LET'S KEEP TALKING!

Cash Visibility is Real-Time. Team Visibility? Still Loading…

Christopher Hagen
Head of Transformation Strategy, Financial Services, UK & Ireland
Oracle

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It began, as these things often do, in a steering meeting.

The CFO asked: *"Why did our liquidity buffer fall short this quarter despite strong inflows?"*

The usual suspects followed—payment delays, reconciliation issues, regional anomalies. Then the CIO chimed in: *"Didn't we roll out AI forecasting and ISO 20022 payments months ago?"*

The tools were there. But people weren't ready to use them.

A People-Centric Challenge in a Digital Treasury

According to PwC's 2024 Global Treasury Survey, 72% of finance leaders cite talent shortages as a key obstacle to real-time liquidity. Deloitte adds that two-thirds of banks and corporates are struggling to find people with the right mix of payments, regulatory, and digital skills.

Where Capability Breaks Down

A consumer goods firm improved forecasting accuracy by 30%, but treasury teams didn't understand the model outputs. A smart contract pilot for intercompany settlements collapsed due to limited understanding of token flows and distributed ledger technology (DLT). ISO 20022 went live, but client-facing staff couldn't articulate the benefits of richer data.

The technology was sound. The talent model was not.

The Roles Must Evolve

Emerging technologies are reshaping treasury and payments, from AI-driven forecasting and anomaly detection to APIs enabling real-time data flows, and blockchain introducing programmable payments and smart contracts. Even legacy treasury management systems are giving way to agile, cloud-native platforms.

In this environment, success demands less process expertise and more data literacy, systems thinking, and adaptability.

What the Future Treasury Team Looks Like

The treasury professional of tomorrow will blend traditional finance acumen with new capabilities: analytical curiosity to interrogate data, operational agility to work with evolving systems, digital fluency with new platforms, and the strategic perspective to influence decisions beyond treasury.

Shaping these capabilities requires coordinated effort between finance and HR, from rethinking recruitment to aligning development and internal mobility with evolving demands.

The Capabilities HR Needs to Build

To support this shift, HR must grow into a more strategic partner. That means planning the workforce in line with tech changes, mapping skills to real-world digital use cases, and building job architectures that support hybrid roles like Treasury Tech Leads or Payments Analysts.

Development pathways should be based on practical business scenarios. Internal mobility needs clearer frameworks for career shifts. Change enablement must go hand-in-hand with system rollouts. And talent analytics should link skill data directly to business outcomes.

How Jobs Are Changing

As automation, APIs, and real-time data redefine treasury, some roles are fading while others evolve or emerge entirely.

Reconciliation clerks, manual report generators, and file-based payment processors are disappearing. Meanwhile, cash managers are becoming more analytical, supporting strategic liquidity through scenario planning. Treasury operations staff are evolving into systems and data specialists, and relationship managers are taking on a more consultative role to help clients understand complex infrastructures and enriched data insights.

Digital transformation is also spawning new roles: forecasting analysts using machine learning to enhance visibility, digital settlement specialists managing token-based payments and smart contracts, and payments solution architects designing seamless, end-to-end digital payment journeys.

Five Actions to Modernise Treasury Talent Strategy

1. *Assess how technology is reshaping roles* across treasury, payments, and transaction banking.

2. *Map skills that drive outcomes* rather than focusing solely on legacy job titles.

3. *Ground learning in real use cases* like AI-driven forecasting and ISO 20022 reconciliation.

4. *Support cross-functional mobility* with clear, structured development paths.

5. *Select vendors that enable capability building*, not just system delivery.

Final Thoughts

The winners in the next phase of treasury transformation won't be the ones with the flashiest tech—but the ones with the most adaptable teams.

Because while money moves faster, smarter, and more securely than ever, **i**t's still people who make it work.

... Let's keep talking!

Chris Hagen brings over 25 years of international leadership experience across the financial services and technology sectors, with a proven track record in strategic transformation, operational excellence, and value-driven change. Since 2019, Chris has been with Oracle, where he has held senior roles across UK & Ireland in London and previously in the APAC region in Singapore.

Before joining Oracle, Chris held leadership and subject matter expert positions at Standard Chartered Bank, Deutsche Bank, and DZ Bank, driving global transformation programs across APAC, EMEA and North America.

A recognized thought leader and frequent speaker at global conferences and industry forums, Chris holds degrees from the London School of Economics and the Singapore Institute of Management.

Christopher Hagen
Head of Transformation Strategy,
Financial Services, UK & Ireland
Oracle