

## Case Study

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We are partners, and together we grow and move forward.”

Rogier Wolf, Operations Manager, IBS Capital Allies

### PROFILE

**Client:** IBS Capital Allies

**Location:** Headquartered in Amsterdam

**Description:** Independent asset manager specializing in asset management, advisory services, fiduciary management, and alternative investments for HNW and institutional investors

**AUM:** \$2.9 billion

### BACKGROUND

- Long-time SS&C Advent client
- Wanted to upgrade its SS&C Advent solutions, and outsource its technology hosting and operational workflows

### SOLUTION

- IBS employs a full suite of SS&C Advent solutions for portfolio management, reporting, and trading, also including portfolio construction and rebalancing, market and portfolio data, as well as a client portal
- Solutions hosted and cloud-delivered through Advent Outsourcing Services (AOS)
- Back-office tasks also outsourced to SS&C Advent

For IBS Capital Allies, the benefits of outsourcing its technology hosting and back-office operations to SS&C Advent primarily came down to simplicity, stability, and expertise.

“Our IT environment was quite complicated previously, with different servers for each of our systems,” says Rogier Wolf, Operations Manager with IBS. But since migrating to the Advent Outsourcing Services platform, SS&C Advent now handles IBS’ entire IT infrastructure.

“We are buying a lot of convenience,” says Wolf. “I strongly believe it’s better to have the software with the software vendor, rather than try to maintain it all yourself. SS&C Advent’s environment is clearly more stable, and there is a better disaster recovery plan thanks to the dual sites in London and Stockholm. The systems are easier to use and maintenance is easier. That’s really powerful for our kind of business.”

### Problems Solved

IBS migrated from its own servers in Luxembourg to the SS&C Advent technology hosting service in May 2016. Handing off

responsibility for running and maintaining its infrastructure in this way has provided IBS with both a smoother operating environment and more freedom to focus on its core activities.

“If a trading line goes down or custodial data doesn’t come in, we no longer have to try to figure out whether it is the SS&C Advent product, the custodian product, the connection between the two parties, or something to do with us,” notes Wolf. “SS&C Advent has most likely noticed something is wrong before I wake up, because it has a nearly follow-the-sun service with teams and processes in place to monitor and fix any issues. And because it is the expert on what specifications need to be in place for its products to run optimally, I don’t have to bother with that either.”

### Enhanced Capabilities

Alongside the hosting migration, IBS also updated its solution suite, moving to the latest technology releases.

One big advantage Wolf has seen is in IBS’ performance measurement capabilities. “We used to calculate performance data for

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clients on a monthly basis by asset class. Now we can do it on a daily basis by security. That gives us more flexibility in how and when we run the reports, as we can look at performance at a sector or industry level, by asset class, and on any period."

In addition, IBS moved to the cloud-based Advent Market Data (AMD) service for the firm's pricing and security information, and to Advent Portfolio Data (APD), which delivers account-level data used for reconciliations and other workflows.

"With APD, the connections are now directly from the custodian to SS&C Advent," Wolf explains. "That makes it much easier to connect with more custodians, and has allowed us to have three new interfaces built since we upgraded. Plus, if files don't come in we no longer have to chase them, as SS&C Advent will take care of it. It is the same for our Bloomberg pricing feeds through AMD."

IBS is also using Advent Genesis, a revolutionary cloud-based trade order creation platform that transforms portfolio construction and rebalancing. With Genesis' powerful capabilities, portfolio managers can actively manage client accounts and positions at any time and from anywhere.

## Streamlining the Back-Office Operations

Outsourcing the technology hosting and maintenance is just one benefit of AOS. Another is the managed services component, which IBS began using in the third quarter of 2017. This has enabled IBS to outsource its key back-office activities to a dedicated team of SS&C Advent professionals.

IBS previously had one back-office person in the firm, but when he was away or on holiday other people had to take on the tasks, which could increase the operational risks and inefficiencies.

"The most important reason to switch to the managed service was continuity and expertise," says Wolf. "For our institutional clients in particular—which form a big part of our service offering—it's really important we carry out operational processes such as reconciliations fast and well. Sometimes we find things a client's custodian wasn't aware of, so it adds value. Those capabilities must be in place, but how we do it is of less concern to them."

Leveraging SS&C Advent's dedicated managed services team has also speeded up the daily processing times. "We used to find out if there were any reconciliation issues by around 9:00 a.m.," says Wolf. "We have now decreased that by about an hour, which allows our traders to start modelling sooner, and our clients to log in via their client portal earlier. So it's a step up in quality."

Then there is the improved control, transparency, and auditability. SS&C Advent has been collaborating with IBS on creating better dashboards that enhance the visibility of, for example, the status of the reconciliations with a particular custodian and what needs to be done. And if the firm ever wants to go back to check what happened on a particular date, the information is easily accessible.

There is the potential for cost savings as well, notes Wolf. "We are growing quite rapidly, which meant we may have had to hire a second back-office person. But because of the scope for future growth offered by the managed services team, we no longer have to consider that."

## Enriching Client Relationships

Growth is one focus for the future. But so too are initiatives to further enhance the client experience. For example, IBS plans to implement a state-of-the-art reporting package that it can send to clients or publish on its client portal.

## BENEFITS

- Hosted IT provides greater infrastructure simplicity, stability and responsiveness
- Technology maintenance and upgrades are faster and easier, allowing IBS to take advantage of enhanced system functionality
- Cloud-based custodial and market data feeds deliver greater flexibility and improved connectivity
- Outsourcing back-office activities to SS&C Advent's managed services team provides improved operational continuity, expertise and scalability
- The combination of technology solutions and outsourced services frees IBS to focus on its core goals: enhancing its client relationships, developing its business, minimizing costs, and driving revenue growth

Another focal area is on smoothing and enriching the customer experience, through a sophisticated front-end supported by streamlined information flows into and out of the various SS&C Advent systems.

"From the first customer contact through to client onboarding and their yearly performance reviews, we want to capture all that information in one system and have it flow seamlessly," explains Wolf. "For the client, that will mean they only have to fill in their details once, after which we can quickly get them up and running, and keep them updated with relevant, client-specific information delivered online."

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## The Power of Relationships

Given IBS' growth and focus, the AOS offering's system functionality and managed services team's capabilities have proved an ideal match. But the greatest value for Wolf lies in the strength and longevity of their relationship.

"To me, the most important and valuable aspect is that there are people I can speak to, that I can share my thoughts and worries

with, and know something is being done," observes Wolf. "I want to be able to talk, and be heard."

This collaborative ethos came to the fore during the migration onto the AOS platform. "We had to be up and running within a month," notes Wolf. "We had some preparation time, but not much. Then after a month SS&C Advent took over. And from there on there have been no major problems. All we are doing is improving the service now."

And that process—of discussion, collaboration, improvement, and feedback—will only continue.

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