



**“We are not afraid to
challenge each other”**

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Tom Loonen of InsingerGilissen is convinced that the work of private bankers will not be made superfluous by digitization. Which does not take away the fact that digitization produces good tools that can help him facilitate customers. “If banks like us want to sustain a high service level, we will need to digitize.”

“We appreciate that Ortec Finance positions itself as an independent party that also dares to pose critical questions about our governance, investment policy, and how we guarantee good risk management.”

“InsingerGilissen is part of KBL European Private Bankers (KBL epb) and is one of the largest private banks in the Netherlands”, says Loonen. “We focus on wealthy families and entrepreneurs, with whom we like to build long-term relationships. As a bank we deal with investments and managing assets, but especially with facilitating our clients. Think of taking over their private administration, or drawing up an independent estate plan or financial plan that we update every five years. We do this with external, independent planners. In this we are unique and we dare to make ourselves vulnerable. If a planner has a piece of advice that goes against the interest of the bank, then so be it. We accept that. Of course we have in-house experience, but we want to provide truly independent advice.”

“The backbone of our services is the personal contact that you have with a customer. Yet we also embrace the digital highway.”

Close cooperation

To this end, InsingerGilissen likes working together with Ortec Finance. “For us they are the independent party par excellence when it comes to ALM studies. Some time ago we started a pilot for foundations and associations which now has acquired permanent status. Ortec Finance’s consultants now assist our clients – in particular the boards of asset funds – in receiving a good ALM report. We appreciate that Ortec Finance acts as an independent party which also dares to ask critical questions: ‘You have set this up like this: how is it arranged in terms of governance?’ ‘You invest according to this model; why has that model not been used?’ ‘I hear you say you’re not enamoured of shares; why do you still have them? And how has it been documented that risks are effectively secured?’ That is a role that Ortec Finance fulfils very well. In the future, Ortec Finance will also supply the software for the financial plans. So our cooperation is very good; we are not afraid to challenge each other.”

Quality and convenience

Both Insinger de Beaufort and Theodoor Gilissen were already using OPAL, and Loonen finds it logical that InsingerGilissen follows their example. “There are not that many players in the private-banking market that can offer what OPAL can. To start with, it is a very easy-to-use package that is well-supported. Our customers appreciate the look and feel; that is also very important. Regular customers get an analysis that shows whether the feasibility of their goals is up to speed. OPAL offers a combination of quality and convenience: we have been using it for a while, we know it, and it works well.”

Ortec Finance recently won a tender for almost the entire KBL group, says Loonen. “For this purpose, Ortec Finance developed a new product: a financial planning tool which allows you to calculate the client’s income, see what is the remaining net sum, etc. That makes it a completely different package from OPAL, or the ALM analyses that we are already using.

It is intended that all external financial planners start using that software. In the course of this year we will roll out the solution that Ortec Finance has developed.”

Loonen sees little difference between the approach to retail customers and private-banking clients. “Usually, the tax route for the private-banking client is slightly different; in the case of a wealthier client, income from assets is often required. There is however a need for a more in-depth approach with private-banking clients. But ALM is ALM; in both cases, you work with a scenario. It doesn’t matter much if that concerns five hundred thousand euros or ten million.”

The benefits of digitization

Digitization can be a solution for all types of customers. “The backbone of our services is the personal contact with a customer that as a banker you have sometimes had for twenty, thirty years. Digitization would be complementary for many of our customers. Yet we also embrace the digital highway for online banking, access to your portfolio, online ordering, and that sort of thing.

In addition, further digitisation can cut costs, allowing us to really focus on our added value and further facilitate the customer. How nice would it be if a customer could send a copy of his income-tax declaration to the banker or independent planner with two clicks in his secure portal? There I see a major role for automation. We want to optimize the thinking process; that is what a banker is there for.”

Internalizing essential information

Loonen certainly sees possibilities for digitisation. “Through OPAL, the client can see for himself what his assets are doing, and whether he is still on track to reach his goal (e.g. ‘ten million in ten years’). For the planning software it is a completely different story. Ideally, we would like the external planner to log in to Ortec Finance’s software and enter all the customer data into it. We will then incorporate those in the plan. And then the planner will present that plan to the customer, but in the meantime we have acquired the data. That kind of information is essential. The best would be if the financial planning software is fed by the tax office, the land registry, mijnoverheid.nl, etc. Those are all organizations that have static data which the planner can work with.”

“If each day you can basically ‘only’ choose between two of the best cakes, they are still top products.”

Holistic advice

“I think we know our clients very well,” says Loonen. “Even better and better in recent years, partly as a result of laws and regulations. We continue to invest to realise that holistic advice. The client will experience that it really works to get an integral view of his situation and receive opinions and actions based on that. We want to make things concrete. From a serious private bank, for example, you may expect that we talk about the choices a client can make with regard to his will.”

Standard top products

Loonen expects the role of digitisation to further increase in the future. “Soon, many people will only receive investment advice by means of robotics. That could lead to a reduction of choices. If banks such as ours want to maintain a high level of service, then we need to digitize. To some extent you will need to move to a more standard advice. There is no objection to that in principle, because even then you can still be there for the client. If each day you can basically “only” choose between two of the best cakes, they are still top products. I therefore do not believe that robotisation is necessarily bad for banks. Why would you not be critical about costs? If this allows us to provide a good service to a particular client group, who are also satisfied with the level of costs, why would you not do that? We know what the world has to offer. We are critical, but we are not blind to it.”



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Prof. dr. A.J.C.C.M. Loonen, InsingerGilissen

Prof. Dr. A.J.C.C.M. (Tom) Loonen is one of the three Board members Private Banking at InsingerGilissen. At the former Bank Insinger de Beaufort his portfolio comprised ALM, private planning and estate planning. In addition, at the front office his portfolio also comprises the topics risk, legal, and compliance. Loonen is also a Professor at the VU, where he specializes in financial law. As a member of the disciplinary board for Banks, he often judges bankers' behaviour, and as a legal expert he is involved in many cases at judicial courts and tribunals.

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