

# Advisor Perceptions of Wholesaler Communications: Research Brief prepared for JAM Consulting Group

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JAM Consulting Group contracted with Dr. Suzanne Altobello of AltoStat Consulting to conduct a survey of financial advisors regarding what it takes, from their point of view, in establishing and continuing a valued relationship with a product provider wholesaler. The online survey<sup>1</sup> was designed to capture their perceptions on how they would like to be engaged.

- The survey link was shared with 700 advisors.
- Respondents were 36% independents, 31% major wire, 23% regional BD, and 10% RIA.
- 17% had assets under management (AUM) \$500M and above, 83% had AUM under \$500M.
- Respondents indicated that if a wholesaler was in their top 5 of individuals they identified to work with, 92% would actively engage with them.
- 38% preferred meeting biannually, with 24% preferring to meet quarterly and 27% willing to meet whenever the wholesaler had an idea relevant to them.

Advisors were asked to identify all the criteria used to determine if a meeting with a wholesaler would be taken.

- What was most often ranked 1<sup>st</sup> or 2<sup>nd</sup> was that the wholesaler had **an idea relevant to my business.**
- Being **referred by someone the advisor knows** ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> or 3<sup>rd</sup> most often.
- That they **knew and liked the firm** was ranked 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Advisors were asked what would be the most effective way for the wholesaler to get a first meeting. The research identified a clear process to address this.

In the meeting request the wholesaler will need to:

1. Convey an understanding of the advisor's practice and focus which was ranked 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. Demonstrate how the wholesaler differentiates themselves ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Once the meeting is accepted, the number one benefit that advisors look for:

1. The wholesalers' conveyance of ideas or programs that help the advisor/advisor's practice.
2. Product updates and information ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>, followed closely by market insights and trends.

## References

<sup>1</sup>Permanent link to survey .pdf at <https://tinyurl.com/NDJAM2018>

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What will stop the wholesaler from getting back in to see the advisor for another meeting:

1. The previous meeting provided no value to the advisor – the ideas shared were not relevant to them ranked 1<sup>st</sup>.
2. The previous meeting was just a product pitch ranked 2<sup>nd</sup>.

Taken together, these results suggest the following:

- ***“It’s all about the advisor”*** Wholesalers must convey the value they can provide the advisor as soon as possible. Do not concern yourself with wholesaler’s own credentials or experience; it is best to talk about the advisor/client and what solutions/benefit the wholesaler can provide.
- Wholesalers ***must do research into the advisor’s practice*** and relate their offering to the advisor and how it would fit within their focus.
- Requests for an initial meeting ***must convey the benefit to the advisor early and quickly.***
- Requests for an initial meeting could also come via a referral, so wholesalers should ***develop a process for cultivating referrals from other advisors.***

For more information regarding the findings and insights from the survey, as well as programs available to enhance effectiveness, you can reach out to JAM Consulting Group at:

<http://jamconsultinggroup.com/contact/>



## References

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