

Transforming Mid-Tier Asset Management with a Unified Data Foundation

Enable Mid-Tier Asset Managers to Streamline Operations, Enhance Insight, and Scale with Confidence



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Executive Summary

Mid-tier asset management firms are navigating an increasingly complex operating environment. Client expectations for transparency and immediacy continue to rise, regulatory scrutiny is intensifying, and product proliferation is accelerating, all while margins remain under pressure. Yet many firms still depend on fragmented data environments made up of spreadsheets, point solutions, data warehouses, and custom systems that were never designed to scale as a unified whole.

These fragmented approaches create persistent friction across the organization. Data teams spend disproportionate time preparing, reconciling, and validating information. Business users wait for insight. Reporting processes are difficult to audit. As firms grow, operational complexity increases faster than value creation.

Establishing a unified data foundation addresses these challenges and paves the way for innovation. By automating core data processes once and reusing them many times, a unified data foundation delivers economies of scale with every new use case and user group that leverages the platform, from sales and marketing to finance, accounting, risk, and operations. As adoption expands, the value of the platform compounds.

Business Impact Across the Front, Middle, and Back Office

Asset management firms are already leveraging this approach across a broad range of front-, middle-, and back-office use cases. A unified data foundation enables firms to automate daily and monthly flows and assets reporting, improving responsiveness to ad-hoc client inquiries and RFP/RFI requests while strengthening marketing and distribution efforts. It accelerates the launch of new investment products, such as ETFs, mutual funds, wrappers, and other structures, by streamlining data preparation through reusable data pipelines and automation.

Across investment and operations, firms can use unified data to enhance risk and performance analysis by combining real-time and historical data for more precise portfolio insights. They simplify AUM and client reporting by dramatically reducing the time required to track assets under management and generate client deliverables. In the back office, automation of end-of-day processes, such as NAV calculation, validation, trade settlement, and reconciliation, further reduces operational burden while improving control.

AI and Advanced Analytics are Ready to Deploy

The same foundation supports AI and advanced analytics initiatives by delivering unified, current data directly into modeling environments. Native support for capabilities such as vector search and retrieval augmented generation (RAG) allows firms to enhance investment research, identify emerging opportunities, and deliver more intelligent, context-aware client experiences.

What begins as a data problem becomes a business constraint, limiting agility, increasing cost, and undermining confidence in reported results.

Improved Governance and Compliance

A common metadata, semantic, and bi-temporal data layer improves regulatory compliance by reducing errors, accelerating responses to regulators, and ensuring consistency across all reporting and disclosures.

This white paper explores how mid-tier asset managers can establish a unified data foundation that supports investment analytics, operations, client reporting, and distribution within a single environment. It introduces InterSystems Data Studio™ as an asset management data platform for this unified data foundation and illustrates how firms can realize value through three progressive phases: operational efficiency, competitive advantage, and long-term differentiation.

The Industry Challenge: Fragmentation as a Structural Constraint

Most asset managers have accumulated data capabilities incrementally. New systems are introduced to solve immediate business problems such as risk analytics, performance reporting, regulatory disclosure, and sales reporting, often without replacing what came before. Over time, this results in parallel data pipelines, duplicated logic, and inconsistent definitions across teams.

The consequences are well understood. Manual data preparation becomes the norm as teams work around architectural gaps. Batch-based workflows delay insight. Point-to-point integrations multiply maintenance effort and operational risk. When questions arise from clients, regulators, or internal stakeholders, tracing reported numbers back to underlying data is slow and sometimes inconclusive.

As firms expand product offerings and distribution channels, these inefficiencies scale. What begins as a data problem becomes a business constraint, limiting agility, increasing cost, and undermining confidence in reported results.

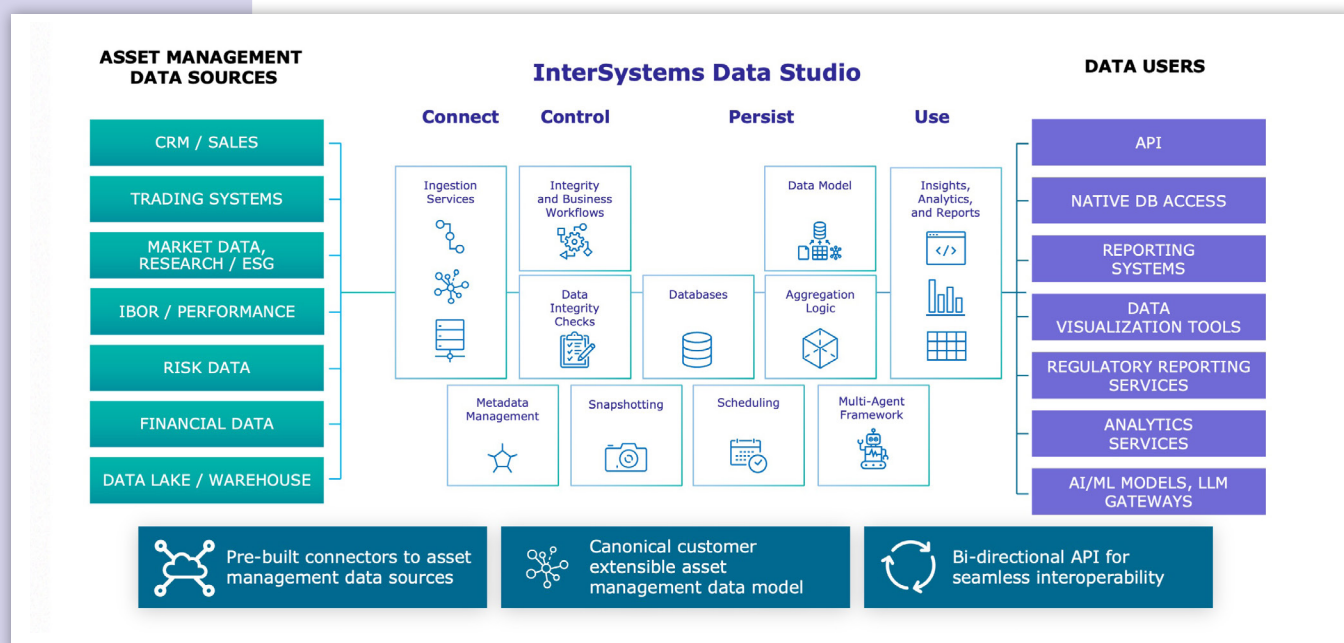
Reframing the Foundation: A Unified Asset Management Data Environment

Rather than continuing to layer new solutions onto legacy architectures, forward-looking asset managers are consolidating core data management capabilities into a unified environment. InterSystems Data Studio supports this approach by providing a single, cloud-hosted platform designed to serve the full lifecycle of asset management data.

Within one environment, Data Studio brings together:

- data ingestion from internal systems and external providers,
- a scheduling layer to automate ingestion,
- integration and orchestration across heterogeneous sources,
- a persistence layer for on-demand analysis,
- semantic modeling for consistent business definitions,
- metadata management for discovery, security and governance,
- and seamless API integration into downstream systems, such as reporting or data visualization tools.

Snapshot and lineage capabilities provide visibility into how data moves and transforms across reporting cycles, supporting auditability and regulatory confidence.



InterSystems Data Studio provides a single, cloud-hosted platform designed to serve the full lifecycle of asset management data.

By concentrating these capabilities in one platform, firms reduce architectural sprawl and enable data reuse across analytics, reporting, and operational workflows without additional custom development.

Benefits of a Unified Data Platform

One Platform Serves a Multitude of Needs

A unified data foundation is not a single-use system. The same platform that automates end-of-day reconciliation and NAV validation also powers client reporting, distribution analytics, AI-driven research support, and product launch data preparation. Every new use case leverages the same governed, trusted data rather than requiring new pipelines or bespoke integrations.

Automation That Compounds

The economics of a unified platform improve with scale. Automating core data processes once and reusing them many times delivers economies of scale with every new use case and user group, from investment operations to client service, finance, compliance, and distribution. The value of the platform compounds as adoption expands across the organization.

A Scalable Engine for Continuous Innovation

The decision to establish a unified data platform is a strategic investment that reshapes how an asset management firm creates value over time. Rather than requiring each new initiative to justify and fund its own data build-out, the platform establishes a persistent foundation that can be reused and extended.

200

FTE hours per month freed through automation of core data workflows in comparable deployments

\$200K

approximate annual staffing cost savings from redirected effort in comparable mid-tier deployments

20-40%

reduction in technology operating costs through platform consolidation and managed infrastructure

This unlocks a broad range of innovation opportunities, many of which would not clear traditional business case thresholds if they required standalone infrastructure. The result is a step change in how quickly ideas can move from concept to execution, with materially lower marginal effort for each new use case. This represents a meaningful shift in how asset managers think about data infrastructure.

A Three Stage Path to Value

Asset managers that adopt a unified data foundation using InterSystems Data Studio typically realize benefits in progressive stages. Each stage builds upon the last, delivering tangible business value while expanding what the organization can support.

Stage One: Operational Efficiency

The first stage focuses on reducing manual effort and stabilizing core data operations. In fragmented environments, routine tasks such as aggregating data, validating figures, and maintaining integrations often require significant hands-on intervention. Consolidating these processes within a unified platform enables automation and standardization.

In practice, mid-tier asset managers can expect to reallocate substantial resources once high effort workflows are automated. In comparable deployments, automating a small number of core use cases has freed up the equivalent of approximately 200 full time hours per month, allowing data and analytics teams to redirect effort toward higher value initiatives such as advanced analytics and business support. These efficiencies have translated into roughly \$200,000 in annual cost savings, simply by enabling teams to do more with existing resources.

Centralizing integrations and workflows also enables firms to retire redundant point solutions that carry ongoing licensing, maintenance, and development costs. According to Accenture research, 70% of technology budgets at financial institutions is allocated to maintaining legacy systems, leaving little for modernization and innovation.¹ In asset management, decommissioning legacy tools has eliminated hundreds of thousands of dollars per year in recurring expenses, while reducing operational risk. Because Data Studio is delivered as a managed service, the overhead associated with patching, security, and infrastructure management is also significantly reduced.

Together, these efficiency gains establish a more resilient, lower-cost operating baseline while setting the foundation for broader business impact.

Stage Two: Competitive Advantage

With a stable and automated data foundation in place, firms are better positioned to compete on speed, insight, and responsiveness. Shared data models and consistent access to trusted information improve decision making across investment, distribution, and client service functions, while also creating a foundation for advanced analytics and AI-driven capabilities.

¹ Accenture How security helps banking bridge modernization gaps, 2026

In practical terms, this stage enables materially faster delivery of new capabilities. In comparable mid-tier asset management environments, firms have implemented proprietary investment risk analytics platforms in under six months, a timeline that would typically extend well beyond a year in fragmented architectures. This acceleration allows portfolio managers and clients to access risk insights sooner, without waiting for new data pipelines or bespoke integrations to be built.

The same reuse-driven approach shortens firms' time to market for new products. By leveraging existing integrations and standardized data preparation processes, firms have completed the data work required to launch new investment vehicles—such as ETFs—in approximately three months. Subsequent launches benefit from even greater efficiency as data assets and workflows are reused rather than rebuilt.

AI and Advanced Analytics Become Achievable

Beyond speed, a unified data foundation enables more sophisticated use of AI and advanced analytics to sharpen competitive advantage. With reliable, well-governed data in place, firms can:

- Apply machine learning models to identify emerging risk signals, factor exposures, or portfolio sensitivities earlier in the investment process.
- Augment investment research by automating data enrichment, screening, and attribution analysis, reducing manual research effort while expanding analytical coverage.
- Use AI-driven insights to provide clients with more timely, contextual explanations of performance, risk, and market dynamics.

Commercial Effectiveness Improves Alongside Operational Performance

Operational improvements also translate directly into commercial effectiveness. Automating daily and monthly assets, flows, and performance reporting replaces spreadsheet driven processes and enables distribution and marketing teams to respond more quickly and confidently to ad hoc client inquiries and RFP/RFI requests. Firms with real-time analytics and unified data narratives have demonstrated higher RFP and mandate win rates, not because their investment products changed, but because they tell a clearer, timelier, and more confident story from the data.

Collectively, these gains allow firms to scale product offerings, improve client responsiveness, and compete more effectively without introducing proportional increases in cost or operational complexity.

From Pilot to Production

The most common AI failure in asset management is an inability to connect models to clean, consistent, governed data at scale. A unified data foundation eliminates this barrier. The same data that powers daily reconciliation and reporting can feed AI models directly, with the governance, lineage, and quality controls that production deployment requires.

Firms operating on a unified data foundation have delivered full reporting modernization in approximately nine months, using existing teams and resources.

Stage Three: Differentiation Through Transparency, Intelligence, and Experience

In the final stage, the unified data foundation becomes a platform for true differentiation, supporting not only consistent reporting, but also more intelligent and personalized client experiences. What has historically been a source of complexity and operational risk is transformed into a strategic capability.

For mid-tier asset management firms, end-to-end client reporting modernization initiatives have traditionally taken multiple years and required incremental staffing. By contrast, firms operating with a unified data foundation have delivered full reporting modernization in approximately nine months, using existing teams and resources.

Standardizing the underlying data model and centralizing reporting logic has enabled asset managers to dramatically simplify reporting complexity. In practice, this has meant consolidating more than ten distinct client report variations into just one standardized template per client type. The result is a more consistent, accurate, and professional client experience across channels.

Critically, snapshot and lineage capabilities establish a clear audit trail for every reporting cycle, making it possible to trace reported figures directly back to source data. This improves transparency, strengthens governance, and significantly reduces the time required to investigate data questions from clients or regulators.

At this stage, firms are also able to layer advanced analytics and AI capabilities directly into client and advisor workflows. Examples include:

- AI-assisted client reporting that dynamically highlights key drivers of performance, risk, or deviation from objectives.
- Natural-language interfaces that allow relationship managers and clients to query portfolios and exposures using plain language questions.
- Intelligent alerts that proactively surface material changes in portfolio risk, liquidity, or market conditions.

Because these capabilities draw from the same trusted data foundation, they can be delivered without increasing headcount or introducing parallel systems. By extending analytics, AI, and reporting from a common environment, firms differentiate on transparency, insight, and experience while continuing to simplify their technology landscape rather than adding to it.

Quantifying the Benefits of a Unified Data Foundation

The following metrics represent the range of improvements firms have realized by consolidating siloed data onto InterSystems Data Studio and using the platform continuously across the firm:

75%

faster report modernization,
compressing multi-year
programs into focused
months-long sprints

25-50%

faster time to market for
new products including
ETFs, SMA strategies,
and wrappers

50%

reduction in reporting
cycle times through unified
semantics and automated
pipelines

20-30%

higher RFP and mandate
win rates through real-
time analytics and unified
data narratives

60%

fewer data quality errors
through bi-temporal history,
validation workflows, and
full lineage

20-40%

reduction in technology
operating costs through
consolidation and
managed service delivery

Establishing a Durable Data Strategy

As market conditions continue to evolve, asset management firms require data strategies that are adaptable rather than brittle. A unified data foundation supports this need by allowing organizations to incorporate new data sources, analytics techniques, and regulatory requirements over time without re-architecting core systems.

By consolidating multiple business and operational initiatives within a single environment firms reduce duplication, improve governance, and extract greater long-term value from existing data assets. More importantly, they align data architecture with business priorities, enabling efficiency, supporting growth, and delivering the transparency that clients increasingly expect.

For mid-tier asset managers seeking to modernize without over-engineering, a unified approach provides a clear path forward.

Learn more: Visit InterSystems.com/AssetManagement to see how InterSystems can help your firm leverage a unified data foundation to realize operational efficiency, competitive advantage, and long-term differentiation.

