

# Working from Home During a Pandemic: How Adviser Investments Maintains Business as Usual



Founded in 1994, Adviser Investments is an independent money management firm dedicated to serving individuals, trusts, institutions and foundations. It specializes in mutual funds, exchange-traded funds and undiscovered managers. It also offers individual bond strategies for high-net-worth investors. It currently manages over \$5 billion for more than 3,500 clients nationwide.

## Over a decade of working together

Adviser Investments started working with Rich Resnick (President at Silverline) back in 2004, before Silverline was officially Silverline. That was just after Adviser Investments officially purchased Salesforce user licenses.

Since then, not a business day has gone by that Silverline isn't working on something for Adviser Investments. Through Navigator, Silverline's managed services offering, Adviser has set hours each month to do upkeep and project-based work.

Before implementing Salesforce nearly 20 years ago, Adviser Investments ran on ACT! databases and Microsoft Office Suite. "We had so many different databases and when they would get slow, they'd add another database and another database. And then when you went to look a contact or lead, it would take maybe two minutes to complete the search. It was so painful. That's when we said, 'Okay, we need something else.' Our IT person wasn't really into the idea of building something new, and that meant we needed to look into other options," said Adviser Investments' Director of Marketing, Lisa Hamann.

Adviser Investments saw that Salesforce was in the Cloud, and at a time when nobody quite knew what that meant — they went for it. "Salesforce seemed like the right fit because our small (at the time) IT department wouldn't be as burdened with doing updates since Salesforce controls all of that on their end. We initially set it up and took some of the processes that we were using and started adapting them," said Hamann.

## Process automation overhaul

From the beginning, Silverline stressed the importance of automating processes. "While we were appreciative, we thought that our processes wouldn't automate well," Hamann said. "For instance, we still thought we needed to walk a folder over to different department leads for signatures to facilitate a new client onboarding. And Rich said, 'No, let's go through all of your processes and we can figure out how to automate it with Salesforce technology.'"

From there, Rich sat down with Hamann's team, charted out all of their manual processes, and began to build workflows and capabilities into their Salesforce org. Initially the firm needed a fast, flexible, and easily configurable solution that would automate multiple sales processes and support work completed by both portfolio executives and client service team members. Additionally, the application needed to integrate with back office portfolio management applications so that portfolio executives had real-time access to clients' financial data.

As time went on, Adviser Investments leveraged the data aggregated from previously developed integrations (Financial Reporting and Portfolio Accounting) to develop a portfolio allocation tool, which allows users to generate compliance- and marketing-approved investment portfolio presentations customized to their clients' investment needs in a matter of minutes. They also have the flexibility required to support endless customization options allowing for a pixel perfect match to manually developed content.

A few years later, Adviser Investments set out to automate more of their daily and monthly reporting activities. The firm had a series of Investment Committee and Marketing reports that were generated manually on a monthly basis using tools like Access, Tableau, and Excel. The reports lacked real-time data and created a burden on marketing and operational teams to aggregate information effectively. Partnering with Silverline, Adviser selected Salesforce Analytics and collectively the Silverline Navigator and Adviser Investments teams developed the operational reporting needed to support the business.





## Enabling employees to work from home

“There are just so many things Silverline has helped us set up. I almost don’t even know where to start,” said Hamann. “Because everything is in Salesforce and that’s where everybody is working all day, it’s made it much easier to work from home. Despite everything going on with Coronavirus, nothing has changed in how our clients engage and connect with us. They likely wouldn’t even know that employees are working from home. Our team has all the tools that they typically use in the office and they can just use those at their home offices, too. It’s been amazing.”

What sort of things can this financial services firm accomplish from their home offices? Hamann outlines just a few of her favorite automations.

### Onboarding



Adviser Investments partnered with Silverline to automate some of the more basic onboarding processes they had. Silverline built workflows into Salesforce around signing contracts and sharing onboarding documents. When Adviser Investments first started working within Salesforce, it was only their sales team, operations team, and marketing who were using it. Over time, they continued integrating more technology into their procedures, and now the whole company uses Salesforce.

“Believe it or not, we are still getting new clients during this time, and it’s been great to have our onboarding process available and accessible. Especially since so many different departments are involved. With everybody out of the office now, it’s no big deal.”

### Trading



Adviser has completely automated their trading processes with a fully connected front and back office. Formally, when the sales team wanted to initiate a trade, they would take out a trade ticket on paper and walk it over to compliance for approval, then to the operations team that would process the ticket. After automating these processes, sales can go into Salesforce and process trade tickets from their own desk, and then they flow directly to the operations team with an automated approval check from compliance.

### Portfolio reviews



Adviser’s review committee can also perform portfolio reviews while working from home — covering every new client or a client making a change to their overall portfolio strategy. Sales team representatives, compliance department, the research team, etc. all gather to review what the client wants to do. They discuss goals, objectives, and the salesperson recommends a particular strategy, and the group talks through questions, tax consequences, retirement timeframes. And then that group approves it for compliance purposes, confirming that a number of Adviser consultants were a part of the decision-making process.

It used to be that they would just sit in a conference room, print sheets out about the client, pass them out and go around the table. Sometimes there are 10, 15, 20 clients and prospective clients that they’re reviewing. “Since we’ve automated it into Salesforce we can continue as usual while working remotely,” Hamann said.

### Real-time updates



As a financial firm, Adviser has all sorts of documents they send back and forth to clients. There are ADVs, contracts, fee schedules, privacy policies, etc. “With Salesforce, we can have all of those automatically pulled in based on the criteria of the proposal and then we need to record the dates that we send these to people. Our client service team used to be responsible for manually entering that. However, now when it gets generated, Salesforce updates all the dates as well. We can go back and see, ‘this person got the ADV on this day and the proposal went on that day.’ It’s great to have all those pieces taken care of from a compliance standpoint, all recorded and updated automatically,” Hamann said.

## Interdepartmental Requests



At Adviser Investments, the connectivity of each department is paramount to a seamless client experience. Departments within the organization are often requesting information, documents, or activities to be completed by other departments. What was once a disconnected email exchange between users, is now a fully automated request developed in Salesforce. This process enables any department to request something from another department. Department leads will receive the requests and assign them to someone on their team to complete. The requestor will receive notifications in Salesforce and email when their request has been completed, or if further information is needed to complete it. This new process ensures nothing slips through the cracks, no matter where employees are working from.

## WaterCooler, Communities



Silverline built an entire flow where employees can complete their quarterly and annual reviews in Salesforce. Managers can complete one part of it, and then the employee finishes the other part. There are reminders when they're up for renewal or up for review. For that, Adviser used Silverline's WaterCooler, and then later Silverline moved them over to a custom Community platform within Salesforce as their needs grew along with their team.

Some of the features include a calendar, with an area where employee birthdays are highlighted along with work anniversaries, and pictures from recent outings, a featured Employee of the Month - where people can submit nominations. There's also a charity section where coworkers can post about charity fundraisers or events featuring links to make donations or volunteer time. Adviser Investments has a huge mentorship program in the company, and that's all managed in Salesforce.

## Mentorship program



Each year, Adviser encourages employees to apply to be mentors or mentees and then they're matched based on what departments they're in and certain business perspectives they'd like to experience. "There's a year-long curriculum we've built out that each person has to fill out at different milestones and then they have to do a big project at the end. And again, it's all tracked and managed in Salesforce," Hamann said.

## Staying on top of things and staying connected

"Our company uses Zoom, so everybody is connected and chatting face-to-virtual-face, and we can share screens and go over items in Salesforce. It's been incredibly helpful to have such extensive remote capabilities," Hamann said. "Especially since this could be a really easy time for things to slip through the cracks. Because of Salesforce, our managers can easily see that everything is moving along or if there is an issue, they can address it much quicker."

In continued work with Silverline through managed services, Adviser Investments can hop on a call with Zoom as Silverline provides support or real-time changes they may need. "Silverline is constantly helping us improve, whether it be building custom code for requested functionality, or sunseting that code and implementing new, robust Salesforce capabilities that can provide more functionality," said Hamann.

Adviser Investments makes a point of investing in Salesforce as a platform; they don't have the mindset of it being a one-time thing. In collaboration with Silverline, the firm is proactive about finding new processes that they're interested in bringing on to the platform or finding ways to improve internal operations. It is this drive to improve, and their commitment to maintaining a strong partner relationship with Silverline that has helped them adapt and adjust to new working environments during uncertain times due to the Coronavirus pandemic.

## About Silverline

Silverline has real-world expertise in the Financial Services industry, including banks and credit unions, mortgage companies, wealth management firms, investment banks, hedge funds, and insurance companies. We combine strategic planning, implementation, and ongoing support to help clients realize continuous value with the Salesforce platform. To find out more, contact us at [financialservices@silverlinecrm.com](mailto:financialservices@silverlinecrm.com).

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