
How to succeed in the DC investment-only market

By Editorial Staff Thu, Nov 23, 2017

Five firms 'are carving out a distinct advantage within the target date funds and retirement income categories,' said Sonia Sharigian, author of a new Cogents Report, Retirement Plan Advisor Trends.

John Hancock Financial Services, Principal Funds, Nationwide, Charles Schwab Investment Management and Wells Fargo have stronger brand presence in the DCIO market than in the broader retail advisory market, partly because they specialize in target date funds and retirement income products.

That and other findings are included in the Retirement Plan Advisor Trends study by Market Strategies International, publisher of Cogent Reports.

The companies mentioned above showed higher brand equity scores in the research firm's Retirement Plan Advisor Trends study than in the firm's retail Advisor Brandscape study.

While John Hancock, Principal and Nationwide respectively rank 13th, 23rd and 28th in brand equity in the mutual fund retail market, they rank in the top 10 among DC advisors. Charles Schwab and Wells Fargo were ranked 26th and 24th, respectively, in brand equity in the retail market but 13th and 15th among DC advisors.

"These five firms are doing an excellent job playing to their strengths and offering competitive solutions for the workplace retirement market," said Sonia Sharigian, product director at Market Strategies and author of the Retirement Plan Advisor Trends report, in a press release. "[They] are carving out a distinct advantage within the target date funds and retirement income categories."

The report found that only a few firms are able to differentiate themselves beyond actively managed mutual funds and target date funds to earn broader product consideration.

To produce the Retirement Plan Advisor Trends report, Cogent Reports conducted an online survey of a representative cross section of 514 plan advisors in July through August 2017. Survey participants are required to have an active book of business of at least \$5 million and be actively managing DC plans.

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