



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

For more information, contact:
Audrey Froehlich, WalshCOMM
602-957-9779
afroehlich@walshcomm.com

What is the value of a financial advising firm?

Stoker Ostler Explains How Financial Professionals Benefit You

Scottsdale, Ariz. (December 11, 2008)...The “do-it-yourself” method has become the new mantra for a multitude of tough tasks like home renovation, auto care, and landscaping. Yet when it comes to your finances, should you rely on your own knowledge, or seek the aid of a professional?

While the answer to that question may vary depending upon your income and life circumstances, most millionaires and millionaires-in-the-making in the U.S. rely on professional financial advice, according to a study conducted by Fidelity Registered Investment Advisor Group. The study found that about 70 percent of the 2,500 millionaires surveyed use a financial advisor. Of the 30 percent who did not use an advisor, about half said they planned to find an advisor within a year.

“Investors turn to financial advisors for very specific reasons that may include retirement planning, charitable gifting, educational goals and so much more,” said Creg Ostler, co-managing partner of Stoker Ostler Wealth Advisors. “The role of the wealth advisor is to understand a client’s personal goals and values and then assist the client in meeting those goals.”

In fact, a large part of an individual client’s satisfaction deals with how their financial advisor best serves their needs and goals. So you should ask yourself these questions to be sure your financial advisor is meeting your needs:

- Does my financial advisor have a clear plan in place to meet my goals?
- Does my financial advisor understand my financial standing?
- Do I have confidence in my financial planner?

If you are debating whether a financial advisor is right for you, Stoker Ostler offers five considerations you need to take into account:

- **Major Life Events** – Major life events such as retirement, sale of a business, divorce, sale of a real estate holding or switching careers all have significant impacts on your finances. A financial advisor can help you wade through the “what ifs” and devise plans that will help you reach toward specific financial goals like retiring early, traveling or sending children to college. Constant communication with your advisor can help you stay on track financially as your life changes.

- **Financial Resources** – Most consumers do not have regular access to the resources that are available to professional financial advisors. Financial advising firms take advantage of full-time researchers, analysts and traders. Professional, certified advisors also undergo rigorous training in the financial arena and are considered “experts” in their fields. It’s important that your advisor provide investment review statements to help you better understand your portfolio. In a recent survey of clients conducted by ClientAudit, clients of Stoker Ostler stated that the most valuable tool provided by their financial advisor was the clearly written, easily understood statements of financial standing that helped them better understand exactly where they are in relation to their goals.
- **Asset Allocation** – Asset allocation and diversification are central to a proper investment strategy. Putting all of your eggs into one basket could be disastrous if the sole investment fails to perform well or, as has been happening recently, fails completely. Financial advisors are trained in asset allocation, which is, splitting investments among a variety of investment instruments. This way, if one investment performs poorly, you have other sources of funding that to rely upon. Asset allocation is extremely personalized, so what works for a good friend or family member may not work for you. Your financial advisor needs to get to know you personally so he or she can help you create a personalized plan based on your individual needs. According to Stoker Ostler clients surveyed this year, the building of trust and understanding by their advisor was very important to the investment relationship with their portfolio manager. When your advisor cares about more than just your investments, he or she will have your overall best interests at heart.
- **Additional Services** – In addition to financial planning, many investors need services such as tax planning, estate planning, retirement planning or insurance planning. Many advisors specialize in these specific areas so seeking their advice can help you achieve long-term goals. It’s important for your advisor to inform you about complimentary services like reviewing estate planning documents, discussing plans for your estate in family meetings and creating retirement planning models. Ask your advisor for referrals and guidance in these areas.
- **The True Cost** – Investors who are timid about using financial advisors are often put off by what they consider to be the high cost of professional advice. However, that cost is generally offset by set fees and tax advantages. Stick with a qualified financial professional and be sure to ask whether he or she is paid by commission on each purchase or sale or on a fee basis that depends on the overall growth and health of your portfolio.
- **Overall Financial Health** - Everyone has the potential to be a millionaire in the making and your investor should have no lesser goal in mind for you. Savvy investors seek professional advice, save more money than they spend, don't spend frivolously but know how to enjoy life, keep an emergency fund, save for retirement and education expenses, and try to keep debt to a minimum. By creating a plan with your financial advisor to meet these goals, you too could be on your way to becoming a millionaire.

For more information, visit www.StokerOstler.com.

About Stoker Ostler Wealth Advisors

Founded in 1997, Stoker Ostler Wealth Advisors, formerly Private Wealth Management, is a fee-only wealth management firm that specializes in managing investments and providing financial planning for private individuals and families, small-to-medium-sized institutions and nonprofit organizations with investment assets greater than \$500,000. In addition, the firm provides reporting, periodic rebalancing and active tax management services for its clients.

Stoker Ostler manages over \$540,000,000 in total assets. Additional areas of expertise include: retirement planning, 401(k)/IRA distribution and issues related to the death of a spouse, divorce, inheritance and stock options.

The firm's founders, Philip Stoker and Creg Ostler, have more than 50 years of combined experience in wealth management. Stoker Ostler is employee-owned, allowing the company to steer clear of conflicts of interest that can arise when wealth managers are aligned with a product-based financial service company. Stoker Ostler's independence, combined with the long-standing relationships cultivated with other financial professionals, allows the firm to provide successful, unbiased financial guidance, based solely on the needs and expectations of each client.

Stoker Ostler is headquartered in Scottsdale, Ariz. with an additional office in Utah. For more information, call (480) 890-8088 or visit www.StokerOstler.com.