



Client management tool need rises

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The market downturn has prompted financial advisers to place a greater need on client management tools within their financial planning software, an industry report has found.

One of the biggest changes in the past 12 months was the increased level of importance advisers now placed on client management solutions, according to the findings of the "Investment Trends October 2008 Planner Technology Report".

"One of the biggest changes is just the mix in terms of what's most important in driving a good relationship or making the tool most useful for the planner," Investment Trends principal Mark Johnston said.

"What's really changed is anything to do with managing client portfolios through the volatile market. So anything around client review tools is suddenly much more important, turnaround times on transactions are much more important, portfolio review tools are much more important,

so there are lots of examples like that."

Client retention and keeping clients content and calm in volatile markets were also behind the change, Johnston said.

The report also found that as life insurance became a larger part of an adviser's business, the importance of integration of risk within planning software had increased.

"The absolute dollars that premiums are being written are roughly the same as last year, but we would expect all the indications that even with absolute premiums, it is likely to increase over the coming year, so risk has become very important," he said.

The report also found that while the majority of advisers were happy to use both planning software and platforms, a growing number of advisers, 25 to 30 per cent, would like to centralise their planning software. «