



GREENWALD & ASSOCIATES

Online & Social Financial Decision-Making

A Multi-Client Research Opportunity
December 2017

Online & Social Financial Decision-Making

Introduction

More people want an entirely online experience, but does that include advice?

Last year, this study measured significant increases in the desire to purchase or invest in a financial or insurance product “entirely” online. The shares using online quizzes and calculators rose. Many indicated comfort receiving advice online to determine how much to save for retirement, for example. At the same time, the desire for social media interactions with financial services companies seemed to increase, with more consumers expecting speedy responses to social posts and expressing a willingness to interact with advisors through social.

Overall, 3 in 10 said they found the concept of robo-advice appealing, but with great variation by generation. Half of Gen Yers liked the idea of robo, compared to 1 in 10 Boomers. Yet, the presence of “live” person still seems to paramount. Calling and reaching a live person is still considered more important than web and mobile capabilities.

Therefore, this year, we aim to further explore the nuanced appeal of online advice and support on a variety of key financial decisions and how that should be coupled with the right level of personal, high-touch interaction.

Now in its 8th year, this study will continue to track the importance of financial services companies having key tech-supported capabilities, like the ability to buy online, chat, or interact through mobile – all compared to being able to call and reach a live person. The study will continue to track consumers’ desire to interact with financial services companies and advisors using social networking, in addition to measuring the change in receptivity to online and social interaction.

As in the past, this study helps firms prioritize online and social initiatives and can help them understand receptivity to online advice programs associated with plans, retail savings and investments, and employee benefits.

Online & Social Financial Decision-Making

Why Sponsor?

Sponsors will gain actionable insights to guide their online service offerings & marketing strategies. They will learn more about how ever-changing technology can be used to promote engagement between consumers and the companies they need to advise them on critical decisions that impact their long-term financial security.

- Create an online experience that aligns with how consumers want to engage online
- Craft an effective social media presence
- Understand the nuanced desire for both a high tech and a high touch experience
- Guide the development of online advice platforms
- Share research with reps & advisors on what constitutes a good website and social media presence

Sponsors can use the study's findings to educate employers & advisors about the need for targeted education and communication, generate social media discussion, and inform their own product development & research efforts.

WHO SHOULD SPONSOR

Full-service financial services firms – Life insurers – Mutual fund & investment companies – Retirement solutions providers – Providers of financial education & advice

**All external use of the study must be discussed with Greenwald & Associates and cited as "Greenwald & Associates' Online & Social Financial Decision-Making Study."*

Online & Social Financial Decision-Making

Heavier focus on Gen XY & Affluent oversample

Financial and online savvy typically increase with household income & assets.

To ensure our research includes consumers using or likely to use financial services companies and/or financial advisors to manage their assets, we will conduct the survey with an oversample of 500 *affluent* households, tiered by generation.

A change, this year, we will survey fewer Boomers (each down from 450 total) and more members of Gen X and Gen Y (each up from 300, including 25 more each in the affluent oversample).

Generation	General sample	Affluent households	Total
Early Boomers (1946-1954)	200	125 with HH income of \$150k+	325
Late Boomers (1955-1964)	200	125 with HH income of \$150k+	325
Gen X (1965-1980)	300	125 with HH income of \$100k+	425
Gen Y (1981-1996)	300	125 with HH income of \$75k+	425
Total	1,000	500	1,500

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How it works

- **Greenwald & Associates will conduct an online survey of 1,500 consumers age 21 to 70, representing Baby Boomers (born 1946 -1964), Generation X (born 1965-1980) and most of Generation Y (born 1981-1999, by our definition).**
 - ✓ Respondents will be screened to ensure they have at least a high school education, are working at least part-time, and have a household income of at least \$25,000 if single and \$50,000 if married.
 - ✓ Quotas will be established by generation and by income level to ensure they represent sponsors' target markets.
- **With sponsor input, Greenwald & Associates will develop a 20-minute questionnaire for this project and will manage all fielding, analysis, and reporting.**
 - ✓ Sponsors will provide input on the direction of the questionnaire and concepts to be tested during kick-off calls with the Greenwald team. They provide feedback on questionnaire drafts. Greenwald's research team will synthesize sponsor feedback and will make all final decisions about the questionnaire.
 - ✓ For cost and planning purposes, we assume the questionnaire will include no more than three open-ended questions, the results of which will be coded.
- **Deliverables will include:**
 - ✓ An annotated questionnaire showing overall results among the total sample
 - ✓ A PowerPoint report of the most interesting & actionable survey findings, highlighting generational differences and other key sub-group differences
 - ✓ One all-sponsor data tabulation book that covers demographics of survey respondents
 - ✓ One custom data tabulation book, allowing sponsors to specify the age and income breaks they prefer, and include crosstabs on items of interest
 - ✓ Participation in an all-sponsor webinar to present the study's findings

Online & Social Financial Decision-Making

What we can cover

Topics are adaptable and flexible to sponsor needs. All sponsors are encouraged to participate in questionnaire development & test online services with survey respondents.

Tech vs. Human Must-Haves

- ✓ What tech-supported capabilities do consumers view as important
- ✓ The importance of a financial services company having a social media presence
- ✓ What is the need/desire for smartphone apps and mobile capabilities
- ✓ What are the obstacles to buying/ investing online
- ✓ Importance of/Desire for an advisor relationship
- ✓ Likelihood of using social or professional networking to find an advisor or communicate with current
- ✓ Understanding of how financial companies & advisors get paid
- ✓ How do consumers assess costs

Paying for Online Advice

- ✓ What does “online advice” or “robo-advice” mean to consumers
- ✓ For what financial needs would consumers be open to online advice
- ✓ What concerns are there regarding online advice
- ✓ What is the role of an “advisor” in a robo-advice platform
- ✓ Willingness to pay a fee vs. commission for online advice
- ✓ Reactions to what robo-services might cost or what consumers would be willing to pay

Online & Social Financial Decision-Making Costs & Options

The base sponsorship cost for this year's study is \$12,000.

Greenwald & Associates takes pride in its ability to be flexible to client needs, and we will be happy to work with you if you require oversampling, custom reports, or in-person presentations.

Options

Additional data tabulation book	\$700
Oversample of 500 (example, depends on specs & reporting needs)	\$6,000 - \$14,000
Custom white paper (5-8 pages)	\$4,000
Custom webinar presentation	\$1,000
Custom in-person presentation (plus travel billed at cost)	\$1,000

For questions or to sponsor this year's study, contact...

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About Greenwald&Associates

Full-Service Research Experts

- Exclusive & active focus on retirement, investments, life insurance, employee benefits, and healthcare
- Mid-sized firm, flexible & responsive to client needs
- Dedicated project teams, based on subject matter expertise and methodology
- In-house programming and telephone interviewing facility at our headquarters
- Consistency and experience for over 30 years

