

COMMONWEALTH FINANCIAL NETWORK® HAS BEEN BREAKING NEW GROUND FOR MORE THAN 35 YEARS. HERE'S A SAMPLING OF SIGNIFICANT EVENTS ALONG OUR ROAD TO BECOMING THE PREFERRED PARTNER OF SUCCESSFUL FINANCIAL ADVISORS.

1979

Commonwealth Equity Services (Commonwealth) is founded by Joseph Deitch, chairman, as an outgrowth of his retail financial planning practice, The Cambridge Group. The name Commonwealth reflects our desire to foster the common good of both our employees and our advisors.

1981 The Cambridge Group¹ is acknowledged by a Becker Research poll as the most prominent financial planning firm in the Boston area.

1982 Advisors gather on Cape Cod for our first annual National Conference.

1982–1987 Commonwealth establishes First Cambridge Properties,¹ an investment firm providing unique private placement investment opportunities.

1983–1985 Commonwealth institutes Broker/Dealer Software¹ to develop and market back-office operating systems to brokerage firms across the United States.

1984–1988 Commonwealth founds Cambridge Analytic,¹ a pioneer in the development of fee-based asset management systems, to design mutual fund portfolios.

1985–1987

Inc. magazine recognizes Commonwealth as one of the 500 fastest-growing private companies.

1986–1987 Commonwealth works diligently to pull through the impact of the Tax Reform Act of 1986 and the severe stock market crash of 1987 to find itself as one of the few survivors perfectly positioned to focus on growth.

1987 Top producers attend the first annual Leaders Conference at the Four Seasons Resort in Toronto, Canada.

1988 Commonwealth Equity Services Insurance (CESI) is established to provide an extensive menu of insurance products and services to our advisors.

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1989

Our growth dramatically increases, and it continues at an average pace of more than 35 percent per year through the 1990s.

1989 Practice Management assistance is pioneered. As the first independent firm to truly acknowledge that our advisors are small business owners, not just salespeople, we begin to offer courses ranging from hiring and managing staff to effective communication skills and disciplined strategic planning.

1991 *Investment Advisor* magazine presents Commonwealth with its first Broker/Dealer of the Year award.² We were pleased to receive two more awards in 1992 and 1994.

1992 Commonwealth completes its first and only acquisition: Kavanaugh Securities. With its nationwide presence, Kavanaugh establishes Commonwealth as a national broker/dealer.

1996–2002 *Investment Advisor* magazine names us Broker/Dealer of the Year six of the next seven years.

1996

Commonwealth creates Preferred Portfolio Services® (PPS), our powerful fee-based asset management program.

1996 Advisors gather at Walt Disney World for our first Business Builders meeting. Held in conjunction with Disney University, this summit combines classroom time with hands-on experiments for the ultimate lesson in business building. (Business Builders is renamed Winners Circle in 2007.)

1996 We soundly establish our web presence by launching ACCESS, one of the most robust advisor self-service web portals available. Advisors can place trades online, as well as view client brokerage accounts, statements, annuity holdings, real-time market data, intraday positions, and much more.

1996 Advent Axyx® is utilized to produce next-generation quarterly performance reports for clients.

1996 The first Practice Management Institute is held in Boston for advisors aspiring to reach a new level of productivity and quality of life.

1997 Assist U is established to provide our advisors' staff with the extensive training needed to excel in their daily job functions. (Assist U is renamed the Commonwealth Institute in 2008.)

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1998

We break the \$100 million revenue mark.

1998 Commonwealth launches Advent Browser Reporting, allowing advisors to generate stunning client reports and graphics via the web.

1999 Commonwealth Financial Network (Commonwealth) becomes the DBA name of Commonwealth Equity Services.

1999 COMMunity Link[®], a more powerful and accessible version of our advisor web portal, is launched as an extension of our home office staff.

2000

Commonwealth opens its San Diego headquarters to better service our West Coast advisors.

2000 Work in Progress is introduced to help advisors stay informed about the work we are processing for them. They can view online how 300 work types within 30 categories across 20 home office departments are progressing in real-time at the click of a button.

2000 A stock option plan is initiated for all permanent Commonwealth employees to share in the firm's future success. This program helps attract, retain, and energize everyone in the company.

2001 The annual National Conference is canceled due to the tragedy of September 11. To ensure that our advisors don't miss out on the valuable content, the conference is brought to them in our first Commonwealth Across America road show. Now a summer tradition, the home office staff travels to a dozen cities across the country to visit with our advisors.

2001 Joseph Deitch announces a new corporate goal to raise Commonwealth's level of service from World-Class to Indispensable. As a result of this campaign, our average annual service scores provided by our advisors rise from approximately 85 percent to 92 percent.

2001 Commonwealth debuts its online Research Bundle, which includes Morningstar[®] Advisor WorkstationSM, Broadridge, Value Line, Argus, Standard & Poor's, and Ibbotson, all for a nominal fee. (Today, the bundle also includes Commonwealth Model Portfolios.)

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- 2001** The online Advanced Marketing Forum is established for advisors looking to tap into the knowledge and experience base of other Commonwealth advisors, as well as the expertise of 32 advanced marketing attorneys and staff from our core carriers.
- 2002** The Paperless Office is launched. A combination of web-based functionality, imaging systems, and regular dissemination of CDs allows our advisors to significantly reduce paperwork, saving valuable office space and making the search for existing documents a snap.
- 2002** Commonwealth launches Portfoliotoday.com, a professional client website offering access to the best of Advent reporting—from positions and tax information to performance data and market commentary, all available 24/7.
- 2002** EasyFill™ automatically enters up to 100 percent of client, account, and/or advisor information into more than 200 of our most used forms, dramatically reducing the time our advisors spend filling out paperwork.
- 2003** The introduction of our New Account Wizard speeds up the entire account setup process and allows advisors to establish an account, fund the account, place trades, and do it all with virtually no errors.
- 2003** Managed Account Process (MAP) is launched to help our advisors close new business and more effectively manage existing accounts. Part practice management tool and part marketing kit, MAP defines the advisor's approach to sales and money management.

2004 We celebrate our 25th anniversary!

- 2004** The first annual Chairman's Retreat is held at the Ritz-Carlton in Boston. Open only to our top producers, home office senior managers, and industry partners, it is an intensive, high-level educational and social experience. Led by Harvard Business School professors and utilizing the case study format, this program is specifically tailored to those individuals who have experienced significant success in their businesses and are intent on going well beyond.
- 2004** The EasySite website program launches. It's a simple wizard program with more than 100 templates to help advisors set up sophisticated websites with ease.

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2004 Joseph Deitch is featured among the leading CEOs of the world in the book *Leadership Secrets of the World's Most Successful CEOs: 100 Top Executives Reveal the Management Strategies That Made Their Companies Great* (Dearborn Publishing). Mr. Deitch is the only CEO featured from the independent broker/dealer industry.

2004–2006 Joseph Deitch is named one of the top 25 most influential people in and around the planning profession for three consecutive years by *Investment Advisor* magazine.

2004 Aspiring to provide our advisors with lower premiums and a higher quality of service, Commonwealth establishes its own E&O insurance company.

2004 National Financial Services awards Commonwealth its first Transfer of Assets Quality Award for the consistently low not in good order (NIGO) rate maintained by Commonwealth's TOA department.

2004 Commonwealth pioneers the Client Proposal Wizard. This asset allocation tool allows advisors to build Compliance-approved, institutional-quality reports to assist in client meetings and to win prospective clients—in as little as two minutes!

2004 Client360® provides our advisors with a holistic view of each client's entire financial picture, document retrieval capabilities from anywhere they have Internet access, the ability to create customized wealth management plans for each household, and access to a customer relationship management program that's fully integrated and synchronized with Microsoft Outlook.

2004 COMMONWEALTH 401(k) premieres as one of the first suites of 401(k) products in the industry specifically designed to meet the needs of small business owners looking for full-service retirement plan offerings.

2004 We hold our first Business Experience conference—a customized business development program designed in conjunction with the Disney Institute in Orlando, Florida.

2004–2009 Commonwealth is honored by the *Boston Business Journal* as one of Massachusetts's Best Places to Work—including being named the #1 Midsize Place to Work in 2005. We believe this award is a testament to our mission of creating a supportive environment where all employees can thrive.

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2005

Commonwealth launches its Wealth Management Initiative. This program provides investment adviser representatives with the educational and marketing infrastructure to simplify and to manage the complexities of their clients' entire financial lives—at no cost to the advisor.

2005 *Investment Advisor* magazine once again names Commonwealth Broker/Dealer of the Year, bringing our total to 10—an unprecedented record!

2005 Commonwealth's San Diego office celebrates its fifth anniversary by adding the Commonwealth name in big, bold lights to the city skyline. This rooftop sign marks the location of the San Diego headquarters and supplements Commonwealth's branding efforts.

2005–2007 An internal comparative study shows that Commonwealth-affiliated financial advisors who used our free practice management services had significantly increased annual revenues over those who did not participate in the same services.

2006 Commonwealth launches its client relationship management system, Commonwealth CRM—a proprietary program designed specifically for financial advisors that stores, tracks, and shares information in one comprehensive system.

2006 Commonwealth bolsters its fee-based platform, PPS, with PPS Select, a turnkey mutual fund and exchange-traded fund wrap program providing portfolio management by Commonwealth's in-house Research team, and PPS Retirement Solutions, a proprietary fee-based retirement plan platform.

2007 Commonwealth celebrates a notable milestone—the 1,000th advisor to adopt our advisory services platform—by offering increased payouts of up to 95 percent.

2007–2016 Commonwealth is honored by *Computerworld* magazine as one of the Best Places to Work in IT. In 2007, *Computerworld* ranked us 1st in Best Places for Training, 2nd in Best Places for Retention, and 6th in Best Places for Career Development. In 2013, we ranked 2nd among small organizations and 4th overall.

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2008

The *Boston Globe* recognizes Commonwealth as the #1 Top Workplace in the midsize category in its list of the 100 Top Places to Work. We were again recognized as a Top Workplace from 2009 to 2013.

2008 A study conducted by Tiburon Strategic Advisors ranks Commonwealth #1 in technology in eight business-critical areas: intuitiveness, integration, imaging capabilities, issue tracking capabilities, reliability, operations capabilities, value, and technology support.

2009 Wayne Bloom, a 20-year Commonwealth veteran and managing principal since 1999, succeeds Joseph Deitch as CEO. Mr. Deitch remains chairman of the firm.

2009 The *San Diego Business Journal* ranks us the #1 Place to Work in the midsize category. This means Commonwealth has been officially recognized as the best of the best on both East and West coasts.

2009 Our Retirement Plan Consulting program is the industry's first vendor-agnostic, fee-based retirement plan platform. We provide advisors universal access to the retirement marketplace, enabling them to offer both plan sponsor and participant-level advice in alignment with fiduciary standards.

2010

Joseph Deitch is honored as one of the 30 most influential individuals in and around the planning profession over the last three decades by *Investment Advisor* magazine.

2010 Thank you to our advisors! Commonwealth ranks "Highest in Independent Advisor Satisfaction Among Financial Investment Firms," according to [J.D. Power and Associates](#).³

2010 Commonwealth is now the largest privately held independent broker/dealer in the nation.

2010 We break the \$500 million mark in revenue.

2012 For the second time in a row, [J.D. Power and Associates](#) ranks Commonwealth "Highest in Independent Advisor Satisfaction Among Financial Investment Firms."

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2013

Commonwealth formally launches its enhanced RIA platform and refined offering.

2013 Consistency counts! [J.D. Power and Associates](#) ranks Commonwealth “Highest in Independent Advisor Satisfaction Among Financial Investment Firms, Three Times in a Row.”³

2013 Rich Hunter, a 25-year Commonwealth veteran and managing principal since 1996, is appointed president and COO. Peter Wheeler assumes the title of vice chairman.

2013 Commonwealth is honored with the Women’s Choice Award⁴ for our existing commitment to the women’s market through community outreach, educational support, and services specific to women and couples. Partnering with WomenCertified, Inc., we are pleased to make the Women’s Choice Award for Financial Advisors available to our advisors who can distinguish themselves as leaders in the women’s market.

2014 For the fourth time running, J.D. Power ranks Commonwealth “Highest in Independent Advisor Satisfaction Among Financial Investment Firms.”

2014 Commonwealth has now been recognized 28 times by top publications as one of the Best Places to Work in the region (*Boston Globe*, *Boston Business Journal*, *San Diego Business Journal*, *U-T [Union-Tribune] San Diego*), as well as in the IT industry (*Computerworld*). With high marks in areas such as work environment, work/life balance, job satisfaction, and opportunities for advancement, Commonwealth earned #1 Best Place to Work designations in the midsize category from the *Boston Business Journal*, the *San Diego Business Journal* (2005, 2009), and the *Boston Globe* (2008); in the large-size category from the *San Diego Business Journal* (2013); and in the small-size category from the *U-T San Diego* (2013).

2015 Commonwealth surpasses the \$100 billion mark in assets under management! This milestone achievement speaks directly to the caliber of our people and our unwavering focus on providing indispensable service to our advisors, their staff, and one another, each and every day. We consistently attract top-notch advisors and help them attain this level of success—in large part by staying true to our two founding principles of quality and community.

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2015 Commonwealth is named to the inaugural Best Place to Work for Millennials in America 2015 list. As a community that prides itself on being a place where all can thrive, we're thrilled to be recognized for our commitment to the fastest-growing generation in the workforce.

2015 Commonwealth reaches the \$1 billion mark in annual revenue, a significant corporate milestone.

2016 To date, Commonwealth has been recognized a remarkable 35 times as one of the Best Places to Work by five top publications. These accolades affirm our commitment to creating a supportive environment where we all can thrive professionally and individually.

2016 Commonwealth ranks highest in advisor satisfaction on Wealth Management magazine's [2016 Independent Broker/Dealer Report Card](#). In this sixth annual survey, we proudly received an overall score of 9.9 out of 10. With gratitude for our advisors' commitment and support, we remain as dedicated as ever to providing the indispensable service and support they need to run their business their way.

¹ By 1988, these companies were either sold or liquidated in order for Commonwealth to focus all resources exclusively on the core broker/dealer business.

² Results are based on advisor satisfaction; Commonwealth was the top broker/dealer in its division for 1991, 1992, 1994, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, and 2005.

³ Commonwealth Financial Network[®] received the highest numerical score in the independent advisor segment in the proprietary J.D. Power 2010 and 2012–2014 Financial Advisor Satisfaction Studies.SM 2014 study based on 3,901 total responses and measures overall financial advisor satisfaction among advisors registered with the Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) investment firms. Proprietary study results are based on experiences and perceptions of financial advisors surveyed in January–April 2014. Your experiences may vary. Visit jdpower.com.

⁴ Women's Choice Award honorees were selected based upon the firms' demonstrated commitment to the women's market and serving women clients through four categories: marketing tools that enhance services offered to female clients and couples; educational support to help advisors understand, capture, and retain women investors; seminars and workshops specific to women's issues; and community outreach and events demonstrating a commitment to women in the community. The inclusion of a financial firm within the Women's Choice Award network should not be construed as an endorsement by WomenCertified Inc. or WIFE.org or its partners and affiliates and is no guarantee as to the future investment success.