What does independence look like?

Embrace freedom and transform your future as an RIA

Join the ever-growing number of advisors who have realized the benefits of the independent registered investment advisor (RIA) model. Take control of the direction of your business. Determine how you want to work with clients. And choose from an unprecedented number of options for support. As an RIA, you have the freedom to call the shots and excel on your terms.

Today, there are more ways to go independent than ever before. Start a firm, join an existing business, or find something in between. It’s time to explore the possibilities and build the future you want, your way.

RIA channel growth

The RIA model is clearly compelling. More than 12,000 advisors joined the channel from 2010 to 2015, including dually registered.1 Assets increased 9.9% year-over-year from 2011 to 2015.2

A Schwab survey asked advisors working at large firms the main reasons they find the RIA model appealing. The responses share a common theme: Respondents want a bigger say in how their businesses are run.4

Benefits of independence

Why are advisors embracing the RIA model?

• Autonomy: You have the freedom to run your business as you choose.
• Income potential: You can keep up to 100% of the revenue you earn, and firm owners can build equity as the firm grows.
• Client flexibility: You are able to put client needs first and communicate with your clients in your own way.
• Access to the right tools: You can choose the technology and platform that best suit your needs. For example, you can keep everything in-house or outsource functions such as IT and compliance to help free up time for clients.

“It’s really about the freedom to make decisions—not only for the business, but for your clients.”

—Colin Higgins, Golub Group
Understanding the differences between RIA models

The advisor landscape is rapidly changing, and advisors have more options for levels of independence. But before making a choice, advisors should decide exactly who they want to be.

### Transition support

Regardless of the option you choose, Schwab can guide you along the well-worn path to independence. We’ll help you create a business strategy, build a transition plan, and transfer client accounts.

And once you’re up and running, Schwab’s service team and in-house consultants are there to help you build a business with a growth strategy over the long term. Together, we can transform your future.

Schwab Advisor Services™ is the leader in RIA custodianship. More independent investment advisors of all types and sizes work with and entrust more assets to Schwab than to any other custodian. As an industry pioneer, Schwab has a longtime commitment to—and vision for—the RIA channel.

### Can I keep my commission business?

You can still enjoy the benefits of independence as an RIA without giving up your successful brokerage business. With the hybrid model, you can offer advisory services as an RIA while keeping your commission-based business by affiliating with a third-party independent broker-dealer.

### Start exploring

Learn about the benefits of the RIA model, discover your options for independence, and find out how leading advisors have built successful RIA firms. Download our white paper at advisorservices.schwab.com/exploringindependence. Or contact a Schwab business development officer at 877-687-4085.

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1. The Cerulli Report: Intermediary Distribution 2016, Exhibit 2.05.
3. 2016 RIA Benchmarking Study from Charles Schwab, January–March 2016. Median results for all firms with $250 million or more in assets under management (AUM). Study contains self-reported data from 1,128 firms. The data were not independently verified. Participant firms represent various sizes and business models categorized into 12 peer groups—7 wealth manager groups and 5 money manager groups—by AUM size. Past performance is not an indicator of future results.
5. The Economic Discovery Tool (Tool) is intended solely for use by investment professionals. The Tool simulates the pro forma financial results of various hypothetical scenarios for establishing, operating, joining, and/or selling an investment advisory practice or firm and compares those simulated outcomes to various alternatives. The scenarios and alternatives covered are not exhaustive and may not be representative of those you actually encounter. Moreover, the simulated pro forma results are materially dependent on various assumptions and inputs, some of which are made and specified by you and some of which are static. These assumptions and inputs may not reflect actual circumstances, and thus the Tool is inherently limited and intended for general informational purposes only. The simulated pro forma results do not reflect, and are not guarantees of, actual or future results. Your actual results may be materially different from those simulated. Schwab makes no warranty of the accuracy or completeness of the Tool or the simulated pro forma results and shall have no liability for your use of the Tool. The Tool is not intended to provide financial, investment, legal, tax, or regulatory compliance advice. You are urged to consult your own professional advisors.

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