



By the Numbers: Accounting Firms and the State of HR, Benefits and Payroll Advising

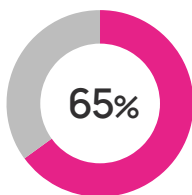
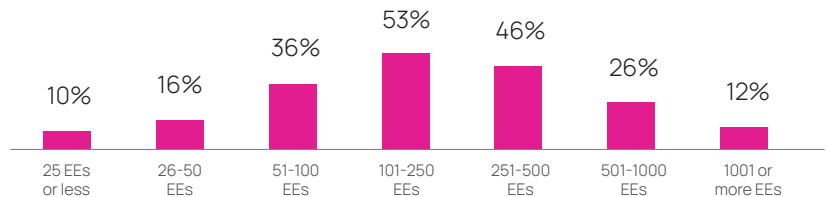
Human resources (HR) departments are overwhelmed with responsibilities, from recruitment and benefits to compliance and policy development. For strategic guidance on these important tasks, many business leaders look for recommendations from specialized advisors who they know, trust and already work with—including their accountants. In isolved’s [Advisory Services Research: The State of Benefits, Financial and HR Consulting report](#), we surveyed accounting firms to learn about what they see as top challenges and emerging opportunities when offering HR support to their clients.

Here is what they told us.

Accounting Firms: Client Snapshot

Typical Business Size of Client

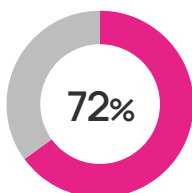
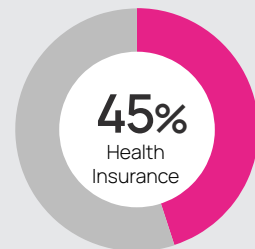
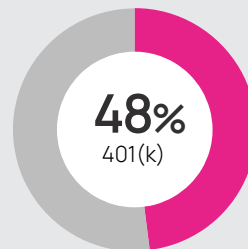
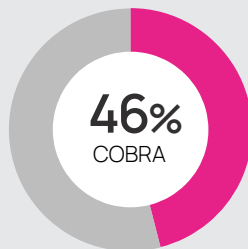
Most accounting firms support clients with between 100 and 250 employees.



Where do Accounting Firms Source Clients?

6 in 10 accounting firms use digital media to source clients, including digital ads, intent data, email marketing, social media, third-party websites and more.

Which Services Are Being Advised On?



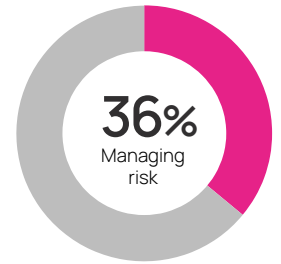
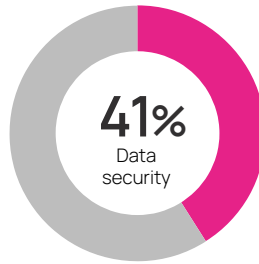
Who Handles Benefits & Compliance?

Nearly three-quarters of accounting firms rely on third-party administrators (TPAs) to handle benefits and compliance services for their clients.

Accounting Firms: Challenges and Priorities

Top Challenging for Accounting Firms

Security of data and privacy is the top concern for accounting firms—pivotal to both meeting evolving client expectations and managing risk.



Top Client Concerns, Ranked

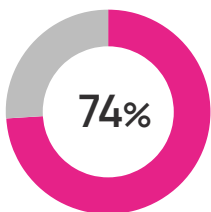
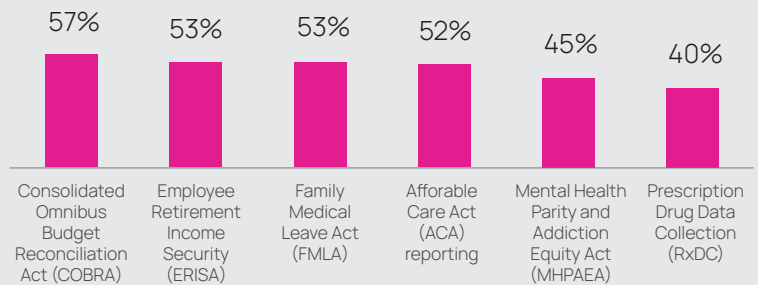
1. Recruiting and retaining employees
2. Improving employee experience
3. Inadequate HCM technology
4. Rising healthcare costs
5. Offering competitive benefit packages

Rising Concerns from Clients

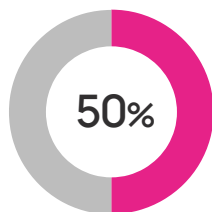
Competition is fierce, and clients want to be sure their human capital management (HCM) tech will keep up—from recruiting and retaining employees to controlling rising costs and meeting employee expectations.

Top Compliance Worries

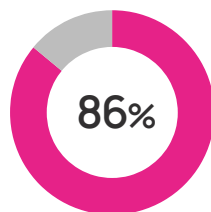
Managing COBRA compliance is a significant concern for accountants, given the regulatory, administrative, and financial complexities.



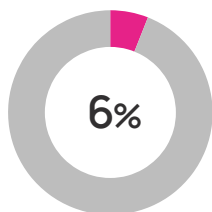
Are worried AI will replace human brokers



Believe AI will disrupt financial wellness and benefits



Are offering or exploring AI in their solutions



Not interested in AI

AI Looms Large

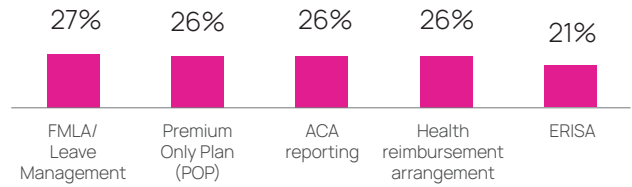
Nearly three-quarters of accounting firms are concerned AI advancements could replace human brokers. Half of all respondents believe the biggest disruptors of financial wellness and employee benefits will include AI-based business models (22%), Fintech AI investment strategies (13%) and shifting demographics that demand tailored benefits with AI analytics (16%).

It's not all anxiety though, because 48% are investigating options to leverage AI and 38% are currently offering AI solutions. Only 6% are not interested in AI at all.

Accounting Firms: What's Next

Service Offerings Now On Deck

Over a quarter of firms are looking to add FMLA support to their list of services. Those who don't currently support leave management say the main reason is a lack of familiarity.



1. Navigating regulatory complexity in HCM
2. AI-driven benefits analytics
3. Financial education programs

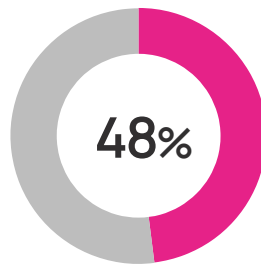
Top 2025 Opportunities

Navigating regulatory complexities in offering HCM services is the biggest opportunity for driving business in the next 12 months.

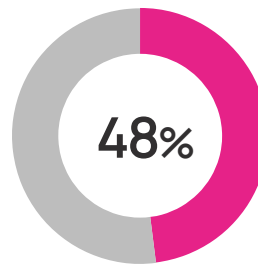
Helping Clients Grow Their Business

To future-proof and protect growth, accounting firms must proactively develop strategies and offer client advice that ensures resilience and longevity.

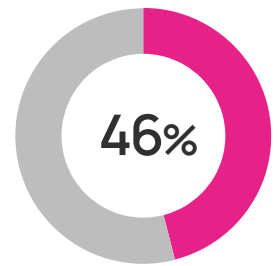
Most Frequent Advice for Clients



Implement retirement savings plans to support long-term goals



Consider flexible or remote work options to enhance work-life balance



Ensure transparent benefits communications to foster trust & satisfaction

Partnering with the right HCM technology vendor can help accounting firms solve top client concerns—like recruitment, retention, and engagement—resulting in happier clients that are more likely to come back for support in the future (and share their experiences with others).

[Read the Report](#)

Download our full **Advisory Services Research: The State of Benefits, Financial and HR Consulting (2024-2025)** report to discover more.