Your Portfolio Process Deserves a Year-End Review, Too

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Key Takeaways

- Year-end reviews should assess which investment responsibilities advisors want to retain and where additional support could better serve their practice and clients.
- Portfolio consultations, collaborative custom models and established model portfolios address different needs for research, investment support and portfolio construction.
- Separately managed accounts add an account-level implementation option, with suitability depending on client needs, strategy characteristics and available customization.

Year-end portfolio reviews tend to focus on familiar questions: Have allocations drifted? Where are the risks? What changes would better align a portfolio with the client's goals?

I would add another question to the agenda: Does the process behind those portfolios still fit the practice you want to run?

As I previously wrote in "Not All Advisors Wear Capes…but Many Wear Too Many Hats," advisors balance a wide range of responsibilities, each competing for their time and attention. Portfolio construction, manager research, implementation and client communication are among them. Year-end offers an opportunity to consider which responsibilities you want to own and where additional support could strengthen your investment offering and create capacity for growth.

Advisors spend an average of 15% of their time on investment management, yet estimate that it represents 36% of their value proposition.[1] That's a lot of perceived value riding on a relatively small share of the calendar.

As you plan for 2027, consider how you'll support that investment offering while making room for everything else your clients, and your business, need.

Start with the Decisions You Want to Own

Models already play a significant role in how advisors invest. They account for 47% of client assets and accounts overall. Among RIAs, the share of assets is 55%.[2]

But a model-based practice can take several forms. Among surveyed advisors, 94% use models in some capacity. Advisor-constructed models are used by 69%, compared with 44% using third-party models, with some advisors using both.[3]

An advisor who has built a disciplined model process may want additional research, a second opinion or implementation support. Another may prefer a partner to help design and maintain portfolios. A third may want to delegate portfolio construction through an established model offering.

Fees, a desire to retain investment control and the importance of investing to the advisor's value proposition help explain why some advisors avoid third-party models.[4] Those considerations deserve a place in the conversation.

My starting point is to ask which investment responsibilities you want to retain, and where outside resources could strengthen your process.

Match the Support to the Job

WisdomTree Portfolio Solutions brings together four pillars: Portfolio Consultations, Shared CIO Custom Models, CIO-Managed Models and separately managed account strategies (SMA Strategies). Each addresses a different need.

Figure 1: Matching Portfolio Support to Your Practice's Needs

Solution	A question it can help address	How it fits
Portfolio Consultations	"How can I strengthen the portfolios I build?"	Advisor-led portfolio decisions supported by allocation analysis, stress testing and risk reviews.
Shared CIO Custom Models	"How can I build portfolios that reflect my firm's preferences with an ongoing investment partner?"	Collaborative portfolio design, customization and scheduled reviews.
CIO-Managed Models	"How can I adopt an established portfolio construction process?"	Ready-built portfolios with WisdomTree leading construction, available through supported platforms.
SMA Strategies	"How can I address investment needs at the individual account level?"	Separately managed strategies, with personalization and tax-management capabilities depending on the offering.

The first three describe different ways to engage around portfolio construction. SMA Strategies add an account-level implementation dimension. Together, the four pillars create flexibility in how advisors seek investment support.

The right fit also depends on what you expect from the relationship. Investment process, fees, communications, advisor support and customization all feature among advisors' considerations when selecting third-party models.

A year-end review is a useful time to make your own expectations explicit. Where would a second set of eyes help? Which decisions would benefit from ongoing collaboration? Where would a ready-built portfolio fit?

Different Clients Can Call for Different Approaches

These choices can coexist within a practice.

You might want to retain responsibility for asset allocation while seeking an independent assessment of portfolio exposures. That points toward a consultation.

Your firm may want portfolios that reflect its investment preferences and brand, supported by an ongoing investment partner. That points toward Shared CIO. For a client segment best served by an established portfolio offering, CIO-managed models may be appropriate.

Separately, selected clients may have needs that warrant evaluating an SMA. The fit depends on the strategy, account characteristics, available customization and implementation requirements.

SMAs already have a place in model-based investing: 37% of surveyed advisors report using them within models.[5] A net 25% of RIAs expect to increase their SMA usage.[6]

For your practice, the useful question is where an individually managed strategy could address a specific client need within the broader portfolio approach.

Set a Portfolio Process Agenda for 2027

Before choosing a solution, I would work through three questions:

- Which investment decisions are central to my firm's identity and client promise?
- Where would research, collaboration or delegated portfolio construction improve consistency or free capacity?
- Which client needs require greater attention to implementation and account-level personalization?

The answers may point to one solution or a combination. They should also clarify what you expect from an investment partner.

As you review client portfolios this year-end, make time to review the process supporting them. Identify the responsibilities you want to own, the resources that would help and the client needs your current approach could serve more effectively.

A conversation with WisdomTree Portfolio Solutions can help you evaluate those choices. For advisors who want to begin with their existing portfolios, a portfolio consultation is a practical place to start.

WisdomTree Portfolio Solutions Informational Sessions

Join WisdomTree thought leaders for concise, 15-minute sessions on how institutional insights and personalized strategies can be applied to build, customize and manage portfolios, supporting more consistent and meaningful client outcomes.

View the sessions and register **here**.

[1] FUSE Research Network, “Financial Advisors Spend Just 15% of Their Time on Investment Management,” March 27, 2025, pp. 1–2. Survey of just over 500 financial advisors conducted in late January 2025.

[2] Elaine Misonzhnik, “FUSE: Risk-Adjusted Returns Top Priority for Advisors in Portfolio Construction,” WealthManagement.com, September 2, 2026, reporting on FUSE’s August Advisor Trend Monitor survey of approximately 560 advisors.

[3] FUSE Research Network, *The ETF Shift: How Advisors Are Investing and Managers Are Adapting*, presentation at the IMEA ETF Roundtable, October 29, 2026, slide 10.

[4] FUSE Research Network, 2026, October 29, slide 11.

[5] Elaine Misonzhnik, 2026, September 2.

[6] FUSE Research Network, 2026, October 29, slide 14.

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