology tool?'

Even the best technology will not succeed without users having an appetite and aptitude for it. A decade or so ago, advisor reservations about clients' abilities to engage with digital tools might have had merit. Today, however, the environment has changed.

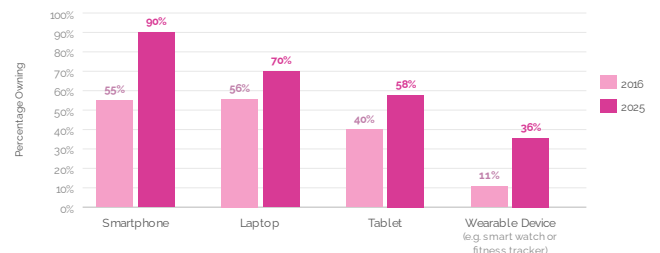
"I've personally found more openness to technology engagement post-COVID. People have gotten more comfortable with digital services now."

Brandon Summers · Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary · First Western Trust

Survey findings highlight the dramatic change in society's adoption of technology. Even among older generations, once stereotyped as technophobes, technology use is viewed positively and embraced widely.

One key indicator is the markedly greater ownership of tech-enabled devices among older adults compared to just a few years ago. For example, 90% of adults 50 or older now own smartphones, a significantly greater share than the 55% who owned these devices just nine years ago.^[36] Ownership is up nearly as much for laptops, tablets, and wearable devices such as smart watches (shown below).

FIGURE 8: GROWING OWNERSHIP OF TECH ENABLED DEVICES AMONG OLDER ADULTS



Source: AARP Research, 2025

In addition, these devices are routinely meeting essential needs. Virtually all (94%) of 50+ adults regularly connect with family and friends via text messages. Almost two-thirds (63%) use a technology-enabled device to handle their banking or finances digitally. In sum, nearly three-quarters of older adults agree that "technology makes my life easier."^[37]

The Irreplaceable Advisor

The wealth transfer is underway. Trillions are in motion. And AI is doing its work — accelerating advice commoditization.

When your best client dies, is your firm ready to step in and fill the void?

The honest answer for most advisors is no—not because they lack expertise or concern, but because they haven't built relationships with the next generation or established the systems to deliver legacy planning support.

An advisory firm wholly reliant on a single generation of clients is not a sustainable business.

The advisory firms that will lead the next decade are already making themselves irreplaceable — building relationships with the next generation now, creating more frequent, deeper touchpoints that demonstrate value beyond portfolio management, and delivering the legacy planning capability that clients need but rarely receive.

When that inevitable day comes, will you be the trusted advisor that the family turns to or the one they will replace?

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Brandon Summers, Executive Director of Wealth & Fiduciary at First Western Trust.	Michelle Bryant, Managing Partner at Premier Planning Partners Inc.	George Williamson, Partner and Wealth Advisor at Pierce Capital Management.

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ABOUT DE PARDO CONSULTING AND EVERPLANS



About De Pardo Consulting

De Pardo Consulting is a research and consulting firm dedicated to the wealth management industry. Working with advisory firms, financial institutions and fintechs, the firm delivers evidence-based research, strategic insights and consulting services that help organizations navigate a rapidly evolving industry landscape.

www.deparadoconsulting.com



About Everplans

Everplans is a smart digital vault that helps users organize, store and securely share important documents, accounts, policies, and legacy plans. With Everplans, financial advisors provide clients and their loved ones easy and secure access to all this vital information in a cobranded vault in case of an emergency or death.

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