



ASSOCIATION FOR  
FINANCIAL  
PROFESSIONALS

AFP TREASURY IN PRACTICE GUIDE

# AI-Ready Treasury

Underwritten by

WELLS  
FARGO



**WELLS  
FARGO**

Powered by advances in artificial intelligence, corporate treasury is evolving as organizations seek more strategic ways to manage cash, risk and liquidity. As AI becomes embedded in decision making, treasury teams are becoming strategic partners within their organizations, moving beyond day-to-day execution to play a more influential role in shaping business outcomes. No longer a future concept, AI is actively changing how work is prioritized and value is delivered, enabling teams to move past routine transaction processing and backward looking reporting toward deeper insight and strategic engagement. For treasury leaders, the question is not whether AI matters, but how to adopt it thoughtfully. As expectations continue to rise, leaders are being challenged to modernize not only their tools, but their operating mindset.

This guide offers a practical perspective on what it means to become “AI-ready” in treasury today. It focuses on preparation: understanding where AI can genuinely help, where human expertise remains essential and how the two work best together. The result is a guide designed to help treasury professionals navigate change with confidence, make more informed decisions and position their teams to deliver greater strategic impact in an increasingly dynamic environment.

Wells Fargo, Global Payments & Liquidity



## CONTENTS

- 4 INTRODUCTION
- 5 UNDERSTANDING AI: CAPABILITIES AND USE CASES
- 6 AI PROMPTS FOR TREASURY
- 7 MANAGING THE RISKS OF AI IMPLEMENTATION
- 9 AI STRATEGY
- 10 PUTTING AI INTO TREASURY PRACTICE
- 11 CONCLUSION: POSITIONING FOR THE FUTURE

WELLS  
FARGO

# Treasury Takeaways

PODCAST

Explore key trends in working capital on the new Wells Fargo Treasury Takeaways Podcast.

This fast-paced discussion delves into the external forces impacting treasurers, including technological changes, macroeconomic shifts and geopolitical uncertainty. How can companies navigate these external elements, while maximizing their impact to the organizations they support? Listen in as industry experts discuss best practices and strategies for success.

© 2024 Wells Fargo & Company. Deposit products are offered through Wells Fargo Bank, N.A., Member FDIC. Wells Fargo Bank, N.A. is a banking affiliate of Wells Fargo & Company.



# INTRODUCTION

Artificial intelligence (AI) is reshaping nearly every area of business — and treasury is no exception. AI creates opportunities to automate key tasks and decision-making processes, freeing up management’s time to focus on more value-added activities. Yet, as with any technological change, realizing these efficiencies requires preparation — in this case, recognition of the pain points in treasury processes and the development of a clear data strategy. Only then is it possible to implement AI in a way that will complement treasury’s existing skills and help the function to become a stronger partner to the business.

This guide is presented in four sections. The first section outlines the different types of AI and illustrates how the technology is being used in treasury departments. The second section describes some of the key risks to manage and hurdles to overcome. The third section examines how AI can be used to bridge different skills gaps within treasury departments. Finally, the guide concludes with a discussion of the specific skills needed within treasury to implement AI and outlines different ways to acquire them.



# UNDERSTANDING AI: CAPABILITIES AND USE CASES

AI is a broad term used to describe a range of technologies, which can make some of the language surrounding its use confusing. For example, what's labeled "AI" could be anything from cash application solutions to the fraud protection tools used by banks. From the perspective of today's treasury department, there are three core AI concepts: machine learning, generative AI and agentic AI.

## Machine learning

Machine learning is the most established form of AI. Broadly speaking, machine learning works by recognizing patterns and trends in data and identifying data anomalies. This functionality can be used to develop more accurate cash forecasts and drive cash application solutions, both of which lead to a more efficient use of working capital. The rapid detection of anomalies helps protect against the significant risk of payment and other types of fraud.

## Generative AI

Generative AI (GenAI), which works through natural language, supports a wide range of use cases. First, it can be used to draft first iterations of content such as reports, RFPs and contracts. For example, GenAI can compare the payment terms recorded in an ERP system with those in a contract and feed the results into cash forecasts.

Second, users can ask questions of the data directly, without the need for specialized reporting tools. For example, treasurers can ask free-form questions to identify data points and trends, such as "What is our cash position?" and "What is our expected cash position at the end of the month?" This functionality can be extended to provide executive leadership with more immediate access to information.

There is a learning process too. "With generative AI, we have to learn how to write the queries, so we get the information we need in the right format," said Tara Herrera, Senior Vice President and Treasurer, Related.

## Agentic AI

Agentic AI represents an extension of AI's scope and functionality. AI can calculate positions and identify trends, and agentic AI empowers the technology to make decisions based on reasoned outcomes within preset parameters. So, for example, agentic AI would be able to automate both the decision to hedge a foreign exchange exposure and its implementation. While agentic AI is largely the future for now, there are examples of this functionality being used today.

**"Agentic AI represents the next phase of treasury automation, where systems can act within defined parameters. While adoption will be gradual, disciplined experimentation today will help organizations prepare for more autonomous models without compromising governance or control."**

— Ather Williams III, Executive Vice President, Head of Global Payments & Liquidity and Wholesale Digital, Wells Fargo



# AI PROMPTS FOR TREASURY

Below are examples of AI prompts that some members of AFP's Treasury Advisory Group use in their workflows.



## PROBLEM-SOLVING PROMPT

### Design

- [specify output, e.g., strategy, initiative, blueprint]
- [specify function or discipline]
- [specify primary goal or outcome, e.g., enhance engagement, foster innovation, improve performance]

### Propose

- [specify tools, mechanisms, approaches, etc.]
- [specify desired outcomes]
- Explain how [specify tools, mechanisms, approaches, etc.] will help achieve the desired outcomes. Provide evaluation criteria and metrics that could be used to measure their effectiveness and impact.



### Example: Crisis and resilience planning

Design a proactive crisis preparedness and financial resilience strategy for treasury management that aims to prepare the treasury function to respond to financial disruptions caused by global economic shifts, natural disasters and geopolitical tensions.

Propose innovative tools and techniques to ensure the organization's financial stability during uncertain times. Explain how these tools and techniques will help achieve the desired outcomes. Provide evaluation criteria and metrics that could be used to measure their effectiveness and impact.

# AI PROMPTS FOR TREASURY CONTINUED



## DELIVERABLE CREATION PROMPT

### Description

- You are the [role] for a [describe company] operating primarily in [describe geographic region or market].
- The treasury function is [describe structure, e.g., centralized, decentralized, hybrid]. The company experiences [describe unique operating conditions, such as seasonality, growth trends or constraints].

### Specify

- You need to [specific task or deliverable, e.g., develop a report, design a dashboard, draft a policy] for [specify audience] to [specify goal or decision-making purpose].

### Format

- In [preferred format, e.g., list, outline, table, etc.], what key [metrics or components] would you include?
- Then, create [specify deliverable] using [provide data or instruct it to use made-up data for a mockup].



### Example: Dashboard of key metrics

You are the treasurer for a large, privately held conglomerate operating primarily in the Midwest of the United States. The treasury function is centralized, with decentralized AR and AP. The company experiences highly seasonal cash flows, and it has significant working capital needs during the winter and summer months.

You need to create a one-page dashboard of key metrics for the CFO to have a monthly at-a-glance update.

In list format, what key metrics would you include? Then, create a mockup of a dashboard using made-up data and placeholders.



## INDUSTRY INTELLIGENCE PROMPT

### Personnel

- What are [persona] of [organization type or industry]
- Focused on when it comes to [focus area of decision-making]? [Ask layered sub-questions that explore the persona's decision-making framework.]



### Example: Competitor and market analysis

What are the CFOs of publicly traded, vertically integrated road construction and materials businesses focused on when it comes to balance sheet management?

- How do they think about leverage?
- How do they measure leverage?
- What macro shocks are they concerned about?

How will they generate liquidity if there is an immediate cash need?



## GENERAL PROMPTS

- Define the [term] in the context of [subject, e.g., insurance].
- Define key terms commonly included in [subject] agreement.
- Provide me with a policy framework [add purpose and parameters].
- What is the best chart or graph format to show [metric, measure or trend]?



# MANAGING THE RISKS OF AI IMPLEMENTATION

Results from the [2025 AFP Treasury Benchmarking Survey](#) show AI has already gained some traction within treasury departments. A quarter of those surveyed have implemented AI to some extent, and a further 39% expect to do so in the next couple of years.

As with any technology, treasurers need to feel confident that AI can deliver the results they expect. Although the AFP survey suggests that half of those who have implemented AI were unable to assess its impact on efficiency, there are steps treasurers can take to increase the potential benefits of adopting AI or extending its use.

## Access to data

Each form of AI relies on the technology having access to the appropriate and necessary data. At the same time, companies need to store data in a way that prevents unauthorized parties, both internal and external, from gaining access to proprietary information, intellectual property or customer information.

Managing this balance between access and control can be achieved by setting a data strategy. A company's data strategy will be determined by its specific requirements and should cover the following elements:

- **How data is understood and recognized.** What data does the company have, how and where (e.g., in which system) is data stored, and which solutions and systems have access to specific data? Data may need to be tagged to be accessible to various solutions.
- **How data is collated.** Where does the required data come from: internal systems (e.g., TMS or ERP system) or external sources (e.g., banks)? How is data captured from those various sources? Treasury needs to be confident that any data collation process is secure (i.e., third parties cannot gain access to and/or alter any data) and efficient (i.e., data is collated in a timely fashion). The use of API technology can ease the collation process.
- **How data is controlled.** One requirement is to ring-fence confidential data (e.g., sensitive internal data, as well as customer and supplier data) to control its use by AI-driven solutions. Any AI-driven treasury technology (e.g., a cash forecasting solution or GenAI) should only use approved and authenticated data (e.g., the data should not be subject to copyright restrictions), and it should not breach any regulatory restrictions (e.g., the timely publication of market-sensitive information).

## Understanding of AI processing

It is important that treasurers understand the capabilities of AI and how it can be harnessed to improve operational efficiency in departmental processes. Mapping existing processes and finding any specific pain points will help to identify where an AI-enabled solution could fit within an operational workflow.

Any new solution should provide an output that is better — more accurate, faster and/or more efficient. During testing, and once implemented, treasurers need to be able to perform a form of variance analysis. This serves two purposes. First, it allows the new tool's effectiveness to be analyzed. Second, identifying the reasons behind any variances will allow treasurers to continue to improve the process to achieve further accuracy and efficiency.

## Ability to deploy AI

Finally, there is the perennial problem of resourcing the implementation of any new technology. In the 2025 AFP Treasury Benchmarking Survey, 60% of respondents identified high costs and a lack of resources as barriers to the adoption of new technology, including AI. Half also identified a lack of skills within treasury to use new technology and a limited availability of IT staff to implement it as a further barrier. The good news is that only 7% of senior managers and 10% of treasury staff are unwilling to adopt new technology. The incentive for companies is simple: "Company valuations are higher for those organizations that have an AI strategy," said James Kelly, Co-founder, Your Treasury.



# AI STRATEGY

At this stage, a practical AI strategy focuses on automating key processes to free up treasury's time to improve performance elsewhere. The first step is to identify pain points that could be improved by the adoption of AI, then design and test a new process for potential efficiency gains before implementing the solution.

## Identifying pain points

The 2025 AFP Treasury Benchmarking Survey identified a number of tasks that pose problems for corporate treasury departments. The most common responses were cash and liquidity forecasting, payments management and improving working capital, along with more general concerns regarding the challenges of automating manual processes and transforming treasury through the implementation of new technology.

At the leadership level, the survey identified some significant gaps between what senior treasury professionals consider to be important skills and their view of their own effectiveness at carrying them out. The identified gaps were all in areas that might be considered soft skills — communication, strategic thinking, collaborative skills and analytical skills — rather than technical treasury skills.

## Using AI to manage pain points

It can be helpful to view AI as simply another tool to support the organization. Given access to the required data and

designed to address specific issues within set parameters, AI can potentially identify patterns and trends and make reasoned decisions. "AI is already helping treasury teams decide how long, how much and in which currency to invest," said Britta Döttger, Head of Treasury at Roche.<sup>1</sup>

AI cannot replace some of the key value-adding roles of corporate treasury identified in the 2025 AFP Treasury Benchmarking Survey, such as strategic thinker, future planner, communicator and driver of change. Consequently, the general approach is to use AI to improve specific technical processes, especially those that consume disproportionate levels of management time. In turn, this will release time for treasurers to address the value-adding roles described above, and to address exceptions, including those activities that AI cannot deal with or that treasurers do not trust AI to manage.

Over time, as treasurers become more comfortable with the technology, there will be opportunities to use AI, as Kelly suggested, to "reimagine multiple processes to create something meaningful."

---

<sup>1</sup>Richards, M. (Host). (2024 January 2). AI, Digital Currencies and the Evolution of Treasury with Britta Döttger (No. 304) [Audio podcast episode]. In *The Treasury Career Corner*. <https://treasuryrecruitment.com/podcast/ep-304-ai-digital-currencies-and-the-evolution-of-treasury-with-britta-dottger/>



## AI STRATEGY CONTINUED

### Developing targeted solutions

The focus on solving particular problems can add real value to corporate treasury departments. “The best examples are practical and driven by necessity: NASDAQ uses FX bots to scrape their balance sheet daily and execute trades — what used to take days now takes 20 minutes,” said Mike Richards, CEO, The Treasury Recruitment Company. “ASML built a cash forecasting tool in-house using just two people and open-source Python. It’s now 97% accurate and outperforms their manual forecasts. Twoday Group created AI tools with built-in rule sets, replacing the need for a TMS altogether in some cases. They built targeted solutions that addressed real inefficiencies.”

Herrera knew there was an error in the way the bank had calculated interest on some of Related’s many bank accounts. A simple AI query was able to identify the affected accounts, providing a quick resolution to what “would otherwise have been a time-consuming task,” she said.

Focus is the key. Success comes “not as much from using AI as it does from understanding treasury,” said Bob Stark, Global Head of Market Strategy, Kyriba. “You have to understand the process where you want to use AI. Then, you calculate how and/or why the AI process is better than that.”

### Use efficiency gains to hone soft skills

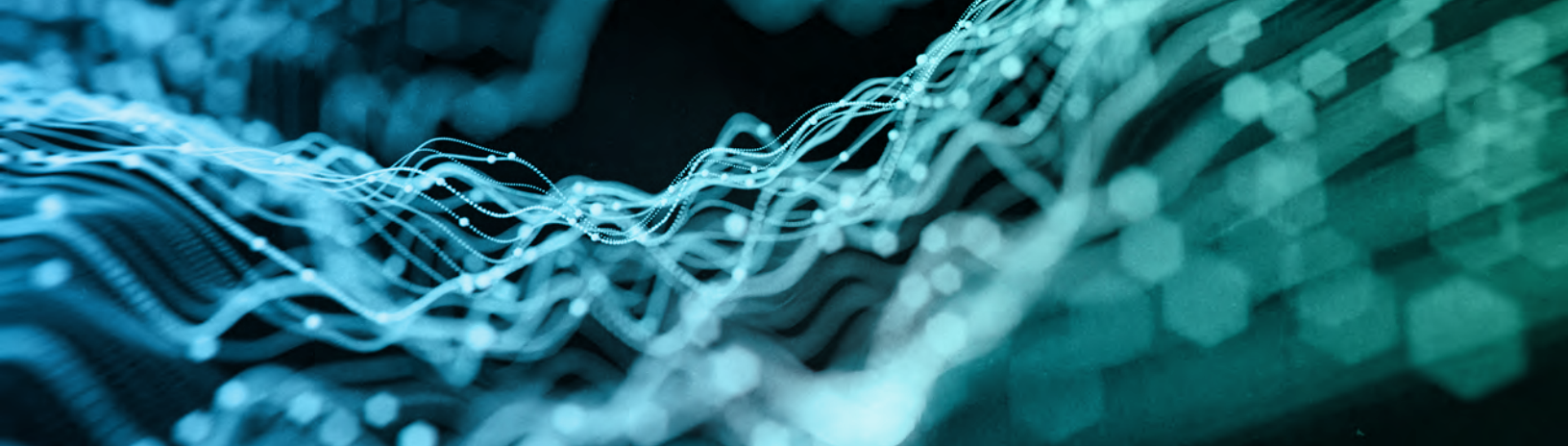
In practical terms, efficiency gains often translate into working capital improvements. For example, more timely and accurate cash forecasting lets companies hold less precautionary cash, freeing funds to reinvest in the business or reduce borrowing costs.

Efficiency gains also lead to changes in the role of treasury. Over the last 20 years or so, the increasing use of technology in treasury has led to automation of core tasks, freeing time for treasurers to become more proactive within the business. AI represents the next level in this transition, offering greater opportunities for automation and deeper analysis of company data.

AI-driven automation frees treasurers to focus on higher-value skills, such as communication, which was highlighted as important in the 2025 AFP Treasury Benchmarking Survey. With more time and access to deeper analysis, treasurers can better support strategic planning and provide clearer evidence for change, making treasury more valuable to the organization as a whole.

“As Dana Laidhold at NASDAQ said, ‘We don’t deal with data — we deal with analysis.’ That shift only happens when you’ve automated the low-value tasks.”

— Mike Richards, CEO, The Treasury Recruitment Company



# PUTTING AI INTO TREASURY PRACTICE

While the potential benefits of AI implementation seem clear, determining how to proceed can seem daunting, especially for treasury departments with limited resources. For many, two key questions dominate. First, how can the department acquire the skills necessary to run one or more AI-powered processes? Second, how does the department ensure each AI-powered process provides a better outcome than the existing method?

## Identifying required AI skills

Broadly speaking, treasury departments will need a combination of three different AI-related skills: the ability to create AI processes, explain the outcomes of AI processes and oversee the integration of AI processes with the overall departmental workflow.

- Because AI is evolving rapidly, treasurers can't expect to hire candidates who are already proficient in AI technology, let alone someone who has the skills needed for what will emerge in two to three years' time. Instead, the goal should be to build teams of people who are open to trying new technology and willing to experiment with AI.
- AI is already changing the way treasury departments access and manipulate the wide range of data available to them. Treasury needs to be able to understand the relevance of the newly available analysis and communicate that to relevant decision-makers.
- \* While senior treasurers do not necessarily need to have hands-on experience with AI, they do need to understand what AI can do. "There are many different types of AI models. Knowing how to choose which one to use for which purpose is going to be more important," said Kelly. "[Treasurers should choose] a simpler, more transparent model, with granular data, where [they] can see the detail if something goes wrong."

## Encouraging AI skills development

Department leaders can take a number of steps to encourage the use of AI. Creating an environment where experimentation is encouraged, they help team members build confidence with the technology and, importantly, identify opportunities to apply it to solve real problems and achieve wider operational efficiencies.

“Treasury departments need translators — treasury professionals who are comfortable asking, ‘Can this be automated?’ or ‘Is there a smarter way?’”

— Mike Richards, CEO, The Treasury Recruitment Company

“Support with training, not pressure. AI confidence grows from experimentation. Employers that give their teams time to learn and test ideas will see the biggest wins.”

— Mike Richards, CEO, The Treasury Recruitment Company

# PUTTING AI INTO TREASURY PRACTICE CONTINUED

## Acquiring AI skills

One practical way to develop AI skills is to use the tools alongside existing activities. This helps users understand how the technology works and determine whether it delivers a superior outcome. There is a wide range of online tools available to support this learning. The [AFP Digital Badge: AI in Treasury](#) is available online and provides a concise introductory guide to the capabilities of GenAI (including ChatGPT) and its relevance to corporate treasury. The course also discusses some of the key risks associated with the technology and how to manage them.

Treasurers can also take a broader approach by providing access to training. “We want [the treasury team] to be as comfortable with new technology as they are with Excel,” said Kelly. “We want them to use it and trial [AI]. We want to empower people by including them in determining what the new [AI] process will be.”

**“Technology doesn’t create value on its own, people do. Treasury teams need the skills and confidence to work alongside AI, applying judgment and business context to turn insights into better decisions.**

— Ather Williams III, Executive Vice President, Head of Global Payments & Liquidity and Wholesale Digital, Wells Fargo

Kelly highlighted collaboration as a key skill, noting that it requires team members to remain open-minded. When discussing the introduction of AI, it’s better to focus on how the technology supports the team’s work rather than on replacing specific tasks, which may cause individuals to view their positions as being under threat. “There is a conflict between companies wanting to use AI for cost-cutting and the benefits that come from upskilling and collaboration in the form of better results,” said Kelly. His view is that costs will fall over time through normal staff turnover and through opportunities to redeploy staff naturally.

**“AI-enabled processes are the future of treasury management. They can offer deeper knowledge, insights and understanding and have the potential to evolve the role of treasury management professionals to be more strategic, and add more value.”**

— Ather Williams III, Executive Vice President, Head of Global Payments & Liquidity and Wholesale Digital, Wells Fargo

## Building treasury expertise

Understanding the limits of AI is a critical skill. Treasurers must be able to assess the technology’s output — both to improve efficiency through ongoing training of the technology and to prevent costly errors. That requires team members to maintain fundamental treasury knowledge and skills while continuing to build their expertise.

Richards advised treasury professionals to be curious. “Get familiar with what is possible while focusing on the business impact,” he said.

**There is value in experience. “The technology is a leveler: a young person might find the tech more instinctive, but more experience allows a deeper understanding of the context of any information and recommendations provided.”**

— James Kelly, Co-founder, Your Treasury



# CONCLUSION: POSITIONING FOR THE FUTURE

With a significant proportion of treasurers expecting to implement some form of AI in the next couple of years, the real question is how to prepare treasury to gain the most from it. There are a number of ways to do so:

- 1. Provide opportunities for team members to explore the technology.** Encourage experimentation with AI tools and test their ideas.
- 2. Think about data and implementing a data strategy.** Identify whether treasury has access to specific data.
- 3. Map out existing processes and try to identify pain points.** At present, the most effective uses of AI involve the further automation of time-consuming processes.
- 4. Remember treasury technical skills and emphasize control.** AI is only as effective as the parameters it is given. Consider which decisions can be automated, where human decisions and authorizations are required, and how these processes will be controlled.
- 5. Consider opportunities for change.** Think about what technology can achieve and where it might fit. Focus on whether implementing a new solution now will improve efficiency today, rather than worrying about how the technology might evolve.
- 6. Use time freed through automation to focus on the value-added skills that AI cannot do,** including strategic analysis, communication and change management.
- 7. Build relationships with company leadership.** At present, the C-suite and board still rely on the CFO and treasury for data when setting strategy and reviewing performance. But this relationship will change as GenAI enables leadership to query data directly and generate their own reports. “Instead of reporting, treasurers increasingly need to use AI to interpret insights, influence decisions, and lead practical change,” said Richards.

Ultimately, technology is only valuable when it drives meaningful outcomes. AI is no different. Its adoption represents the next stage in the emergence of treasury as a key strategic partner to the business.

**Association for Financial Professionals: AFP Treasury in Practice Guide: AI-Ready Treasury**

**Copyright 2026 by the Association for Financial Professionals (AFP).**

**All Rights Reserved.**

This work is intended solely for the personal and noncommercial use of the reader. All other uses of this work, or the information included therein, is strictly prohibited absent prior express written consent of the Association for Financial Professionals. Association for Financial Professionals: *AFP Treasury in Practice Guide: AI-Ready Treasury*, or the information included therein, may not be reproduced, publicly displayed, or transmitted in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including but not limited to photocopy, recording, dissemination through online networks or through any other information storage or retrieval system known now or in the future, without the express written permission of the Association for Financial Professionals. In addition, this work may not be embedded in or distributed through commercial software or applications without appropriate licensing agreements with the Association for Financial Professionals. Each violation of this copyright notice or the copyright owner's other rights, may result in legal action by the copyright owner and enforcement of the owner's rights to the full extent permitted by law, which may include financial penalties of up to \$150,000 per violation.

This publication is not intended to offer or provide accounting, legal or other professional advice. The Association for Financial Professionals recommends that you seek accounting, legal or other professional advice as may be necessary based on your knowledge of the subject matter.



All inquiries should be addressed to:

Association for Financial Professionals

12345 Parklawn Drive

Suite 200

PMB 1001

Rockville, MD 20852

301.907.2862

[AFP@financialprofessionals.org](mailto:AFP@financialprofessionals.org)

[www.financialprofessionals.org](http://www.financialprofessionals.org)

## About the Authors



**Guy Voizey, WWCP Ltd**

Guy Voizey has been a financial writer and editor for over 20 years. He is a director of WWCP Ltd, a research and publishing company, which specializes in the provision of information and editorial on corporate treasury and cash management. Guy wrote (or co-wrote) four books co-published by WWCP. In addition, Guy has also written over 20 executive and other guides for AFP, covering a range of topics, including liquidity management, cybersecurity, capital structure, taxation, and accounting. Guy edited the AFP's Essentials of Treasury Management (7th edition).



**Tom Hunt, CTP, Director, Treasury Services and Payments**

Tom Hunt, CTP, is the Director of Treasury Services at the Association for Financial Professionals. Hunt has more than 15 years of direct treasury experience working across different industries, including various roles at Medtronic, Fairview Health Systems and, most recently, at 3M Company. At 3M, he oversaw the global banking strategy, redesigned and implemented a new domestic cash management structure and led acquisition activities for the treasury department. He holds an MBA in finance from the Opus College of Business at the University of St. Thomas in St. Paul, MN.

[thunt@financialprofessionals.org](mailto:thunt@financialprofessionals.org)



ASSOCIATION FOR  
FINANCIAL  
PROFESSIONALS

### About AFP®

Headquartered outside of Washington, D.C. and located regionally in Singapore, the Association for Financial Professionals (AFP) is the professional society committed to advancing the success of treasury and finance members and their organizations. AFP established and administers the Certified Treasury Professional® and Certified Corporate FP&A Professional® credentials, which set standards of excellence in treasury and finance. Each year, AFP hosts the largest networking conference worldwide for more than 7,000 corporate financial professionals. AFP also hosts the FP&A Forum annually, where top finance and FP&A professionals meet in-person for education and peer networking.

12345 Parklawn Drive Suite 200 PMB 1001

Rockville, MD 20852

T: +1 301.907.2862 | F: +1 301.907.2864

[www.financialprofessionals.org](http://www.financialprofessionals.org)