How We're Reimagining Asset Management Through Technology

By Jeremy Naguran | CTO at Differential Capital | Published April 4, 2025

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POWERED BY DIFFERENTIAL TECHNOLOGIES

A few years ago, if you had told me I'd be writing software to automate trade allocations, track compliance breaches in real-time, and integrate directly with trade execution systems via APIs, I might've raised an eyebrow.

Back then, asset management was still largely Excel-bound — sophisticated in theory, but often slow, manual, and fragile in practice. Smart people spent too much time chasing down data, verifying numbers, and cross-checking spreadsheets.

At Differential Capital, we knew there was a better way. We asked ourselves a simple question:

What would asset management look like if we built it from the ground up with technology at the core?

That question became our North Star. And the journey that followed has been both challenging and deeply rewarding.

Rethinking the Workflow

One of the first things we did was map out every step in our investment and operational process — from portfolio construction, trade execution, and compliance to reconciliation. We quickly saw just how many tasks were ripe for automation or real-time enhancement.

For example, we built a trade staging and execution engine that lets our investment team construct, review, and submit orders — all in a single workflow. It integrates with Bloomberg EMSX for straight-through processing and gives us real-time visibility into fills.

No more "Did you send that order?" No more Ctrl+F-ing through emails to find blotters. Just clarity, speed, and accountability.

From Tools to Leverage

But the bigger insight wasn't just about automation. It was about leverage. How could we help our small team punch above its weight?

We started thinking like product builders. What pain points do analysts have when constructing trades? How can we reduce operational load without increasing risk? What would an ideal post-trade workflow look like?

The answers led to simple but powerful tools:

- Allocation engines that handle rounding logic and breach checks
- Compliance dashboards with automated flags
- Audit trails for every action, accessible in seconds

These tools didn't just improve efficiency — they gave us confidence. They let our team focus on high-value decisions, not manual grunt work.

People First, Tech Second

One of the most important lessons? Tech is easy. People are hard.

Adopting new systems meant more than shipping clean code — it meant changing habits, rebuilding trust in data, and creating a shared language between developers and investment professionals.

We ran small pilots, gathered feedback obsessively, and kept iterating. Sometimes that meant rewriting code. Sometimes it meant redesigning workflows. Occasionally, it meant sitting in a room for an hour just to align on what a “breach” actually means.

And that’s okay. Because building great systems isn’t just about features — it’s about fit.

Built for Trust

In asset management, trust is everything. That means building secure, auditable systems from day one. We’ve embedded authorization tokens, encrypted data flows, and full traceability into every part of the platform.

Clients trust us with their capital. Our systems need to reflect that level of responsibility.

Just the Beginning

Technology won’t replace portfolio managers. But it can give them superpowers — sharper insights, faster actions, and fewer distractions.

At Differential Capital, we’re not just building software.

We’re building leverage – We’re building trust.

And we’re building a platform for the future of asset management in South Africa.

This is just the beginning…

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