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Media Release

Advisers Cautioned Not to Discount Importance of Digital Client Interaction

Monday April 28, 2014. President and Founder of US Based i-Impact Group Mr. Claudio O. Pannunzio has just reviewed a key conclusion of a recently published study by SEI, a global provider of outsourcing solutions that help financial advisers create and manage wealth that "Digital interaction contributes to strengthen the client-adviser experience for the wealthy."

The study, "The futurewealth Report 2014: Upgrading the Service Delivery," surveyed 3,025 affluent investors worldwide, analyzing the key factors that this type of investors consider when entering in a relationship with their financial advisers and the role that digital technology plays in that experience.

The results of this survey caught Pannunzio's attention, as they seemed to point to a different conclusion than what the study reported and he provides the following explanation.

According to the study, respondents entering in a relationship with their financial advisers were:

More concerned about an adviser's attributes, such as:

1. Level of experience (65*)
2. Market knowledge (65*)
3. Understanding of client's needs (65*)

Less concerned about the adviser's digital delivery capabilities, including:

1. Ability to simulate portfolio strategies online (39*)
2. Ability to customize online reporting (38*)
3. Having an easily navigable website (37*)

() importance index measured out of 100*

The fact that respondents to the survey placed far less emphasis on the digital side of the service experience and favored instead advisers' understanding of their goal-based investment approach, could lead many to erroneously believe that affluent investors do not actively use digital technology.

"Nothing could be more far from the truth, as the study also revealed that 92 percent of investors under age 40 use online tools to learn more about their transactions and support their wealth management decisions," affirms Pannunzio.

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More specifically, 50 percent of them declared that they log on to the online account they have with their financial advisory firm to:

- Read market reviews (55 percent)
- Check performance analyses (55 percent)
- Find information about securities (51 percent)
- Review portfolio evaluations (51 percent)

Pannunzio continued, "These results clearly underscore how crucial digital technologies have become for investors. Consequently, when it comes to delivering a great service experience, advisers should keep in mind that the digital component of that experience plays a crucial role for their clients, especially younger ones".

"The latter in particular, have an active online life and rely significantly on the internet and social media to access a wide array of information, including financial products and services. This is the reason why digital engagement must become an essential component of advisers' communication with their clients and prospects".

Digital technology plays also a significant role in helping advisers regain investors' trust. This appears to be particularly true with millennials of generation D (digital), a segment of the investor population with a distinct lack of trust in the financial system – a consequence of the most recent financial crisis – and a subsequent prudent and conservative attitude toward their investments.

Pannunzio concluded, "The ultimate goal of advisers' digital engagement is to deliver to their clients and prospects the exceptional service experience they are seeking through their preferred communication medium."

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