
Which Firms Connect Best with Advisors?

By Editor Test *Thu, Oct 21, 2010*

"Prudential has strengthened its grip on advisors in the variable annuity space over the past year," says Cogent Research in a study of advisor loyalty to variable annuity issuers, mutual fund companies and ETF providers.

American Funds, iShares, and Prudential Financial lead other providers in "creating strong connections with individual advisors," according to *Advisor Touchpoints 2010*, a report issued by Cogent Research this week.

"Prudential has strengthened its grip on advisors in the variable annuity space over the past year, [but] American Funds and iShares face increasing challenges from other mutual fund and ETF providers," said the report, which is based on a survey of 1,500 registered advisors.

The proportion of advisors who named Prudential as the variable annuity provider doing the best job keeping them feeling "personally connected to the company, its products, and services," increased since 2009 to 18% from 14%.

Twelve percent of advisors, the same number as in 2009, said Jackson National was the VA issuer they felt most connected to, while 9% of advisors chose Sun Life Financial, up from only two percent in 2009.

Among mutual fund producers, 19% of advisors this year indicated that "American Funds does the best job making them feeling connected," compared to 23% of advisors who felt this way one year ago. Franklin Templeton Funds was chosen by 14% of advisors, up from seven percent. BlackRock and Fidelity Advisor funds experienced similar substantial proportional increases.

While iShares was the most popular ETF provider (32% of advisors felt a strong connection), PowerShares, ProShares, and Vanguard are gaining.

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