

Case Study: Raising Awareness of A Financial Planning Software Provider

The Situation

A financial planning software provider that first launched in 2011 was seeking to accelerate awareness of its product.

The firm had partnered with a well-known academic researcher to create an innovative financial planning platform based on behavioral science and more accurate planning calculations. But despite the fact that the academic partner's independent research was widely read and well regarded, he had no outward-facing affiliation with the financial planning software firm.

Upon hiring a new distribution team in 2016, the firm decided it needed a concerted communication effort aimed at raising awareness of the firm and supporting its new distribution team.

The Lowe Group was brought in to lead a national awareness campaign focused on three primary objectives:

- 1) Raise awareness of the firm among financial advisors
- 2) Help advisors see the value of a plan-centric practice
- 3) Drive software demos and sales leads

The Approach

The Lowe Group developed messaging that summarized our client's value proposition. We coached executive management and the distribution team to work these points into every interview or sales meeting.

We conducted a thorough audit of the firm's existing content and created a content development plan. We prioritized a detailed whitepaper bylined by the academic researcher, and a series of articles. For the articles, we focused on three major industry movements relevant to our client's product:

- 1) As active management underperformed passive, investment-focused advisors were finding it hard to add value through investment selection alone
- 2) The rise of robo-advisors motivated many advisors to leverage technology to generate efficiencies and add value
- 3) Advisors were looking for ways to demonstrate compliance with the pending DOL Fiduciary Rule

The Lowe Group leveraged these articles to secure media interviews, create fresh blog content, support the distribution team's efforts and reinvigorate the client's social media content.

By anchoring the content to topical industry news, we were able to tell our client's narrative in a way that was relevant and engaging to advisors.

We conducted a social media audit for the client, created a social media policy, developed social media content, built Twitter lists and managed the client's Twitter and LinkedIn accounts for several months.

We also devised a strategy to more closely align the academic researcher with our client which included a new title (Chief Planning Strategist), the bylined whitepaper, sharing his research on social media, arranging joint media interviews for him and the firm CEO and nominating him for the *Investment News* "Icons and Innovators" Award.

The Result

We secured media interviews for our client with advisory trade publications and arranged in-depth meetings with Jason Zweig and Brian Herschberg of *The Wall Street Journal*. Other media opportunities included *CNBC*, *MarketWatch* and *Bloomberg*.

Over the course of only 4 months, our client received a significant increase in quality media coverage in key advisor publications including *Investment News*, *FA Mag*, *RIA Biz*, *Financial Planning*, *Wealthmanagement.com*, the Michael Kitces blog and a financial podcast.

The client's Chief Planning Strategist was selected as a finalist for the *Investment News* "Icons and Innovators Award." His work was also praised in a *Wall Street Journal* article, which we repackaged into a client email about best practices for calculating retirement risk.

Our client's social media followers and engagement spiked. Some of the new followers were key industry reporters and influencers.

Over the course of our engagement, our media efforts helped drive traffic to the client's website and online demos, thereby helping the sales team build their pipeline.