

Investment Café

Groundbreaking Investment Café platform uses the Adobe® Digital Enterprise Platform and the Adobe Flash® Platform to accelerate and improve fund administration for alternative asset firms



Investment Café

www.investmentcafe.com

Industry

Financial services

Challenges

- Enable alternative fund sponsors to communicate with investors online
- Improve the client experience
- Improve fund sponsors' ability to raise funds quickly and efficiently
- Deliver a fund administration solution that helps enforce client security and privacy
- Improve the efficiency and speed of delivering capital call letters to investors

Solution

- Customer communication
- Fund administration
- Capital call solution

Investment Café uses the Adobe Flash Platform and the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform to provide fund managers and investors with rapid, reliable, and secure access to vital account information and services.

Results

- Reduced costs to print and deliver capital call statements by as much as \$1 million
- Accelerated creation and delivery of capital call letters by over 90%
- Accommodated high-volume document generation
- Reduced risks by minimizing opportunities for human errors
- Improved responsiveness to clients
- Provided investors with secure access to critical account information, anytime and anywhere

Systems at a glance

- Adobe Flex Builder
 - Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform.
- Key capabilities include:
- Data Services
 - PDF Generator

Setting new standards for investor services

Investment Café is an independent company offering a suite of web-based financial reporting and fundraising products to the alternative asset community. The company's flagship product, the Investment Café Reporting System, has become a solution of choice for many of the world's largest alternative asset firms, including The Carlyle Group; UBS; Blackrock; MatlinPatterson; Clayton, Dubilier & Rice; and others. Today, the company's solutions are used by firms managing more than \$150 billion in capital commitments, representing over 20,000 investors in more than 100 countries.

What makes the Investment Café Reporting System incomparable is its ability to address the unique needs of alternative asset firms and to significantly reduce the burden of fund administration. "For the last ten years, it's been our goal to enable fund sponsors to deliver a premium level of service to their investors," says Mark Levey, CEO of Investment Café. "The expectation is for outstanding services and information to be available on demand."

For Investment Café, this means providing fund sponsors with an online solution that automates fund administration down to the tiniest detail. The company's challenge was to deliver an Internet application with an incredibly rich set of functionality, while offering an unmatched customer experience combined with a high level of security and protection.

Rapid, secure access to critical investment information

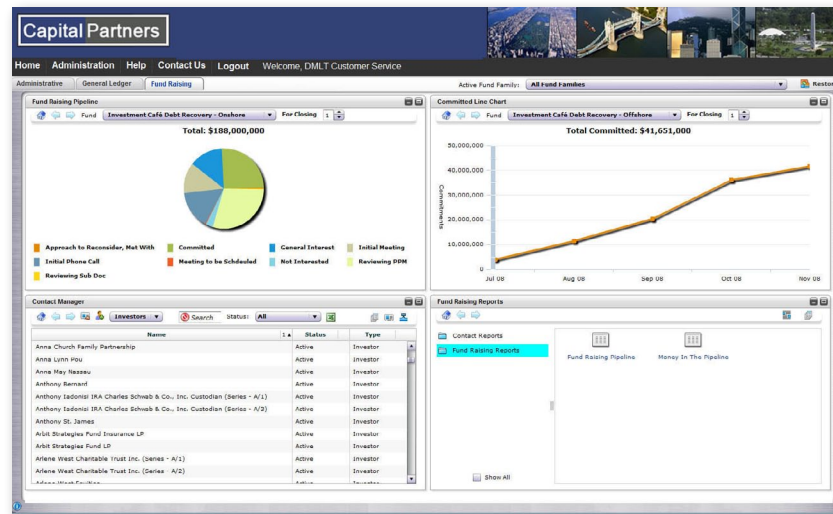
Alternative asset firms choose Investment Café because it enables them to scale client communications, simplify fund management, and enhance overall investor relations. At the same time, Investment Café can maintain an online customer experience that reflects the look and feel of each company's brand.

For fund managers, the powerful system greatly streamlines fund administration and accelerates the delivery of reports and quarterly statements to investors. "The returns to fund sponsors using our tools built on the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform (ADEP) and the Adobe Flash Platform have been impressive," explains Levey. "In one case, upwards of a million dollars annually was saved by automating statement creation and delivery. Eliminated are the costs to print, collate, and express ship thousands of investor documents every quarter."

For investors, the streamlined, online access to their account provides them with critical information on demand. Within seconds, they can securely log in and view account activity in detail, generating monthly statements or investment reports as needed. This is important not only during tax season, but also at any time investors want to review their portfolios.

"The Adobe solutions allow us to deliver the kind of intuitive, robust end-user experiences often found in desktop applications, but now delivered online," says Levey. "Even non-technical investment managers and their employees can jump in and start using our online tools to manage funds, view activity, generate reports, and fulfill a variety of service needs."

Built using Adobe Flex Builder, and Data Services and PDF Generator capabilities of the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform, Investment Café automates fund administration down to the tiniest detail while providing an online customer experience that reflects each company's brand. Within seconds, investors can securely log in and view account activity in detail, generating monthly statements or investment reports as needed.



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Mark Levey
CEO, Investment Café

Standardizing on the Adobe Flash Platform and the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform

To provide clients with access to rich, highly interactive online services, Investment Café chose the Adobe Flash Platform and the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform to build and deliver the Investment Café Reporting System. The dynamic system offers clients an intuitive solution that makes it easy for fund sponsors to disseminate information online to prospects during the fundraising process and to investors when the fund communicates and sends capital account statements, capital call letters, tax documents, and distributions.

While the company initially developed earlier versions of its reporting application in Adobe ColdFusion®, Investment Café today has transitioned application development to Adobe Flex Builder™ to take advantage of a richer environment. The enterprise rich Internet application (RIA) developed in Flex Builder enables investors and fund sponsors to securely log in to the application with a web browser, see pertinent information about a fund in real time, and generate detailed documents delivered as Portable Document Format (PDF) files.

Investment Café initially evaluated multiple development environments before deciding to expand its solutions on the Adobe Flash Platform. “The Adobe Flash Player is ubiquitous and doesn’t require any special downloads or extra costs for our users,” says Levey. “We can count on the Flash Player to let us reach investors with dynamic, timely information and still work within the confines of corporate security policies and firewalls.”

For Investment Café, another advantage to using the Adobe Flash Platform is seamless support for PDF, an accepted financial industry standard for sharing and collaborating on documents.

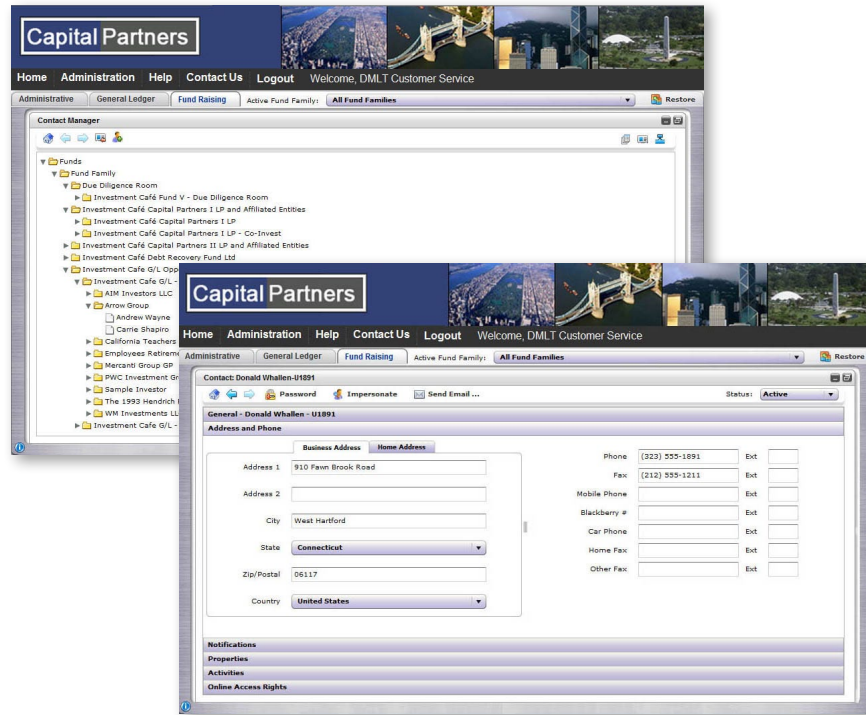
Making client services more efficient, secure, and reliable

The Investment Café Reporting System is focused on making fund sponsors more productive by automating a comprehensive set of processes associated with fund administration, particularly in the area of reporting, calling capital, and fund raising. The Adobe Flash Platform and the Digital Enterprise Platform enable this by supporting the delivery of integrated, easy-to-use functionality in the system.

For example, Investment Café delivers functionality that makes delivering capital call letters much more efficient, faster, and less error-prone. Traditionally, accountants, fund managers, and assistants worked many long hours to manually create, print, and deliver capital call letters.

The manual processes can be costly and stressful because there are many opportunities for mistakes. Every letter has to be personalized to reflect each investor’s commitment level, and for security and privacy reasons, no letter can be accidentally sent to another investor. To further complicate the process, investors have a complex matrix of requirements, sometimes having multiple addresses and depending on the information being delivered, might want to receive it via the postal service, FedEx, fax, or e-mail.

The Investment Café system lets fund sponsors disseminate information online such as capital account statements, capital call letters, tax documents, and distributions. The combination of the Adobe Flash Platform and the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform lets investment professionals generate and deliver highly personalized investor letters securely, and in minutes instead of hours or days. Its Contact Management application provides a rich, visual interface for updating client information or initiating service requests.



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Mark Levey
CEO, Investment Café

"As a specialist that supports many of the top fund sponsors worldwide in the alternative asset industry, this gave us a unique perspective into the challenges they were facing. Our aim was to automate the capital call process, reduce the risks, and eliminate many of its costs," says Levey. "With the Adobe Flash Platform and the Digital Enterprise Platform, we have flexible, secure, and powerful solutions to reach those goals."

With Adobe Flex Builder, and the Data Services and PDF Generator capabilities in the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform, Investment Café has brought new efficiencies to the capital call process. "The combination of the Adobe Flash Platform and the Digital Enterprise Platform lets investment professionals generate and deliver highly personalized investor letters securely, and in minutes instead of hours or days. We also minimized risks by automating processes and eliminating many of the chances for human errors," says Levey.

Today, to initiate the capital call letter process, investment managers use the rich client interface developed using Flex Builder to identify each investor to receive a capital call letter, who at the investment firm needs to receive the file, where to send it, and via which method. The system automatically transfers the request using the Data Services capabilities in the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform. Based on the requests, personalized and accurate capital call letters are generated and converted to PDF using PDF Generator capabilities in the Adobe Digital Enterprise Platform.

Using the interactive client interface that was developed using Flex Builder, investment managers can then complete the process by easily dragging-and-dropping the PDF files to onscreen icons for mailing, faxing, or e-mailing materials. "With Adobe solutions, we transformed time-consuming manual workflows into highly efficient automated processes that greatly improve staff productivity and client services," says Levey.

Rich experiences, seamless integration across systems

The same streamlined processes benefiting the updated capital call process is evident in Investment Café's other applications. Its Contact Management application, for example, brings new ease to fund administration, providing managers with a richer, more visual interface for updating client information or initiating service requests, such as mailing holiday cards to investors.

"We work with some of the world's largest private equity fund companies and understand firsthand how multifaceted and time-intensive fund administration can be," says Levey. "By using the Adobe Flash Platform and the Digital Enterprise Platform, we transformed complex fund administration and service delivery to much more fluid and seamless processes for managers."

Using Adobe solutions, Investment Café generates personalized and accurate capital call letters, transforming a manual process into an efficient, productive asset for the staff and clients.



For Investment Café, the evolution of its product suite to RIAs is delivering solid returns all around. Demand for the firm's products continues to increase, with the volume of client statements and reports generated through its systems reaching all-time highs: last tax season, more than 65,000 tax documents were delivered by fund managers using Investment Café.

"In our business, the stakes are extremely high for our clients and for their investors," says Levey. "With Adobe solutions, we can deliver next-generation financial services that address the need for rapid, anytime access to rich information and services, while working within our security requirements."

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