Grant Thornton

Seizing opportunities for tech sector growth and profitability

Position your business for success in the tech sector with an advisor that combines global expertise with a personalised and agile approach

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Rapid advancements in artificial intelligence (AI) and other emerging technologies are a double-edged sword for tech businesses, representing both challenges and huge opportunities for those navigating these changes.

For mid-market businesses striving to succeed in this dynamic market, global expansion hinges on successfully navigating a complex tax and regulatory landscape. Geopolitical instability, a tariff-fuelled global trade war and talent shortages are creating a need for agile business models to minimise disruption.

Meanwhile, large enterprises must innovate to drive growth and operational efficiency in a market where many of their customers are reducing IT expenditure. Acquisitions also remain a strategic growth avenue, provided new approaches are adopted to manage regulatory scrutiny.

To navigate this landscape and thrive, tech businesses need an approach that combines the best of both worlds: the global expertise and comprehensive services of a large firm with the personalised, agile approach and senior project teams of a boutique adviser.

Find out more about what you can achieve by choosing to work with the Grant Thornton network in the following pages.

‘Grant Thornton’ refers to the brand under which the Grant Thornton member firms provide assurance, tax and advisory services to their clients and/or refers to one or more member firms, as the context requires.

“Whether it’s resolving recurrent issues efficiently or access to fresh thinking to tackle new challenges, we’ll help you seize opportunities and transform challenges into long-term growth and profitability.”

Andrea Schulz

Global head of tech
Principal, Grant Thornton Advisors LLC

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Growing amid tough competition

Growing amid tough competition

Mid-market tech businesses are squeezed between agile, well-funded start-ups seeking to disrupt existing technologies and larger businesses with the scale, talent and computing power to support continuous tech investment while protecting their margins. To stay in the game, expansion – whether organically or through acquisitions – is often a must.

Meanwhile, large tech enterprises are facing pressure from shareholders to maintain high growth while addressing their own customers' growth challenges and tech spend cuts. This requires them to drive efficiencies across operations and focus on acquisitions as a vehicle for growth, while navigating potential scrutiny from regulators.

Shifting regulatory and tax landscapes

Unforeseen tax burdens, costs and compliance issues are common in a world where regulations, regimes and political priorities change frequently. The global, tariff-fuelled trade war is a case in point. Issues like these can hinder expansion for mid-market tech businesses. Limited in-house resources mean enlisting external advice on tax structuring and compliance is essential for managing regulatory complexities, especially when expanding internationally.

On the other hand, large tech enterprises operate in a highly regulated global environment with increasing focus on anti-trust and data protection. Mergers, acquisitions and global operations lead to complex tax structures, making securing the right expertise critical for avoiding penalties and optimising tax strategies. Tariffs also intersect with M&A strategy, supply chain structuring and cross-border operations, requiring expert advisory to mitigate their risk.

Steep competition for talent

Faced with high competition for specialist talent from large tech enterprises and agile start-ups, mid-market tech businesses often lack the resources to compete on salary. They must instead develop innovative talent strategies to attract and retain the right expertise for mission-critical functions, while evolving job roles to make the best use of AI technologies and incorporate hybrid skillsets.

But for the largest tech enterprises, attracting top-tier candidates means maintaining a strong employer brand, bolstering ESG credentials and adapting to accommodate hybrid work. As AI transforms operational needs, these businesses must also strategically upskill existing talent while recruiting for emerging specialisations. These businesses need efficient talent acquisition and development functions to navigate talent shortages across the globe.

Modernising your tech foundation

Budget constraints and a reliance on legacy systems create digital transformation hurdles for mid-market tech businesses. These organisations must deploy automation and scalable processes to enhance efficiency without disrupting business-critical operations.

Large tech enterprises face these same challenges as they push to adopt advanced technologies, eg AI and automation. The older and more entangled an enterprise's tech infrastructure is, the harder it becomes to eliminate tech debt without impacting its resilience or cybersecurity.

Navigating these challenges requires advisers who can provide innovative solutions, strategic foresight and deep, practical expertise.
Find out more about what you can achieve by choosing to work with the Grant Thornton network in the following pages.

Harness expertise and agility to seize new opportunities

Optimise operations and grow through strategic expansion

The rapid pace of global technological disruption demands innovative solutions, strategic foresight, acumen and practical expertise.

Grant Thornton's highly tailored, strategic approach is built on deep industry expertise and senior leadership involvement. Our member firm teams are not just advisors, but embedded collaborators who work alongside your leadership to create actionable and sustainable strategies that tackle the complex challenges of the tech sector.

Our agile, personalised approach allows us to deploy resources precisely when and where you need them, ensuring you stay ahead of the pace of change. This will help you seize opportunities and transform challenges into growth and profitability.

96%

of clients rate us highly for developing effective relationships with them.

91%

of Grant Thornton clients say they are likely to use our services again in future.

Statistics source: What our clients say — Based on average scores from over 12,000 clients worldwide.

Why Grant Thornton?

Grant Thornton combines the best of both worlds: the global expertise and comprehensive services of a large network with the personalised, agile approach and senior project teams of a boutique adviser.

Here is why many leading tech organisations trust Grant Thornton:

Global reach and full service

Grant Thornton leverages its global reach and comprehensive service offerings to tackle the tech sector's most complex challenges. Our globally-connected tax, audit and assurance teams span advisory on digital transformation, cybersecurity, risk management, regulatory compliance and strategic growth. Our global network works together to ensure a unified experience across all geographies and service lines.

Pragmatic, flexible and fresh solutions

We deliver solutions with a focus on execution excellence and results-driven programme management. This enables actionable strategies that align with the tech sector's rapid pace of innovation for impactful, timely results.

Senior leadership engagement

Senior leaders engage at every stage, ensuring high-quality execution and strategic collaboration to shape compelling business cases. This provides our clients with expertise and insight that drive impactful outcomes.

Optimal value

We offer commercial flexibility through tailored services, adaptable pricing models and a client-centric approach. This lets us align our high-quality services with clients' specific needs and budgets, delivering effective solutions without compromising on excellence.

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Go beyond with Grant Thornton

The world's leading tech businesses choose Grant Thornton to help realise their ambitions. With Grant Thornton member firms employing 76,000 people in 156 markets, the Grant Thornton network combines global scale and capabilities with local insights and understanding.

We work at a pace that matters – yours – bringing flexibility, consistency and rigour. That means we can help you prosper at the speed of innovation with our unique combination of industry expertise, service excellence and agile innovation.

In this document, we will demonstrate the value we offer in four areas:

1. ACCELERATE GROWTH STRATEGIES
2. NAVIGATE REGULATORY AND TAX LANDSCAPES
3. IMPLEMENT SUCCESSFUL TALENT ACQUISITION AND RETENTION STRATEGIES
4. ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Statistics include services provided by both the parent business and its subsidiaries globally.

92%

of S&P Europe 350 tech businesses are clients of Grant Thornton member firms (as of June 2024).

90%

of Forbes 100 tech businesses are clients of Grant Thornton member firms (as of June 2024).

01

ACCELERATE GROWTH STRATEGIES

Growing amid tough competition

Accelerate growth strategies

Today's business landscape often demands not just new models, but a fundamental rethink of operations for tech businesses to stay efficient and nimble. This often requires finding new ways to evolve, be more efficient and support profitable growth. Scale, talent, computing power, operational efficiencies, financial discipline and business model agility can make the difference between profitable growth versus simply running to stay in the game.

Grant Thornton works strategically with tech businesses of all sizes to address these challenges. Whether you're a mid-market business aiming to expand your market presence or a large enterprise rethinking strategies to maintain your competitive edge, our approach is designed to meet your needs. From improving efficiencies and protecting margins to seizing new revenue opportunities, our global reach and deep expertise ensure the resources and skills you need are always at hand.

We support tech businesses through investment cycles as they grow from start-ups to mid-market businesses to large enterprises. Through providing M&A advice, transaction support, assurance, tax structuring and talent planning services, we empower you to attract investment and grow rapidly as you navigate these often-rapid transformation journeys.

How we go beyond

Grant Thornton helps you to find the optimal path to growth, working as one connected team across all geographies and service lines. Our member firm experts immerse themselves in your organisation's unique culture, capabilities and goals, providing tailored insights to optimise operations, unlock value and drive sustainable growth.

82%

of Fortune Global 500 tech businesses are clients of Grant Thornton member firms (as of June 2024).

02

NAVIGATE REGULATORY AND TAX LANDSCAPES

Shifting regulatory and tax landscapes

Navigate regulatory and tax complexities

As tech businesses innovate or expand into new markets, they may encounter unexpected tax liabilities and compliance hurdles that can slow operations down or drive costs up. The need for agility often clashes with the increasing complexity of global regulations. This is especially true in the context of global trade wars, as businesses might need to rethink supply chains, sourcing, or production locations in response to tariffs or retaliatory trade barriers.

Managing complex global tax structures and keeping up with regulations across different countries becomes even more challenging as your business scales. Mergers and acquisitions (M&As) add another layer of complexity, often requiring specialised expertise to navigate. As scrutiny grows in areas such as anti-trust and data protection, staying compliant is crucial to protect profits and safeguard your reputation and growth potential.

We know that successful businesses are continually revising their business models, scaling operations, optimising costs and securing funding – all while meeting regulatory requirements and managing risk. At Grant Thornton, we help tech businesses manage these challenges on a global scale. Our member firm experts have deep knowledge of international regulatory environments, ensuring your business stays compliant, reduces risk and avoids unnecessary costs.

How we go beyond

Navigate regulatory complexity and tariff volatility with an integrated, end-to-end solution. From restructuring for efficiency to managing cross-border tax obligations or advising on M&As, our sector expertise, client-focused service and globally connected teams empower you to move fast and seize growth opportunities safely.

59%

of tech industry leaders would not describe their monthly close processes as 'secure and high-functioning'.[1]

1. Grant Thornton, The CFO Pulse Survey, Q1 2024.

03

IMPLEMENT SUCCESSFUL TALENT ACQUISITION AND RETENTION STRATEGIES

Steep competition for talent

Implement successful talent acquisition and retention strategies

Tech businesses are locked in fierce competition for top talent – in a world where rapid AI adoption is reshaping the skillsets required for many essential job roles. The need to reskill existing teams is placing immense pressure on HR departments and leadership teams. Creating a strong employer brand that stands out to top-tier candidates is becoming more complex, particularly as remote work options and flexible work cultures become standard expectations.

To future proof their talent bases, tech businesses must go beyond traditional hiring and invest in continuous learning and upskilling programmes. The most forward-thinking businesses are leveraging internal mobility, AI-driven learning tools and tailored learning and development strategies to build next-gen capabilities from within.

Grant Thornton helps tech businesses develop and implement talent strategies that are tailored to their needs. We provide the compensation strategies, employee engagement and talent development programme insights you need to build a competitive edge. From advising on global talent acquisition, workforce planning and employee engagement initiatives to helping you navigate the complexities of retaining talent in a hybrid work environment, we ensure your business remains agile and equipped with the skills to thrive.

How we go beyond

We work closely with your business's leadership to understand the specific skillsets needed to drive your business forward through optimising recruitment processes, building career development frameworks or strengthening your retention strategy to keep your best people engaged.

55%

of CFOs say the ability to execute on their short-term strategy is potentially at risk due to human capital shortages.[2]

2. Grant Thornton, The CFO Pulse Survey, Q2 2023.

04

ACHIEVE OPERATIONAL EFFICIENCY AND DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

Modernising your tech foundation

Achieve operational efficiency and digital transformation

As tech firms adapt to a 'new normal' of slower growth, they must rethink their operating models to balance innovation with greater efficiency. Successfully integrating technologies such as AI, automation and data analytics while maintaining smooth operations requires careful planning and coordination.

Foundational systems are often neglected when the drive for efficiency conflicts with the need to innovate and develop new customer-facing products. Time constraints and a reluctance to commit to standardised systems during periods of change often lead to scalability – and efficiency-focused investments being deferred.

Grant Thornton helps tech firms improve efficiency while ensuring their digital transformations are secure and sustainable. Our member firm experts have deep expertise in transitioning to cloud-based systems, automating the financial close, enhancing data analytics, operationalising AI, streamlining operations, optimising your tech stack, addressing evolving cybersecurity needs – and beyond.

How we go beyond

We take a holistic approach that considers the needs of your whole business, working closely with your leadership to assess your current systems, streamline processes and leverage automation to help you scale effectively – while also advising on updating security protocols and systems to prevent vulnerabilities.

31%

of CFOs say 'financial constraints' will be one of their top challenges in implementing new digital initiatives.[3]

3. Grant Thornton, The CFO Pulse Survey, October 2024.

Stories of success with Grant Thornton

CASE STUDY

Supporting ERP modernisation at a global firm

Enhancing capacity with a new cloud platform

Client challenge

A global tech firm wanted to re-implement and update its ERP. But after a year the project was in crisis. The firm's senior leadership wanted enhanced functionality across finance and supply chains, but we're aware what had been achieved so far, lacking clear objectives and an implementation roadmap.

Client outcome and benefits

The client needed to realign their strategic objectives and approach, including governance, costs and risk management. We helped the client to diagnose gaps and during the engagement:

1. Evaluated the client's stalled implementation and replanned the system's implementation to suit their needs
2. Established an improved governance structure framework and a project management office to the client could easily see reports on project status
3. Provided practical recommendations so the client could improve processes and reach an achievable go-live date
4. Used new methodologies, processes and controls to help migrate more than 300 end users to the new ERP solution.

300+

end users migrated to a new platform as part of the project.

20

different countries are now accessing the system.

Meeting the challenge by going beyond

- The client had access to a global team, working together around the clock with experts across multiple jurisdictions and time zones
- Helped the client to improve processes and reduce duplicate effort by establishing dependable methodologies alongside proper controls
- Worked with the client to identify and better communicate with key stakeholders throughout change implementation.

Services used: technology modernisation services, technology advisory services.

CASE STUDY

Enabling $1 billion in SaaS company growth

Driving strategic realignment to support customer growth

Client challenge

The client wanted to collaborate on a future-focus sales organisation tailored to different customer segments, so they appointed Grant Thornton to assess the company's operating model. We advised the client based on insights from market data, competitive intelligence and our deep sector experience, ensuring their plan aligned more closely with their overall strategic intent:

Client outcome and benefits

Four key benefits the client valued:

1. New platform-based product launch now has a clear plan to achieve topline growth target of $1 billion through operational alignment across integrated sales and support processes
2. Cost reductions and reduced year-over-year spending of $2.4 million
3. Improved customer experience through simplified activity and reduced touchpoints which led to the client having higher customer engagement, increased renewals, and growing new business
4. Greater continuity and ownership among sales and implementation teams, leading to better customer solutions and long-term loyalty.

$2.4M

reduction in year-over-year spending, with better cross-sell capabilities.

50%

of customer experiences improved, with contact points streamlines from six down to three contacts per account.

Meeting the challenge by going beyond

Grant Thornton acted not simply advisers but were embedded collaborators formed from globally connected teams. We not only supported on strategic guidance, but we also took a data-driven approach to re-engineering the client's business models for growth. We also ensured we provided comprehensive solutions to solve our client's complex organisational challenges.

Services used: growth advisory, business consulting.

CASE STUDY

Advising on the sale of Medical Management Systems

Preparing the medical technology company for a profitable sale

Client challenge

When the shareholders of Medical Management Systems (trading as Meddbase) wanted to realise the value of its cloud-based clinical management software, it needed expert support to facilitate the sale. The client operates in a rapidly growing sector and was well positioned for further growth having invested in the senior team and nurtured emerging international opportunities.

Client outcome and benefits

The client needed the right combination of sector knowledge in healthcare and technology, with access to an international network of investors and potential acquirers. Grant Thornton supported and brought these key benefits to Meddbase.

1. Client achieved an outstanding result that exceeded shareholder expectations, thanks to our robust negotiation and facilitation
2. Client was in a position to act timely, with an extensive preparatory phase with a clear understanding of the business and market opportunity, to ensure they diligence-ready
3. Client was enabled to run a focused marketing process based on deep knowledge of the strategic trade and investor landscape.

Meeting the challenge by going beyond

Our collaborative approach extended the client's capabilities, enabling coordination and inclusion of multiple stakeholders, which we underpinned by a significant preparation phase. This critical support and guidance were instrumental for driving deal completion. The client's business and management team were supported through various macro-economic events while continuing to expedite a competitive process, showing resilience is key in a changing landscape.

$2.4M

reduced by the business for year-over-year spending, with better cross-sell capabilities.

50%

of customer experiences improved, with only three contacts per account compared to six or more contacts before.

Services used: M&A, transaction advisory, corporate finance.

"From the outset of the engagement, Grant Thornton felt like an extension of our team. We could call on them for invaluable support and guidance at every point of the process. The team were instrumental in driving the deal to completion through a combination of their resilience and deep technical knowledge. The team effectively managed multiple stakeholders and associated negotiations to deliver an amazing result. I would not hesitate in recommending the Grant Thornton Corporate Finance team to anyone looking for investment or an exit event."

Will Temple

Managing Director,
Medical Management Systems Limited

CASE STUDY

Facilitating the sale of FundsLibrary

Providing M&A advisory services to Hargreaves Lansdown

Client challenge

Hargreaves Lansdown made a strategic decision to sell its subsidiary FundsLibrary, a digital platform for investment fund data. They were seeking an advisor on this complex transaction who had experience in the technology sector in multiple jurisdictions.

Client outcome and benefits

Choosing Grant Thornton brought access to our professionals with existing relationships across a range of acquirers, enabling the client to position competitively. We also bought to the client:

1. A tight and confidential competitive auction process
2. Positioning their business for value, referencing relevant drivers of value
3. Understanding of key bidders and their strategic rationale
4. Managing conversations and negotiations across various stakeholders
5. Provided integrated advisory services from corporate finance advice, vendor due diligence, modelling support and carve-out planning services.

Meeting the challenge by going beyond

What really set Grant Thornton apart in this transaction was our industry and service knowledge combined with our cross-border capabilities – this understanding, when distilled and tailored to the specific needs of the client, proved essential for working effectively on the transaction. With any time-sensitive transactions, having continuity is important, and our senior leaders supported Hargreaves Lansdown to navigate highly competitive business landscapes to secure a long-term relationship for the client through trusted and reliable advice.

Services used: M&A, vendor due diligence, separation, SPA advisory, financial modelling.

Grant Thornton's experience and expertise were critical in obtaining a highly satisfactory conclusion to this complex transaction. The project ran smoothly and to schedule from inception to completion, due in no small part to the personal care and diligence provided by the Grant Thornton team. We'd love to work with you again in the future."

Philip Johnson

CFO,
Hargreaves Lansdown PLC

CASE STUDY

Streamlining post-M&A data aggregation

Automating data processes for a Fortune 500 business

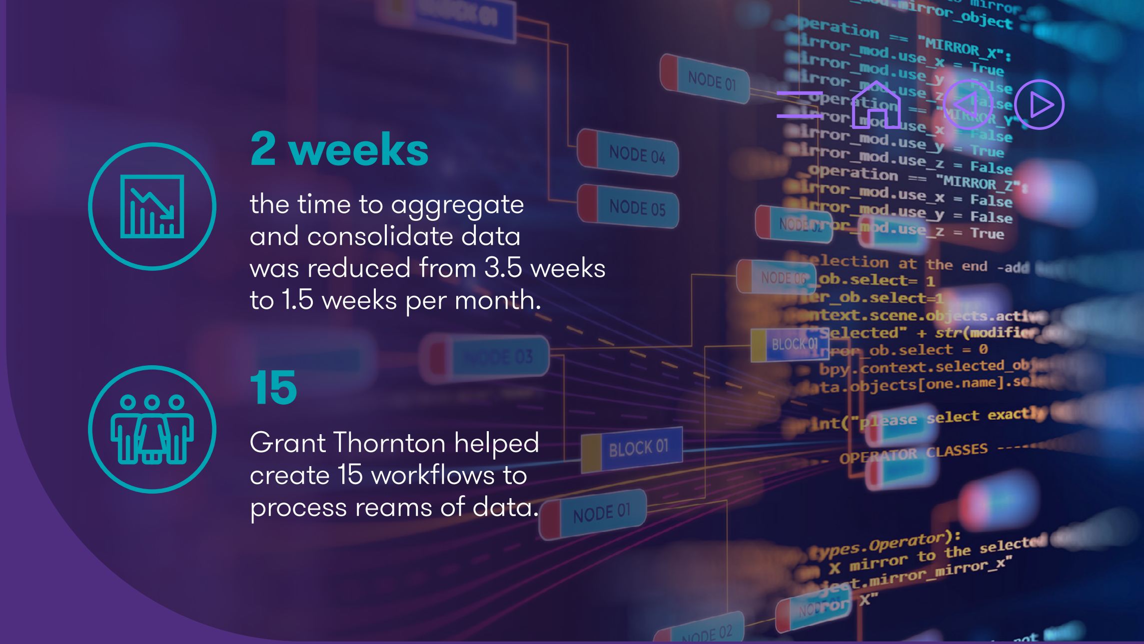
Client challenge

A Fortune 500 payment technology and services company faced significant data aggregation challenges due to increased data from acquisitions and mergers. The client's collection and consolidations were cumbersome and time-consuming, and they needed advice on how to relieve the data burden and save significant processing time.

Client outcome and benefits

Huge time savings frees staff for other duties:

1. Monthly returns required four staff members about 3.5 weeks to complete. This forced the company to report one month in arrears and required additional staff to assist in the process. Grant Thornton built approximately 15 workflows to automate a substantial portion of the monthly indirect tax data aggregation and consolidation process
2. We then upskilled the company's staff to run these workflows monthly, ensuring a seamless transition and ongoing efficiency. Our intervention this allowed the client to redeploy the additional staff to other duties, optimising resource allocation.



2 weeks

the time to aggregate and consolidate data was reduced from 3.5 weeks to 1.5 weeks per month.

15

Grant Thornton helped create 15 workflows to process reams of data.

Meeting the challenge by going beyond

We collaborated with senior company stakeholders to strategise potential solutions utilising their existing Alteryx licenses. By applying proven methodologies, we swiftly helped transformed the client's processes in less than a month with last impact. Our deep change management expertise across a variety of project also enabled us to enable the client to upskill their staff and introduce new ways of working effectively.

CASE STUDY

Smart contract review and fund tracing for French DeFi platform

Client challenge

A French decentralised finance (DeFi) platform sought our support to investigate the architecture and activity of several smart contracts underpinning a global ‘node’ compounding protocol. The client needed a comprehensive review that included reverse-engineering smart contracts and translating solidity code into plain English. They also required us to verify the legitimacy and functionality of the contracts and an audit for vulnerabilities or potential rug-pull mechanisms. It was important to the client for us to investigate and understand the movement of funds across the blockchain to identify key addresses or individuals. We also advised on potential recovery strategies based on the findings.

Client outcome and benefits

The client received a clear, actionable report that incorporated data from over 100,000 transactions, bringing the following client benefits:

1. Demystified the smart contract logic for both technical and non-technical stakeholders
2. Identified critical security vulnerabilities and centralised control points
3. Mapped the flow of funds, highlighting major token holders and suspicious transactions
4. Provided a foundation for potential legal or recovery actions against identified entities.

100,000+

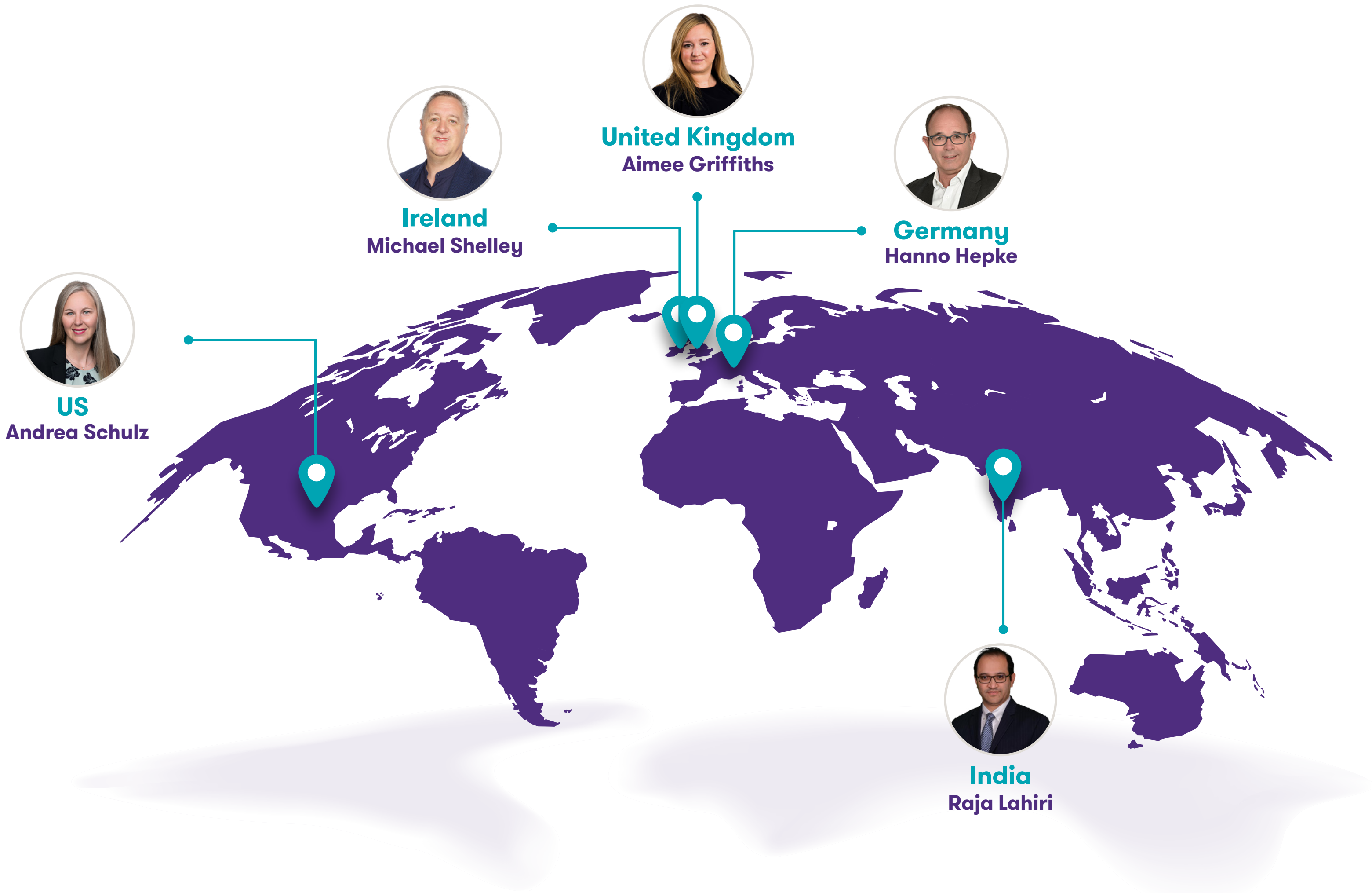
transactions analysed to learn how fund distribution was programmed.

Meeting the challenge by going beyond

We not only met the client’s expectations but also empowered them with the insights they needed to make informed decisions about risk, compliance, and practical steps for future planning.

Working with the client, we performed a deep technical dive into both the smart contract logic and the transactional behaviour on-chain. Realising the client’s multifaceted needs, we adopted a structured and thorough approach using a detailed execution roadmap so there would be no surprises.

Meet the Grant Thornton network technology team



Get in touch with our member firms to talk about how we can go further for your clients

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Grant Thornton

We are Grant Thornton.
Going beyond business as usual, so you can too.

Grant Thornton is an award-winning, globally recognised professional services network – and one of the world's leading organisations of independent assurance, tax and advisory firms. We invest in listening, building relationships and understanding your concerns to deliver an experience that's more personal, agile and proactive. We work at the pace that matters: yours. That's why we celebrate fresh thinking and diverse perspectives to find better solutions. We don't predict the future; we help you shape it.

We embrace what makes each market unique. On a global scale.

Grant Thornton network has more than 76,000 people in Grant Thornton member firms in 156 markets with a common goal – to help you realise your ambitions. That is why our connected network combines global scale and capability with local insights and understanding, to provide a unified experience across geographies and service lines. So, whether you're growing in one market or many, looking to operate more effectively, managing risk and regulation or realising stakeholder value, our member firms have the assurance, tax and advisory capabilities you need with the quality you expect.

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