BRIDGEMARK STRATEGIES

Case Study

Strategic Evolution of a $600MM Independent Hybrid RIA Team

Firm Profile

- **Structure:** Independent Hybrid RIA
- **AUM:** $600 Million
- **Team:** Two founding partners (50s), two junior advisors (30s-40s)
- **Focus:** Financial planning, fee-based AUM growth, multigenerational client servicing

Background

A successful $600 million AUM independent hybrid advisory team approached Bridgemark Strategies at a pivotal point in their business lifecycle. With a strong client base, a proven track record of growth, and a sophisticated financial planning focus, the team was poised for its next evolution — but needed guidance on how to align its internal dynamics with future opportunities.

The team was structured around a mix of senior and junior professionals: founding partners in their mid-50s, and a promising next generation of advisors in their 30s and 40s. They had already built a high-functioning, high-growth, planning-first business and managed a substantial book of fee-based AUM. Yet, questions lingered about how best to structure ownership, leadership succession, and long-term platform fit.

The Challenge

Despite their strong market position, the team faced several key strategic inflection points:

- **Generational Transition Planning**
- **Platform Reevaluation**
- **Strategic Clarity**

Bridgemark Strategies leveraged its knowledge of the marketplace and choices and worked with the team to educate them on options without pressure or bias.

Outcomes of Evaluating Strategic Options

1 Change Broker-Dealers:

While this could solve some problems and offer transition capital, it was ultimately a lateral move - trading improvements in some technologies/products for deficiencies in others.

2 Start a New RIA:

This path offered long-term enterprise value and better tools/products. However, it came with upfront complexity and a long runway to realize value.

3 Partner with a Strategic Buyer

After engaging several PE-backed RIA integrators, this was chosen as the best fit. It offered enterprise-level tools, a monetization event for senior advisors, and significant future upside for junior team members — all while eliminating the burdens of running a mid-sized business.

Bridgemark's Solution: Feel, Fit, and Financials™

- Clarified goals across generational lines that allowed them to evaluate different firms.
- Provided a curated solutions set with guidance and education of BD, RIA, and M&A paths.
- Identified must-haves and can't-haves to refine the search for the right strategic partner.
- Facilitated evaluations and negotiations with the chosen RIA integrator.

Outcome

The team successfully aligned on a high-value strategic partnership that balanced immediate liquidity, future income potential, and operational freedom. founding partners gained a significant de-risking event without retiring, while the junior advisors were positioned for long-term growth and upward mobility in a larger, more scalable platform.

In addition to these strategic wins, the partners were able to realize **financial success well beyond their initial expectations.** They discovered a solution that not only offered better tools, technology, and resources for serving their clients and empowering staff, but also created **a meaningful financial incentive and monetization opportunity** for both senior and junior members of the team.

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