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## Merrill Lynch launches hybrid digital-human advice platform

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By Editorial Staff      Thu, Feb 9, 2017

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Merrill Lynch has launched its hybrid robo-human digital advisory platform, Merrill Edge Guided Investing, which “combines expert insight with the convenience and flexibility of online management,” according to a release this week.

Through the new platform, investors at any asset level can access strategies “built and managed by the Global Wealth & Investment Management (GWIM) Chief Investment Office, not by algorithms,” the release said.

Web-based, advisor-assisted investment solutions, a hybrid between human advice and robo-advice, is widely seen as the future of advice for mass-affluent investors. “Merrill Edge Guided Investing is our way of bringing together advice and technology to create stronger relationships with investors,” said Aron Levine, head of Merrill Edge.

A Merrill Edge Guided Investing account on MerrillEdge.com can be opened with \$5,000 or more. Clients specify an investing goal, and, based on the information they provide, receive a recommended investment strategy designed by a team of Merrill Lynch investment experts. They are then presented with options to open and fund the account.

GWIM’s Chief Investment Office develops the investment strategies, including providing its recommendations of ETFs and related asset allocations. Managed Account Advisors LLC, Merrill Lynch’s affiliate, is the portfolio manager responsible for implementing the Merrill Edge Guided Investing strategies for client accounts based on the GWIM CIO’s recommendations.

Merrill Edge Guided Investing can be a complement to a client’s existing Merrill Edge, Merrill Lynch or U.S. Trust relationship. Clients can view their Merrill Edge investments and Bank of America bank accounts on one page online. They also have access to one-on-one guidance and competitive pricing for online trades.

If clients want customized financial advice and guidance, they can use Merrill Edge Roadmap to work one-on-one with a Merrill Edge Financial Solutions Advisor.

Merrill Lynch Wealth Management is among the largest provider of wealth management and investment services for individuals and businesses globally, with \$2.1 trillion in client balances as of December 31, 2016.

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