
Honorable Mention

By Editorial Staff *Thu, Jun 2, 2016*

Brief or late-breaking items from Morningstar, NFP and vWise.

Morningstar acquires fixed-income analytics firm

Morningstar, Inc., has acquired InvestSoft Technology, a provider of fixed-income analytics. Terms were not disclosed. Morningstar will gradually integrate the firm's capabilities into its data processing systems and product functionality, rebranding it under the Morningstar name.

InvestSoft helps investment firms analyze fixed-income securities and portfolios, primarily through its BondPro Fixed-Income Calculation Engine, which provides more than 130 analytic and accounting calculations.

"Our asset management and advisor clients have been asking for more robust fixed-income capabilities, and InvestSoft's analytics will help us create a more complete view of mutual fund and exchange-traded fund portfolios, providing investors with better transparency into bond funds," said Frannie Besztery, head of data for Morningstar, in a release.

Based in Framingham, Massachusetts, InvestSoft was found by Al Roitfarb in 1992 as Investment Technology. State Street acquired the firm in 2001, but Investment Technology re-acquired key software in 2005. In 2011, Al Roitfarb and his son, Todd Roitfarb, formed InvestSoft.

The younger Roitfarb has been CEO since joining InvestSoft in 2011. He previously held roles at Fidelity Investments, Merrill Lynch, and Ernst & Young. Al Roitfarb will become head of architecture, fixed income, and Todd will become head of fixed-income products for Morningstar. The investment banking firm DGZ Associates, Inc. advised InvestSoft on the transaction.

NFP acquires ERISA Fiduciary Advisors

NFP, an insurance broker and consultant that provides employee benefits, property & casualty, retirement, and individual insurance and wealth management solutions, has acquired ERISA Fiduciary Advisors, Inc. (EFA). The transaction closed on March 1, 2016.

Founded in 2005, EFA is an independent, fee-based registered investment advisor and retirement plan consultant with offices in Weston and Stuart, Fla. It provides fiduciary management processes for plan sponsors and fiduciary oversight for wealth management services.

The firm's principals, Thomas Bastin and Bradley Larsen, will both serve as managing director, Southeast, and report to Nick Della Vedova, president of the retirement division at NFP.

vWise announces video and digital plan enrollment process

vWise, Inc., a provider of digital solutions for retirement plan providers and plan advisors in Aliso Viejo, Calif., has introduced an interactive video-enriched online enrollment solution that it calls SmartEnroll.

Designed for plan providers, advisors, and their plan sponsor clients, SmartEnroll is intended to make enrollment simpler, reduce print/mail costs, facilitate recordkeeper transitions and allow access from desktops, tablets and smartphones.

According to a release, vWise solution "bite-sized content that can be watched, skipped, or watched again," and to spur participants to specific actions, such as completing a risk questionnaire, selecting a deferral amount or choosing investments. The experience can be delivered in English or Spanish, and customized to each plan sponsor's brand and preferences.

SmartEnroll allows data-capture and on-demand reporting and reduces administrative and call center burdens, as well as lowering the costs associated with enrollment kit printing and distribution. When used with SmartConnect, vWise's two-step, secure email capture tool, vWise solutions facilitate ongoing, targeted participant outreach, communication, and education.