

# Transforming FP&A:

## Strategic Frameworks and Enablers for Organisational Agility



**Authors:**

Larysa Melnychuk, Founder and CEO at FP&A Trends Group  
Tanbir Jasimuddin, FP&A Trends Group Author & Thought Leader  
Michael Coveney, Head of Research at FP&A Trends Group

Sponsored by

  
**workday**  
Adaptive Planning

Contents:

---

**INTRODUCTION: WHY FP&A MUST TRANSFORM ..... 2**

**LAYER 1: FP&A TRENDS MATURITY MODEL ..... 3**

**LAYER 2: TRANSFORMATION FRAMEWORKS ..... 6**

    Framework 1: Integrated FP&A ..... 6

    Framework 2: Five FP&A Team Roles ..... 8

**LAYER 3: FP&A FOUNDATIONS ..... 10**

    Foundation 1: Driver-Based Planning .....10

    Foundation 2: Scenario Management ..... 12

**LAYER 4: ENABLERS ..... 13**

    Enabler 1: Trusted and Actionable Data ..... 13

    Enabler 2: AI-Powered Technology Ecosystem .....14

    Enabler 3: FP&A Business Partnering ..... 16

**CONCLUSIONS: MAKING IT HAPPEN ..... 19**

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS ..... 20**

# Introduction: Why FP&A Must Transform

Financial Planning and Analysis (FP&A) teams have played a critical role in organisations for a long time. However, traditional FP&A is no longer sufficient. It lacks the speed to deliver critical insights and the agility to respond to rapid changes. The key factors that are driving this gap are economic volatility, shifting demographics, emerging technologies and data overload. Therefore, it is imperative that organisations adopt leading-class FP&A practices to better support their business ambitions.

This paper explores what makes modern FP&A teams effective, outlines four essential pillars to meet today's business needs and provides practical steps to implement them.

## Many Teams Are Failing to Adopt Leading-Class FP&A Methods

According to the [2024 FP&A Trends Survey](#), which reflects insights from eight years of analysis, most FP&A teams still struggle to adopt leading FP&A methods. For example, only 9% of organisations use fully Driver-Based Planning models – a known critical factor for agile FP&A (Figure 1).

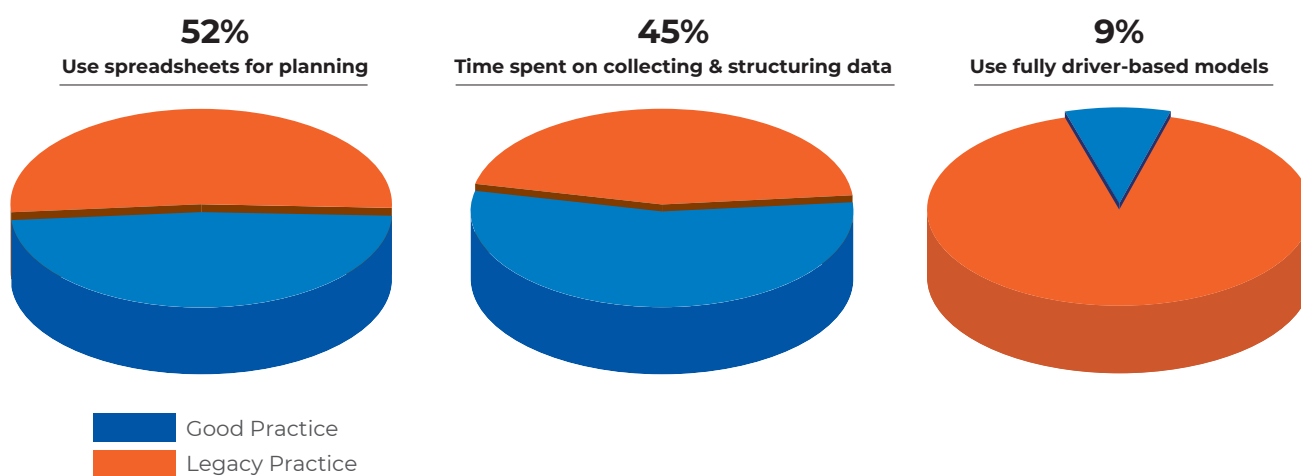


Figure 1: Adoption of FP&A Practices: Insights from the 2024 FP&A Trends Survey

Figure 1 illustrates the current challenges in FP&A practices. Over half (52%) of organisations still rely on spreadsheets for planning, 45% of total FP&A time is spent working on data reconciliation and cleansing, and only 9% use fully Driver-Based Planning models, which is a critical factor for enabling agile FP&A. These inefficiencies highlight the pressing need for transformation along with an adoption of modern, integrated FP&A practices to enhance overall productivity and decision-making.

Many of these challenges are solvable and have already been addressed by organisations that have adopted modern FP&A practices. The technology available can scale processes, automate workflows and improve forecasting while aiding decision-making through visuals.

Organisations that have embraced these changes report significant improvements in FP&A performance. For example, **Artificial Intelligence (AI) and Machine Learning (ML) adopters outperform their peers, with 65% of these organisations rating forecasts as great (vs. 40%) and 75% of them leveraging data extensively (vs. 62%).**

This paper explores four interconnected layers that are used to enhance an FP&A team's organisational value:

- 1. The FP&A Trends Maturity Model:** A benchmarking tool that evaluates an FP&A department's capabilities across six key dimensions and helps organisations identify and enhance their performance.

2. **Transformation Frameworks:** Practical blueprints that guide organisations in building effective structures, processes and roles that drive FP&A transformation.
3. **FP&A Foundations:** Core principles such as Driver-Based Planning and Scenario Management that enable dynamic, forward-looking financial planning.
4. **Enablers:** The integration of trusted data, advanced technology and strong Business Partnering to support and optimise FP&A operations.

These layers build sequentially to create what we refer to as Modern FP&A (Figure 2).

These four layers are key to becoming a Best-in-Class organisation, where FP&A adds real value to the business during turbulent times.

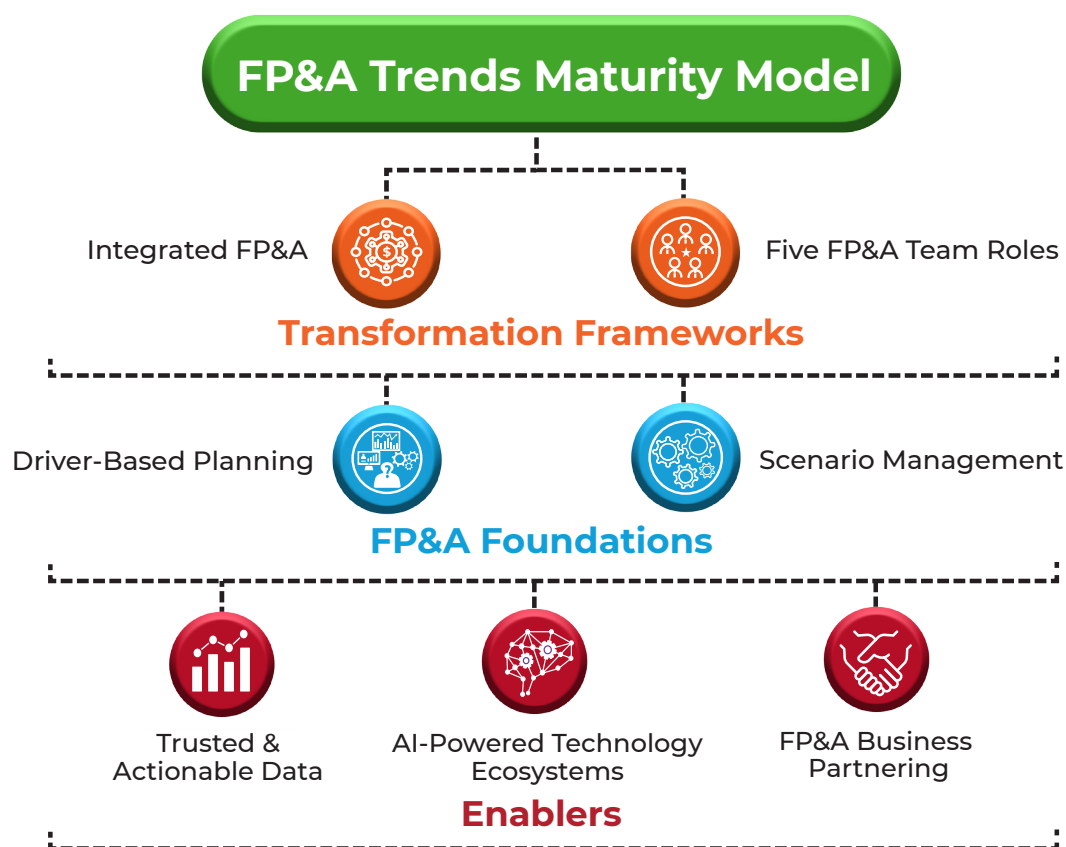


Figure 2: The Layers of Modern FP&A

## Layer 1: The FP&A Trends Maturity Model

The [FP&A Trends Maturity Model](#) is a globally recognised tool designed to assess and enhance FP&A capabilities. Developed with insights from FP&A Board members across 33 chapters in 19 countries, it evaluates six critical dimensions and outlines five stages of maturity. This model serves as both a benchmark and a transformation guide, empowering organisations to build agile, data-driven FP&A functions ready to navigate complexity. By addressing these dimensions and stages, organisations can measure their current capabilities and create a clear roadmap for achieving leading FP&A practices.

### The Six Dimensions of FP&A Activity

1. **Leadership:** A shift from reactive decisions to strategic collaboration. Effective leadership ensures FP&A initiatives align with organisational goals and foster cross-functional engagement.
2. **Skills & Capabilities:** A move away from traditional accounting towards multidisciplinary teams who are adept at storytelling and analysis. This shift enables an FP&A team to communicate insights effectively and support data-driven decisions.

3. **Business Partnering:** An evolution from minimal stakeholder interactions to trusted business advisory roles. Strong partnerships are key to integrating FP&A into strategic decision-making.
4. **Processes:** A transition from static workflows to dynamic, real-time planning systems. Integrated processes ensure agility and efficient resource allocation.
5. **Data & Analytics:** An advancement from manual data collection to AI-driven predictive analytics. High-quality data supports accurate forecasting and proactive decision-making.
6. **Technology:** An evolution from basic tools to advanced systems that enhance collaboration and insights. Modern technology forms the backbone of an agile FP&A function.

Addressing these six dimensions holistically helps organisations progress through the five stages of the FP&A Trends Maturity Model. By focusing on these dimensions, organisations can build the capabilities needed to implement Transformation Frameworks and achieve agility in their FP&A function.

## The Five Stages of Maturity Development

1. **Basic:** Characteristics include reactive leadership, fragmented workflows and minimal collaboration. Organisations in this stage face inefficiencies and lack strategic alignment.
2. **Developing:** Organisations that have basic process standardisation, adopt foundational tools and show signs of early alignment. Progress at this stage lays the groundwork for structured operations.
3. **Defined:** Characteristics include structured processes, clear strategic alignment and some collaboration. This stage enables more consistent decision-making.
4. **Advanced:** Characteristics include predictive analytics, integrated processes and proactive leadership. Organisations at this stage benefit from enhanced forecasting and agility.
5. **Leading:** Organisations with fully aligned leadership, real-time planning and AI-driven insights. This stage positions FP&A teams as trusted strategic advisors.

These stages provide a clear roadmap for organisations to measure progress and set priorities for transformation.

## How to Use the FP&A Maturity Model

To effectively use the FP&A Trends Maturity Model:

- **Assess:** Use the [online questionnaire](https://fpa-trends.com/article/demystifying-how-fpa-unlocks-value-your-organisation) to evaluate your current maturity level (Figure 3 shows example results).
- **Prioritise:** Focus on initiatives that align with strategic goals and that address key gaps across the six dimensions.
- **Iterate:** Revisit the assessment regularly to stay aligned with evolving business needs.

“It is important to spend sufficient time identifying emerging business requirements and regularly assessing your FP&A maturity to check if it is still connected to the business needs.”<sup>1</sup>

**Pieter van Loosbroek, Global Process Lead FP&A at The HEINEKEN Company**

<sup>1</sup> <https://fpa-trends.com/article/demystifying-how-fpa-unlocks-value-your-organisation>

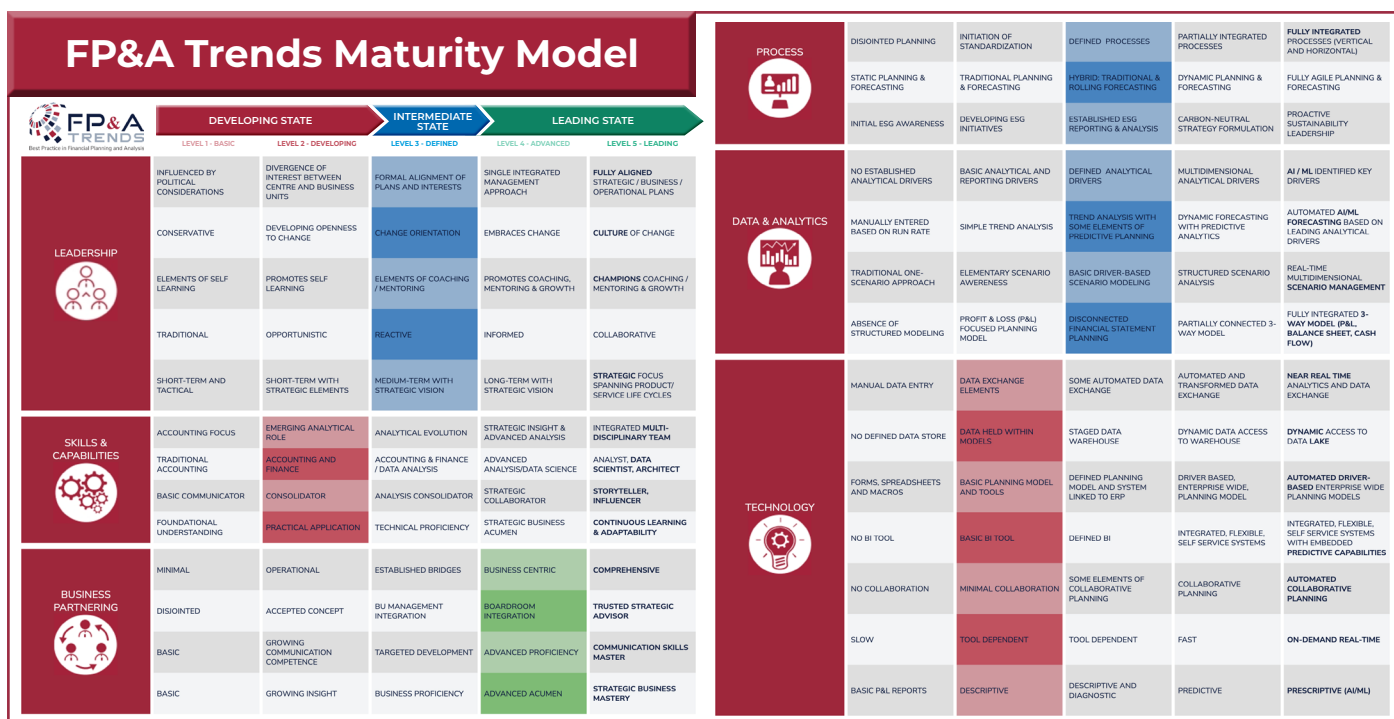


Figure 3: Example Results of FP&A Trends Maturity Mapping

## Case Study: TIP Group's Journey Using the FP&A Trends Maturity Model<sup>2</sup>

TIP Group, a €1 billion+ transport equipment leasing and maintenance business operating in 17 European countries, recognised inefficiencies in their FP&A function following rapid growth. Their planning and standardisation were hindered by reliance on fragmented workflows and inconsistent data governance.

To address these challenges, TIP Group embarked on a transformation aligned with the FP&A Trends Maturity Model. Key steps included:

- 1. Leadership:** They established a clear vision for Advanced FP&A with strong executive sponsorship.
- 2. Skills & Capabilities:** They upskilled their FP&A team to better manage planning, forecasting and analytics.
- 3. Processes and Data:** They standardised workflows and improved data governance by centralising data into a single data lake, with enhanced reporting tools for better accessibility.
- 4. Technology:** They implemented a cloud-based planning tool integrated with the data lake, forming the technological foundation for FP&A activities.

**Rudie van Dijk, Group FP&A Director at TIP Group**, highlighted the importance of the model, saying: "We used the FP&A Trends Maturity Model to validate and refine our approach on our journey to Advanced FP&A."

This comprehensive approach enabled TIP Group to reduce data silos, enhance collaboration and deliver real-time insights. Their success demonstrates how the FP&A Trends Maturity Model provides a practical framework for FP&A departments to evolve into advanced, data-driven FP&A functions.

The FP&A Trends Maturity Model sets the stage for transformation by identifying gaps and setting clear priorities. Layer 2 builds on this foundation by introducing frameworks that translate these priorities into actionable strategies to achieve FP&A agility.

<sup>2</sup> <https://fpa-trends.com/article/case-study-how-move-towards-advanced-fpa>

## Layer 2: Transformation Frameworks

Building on the FP&A Trends Maturity Model, Layer 2 introduces two key Transformation Frameworks: Integrated FP&A and the Five FP&A Team Roles. These frameworks provide structured solutions to align planning processes, define critical FP&A roles and drive agility and collaboration across an organisation.

### Framework 1: Integrated FP&A

Despite the importance of aligning strategic, financial and operational planning, only 13% of organisations have achieved full integration, according to the 2024 FP&A Trends Survey. The survey also revealed that currently, only 21% of organisations have integrated their profit and loss (P&L), balance sheet and cash flow statements into a single cohesive model. This critical capability for holistic financial oversight and scenario planning is hindered by complex processes (30%) and unsuitable systems (24%).

The Integrated FP&A Framework addresses these challenges by connecting strategic, operational and financial planning to ensure alignment both vertically (strategy to execution) and horizontally (across departments). When real-time updates with collaboration are enabled, organisations gain greater agility, which allows them to adapt quickly to changes and make informed decisions.

Figure 4 below illustrates the six interconnected aspects of Integrated FP&A that harmonise planning processes across an organisation:

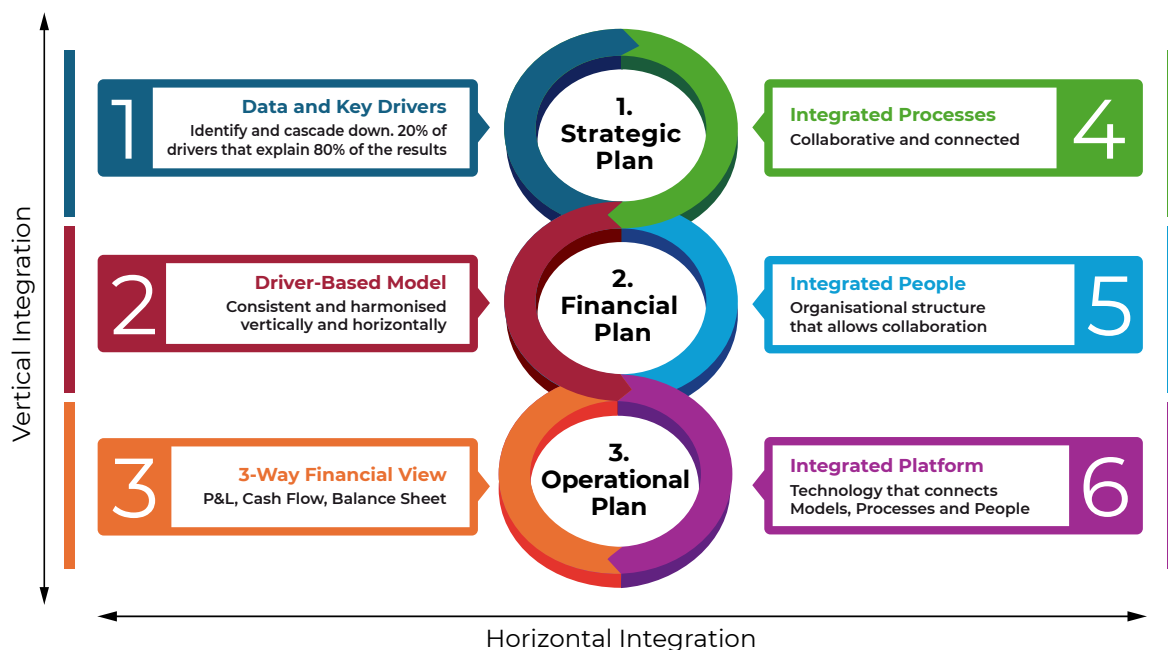


Figure 4: The Integrated FP&A Framework: Connecting Strategy, Operations and Finance

- 1. Data and Key Drivers:** Integration starts by identifying a business' key business drivers. These are the small number of factors that drive the majority of outcomes. Key business drivers link strategic goals to operational execution.

"Understanding and effectively managing key business drivers is crucial as it links strategic planning directly to operational performance."

**Rudie van Dijk, Group FP&A Director at TIP Group**

- 2. Driver-Based Models:** Drivers are incorporated into models that connect strategic, operational, and financial activities to ensure the consistency and agility of planning.

3. **3-Way Financial View:** Models integrate P&L, balance sheet and cash flow statements, providing a comprehensive financial perspective for better decisions and scenario planning.
4. **Integrated Processes:** Processes built on driver-based models foster seamless collaboration, breaking silos and enabling plans to flow efficiently across the organisation.
5. **Integrated People:** Collaboration is key. Integrated FP&A aligns goals across teams to ensure cohesive and effective teamwork.
6. **Integrated Platforms:** Cloud-based tools centralise data, automate updates and enable real-time insights that support dynamic and agile planning.

## Case Study: Driving Growth with Integrated FP&A at Kainos<sup>3</sup>

Kainos, an IT services company operating in 22 countries, faced challenges managing financial operations due to fragmented systems, slow decision-making and limited collaboration during rapid growth. By implementing a modern platform (Workday) that integrated finance, HR and planning systems, Kainos aligned its financial operations with strategic goals. This allowed them to achieve:

- **Efficiency Gains:** Manual invoice entries were reduced from 50% to 15%, supplier payment times decreased to 20–30 minutes and reporting cycles were shortened from weeks to a single day.
- **Enhanced Planning:** Real-time dashboards helped improve accountability, while integrated variance analysis boosted forecast accuracy and compliance.
- **Strategic Adaptability:** During COVID-19, workforce costs (two-thirds of total expenses) were optimised through integrated planning insights. As **Matt McManus, Services CFO at Kainos**, highlights: “Workday Adaptive Planning empowers our business to anticipate change, plan smarter, pivot faster, and drive confident decisions across our organisation.”

## How to Implement the Integrated FP&A Framework

1. **Identify Key Drivers:** Define the critical business drivers that link strategic goals to operational execution. *This step builds on the FP&A Trends Maturity Model’s focus on identifying drivers that influence meaningful outcomes.*
2. **Build Driver-Based Models:** Develop models that integrate these drivers into planning processes to ensure consistency and alignment across financial, operational and strategic activities. *Driver based models are essential tools discussed in Layer 3, forming a foundation for effective FP&A practices.*
3. **Create a Unified Financial View:** Integrate the P&L, balance sheet and cash flow statements to provide a comprehensive financial perspective for better decisions and scenario planning. *This aspect supports the Integrated FP&A Framework by enabling cohesive decision-making.*
4. **Adopt Integrated Processes:** Break silos by fostering seamless collaboration across teams and ensuring plans align across all organisational levels. *This aligns with the goals of Layer 2, which phases harmonised planning across organisational levels.*
5. **Leverage Cloud-Based Platforms:** Implement modern tools to centralise data, automate updates agility and scenario planning. *Cloud platforms, explored in Layer 4, enhance agility and scenario planning.*
6. **Foster a Collaborative Culture:** Align goals across departments and build a cohesive teamwork approach to achieve successful integration. *This collaboration is further strengthened by the roles defined in the Five FP&A Roles Framework within this layer.*

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.workday.com/en-gb/customer-stories/i-p/kainos-gains-greater-insight-to-drive-profitable-growth.html>

## Framework 2: Five FP&A Team Roles

This transformation framework identifies five essential roles critical for building agile and high-performing FP&A teams. Developed through global research and practitioner insights, these roles address skill gaps, foster collaboration and deliver actionable insights. These flexible roles allow individuals to take on multiple functions, therefore, enabling FP&A teams to adapt quickly to shifting priorities and optimise resources within dynamic business environments. By combining technical expertise with strategic communication, the framework equips teams to drive decision-making and transformation.

Through global research, we have identified these five critical team roles (Figure 5).

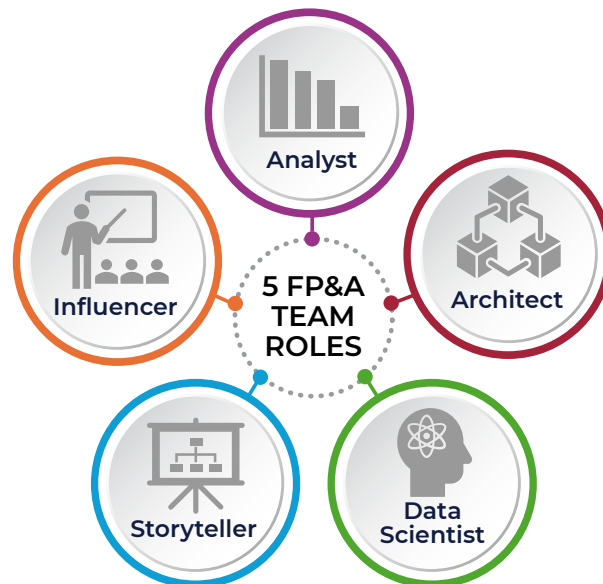


Figure 5: The Five Critical FP&A Team Roles

These roles combine technical and soft skills to equip FP&A teams with the ability to support insight-driven decision-making, ensuring they align with the FP&A Maturity Model and Integrated FP&A Framework for cohesive and adaptable strategies.

### Technical Roles

#### 1. The FP&A Analyst

- **Scope:** Delivers insights through data collection, cleaning and analysis.
- **Skills:** Proficient in analytics data handling and has a strong attention to detail.
- **Business Requirement:** Supports accurate financial planning and reporting.

#### 2. The FP&A Data Scientist

- **Scope:** Enhances forecasting and decision-making with AI/ML and advanced analytics.
- **Skills:** Expertise in predictive modelling, statistical analysis and Machine Learning.
- **Business Requirement:** Drives forward-looking analysis to adapt to trends and uncertainties.

#### 3. The FP&A Architect

- **Scope:** Builds and integrates systems that enable efficient, scalable financial processes.
- **Skills:** Expertise in system design, process optimisation and technical platforms.
- **Business Requirement:** Creates a robust IT ecosystem for automated planning and analysis.

“An FP&A Architect integrates financial and operational systems, building scalable platforms that enable real-time insights and agility.”

**Kelsea Vaughan, Manager at Workday Adaptive Planning**

## Soft Roles

### 4. The FP&A Storyteller

- **Scope:** Converts data into visuals and narratives to provide clarity for decision-makers.
- **Skills:** Expertise in storytelling, data visualisation and presentation.
- **Business Requirement:** Makes insights accessible and actionable across departments.

### 5. The FP&A Influencer

- **Scope:** Aligns stakeholders by fostering collaboration and unified decision-making.
- **Skills:** Strategic communication, leadership and relationship-building.
- **Business Requirement:** Ensures alignment between financial strategies and operational goals.

“The FP&A Influencer plays a key role in bringing people across the company in contact with each other and keeping the team up-to-date on the latest developments within the business. The influencer tactically changes course in an uncertain environment and tries to link strategic planning to maturing operational planning if necessary.”

**Rudie van Dijk, Group FP&A Director at TIP Group**

## How to Use the 5 FP&A Team Roles Framework

1. **Define Roles to Drive Efficiency:** Map team members to roles aligned with their strengths. For example, assign technical experts to the roles of Analyst or Architect and communicators to the roles of Storyteller or Influencer. Regular team reviews ensure roles adapt to the changing needs of the organisation.
2. **Invest in Upskilling:** Provide targeted AI/ML training for Data Scientists and data visualisation training for Storytellers. Use platforms like LinkedIn Learning or Coursera to ensure teams stay competitive and leverage advanced tools effectively. Whilst this requires upfront investment, it frees up more time for generating insights and decision support.
3. **Foster Collaboration:** Encourage cross-functional collaboration using tools like Slack or Microsoft Teams. Schedule regular alignment meetings to streamline communication and unify decision making efforts.
4. **Align with Business Goals:** Establish KPIs specific to each role that align with organisational objectives. For example, measure the number of cross-departmental meetings facilitated by Influencers or the percentage of strategic initiatives aligned with financial goals. Regularly review team performance to maintain relevance in a changing business environment.
5. **Commit to Transformation:** Identify gaps and develop targeted strategies to drive transformation. Focus on agility and continuous improvement to drive sustainable results.

“Building a future-proof FP&A team requires a clear assessment of current capabilities, deliberate actions to fill skill gaps and a commitment to continuous learning and process optimisation. Success lies in aligning team development with business needs and adapting quickly to evolving demands.”

**Natasha Rathee, SVP, Head of Finance at BlueRock Therapeutics**

Equipped with clearly defined roles, FP&A teams are now prepared to integrate foundational processes like Driver-Based Planning and Scenario Management. These processes, supported by the FP&A Maturity Model (Layer 1) and Transformation Frameworks (Layer 2), enhance operational agility and strengthen the FP&A team’s role as a strategic Business Partner, which enables impactful decision-making and helps create alignment with organisational priorities.

## Layer 3: FP&A Foundations

FP&A Foundations are the essential processes that support accurate planning and agile decision-making. Guided by the FP&A Trends Maturity Model (Layer 1) and structured through the Transformation Frameworks (Layer 2), these foundations ensure FP&A teams can align plans with business priorities and respond effectively to change.

The two key FP&A Foundations are:

- 1. Driver-Based Planning:** A structured process that aligns financial plans with key performance drivers, such as pricing and improves forecast accuracy, goal alignment and risk visibility.
- 2. Scenario Management:** The ability to prepare for uncertainty by rapidly modelling multiple outcomes and enabling proactive responses to changing conditions.

Supported by the Enablers (Layer 4) of data, technology and collaboration, the above processes transform FP&A into a dynamic, forward-looking organisational function.

### Foundation 1: Driver-Based Planning

Driver-Based Planning is a structured approach that aligns financial plans with key business drivers, both internal (e.g. production efficiency) and external (e.g. market trends). Built on dynamic mathematical models (Figure 6), it combines human-defined insights with ML-driven relationships to create accurate, actionable forecasts. These models reveal how changes in drivers directly impact outcomes like profitability and costs, enabling organisations to make agile and informed decisions.

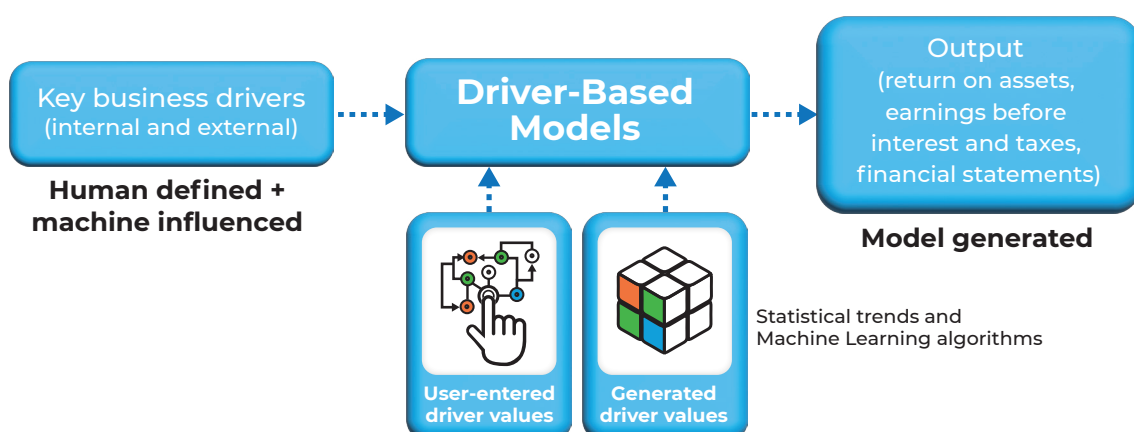


Figure 6: Driver-Based Models

## Adoption and Benefits

Despite the proven potential of Driver-Based Planning, the 2024 FP&A Trends Survey highlights significant resistance to adoption:

- Only 9% of organisations use fully driver-based models, while 54% rely on partially calculated models.
- 37% of organisations do not use Driver-Based Planning at all, limiting their ability to adapt in volatile environments.

However, organisations that adopt Driver-Based Planning enjoy significant advantages:

- **Time Efficiency:** 45% of their time is spent on high-value activities, compared to only 33% for non-adopters.
- **Forecast Reliability:** 51% of users rate their forecasts as great or good, compared to only 25% of non-users.
- **Data-Driven Decisions:** 70% of users rely on data for key decisions, compared to just 52% of non-users.

These benefits underscore the transformative potential of Driver-Based Planning. Drivers are measures that represent specific business activities or factors with a direct impact on financial results, ensuring planning models remain relevant and actionable.

## Why It Matters

Driver-Based Planning is the foundation for agile FP&A. By linking plans to dynamic models that reflect critical business drivers, organisations can:

1. **Enhance Forecast Accuracy:** Reliably predict outcomes by focusing on drivers that truly matter.
2. **Increase Agility:** Quickly adjust plans in response to driver changes, enabling proactive responses.
3. **Improve Strategic Focus:** Align planning efforts with high-impact areas, ensuring relevance and efficiency.

Static planning models fail to adapt to changing realities, leaving organisations exposed to risks. Driver-Based Planning ensures flexibility, focus and precision in today's fast-changing environment.

However, adoption challenges remain. Many organisations struggle with technical complexity, lack of data integration or resistance to change. Addressing these barriers is critical to unlocking the full potential of Driver-Based Planning.

## Steps to Implement Driver-Based Planning

1. **Identify Key Drivers:** Engage stakeholders to determine the business drivers with the greatest impact (e.g. price elasticity and customer retention).
2. **Validate Driver Relationships:** Use historical data to test and refine the relationships between drivers and performance metrics.
3. **Integrate Drivers into Planning Systems:** Embed dynamic models into financial systems to ensure forecasts remain agile and relevant.
4. **Address Barriers to Adoption:** Ensure robust data systems, cross-functional collaboration and training programmes to overcome resistance.

## Foundation 2: Scenario Management

While Driver-Based Planning links financial plans to key performance drivers, Scenario Management provides the ecosystem that prepares an organisation for multiple alternative futures that arise due to uncertainty. It is a closed-loop, agile process that continually develops action plans and allows management to mitigate risks or capitalise on opportunities presented within these alternative scenarios.

“Scenario Management is a compass for navigating uncertainty, empowering leaders to anticipate risks, evaluate opportunities and steer their organisations towards resilience in uncharted waters.”

**Frederic Portal, Senior Director, OCFO at Workday**

The Scenario Management foundation integrates:

- **Data:** Actionable insights from reliable internal and external sources.
- **Driver-Based Models:** Integrated financial views that include P&L, cash flow statements and balance sheets.
- **Advanced Analytics:** AI/ML-powered tools that simulate scenarios and reveal hidden drivers.
- **Processes:** Continuous, harmonised planning across strategic, financial and operational domains.
- **Technology:** Collaborative platforms that enable real-time scenario generation and analysis.

### The Measure of Agility

The agility of an organisation's FP&A function is measured by how quickly it can generate and respond to scenarios. According to the 2024 FP&A Trends Survey:

- Only 4% of organisations can model scenarios in real-time.
- 17% of organisations can run scenarios in less than a day.
- The majority, 62%, struggle with time-consuming processes that limit their ability to adapt swiftly.

During the early weeks of the COVID-19 pandemic, organisations relied on advanced planning systems to navigate unprecedented uncertainty. **Frederic Portal, Senior Director, OCFO at Workday**, shared: “Between March 23 and 27, 2020, our cloud planning platform (Workday) processed 30 times more forecasts and scenario builds than in a typical week. Throughout the pandemic, the platform saw a 15x surge in modelling and recalibration as organisations worked to understand and adapt to the ripple effects of global disruptions.”

As **Laurent Claes, Group Controlling Director at YOOX NET-A-PORTER GROUP**, emphasised: “Modern planning thrives on agility, the ability to run scenarios quickly and iterative feedback. While Excel serves as a model prototype, transitioning to a Driver-Based Planning system is essential for long-term sustainability.”

### Four Key Benefits of Scenario Management

Scenario Management offers four practical benefits that empower organisations to navigate uncertainty effectively:

1. **Adaptive Agility:** It enhances responsiveness to change by identifying key business drivers and eliminating rigid plans. This allows organisations to anticipate disruptions and adjust their strategies accordingly.

2. **Informed Decision-Making:** It provides deeper insights by challenging assumptions and aligning strategies with evolving conditions. This helps organisations pivot effectively when circumstances change.
3. **Collaborative Alignment:** It fosters open communication and aligns teams with shared goals by leveraging transparent planning and actionable insights. This ensures unified execution.
4. **Efficient FP&A:** It streamlines planning cycles, reduces manual tasks and enables teams to focus on high-value activities that drive strategic outcomes.

## The Steps to Implement Scenario Management

1. **Define the Scope:** Identify key issues, stakeholders and time horizons.
2. **Define Key Drivers:** Use data analysis and AI/ML to pinpoint critical performance drivers.
3. **Check and Analyse Data:** Validate data quality, timeliness and accessibility.
4. **Develop Scenarios:** Create 3 to 5 well documented, plausible scenarios.
5. **Develop Responses:** Prepare a resource-optimised action plan for each scenario.
6. **Communicate and Update:** Share scenarios with stakeholders and continuously iterate updated versions based on new insights.

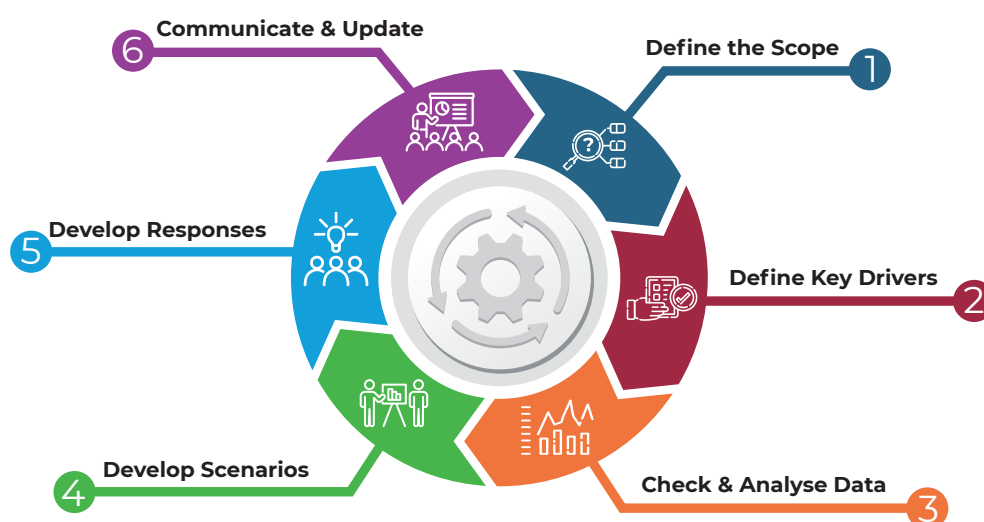


Figure 7: Steps in Implementing Scenario Management

## Layer 4: Enablers

The previous layers of Modern FP&A focus on setting the vision (FP&A Trends Maturity Model), creating the framework (Transformation Frameworks) and developing the actions (FP&A Foundations). However, none of these can be realised without robust Enablers, in other words data, technology and effective Business Partnering, that ensure smooth execution. These Enablers provide the foundation for transforming FP&A into a strategic, agile function that delivers consistent value to the organisation.

### *Enabler 1: Trusted and Actionable Data*

High-quality data forms the backbone of any effective FP&A team since it enables agility, informed decision-making and long-term success. However, many organisations face persistent challenges,

such as fragmented systems, manual processes and inconsistent data governance. According to the 2024 FP&A Trends Survey:

- 45% of the FP&A team's time is spent on manual tasks like data collection and validation, which leaves only 35% for value-adding activities such as insight generation and decision-making.
- Organisations with strong data governance are 3.4 times more likely to produce accurate forecasts, with 71% rating their forecasts as great or good, compared to just 21% for those with poor data quality.

## The Three-Step Approach to Trusted Data

To transform data into a strategic asset, organisations must adopt a structured three-step approach:

- 1. Define an Information Strategy:** Identify the data required to drive business performance by aligning it with the key value drivers. Use advanced analytics to uncover hidden drivers and establish a decision calendar to ensure the timely delivery of actionable insights.
- 2. Develop a Data Strategy:** Establish workflows to source, clean and organise data efficiently. Leverage AI/ML tools and CPM solutions to model and deliver insights. Ensure the data strategy promotes consistency, trustworthiness and accessibility across the organisation.
- 3. Build a Data Platform:** Centralise and integrate data into a scalable, cloud-based platform. Establish a single source of truth that supports real-time insights, enables collaboration and improves decision making reliability.

Figure 8 highlights the key steps needed for maintaining data quality through governance, including identifying critical data elements, monitoring data quality and resolving issues via a continuous feedback loop.



Figure 8: An Example of a Data Quality Process

By addressing these challenges, FP&A teams not only enhance their efficiency and forecast accuracy but also place their organisations in a better position for greater strategic agility. As **Valerie Martin, Senior Finance Director at Autodesk**, explains: “Eliminating silos and creating a single source of truth unlocks insights aligned with organisational goals.”<sup>4</sup>

## Enabler 2: An AI-Powered Technology Ecosystem

Building on the foundation of trusted and actionable data (Enabler 1), the next step is to harness technology, particularly AI, to unlock the full potential of the FP&A function. AI-enabled tools are transforming how organisations forecast, analyse and make decisions, ultimately improving agility and strategic impact.

<sup>4</sup> <https://fpa-trends.com/article/guide-big-data-and-transformation-fpa>

## The FP&A Technology Ecosystem

Figure 9 shows a typical FP&A Tech Stack that consists of the core components:

- 1. Source Data:** ERP, CRM, HR and other systems are linked to pull essential information.
- 2. Centralise Data:** Data is extracted, loaded, cleansed and transformed into a usable format.
- 3. Process/Store Data:** Data is normalised and blended for modelling, forecasting and consolidation.
- 4. Reporting to End Users:** Dashboards, static reports and data visualisations are provided to inform decision-making.
- 5. Govern Data:** Synchronising metadata to monitor quality and ensure compliance.

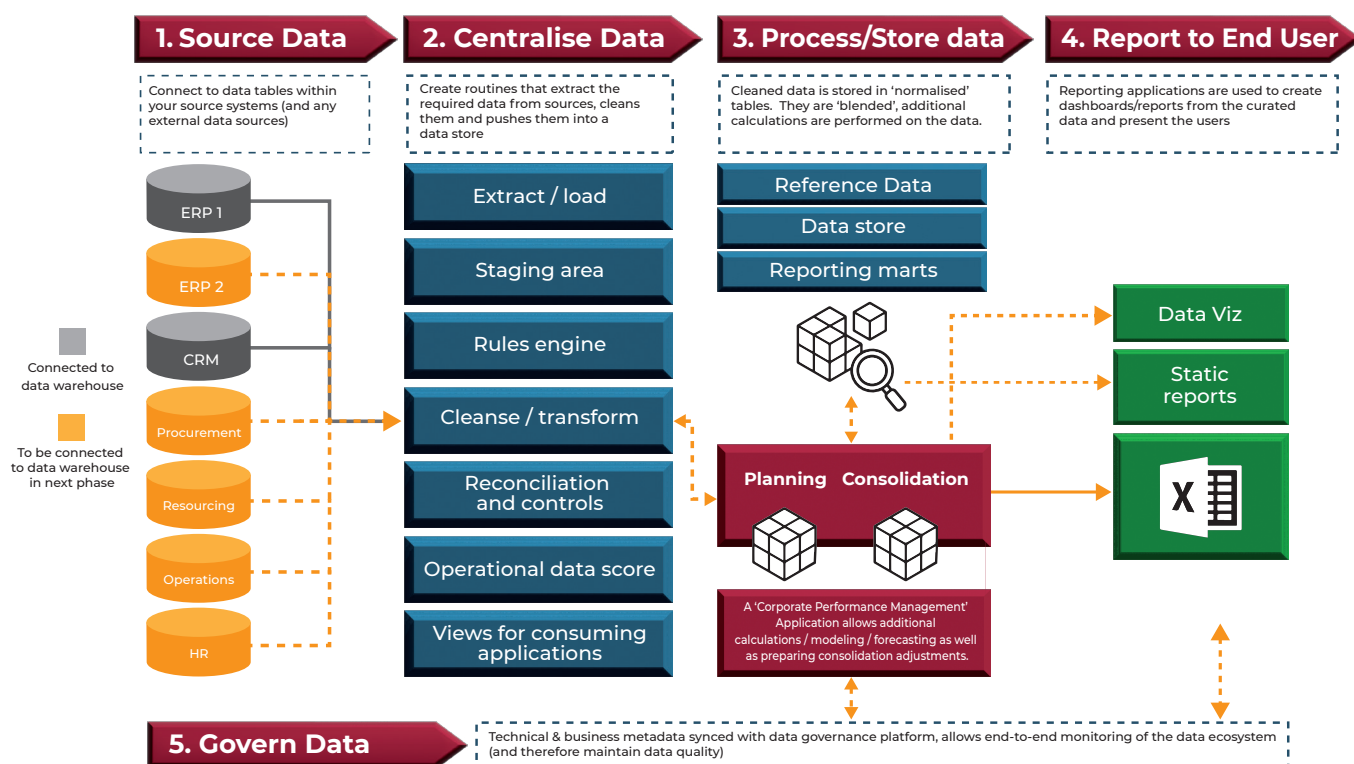


Figure 9: Typical FP&A Tech Stack

By layering AI and analytics on top of this tech stack, organisations transform raw data into actionable insights. Machine Learning models uncover correlations and forecast scenarios, while Generative AI automates reporting and simulates potential outcomes. This is all grounded in the reliable data foundations discussed in Enabler 1.

## Two Core AI Applications in FP&A:

### 1. Machine Learning: Enhancing Forecasting and Scenario Planning

Machine Learning helps organisations uncover hidden drivers, increase forecast accuracy and develop complex scenarios. The 2024 FP&A Trends Survey reveals:

- Organisations that are using ML are 60% more likely to rate their forecasts as great or good compared to those not using ML (65% vs. 40%).
- High-performing FP&A teams are twice more likely to adopt ML (35% vs. 17%).

ML-adopting teams spend more time on strategic tasks and see higher forecast satisfaction, which highlights ML's impact on data-driven decisions.

## 2. Generative AI: Revolutionising FP&A Workflows

Emerging in the last two-three years, Generative AI broadened the scope of AI in FP&A by:

- **Automating Narrative Reporting:** Drafting reports, variance analysis and recommendations.
- **Supporting Decision-Making:** Simulating strategic alternatives for better outcomes.
- **Enabling Natural Language Interaction:** Employing AI-driven chatbots for intuitive data queries.

As a result, Generative AI reduces time spent on repetitive tasks, allowing FP&A professionals to focus on more strategic, value-adding work.

To successfully implement AI in FP&A, organisations should:

1. **Adopt AI-Enabled Tools:** Incorporate AI capabilities into existing CPM and cloud systems.
2. **Leverage Both ML and Generative AI:** Combine ML forecasting and scenario planning with advanced automation and decision support (Generative AI).
3. **Upskill FP&A Teams:** Encourage ongoing learning to help teams fully utilise AI's capabilities.

“Artificial Intelligence will fundamentally shift the role of profiles in FP&A, transforming processes and requiring new skillsets.”

**Michael Nudelmann, Director of Controlling, Head of FP&A at Swarovski<sup>5</sup>**

## Enabler 3: FP&A Business Partnering

Building on the foundations of trusted data (Enabler 1) and an AI-powered technology ecosystem (Enabler 2), FP&A Business Partnering helps ensure that insights translate into action. By integrating financial expertise with operational insights, Business Partnering elevates FP&A to drive performance, challenge assumptions and support data-driven decision-making aligned with company goals. It positions the FP&A team as trusted advisors, which ensures that financial insights inform and influence key decisions.

“To be a successful finance partner, you have to understand the business you are in. It is not just what the company does but really understanding how business behaviours translate into numbers.”

**Liping Qi, CFO at MicroSurgical Technology<sup>6</sup>**

## Case Study: Strengthening Business Partnering at Altrad<sup>7</sup>

Altrad, a global leader with 100 subsidiaries, faced challenges due to fragmented financial systems, limiting the finance department's ability to provide timely, actionable insights and effectively undermining its role as a trusted partner.

By implementing a modern FP&A technology (Workday Adaptive Planning), Altrad were able to centralise financial data, streamline reporting and integrate legacy systems without costly replacements. Reporting time was cut from a full day to two hours, which enabled the finance team to focus on advanced analysis and proactive decision-making.

<sup>5</sup> <https://fpa-trends.com/article/aiml-magic-bullet-fpa>

<sup>6</sup> <https://fpa-trends.com/article/mastering-finance-business-partnering>

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.workday.com/en-gb/customer-stories/a-h/the-altrad-group-solution-rapid-global-growth-planning.html>

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the finance team delivered rapid insights on working capital and workforce impacts, helping leadership adapt quickly. Additionally, the team's ability to provide integrated reports supported cross-departmental collaboration, such as aligning operational strategies with financial planning to manage resource allocation effectively.

**Financial Controller Elsa Meallares** noted, “Our ability to respond quickly has significantly increased trust in finance as a strategic partner.”

This transformation positioned the finance team as a trusted advisor and helped foster collaboration, which enabled Altrad to navigate global growth with agility.

## The Challenges

Despite its critical importance, many FP&A teams struggle to fulfil their Business Partnering potential. The 2024 FP&A Trends Survey highlights key barriers:

- **Time Constraints:** Only 35% of FP&A time is spent on high-value activities like generating insights, while 45% is consumed by manual tasks.
- **Skill Gaps:** Business Partnering is the top skill sought by 50% of organisations, reflecting a 9% increase from the previous year. Yet many teams lack the communication, storytelling and influencing skills required for success.
- **Siloed Thinking:** A lack of shared goals and resistance to collaboration across functions often undermine cross-departmental alignment.

To overcome these barriers, FP&A teams must adopt structured approaches that operationalise Business Partnering capabilities.

## The Business Partnering Framework

The [Business Partnering Framework](#) (Figure 10) identifies five critical attributes that enable FP&A teams to bridge the gap between analysis and action:

1. **Strategic Alignment:** This ensures financial planning aligns with organisational goals and priorities.
2. **Data-Informed Insights:** The combination of analytics and business acumen that generates actionable recommendations.
3. **Collaboration and Relationship Building:** Teams must build trust and alignment through proactive engagement.
4. **Effective Storytelling:** This is necessary to translate complex financial data into compelling narratives for decision-makers.
5. **Change Leadership:** FP&A acts as catalysts for transformation by driving innovation and challenging the status quo.



Figure 10: The Business Partnering Framework

To put the attributes of the Business Partnering Framework into action, FP&A teams should focus on these steps:

1. Align financial, operational and strategic priorities through cross-functional planning sessions focused on key business drivers.
2. Strengthen collaboration by assigning FP&A partners to key departments and fostering alignment with shared KPIs.
3. Simplify communication by training teams to deliver insights through clear narratives and standardised visuals.
4. Measure success with KPIs tied to collaboration and highlight impactful FP&A contributions to decisions.
5. Foster a culture of innovation by encouraging teams to challenge inefficiencies and reward adaptability.

“The integration of AI and Large Language Models in FP&A represents a significant paradigm shift. For FP&A leaders, this means an opportunity to transform their teams from traditional finance roles to strategic Business Partners.”

**Michael Schiebel, Head of Finance & Operations at Stealth<sup>8</sup>**

<sup>8</sup> <https://fpa-trends.com/article/elevating-finance-business-partnering-ai>

## Conclusion: Making It Happen

---

FP&A has undergone a significant evolution, yet many organisations remain behind in adopting modern practices. The message is clear: teams that embrace modern FP&A consistently outperform their peers. Achieving this transformation requires more than just technology — it demands a structured framework that fosters alignment and delivers meaningful impact.

Our recommendations:

- 1. Use the FP&A Trends Maturity Model (Layer 1) to Guide Your Journey.** It provides a roadmap for assessing current capabilities, identifying gaps and prioritising improvement efforts.
- 2. Implement the Transformation Frameworks (Layer 2):**
  - Adopt the Integrated FP&A Framework to align planning processes across strategy, operations and finance.
  - Utilise the FP&A Roles Framework to define and organise high-performing teams.
- 3. Develop FP&A Foundations (Layer 3) and Implement:**
  - Driver-Based Planning: Build precise forecasts aligned with key business drivers.
  - Scenario Management: Develop plans for multiple potential futures, ensuring adaptability.
- 4. Strengthen Key Enablers (Layer 4):**
  - Ensure data is clean, relevant and actionable.
  - Leverage AI-powered tools, dashboards and analytics for efficiency and insights.
  - Foster pro-active business partnering across the organisation to ensure insights lead to action.

Modern FP&A is more than just adapting to change, it serves as the cornerstone for better and more effective leadership. By applying the Maturity Model, Transformation Frameworks, Foundations and Enablers, FP&A teams can proactively shape strategies, navigate complexity and deliver sustainable success.

# Acknowledgements

---

## About the authors



### **Larysa Melnychuk, CEO and Founder at FP&A Trends Group**

---

Larysa is an accomplished FP&A professional and thought leader with over 20 years of experience in senior finance roles at top-tier companies. In 2016, she founded the FP&A Trends Group, a global organisation that offers valuable insights, advisory services, and training to finance professionals seeking to stay ahead of the curve.

She also founded the International FP&A Board, which has held over 260 meetings for finance leaders from 33 chapters across 19 countries on four continents.

Larysa chairs the Global AI FP&A Committee and runs a number of high-profile initiatives in the area of modern financial analytics.



### **Tanbir Jasimuddin, FP&A Trends Author and Thought Leader**

---

Tanbir is an award-winning finance and analytics transformation leader and FP&A Trends author. He has a track record of delivering significant performance improvements in organisations. Having learned his craft at McKinsey and the Big 4, he has since held finance leadership roles at several global organisations. His expertise includes deploying finance and analytics systems, alongside building the required data culture that will maximise the benefits.



### **Michael Coveney, Head of Research at FP&A Trends Group**

---

Michael has over 40 years of experience in designing and implementing software solutions that improve the efficiency and effectiveness of planning.

He has conducted senior management workshops with leading organisations around the world and the author of many articles and books. His latest, 'Budgeting, Planning and Forecasting in Uncertain Times' is published by John Wiley & Sons.

## References

[2024 FP&A Trends Survey: Empowering Decisions with Data: How FP&A Supports Organisations in Uncertainty](#)

[2023 FP&A Trends Research Paper: Intelligent Transformation with FP&A Trends Maturity Model](#)

[2023 FP&A Trends Research Paper: FP&A Scenario Management: Your Path to Navigating Uncertainty](#)

[2024 FP&A Trends Insights Paper: Mastering Data in FP&A: How to Build Analytical Capabilities for Strategic Growth and Informed Decisions](#)

[2024 FP&A Trends Insights Paper: FP&A Business Partnering in the Age of AI: Shaping Strategic Value and Organisational Agility](#)

[International FP&A Board](#)

[FP&A Trends Webinars](#)

[FP&A Trends Maturity Model Assessment](#)

## About FP&A Trends Group

FP&A Trends Group is a high-profile think tank focused on modern corporate Financial Planning and Analysis (FP&A). The organisation's mission is to identify, shape and share the latest FP&A trends and best practices via global research, events, educational content and advisory services.

FP&A Trends Group enables continuous discussion, collaboration and knowledge sharing among finance practitioners from leading organisations. The organisation is UK-based but highly international in nature, serving as a one-stop shop for all things FP&A.

For more information, please visit our website at [www.fpa-trends.com](http://www.fpa-trends.com).

## Our Sponsor About Workday Adaptive Planning

Workday Adaptive Planning is a leading cloud-based planning and performance management solution. With its intuitive interface, powerful integration capabilities, flexible modelling tools and AI-powered intelligent insights, planning processes become streamlined and more time is spent on what matters most: adapting plans in real-time to drive growth. Consistently recognised as a Leader by top industry analysts like Gartner and IDC, 6,600+ global customers like BDO, Belmond and Deloitte trust Workday Adaptive Planning.

To learn how Workday Adaptive Planning can elevate your business planning, visit <https://www.workday.com/en-gb/products/adaptive-planning/overview.html>.

### Disclaimer

The content provided in this Insights Paper is intended solely for general information purposes, and the statements and opinions provided herein are the authors' and contributors' own. The information in this Insights Paper was gathered with reasonable care and attention. However, it is possible that some information in this Insights Paper is incomplete, incorrect, or inapplicable to particular circumstances or conditions. Any use of this information should be done at the sole risk of the reader. We do not accept liability for direct or indirect losses resulting from using, relying or acting upon information in this Insights Paper.

Transforming FP&A: Strategic Frameworks and Enablers for Organisational Agility, the Insights Paper produced by the FP&A Trends Group dated January 2025, is sponsored by Workday. This paper is the copyright of the FP&A Trends Group and is not to be used in publications unless authorized by the FP&A Trends Group.

© 2013 - 2025, FP&A Trends Group. All rights reserved.