
Morningstar establishes online 'Alternative Investments Center'

By Editor Test *Wed, Mar 7, 2012*

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As part of several enhancements to MorningstarAdvisor.com, a free website for financial advisors, Morningstar Inc. has launched a new "alternative investments center."

"Advisors play a crucial role in educating their clients about alternative investments," said Nadia Papagiannis, Morningstar's director of alternative fund research. "Now advisors have a comprehensive resource for providing clients with a more complete perspective on alternative investments."

The site also contains Morningstar market tools and an expanded video library featuring interviews with top portfolio managers and newsmakers, analysts, and some of the leaders in the advisory community, along with research reports on funds, stocks, ETFs, closed-end funds, and alternatives.

The site currently has three main content tabs: Alternatives, Practice Management, and Research and Insights.

- **Alternatives**, the site's newest tab, provides detailed educational information and analysis of alternative investments, in vehicles such as hedge funds, ETFs, mutual funds, and separate accounts; weekly articles discussing the latest on alternative investment topics and trends; access to Morningstar's comprehensive quarterly Alternative Investments Observer newsletter; video interviews with alternative investment managers; downloadable handbooks explaining different alternative strategies; and a Solution Center featuring videos and slides designed to help advisors educate their clients about alternative investments.
- The recently expanded **Practice Management** tab includes advisor profiles, fiduciary topics, technology news and reviews, and best practices for building an advisory business.
- **Research and Insights** features in-depth interviews with leading portfolio managers, research on college savings plans, screening tips for the best stocks and funds for a client portfolio, sector spotlights, and commentary from Don Phillips, Morningstar's president of fund research.

The enhanced site also features additional components for social interactivity, a discussion feature allowing advisor dialogue and debate on articles and industry issues, a webinar audio archive, and links to Morningstar's advisor services, publications, and software platforms—Morningstar Advisor Workstation, Morningstar Office, and Morningstar Principia.

RAMP, a web content optimization company based in Woburn, Mass., worked with Morningstar to develop the new user interface and menu navigation, adding faster search and browsing capabilities, and integrating an iPad-enabled video player with a searchable transcript feature.