

Outlook Wisconsin Business Profiles

Where Brokers and Clients Gain Freedom

Financial Planning Magazine Names First Midwest Securities as One of the Up and Comers

Established in 1987, First Midwest Securities, Inc. appeals to brokers and investors yearning for change. To those who share its independent spirit, the firm stands as a welcome alternative, having long ago rejected many industry practices that no longer benefit brokers or investors. Impersonal account service, such as call centers used by most wire houses; inadequate broker support; and pressure to sell proprietary products have historically been the norm in the world of financial services.

FMSI's conscious decision to *march to a different beat* explains the firm's remarkable growth since its earliest days. Built from a single Milwaukee, Wis., office in 1987, FMSI has become a full-service brokerage firm serving brokers and a diversity of clients from its Bloomington, Ill., headquarters. The firm also enjoys the strength of branch offices across the nation and in Europe. Throughout the company's steady growth, success through freedom has remained its primary goal.

Untying Brokers' Hands...

At FMSI, a family atmosphere, outstanding back-office support, and a seamless, national broker network operate in unison. Under these conditions, brokers are free to do what's in the best interests of their clients, to work in their particular comfort zone and to take advantage of the finest tools of their trade. This high level of autonomy has proven enormously beneficial to brokers, their clients and the firm itself.

"Brokers have access to the latest technologies, best-in-class products and an experienced and professional office staff," says FMSI President Terry

Buffalo. "They also have direct access to the firm's principals since there's not much of a hierarchy here. With one phone call, they can take their concerns straight to the top.

"We are employee owned, so everyone has a clear stake in the firm's success. We at FMSI strive to assist our brokers and satisfy their clients' needs."

"We offer the same products and services as the largest firms in the industry," Buffalo explains. "Where we differ is our approach. We don't depend on proprietary products, and that's critical to maintaining our objectivity. We consider all investment opportunities rather than anchoring our reputation to the investment product *du jour*."



(Left to right) James Linna, Chief Executive Officer; Jennifer Pratt, Chief Compliance Officer; Terry Buffalo, President

...to Better Serve Investors

What does all this mean for clients? Above all, it means freedom from worry that FMSI brokers are merely salesmen for particular investments. Indeed, your broker has the freedom to work independently without being pressured to sell one product over another. This ensures the investment process remains client-focused and in the best interest of the client, not the firm, unlike some of FMSI's competitors.

When it comes to service, FMSI prides itself on the highly personalized nature of its account management. "Continuity and accessibility are key. Our brokers do most of their client consultations in person. When clients call our home office, they'll always get a person on the other end. Such personal service is hard to find elsewhere."

Ask us about our appearance in *The Robb Report*, *Financial Advisor*, *Boomer Magazine*, *On Wall Street*, *Financial Planning*, *Registered Rep.*, *Investment News*, *Business-to-Business*, *Forbes*



FIRST MIDWEST SECURITIES, INC.

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