

DIGITAL DISRUPTION IN ASSET MANAGEMENT THROUGH CLIENT PORTALS

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Digitally savvy new businesses are seeking to disrupt the asset management industry by making investing simpler, more affordable, and offering greater transparency for consumers.

Attitudes towards investing are changing and, as investing becomes more democratised, clients expect their asset managers to have a sophisticated digital infrastructure that offers transparency at all levels of the investment process.

With the introduction of Mifid II, there are also formal new demands for asset managers to be more transparent and increase the level of data that they make available to clients. With pressure from both investors and regulators, technological innovation will be a dominant trend for asset managers in the coming years.

When the new management team took over Gresham House in 2014 they recognised the need to move with the times. They decided to put technology at the core of the client proposition and aimed to develop a platform that would offer a best in class digital experience and levels of transparency on private assets typically only seen in the public markets.

The management team's

vision was to deliver a digital offering that would facilitate more interaction between the client and investment managers. In order to do this, plans were put in motion to build a unique investor portal that would enhance transparency by bringing clients much closer to the investment DNA of the firm through unprecedented access to investment information and decision-making processes.

The consumer sector has often been on the front foot when it comes to innovative user engagement and has arguably been more effective than the financial services industry in meeting the digital needs of its clients. Therefore, consumer-style transparency and usability were a key focus for Gresham House when it came to develop the portal.

Clients can log on to the portal and follow their portfolio by accessing information on the assets underlying their investments, reading appraisals and investment papers (where available) and viewing how much of their committed cash has been drawn down.

The portal also provides clients with the ability to access and participate in deal-by-deal co-investment opportunities in a structured and simple manner. This allows them discretion to increase their investment into the regions, sectors or deals specific to their interests. Gresham House involved clients in the platform's development from a very early stage; commenting on aspects of the initial design, user journey and content of the prototype. The portal went live in December 2017 and the business has already seen a positive response from clients.

There is no doubt that, in addition to financial returns, investors and the regulator want asset managers to offer clients greater transparency and a higher level of engagement and communication.

The Gresham House portal strives to meet these demands and provides the business with a platform on which further enhancements and developments can be made.



Andrew Hampshire joined Gresham House in February 2017 as chief technology officer. Andy is responsible for all technology initiatives across Gresham House including the development of the client portal, which provides a high-quality service for investors that facilitates co-investment opportunities. Andy has a strong technology and business background, having previously worked for LDC and the wholesale division of Lloyds Banking Group where he spent six years leading numerous change and technology programmes. Throughout his career Andy has advised companies on identifying value creation opportunities to support growth that can be driven through technology as well as supporting complex technology integrations post mergers and acquisitions. At Lloyds Banking Group, Andy was responsible for heading up the data quality function and prior to this led a programme to deliver a Chief Operating Office to the Global BSU business. He was also responsible for delivering an integrated case management and impairment calculation technology platform within Global BSU following the acquisition of HBOS. Prior to working at Lloyds Banking Group, Andy started his career with his own company as an independent software developer. Andy has an MBA from the university of Warwick.