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Is it time for a different kind of financial advisor?

Three independent advisors explain why you may want to consider a registered investment advisor (RIA).

Maybe you're not actually dissatisfied with your current financial advisor—it's just that you have the nagging feeling you're not getting the attention or the kind of advice you really need. You're not alone. It's a common concern among investors who have accumulated substantial wealth. In more and more cases, they are turning to an RIA.

RiA

STANDS FOR YOU.

Discover the difference with a Registered Investment Advisor.

What makes an RIA different?

An RIA is a professional advisory firm that offers personalized financial advice to clients who require a high level of investment management strategy and consultation.[1]

In the last ten years, investors have transferred a staggering amount of assets to the care of registered investment advisors, reaching $2.8 trillion by 2011.[2] And while the choice of a financial advisor is a highly individual decision, here are some of the most common reasons why investors make the switch.

1. A personal focus on service.

Karen, who founded her own RIA firm in New Hampshire, explains it this way: "We get to know people in ways that you never thought possible...really deep down...and what drives them, why they're entrepreneurs or physicians, what's their passion, and what their relationship is with money." For her, taking the time to really know her clients is key to her firm's success and her job satisfaction.

2. Independence.

Many RIAs are owned and operated by the individual advisors who run them. They believe that their independence is instrumental to offering advice based on their clients' best interests.

"We're not really tied to any one particular family of funds or any one particular broker situation," says Elaine, an advisor principal from Indiana, "we're very open and able to use the universe of products available."

3. Fiduciary responsibility.

While many investment advisors may put their clients' interests first, RIAs are legally required to do so.[4] "We would do that because it's the right thing to do, but the Securities and Exchange Commission holds us accountable to it," Elaine continues.

Peter, an advisor from Minnesota adds, "I chose to be an RIA because I operate with a fiduciary mindset. My organization is lined up to do exactly what our clients want. Whatever their issues are, wherever their life and wealth intersect, I can make a difference."

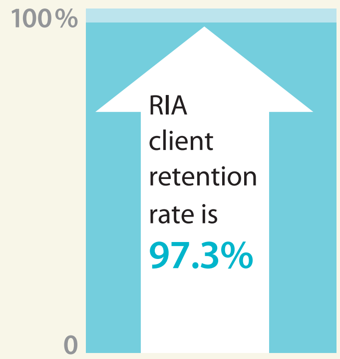
4. You know what you're paying for and where your money is held.

Typically, fees are based on a percentage of assets managed, so the RIA has a vested interest in your success. Additionally, RIAs most often use independent custodians to hold clients' assets. For many investors, this provides a reassuring system of checks and balances—your money is not held by the same person who advises you about how to invest it.

To learn more about how to choose an advisor you can feel comfortable with and hear stories from investors who have made the switch to an RIA, visit riastandsforyou.com.

Why an independent RIA might be a good choice

Independent advisors can tailor solutions to your goals by making available a wide universe of products and services (sometimes through collaboration with specialists). You can feel assured that your advisor is looking at the big picture with your best interests in mind.



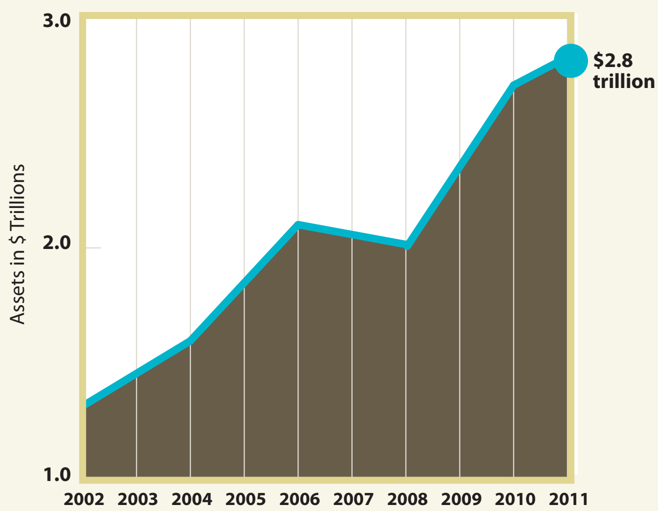
Clients value RIAs

RIAs build strong relationships[3]

More investors are choosing RIAs

Assets under RIA management grew by 115% to **$2.8 trillion** from 2002 through 2011[2]

Growth of assets under RIA management



[1] RIA firms register with the Securities and Exchange Commission or state securities regulators and are subject to the Investment Advisers Act of 1940. State-registered advisers are subject state specific securities rules that may differ from federal regulation. Individual advisors are subject to the same standard as the RIA whether the individual is required to be registered or not.
[2] Sources: Cerulli Associates, company reports, and Charles Schwab strategy estimates 2012.
[3] Source: Charles Schwab RIA Benchmarking Studies (study fielded February and March 2012, with self-reported data from 1,025 firms).
[4] Under the Advisers Act and similar state statutes, an advisor is a fiduciary. Fundamental to the federal fiduciary standard are the duties of loyalty and care which require an adviser to serve the best interests of its clients, including an obligation not to subordinate the clients' interests to its own.

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