Volume 01
ASSETPLUS
PARTNER. GROW. SUCCEED
Jan / 2026

The AssetPlus Journal

INDIAN INVESTING SHIFTS: TRUST RETURNS

By Neha Verma, Senior Manager - Content Strategy & Marketing | AssetPlus

For a decade, Indian investing optimised relentlessly for the “how” - how to open an account in five minutes, how to trade with zero fees, how to apply for an IPO with one swipe.

The fintech space solved access at scale. Platforms multiplied. Products exploded. Information became abundant. In fact, **50+ wealth and investing apps launched in India in the last decade.**

But somewhere along the way, we deprioritised the “what” and the “why.” And now, the Indian investor is asking those hard questions again - questions algorithms don’t answer well.

Because investors didn’t lack information. They lacked clarity. They didn’t struggle to start.

They struggled to stay the course.

As millions entered the markets, a different truth surfaced. In a world of constant noise, endless choices, and fast-moving trends, the real gap in Indian investing is no longer- access. **It is decision-making.**

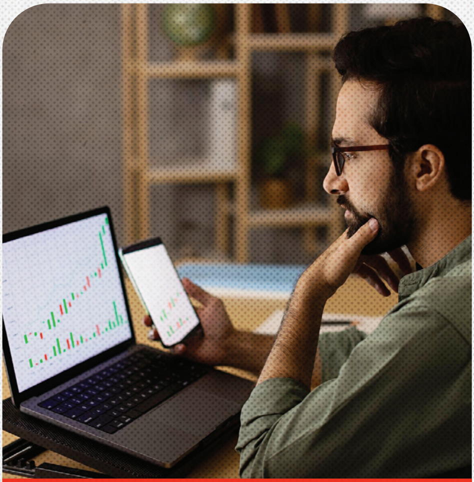
And that’s why a quiet shift is underway.

Across cities, towns, and emerging investor communities, households are moving away from isolated, do-it-yourself investing - and returning to something far more fundamental:

Trust-led Expert Guidance.

THE BUILD-UP: FROM “DO IT YOURSELF” TO “HELP ME DO IT”

To understand this quiet return to expert guidance, we must look at the noisy revolution that preceded it. The last decade of Indian investing wasn’t just a change in technology - it was a psychological shift, unfolding in three distinct acts.



Act I: The Great Democratization (2014-2019)

Act II: The DIY Euphoria & the Finfluencer Boom (2020 - 2022)

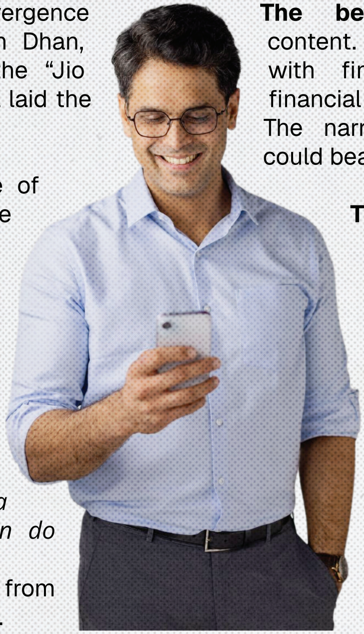
The era of Access & Affordability

Ten years ago, investing in India was a friction-heavy process reserved for the persistent. Physical paperwork. Confusing bank visits. Legacy interfaces that looked like spreadsheets from the 90s.

The catalyst: The convergence of the JAM Trinity (Jan Dhan, Aadhaar, Mobile) and the "Jio effect" of affordable data laid the rails.

The shift: A new wave of wealth-tech apps like Zerodha and Upstox - and later Groww - arrived with a radical proposition: zero brokerage. They didn't just reduce costs. They dismantled the barrier to entry.

The vibe: *"I don't need a suit-and-tie broker. I can do this on my phone."*
Power shifted from institutions to individuals.



The era of Gamification & Overconfidence

The pandemic became the accelerant. With millions locked indoors and markets crashing, then rallying, a massive wave of first-time investors entered the system.

The behaviour: Investing became content. YouTube and Instagram flooded with finfluencers decoding complex financial instruments in 30-second reels. The narrative was seductive: anyone could beat the market.

The tech: Apps turned hyper-slick. One-click IPOs. Advanced charts. Seamless trading journeys. Investing began to feel like a video game.

The peak: Retail participation in Futures & Options exploded. The prevailing sentiment was simple: *"Why pay for advice when information is free?"*

The DIY model reached its zenith.

Act III: The Reality Check (2023 - Present)

The era of Fatigue & the Return to Quality

As the post-COVID bull run stabilised and volatility returned, cracks in the DIY story began to surface.

Two things happened simultaneously.

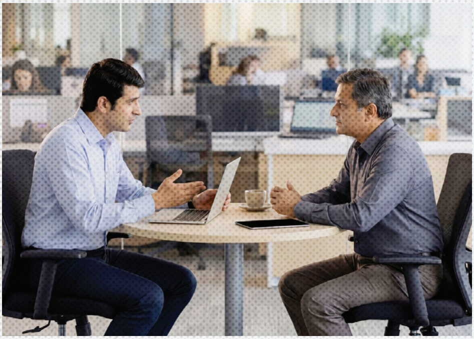
SEBI's mirror: The regulator released data showing that **9 out of 10 individual traders in the F&O segment were losing money.** The "easy wealth" illusion broke.

The information trap: Investors realised that access to information is not the same as insight. Contradictory tips, regulatory crackdowns on finfluencers, and constant noise created decision paralysis.

The pivot: The modern Indian investor now has the tools to execute - but not the time, emotional bandwidth, or expertise to strategise. They are tired of managing their own fear and greed.

THE QUIET SHIFT (CURRENT STATE)

We are witnessing a pendulum swing.



From "I want to trade."
To "I want to build wealth."

The same platforms that once won on speed and cost are now scrambling to layer in trust, education, and guidance. Because the question has changed.

Not "How do I buy this?"
But "Should I buy this - and does it fit my life goals?"

WHY THE PENDULUM IS SWINGING BACK

The story of the last decade was that technology would replace the so-called middleman.

The story of the next decade is that technology will supercharge them.

Here is the data-backed reality behind why Indian households are stepping away from decision fatigue and moving back toward trust-led guidance.

1. The Crisis of Confidence: Information Overload vs Actual Wealth

The DIY revolution promised financial empowerment. For many, it delivered financial anxiety.

The defining statistic of the era:
A SEBI study (FY24) revealed that **93% of individual traders in the Equity F&O segment incurred losses, with the average trader losing ₹2 lakh.**

The noise factor:
With over **2,500+ mutual fund schemes and thousands** of influencers shouting "buy" and "sell" in parallel, investors are facing acute decision paralysis.

The insight:
Free advice has turned out to be the most expensive advice. The abundance of unverified data has created a confidence gap. Investors don't need more dashboards.

They need a filter.

A SEBI study released in late 2024 confirmed that **93% of individual traders in the Equity F&O segment lost money between FY22 and FY24,** with average losses of ₹2 lakh per trader and aggregate losses exceeding ₹1.8 lakh crore.

Only **1% made profits over ₹1 lakh.**

The top 3.5% of loss-makers averaged **₹28 lakh in losses each.**

Meanwhile, proprietary traders and FPIs - driven largely by algorithmic trading - booked significant profits.

The implication is clear: F&O participation at a retail level remains structurally high-risk, reinforcing the need for guidance, suitability, and investor education.

2. Regulatory Tailwinds: The Push for Assisted Models

SEBI is no longer a passive observer.

The crackdown:
The 2024 action against unregistered finfluencers has significantly curbed YouTube-led tip culture. This has created a vacuum - one that regulated intermediaries are designed to fill.

The structure:
The future was supposed to be "Direct." It isn't. The real shift is from unguided to intelligently guided. Indian households aren't opting out of technology - they're opting out of emotional risk. And that's a far more rational decision.

The takeaway:
Institutions may go direct. Families stay assisted. Because what households value most is not access - it is hand-holding during volatility.

3. The Return of the Human: Why Households Want a "Financial Guide"

We are reverting to behavioural fundamentals.

Just as we use Google to research symptoms but go to doctors for treatment, investors are using apps to track markets - and experts to build portfolios.

The stickiness data:
AMFI data suggests that investors who enter through MFDs stay invested nearly twice as long as DIY investors

Despite direct plans being launched 13 years ago, 75% of individual investors' AUM is still in regular plans, showing the value investors assign to intermediaries.

When markets fall, apps send alerts.
Financial Experts offer reassurance.

That emotional buffer is the real alpha.

The SIP surge:
Record high SIP inflows of ₹31,000 crore (Dec 2025) are not just clicks. They are the outcome of millions of long-term conversations between families and wealth guides.

THE SOLUTION AT SCALE: THE RISE OF THE "BIONIC" GUIDE

The future is not human versus technology.
It is human **with** technology.

If households want personal guidance, and financial experts need to serve hundreds of families efficiently, the only viable model is a bionic one.

This is where new-age wealth platforms enter the frame.

AssetPlus: The Operating System for the Modern MFD

While DIY apps are built for end-investors, AssetPlus is built for the ecosystem that manages India's household savings: **Mutual Fund Distributors.**

The thesis:
The MFD is not obsolete. They are under-tooled.

The scale:
AssetPlus has already onboarded 19,000+ MFD partners using its platform to manage and grow their client base.

THE SYSTEM: THE TECH-TOUCH BRIDGE

Scale through automation:
MFDs historically spend nearly 60% of their time on operations. AssetPlus automates onboarding, KYC, transactions, and reconciliations - freeing wealth guides to spend their energy on advice and relationships.

Insight through intelligence:
With tools like Fund Finder, AssetPlus enables Mutual Fund Distributors to deliver algorithm-backed, institution-grade recommendations which solves the investor behaviour & outcome through asset allocation - without losing the human layer.

Education through ecosystem building:
Through AssetPlus Academy, the platform is not just providing software. It is building the next generation of MFDs - from training and certification to defining what a modern, reliable distributor looks like.

Conclusion: The Human Core of the Digital Future

As the dust settles on a decade of digital disruption, Indian investing has arrived at a deeper realisation.
An app can execute a transaction. It cannot build temperament. The quiet shift underway is not regression. It is evolution.
A move into a bionic era - where platforms like AssetPlus remove friction, and MFDs return to their highest-value role: behavioural coaches, strategic partners, and long-term guardians of household wealth.
Because in a world of algorithms and abundance, the ultimate differentiator in wealth management is still profoundly human: **Trust.**

WHAT THIS FUNDRAISE REALLY MEANS TO ME

Vishranth Suresh
CEO & Co-Founder,
AssetPlus

When founders raise capital, there's often a rush that follows. Bigger headlines. Bolder bets. Faster expansion. I've watched many friends in the ecosystem ride that high - and I genuinely celebrate their journeys.

But I've also realised something about mine.

Before I became a founder, I was a financial expert. Long before pitch decks and boardrooms, my job was to sit across the table from families and professionals who were trusting me with their life savings. Their children's education. Their retirements. Their sense of security.

And that changes how you see money.

You don't treat it as fuel to burn. You treat it as responsibility to protect.
We last raised funds in 2024. At the time, we already felt well-capitalised for the next three to five years. But less than ten months later, we chose to raise again - not out of pressure, but out of preparedness. AssetPlus and our partner network were growing much faster than we had anticipated, and we wanted to keep that momentum going, strengthening our systems and scaling with intent.

At AssetPlus, fundraising doesn't feel like a finish line. It feels like a promise. A promise that we will build slowly, thoughtfully, and correctly. That we will improve the foundation before adding more floors.

Because in finance, you are not just managing capital.

You are managing long-term trust.

And trust is always earned quietly - through consistency, care, and doing the right thing when no one is watching.

ASSETPLUS PARTNER COMMUNITY

Success Roadmap for MFDs:

Starting out as a Mutual Fund Distributor (MFD) and wondering how to set yourself up for long-term success? Our podcast **Success Roadmap for MFDs** offers business-strategies to scale and build a sustainable practice.

In January, Episode 13 of Success Roadmap for MFDs highlighted the **importance of client onboarding.**

From the first interaction to the first investment, a structured onboarding process builds trust and sets the tone for long-term relationships. The episode covered common gaps and how better onboarding turns new investors into lasting clients.

If you missed it. Watch the full episode now.

CLICK HERE TO WATCH

The MFD Spotlight:

The **MFD Spotlight** is a podcast that brings forward the journeys of Mutual Fund Distributors - their challenges, learnings and the real impact they create in shaping how India invests, helping newer MFDs learn from real experiences.

This January, **Pankaj Dadhich** from **Planfin Financial Services** was featured in **The MFD Spotlight.**

From a background in engineering and academics to building his journey as an MFD, Pankaj shares how discipline, learning, and purpose shaped his path.

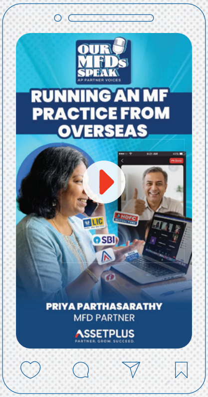
If you missed it, watch the full episode here:

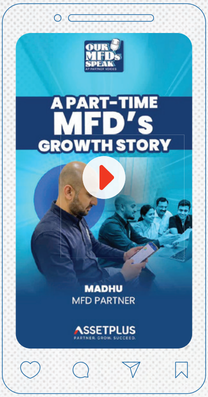
CLICK HERE TO WATCH

Our MFDs Speak: AP Partner Voices:

We also featured multiple AssetPlus partners in **Our MFDs Speak: AP Partner Voices,** where partners shared their experiences of growing their practice with AssetPlus.

Catch these real stories from the community here:





WHAT'S TRENDING @ ASSETPLUS

January 2026.
Kicked off with momentum.

New year. Fresh energy. One clear focus. Helping partners grow with better learning, sharper tools, and stronger conversations.

DISTRIBUTOR SAATHI IS HERE

Newly launched to power MFD growth.

The year begins with the launch of **Distributor Saathi,** a new learning initiative by **AssetPlus Academy.** It is built to help distributors tackle real-world challenges at every stage of their journey.

Distributor
SAATHI
An Initiative by ASSETPLUS Academy

Designed to improve everyday conversations and market positioning, Distributor Saathi provides actionable learning. Each module is built to deliver measurable growth outcomes.

What partners get:

Access to **MFD Growth Hacks – Vol. 1,** a curated learning series covering:

- The art of self-branding for MFDs
- Mastering client conversations that convert
- A practical playbook for handling client objections
- Protection-first planning and the insurance advantage
- Building visibility and credibility in a digital-first world

FREE
Free for all partners

Available in English and Hindi

REGISTER NOW

PRODUCT UPDATES

Less friction. More insight.

We started the year with a personalised Yearly Recap for active partners, helping them review performance at a glance. Engagement and feedback were strong.

Onboarding is now simpler. The onboarding checklist has moved into the app, making the setup smoother.

Coming up next.

Dual XIRR for clearer active and lifetime portfolio views, and a partner-only portfolio analysis tool to power deeper, insight-led client conversations.

Can Mutual Funds Be Multi-Baggers?

A smart read for smarter conversations.
A new content release that challenges a popular investing belief and offers a long-term perspective on wealth creation through mutual funds.

📍Available now on the Partner Dashboard

SIF Adoption Is Picking Up Speed

Structured investing is finding its stride.

418 partners completed SIF registrations in January, reflecting a growing shift towards goal-led and outcome-driven investing conversations.

Learning Went Everywhere

On the ground. Online. On point
January was packed with partner engagement across formats.

Offline:

- 9 events across key cities
- SIP selling, AUM growth, and SIF-focused workshops

Online:

- 26 sessions across Mutual Funds, Insurance, SIPs, SIFs, and growth themes
- Designed for different partner segments and open sessions for all

Investor Awareness, Amplified

We hosted 6 Investor Awareness Programmes for partners across key cities like Delhi and Kolkata.

The focus stayed simple. Educate investors. Build trust. Strengthen long-term relationships.

January set the tone for what's ahead.
More learning. Better conversations. Stronger growth support.

And this is only the beginning.

SOCIAL MEDIA HACK

The MFD Social Starter Zone!

Hey everyone, welcome to the Social Media Zone for MFDs 👋

If you've been thinking about starting your digital presence but didn't know where to begin, this is where we break social media down into simple, doable actions.

If you're ready to start showing up online, let's begin with Instagram.
Today's focus: posting your first Instagram Story.

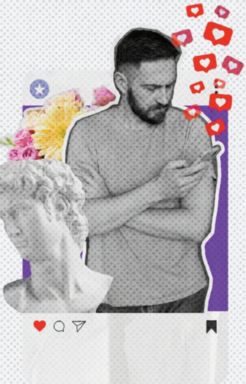
Step 1: Open the **Instagram** app

Step 2: Tap the "+" icon on the top left corner and select Story on the bottom.

Step 3: Double-Tap on the screen to open the front camera.

Step 4: Hold the phone at eye level and look into the camera & click a Selfie.

Step 5: Tap anywhere on the screen to add Text



For example, type one simple line:
Hi, I'm <Your Name>. I help people invest with discipline and long-term focus.

Step 6: Tap Share to Story

That's it. You've just shown up on social media as an MFD.

If you wanna get featured here, tag **@assetplusindia** when you post your story.

THE PHOTOBOOTH

Harvest Celebration at AssetPlus

EDITORIAL TEAM

- NV **Neha Verma**
- AD **Abhinay Dhole**
- SS **Senthamil Selvan S**
- SA **Sakshi Agarwal**
- GG **Geet Goswami**