

TRANSFER AGENCY: 5 QUESTIONS ASSET MANAGERS SHOULD BE ASKING



Transfer agency has always underpinned the fund ecosystem, from maintaining the register to supporting subscriptions, redemptions, fund events and investor servicing. But its role is becoming more strategic as product structures grow more complex, investor expectations rise and asset managers look for more scalable operating models.

This guide explores five questions shaping the [next generation of transfer agency](#): why it is becoming more strategic, how technology is changing the operating model, how transfer agency can support growth, how firms can balance resilience, regulation and investor experience, and what asset managers should do next.

Beyond technology, resilience matters more.

Asset managers should consider whether their transfer agency partner has the scale, financial strength, regulatory oversight and global operating model needed to support investors through periods of market stress, regulatory change and long-term growth.

Why BNY

- Global Systemically Important Bank
- 240+ years of financial market experience
- Globally standardized transfer agency, custody and fund accounting services
- Global operating model with extensive regulatory oversight
- Proven resilience through market cycles

1

Why is transfer agency becoming more strategic?

The transfer agent maintains the official record of fund ownership and supports investor onboarding, account updates, transactions and reporting. That foundation has not changed, but the activity around it has become more complex and more visible.

Asset managers are under pressure to reduce cost, simplify operations and expand into new markets and to explore the opportunities of digital assets and AI. At the same time, investors expect speed, transparency and intuitive digital access. We believe, these forces are moving transfer agency beyond processing and making it a strategic extension of the asset manager's brand and operating model.

2

How are data, automation and AI changing the transfer agency operating model?

Data, automation and AI are improving both efficiency and oversight. They can support document processing, instruction capture, reconciliation, transaction monitoring, fraud detection and service support, reducing manual touchpoints and helping teams identify exceptions earlier.

Technology can create a more connected view across investor activity, transactions, communications and reporting, while also automating existing processes.

Used well, technology can make transfer agency more proactive, resilient and scalable without replacing the control frameworks and human judgement that underpin trust.

3

How can transfer agency support new fund structures, markets and distribution channels?

As managers expand into ETFs, private markets and retail alternatives, transfer agency needs to support different liquidity profiles, reporting needs, investor communications and regulatory requirements without creating fragmented operating models.

Tokenization, in our view, adds another layer of change. A tokenized fund still depends on the core disciplines of transfer agency, including register maintenance, onboarding, investor servicing, AML and KYC controls, reconciliation and reporting. What changes is the infrastructure supporting some of those activities, requiring blockchain connectivity and smart contract libraries, enhanced controls and regulatory permissions alongside integration to custody, stablecoin services and on-chain data.

A future-ready model is therefore defined by adaptability: helping asset managers grow through new products, markets and distribution channels while maintaining control, consistency and service quality.

Did you know?

As a G-SIFI regulated banking organization, BNY is among the few banks delivering globally standardized transfer agency, custody, and fund accounting services across **35 countries** on **six continents**.

4

How can transfer agency balance resilience, regulation and investor experience?

The register sits at the heart of investor activity, transactions and distribution, so disruption has immediate consequences for investors, managers and regulators. Resilience is therefore a core requirement of the transfer agency model, not a technical add-on.

At the same time, regulation and investor experience should not be treated as competing priorities. Digital onboarding, automated identity verification, consistent data management and strong controls can help firms meet regulatory obligations while delivering the speed and transparency investors expect.

5

What should asset managers do next?

Transfer agency is now a strategic decision. Asset managers should assess whether their current model can support growth across new structures, markets and investor expectations before complexity forces the issue.

For most firms, the starting point is consolidation: fewer service relationships, more connected data and a clearer view across the fund lifecycle. We believe this creates the foundation for entering new markets, launching new structures and preparing for tokenization.

BNY supports clients across the full transfer agency lifecycle, from traditional funds and ETFs to alternatives and digital asset structures.

Did you know?

BNY services
**7.5M investor
accounts globally***

*As of Q2 2026, based on internal BNY data

Getting Started

To explore what the right model could look like for your business, speak to your BNY relationship manager or visit our [Fund and Investor Solutions website](#).



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