

True Wealth – asset management made easy

Launched as a start-up in 2013, True Wealth is Switzerland's first online asset management company. Thanks to an interactive web platform developed by Ergon, its customers can alter their investment mix themselves whenever they like.

In the beginning, there was the vision of the company's two founders, Felix Niederer and Oliver Herren. They wanted to combine their investment experience with the scientific methodology of modern portfolio theory to create an online asset management package that was intuitive to use while offering the investor complete transparency – with the best possible cost-efficiency that would ultimately leave the investor with more profit.

Algorithms as investment advisors

The idea of online investment management was not an entirely new one; there were already various different providers that had replaced traditional asset management with standardised (automated and internet-based) solutions. But True Wealth went one step further: the idea was to empower investors to compile and manage their portfolios themselves, with just a few clicks and at rock-bottom prices.

True Wealth AG was founded by Felix Niederer and Oliver Herren in February 2013 and Ergon experts began back-end development of the online platform that October. The majority of the front end had already been completed by this point, so the Ergon team was confronted not only with the task of constructing the back end, but also of integrating into it an existing website. Thanks the engineers' agile techniques, they soon found an uncomplicated way of liaising with Gold Interactive, the company responsible for the front end.

Complex data model

One demanding and very exciting task in the project was to map the data model: if the portfolio of a True Wealth client is composed of cash or exchange-traded fund (ETF) positions, for example, trading floor opening times and exchange rates will play a significant role in its valuation. The total value of a portfolio is thus dependent on individual rates in the relevant currencies at any particular moment in time. In addition to daily rate changes, the total number of investment

options can also change over time as equities and ETFs traded on the market are closed out or newly launched. The composition of a portfolio is thus highly dynamic and has to be continuously adapted to market conditions.

Ergon helped True Wealth to optimise implementation of the data model to ensure that everyday tasks can be completed efficiently. Felix Niederer, the CEO of True Wealth, appreciates the collaboration with Ergon: "The project team worked very efficiently and flexibly, demonstrating real expertise in the decisions made about the architecture and code design."

Successful project delivery

After successfully going live in the autumn of 2014, the project schedule foresaw a gradual transfer of knowledge from Ergon's experts to True Wealth, with the company ultimately able to take over operations entirely. Rewards of a very special kind came in the form of top place in the "Business" category and a bronze award in the "Usability" category at the Best of Swiss Web Awards in 2015 – the jury singled out the project's ease of use for special praise.

Digital revolution

If it hadn't before, digitisation has now certainly made its mark in asset management with True Wealth – the platform has given the Swiss financial sector a new lease of life and hit the spot for a generation that has little time to spare, prefers to communicate online, is not too bothered about meeting customer advisors in person and likes to make its own decisions.

And the best thing about it is that a portfolio can be assembled and managed with relatively modest sums. Costs, performance and risks can be quickly and transparently identified.