



50 Big Beaver, Suite 175
Troy, Michigan 48084
P: 248.328.4100
E: info@advisorlegacy.com

A photograph of a person in a dark blue suit and a red and white striped tie, standing behind a wooden table. They are holding a wooden block and about to place it on top of a stack of four other wooden blocks. To the right of the stack, another wooden block sits on the table. In the background, there is a small potted plant with green leaves. The image is partially obscured by a large orange diagonal shape at the bottom.

From Challenge to Opportunity

A buyer and seller share their journey



The Seller's Journey

2

Family led practices face many unique challenges as they grow and develop.

This is equally true when the founding generation decides to retire, and the next generation is left to face the realities of running a practice. For some, that reality isn't the best fit for their career goals and strengths. Such was the case for Joseph Darpel III, a Raymond James advisor who quickly realized that, although he loved serving his clients, the role of practice owner wasn't the way for him to do it.

Facing a Hard Decision

Says Darpel, "It was such a hard decision to make, but ultimately, with my father retiring (at 86!), I decided I wanted to work in more of a customer service, operational role. This meant I needed to find someone to take over and lead our practice." Making the decision to sell was only the beginning. As Darpel explains, "I started down the path of identifying a buyer on my own but realized pretty quickly we were going to need help vetting a company that we could trust to take good care of our clients."

Process

You only sell your practice once. It makes sense to leverage a seasoned expert.

Using an Expert

Darpel had already engaged with Advisor Legacy in order to gain a valuation for the business. He worked closely with M&A Consultant Todd Doherty, who went through the valuation process with him. Darpel adds that, “I really appreciated his patience and sound counsel as I personally wrestled with the decision. Once I finally made the decision to sell, it made sense to continue working with Todd and his team, as we knew we could trust him, and they have proven experience in the financial industry.”

The Process

Todd and his team worked closely with Darpel throughout the entire process, which began with a questionnaire about the business and what they were looking for in a buyer. That information was paired with the valuation and other key reports to put together a listing that was shared with Advisor Legacy’s registered buyers. Among those firms, 7 offered bids. Darpel worked with Todd to narrow it down to 3 potential buyers to interview. In the end they chose Brandon Oliver of Oliver Wealth Management, an RIA who clears through Raymond James.

The Perfect Fit

“We liked his investment philosophy and we sensed that his personality would be a good fit of our client base,” says Darpel, who described his clients as “salt of the earth people.” Darpel continues by adding, “Brandon put the client first in everything he said during interviews, and that made all the difference.” Darpel believed that the sale of the practice would mean that he would not only have to change companies, but maybe even a change of industry after nearly 30 years at the same practice.

“Once I finally made the decision to sell, it made sense to continue working with Todd and his team, as we knew we could trust him, and they have proven experience in the financial industry.”

However, “once we began working through the transition and realized how much we enjoyed working together, Brandon invited me to stay on in a service role – an opportunity to continue the legacy my father built in a role that suits me.” The situation is proving to be a truly beneficial situation for all parties. Adds Darpel, “it is turning into a great partnership and a real win for our clients knowing that I’m staying on to take care of their financial needs.”

Successful Outcome



“Selling your book of business is an enormous decision and a daunting process – one that you may go through only once in your life.”

I recommend hiring an expert to help you.”

SELLER'S ADVICE TO OTHERS

Selling a practice is a new, often challenging and emotional process regardless of the circumstances. Darpel shares this advice with other practice owners, “Selling your book of business is an enormous decision and a daunting process – one that you may go through only once in your life. I recommend hiring an expert to help you.”

Overall the whole process turned out better than Darpel expected, thanks largely in part to the support of Advisor Legacy. “The team at Advisor Legacy knows the ins and outs of buying/selling a financial practice,” Darpel explains. “They have the marketing tools, the industry connections, and the expertise to help ensure a smooth sale and transition.” In addition to their proven process and industry expertise, Darpel notes that the Advisor Legacy team was “personable, trustworthy, and highly professional.”

The Buyer's Journey



It's a competitive environment for buyers, but the right platform can help buyers connect with the right practice.

Brandon Oliver of Oliver Wealth Management was ready to grow his practice. He knew that acquisitions were a great way to expand his business quickly. He began his search, exploring multiple listing sites and firms and placing multiple “irons in the fire,” as he explains it.

Oliver discussed his desire to purchase a book of business with his lender at Oak Street Funding®. A lending partner of Advisor Legacy, Oak Street Funding had just received notice that a Raymond James practice had gone up for sale on the Advisor Legacy Sales platform. “I reached out to Tony Whitbeck, and he showed me how to get set up as a buyer on their website.”

Oliver noticed that the platform worked like many of the others he experienced, and diligently filled out all of the questions about his practice. Says Oliver, “I didn’t expect a lot to come from it because I hadn’t had success on other platforms.” Unlike the other platforms, Oliver did receive notice that he had been selected as one of the 3 firms slated for a virtual interview with the owner, Joseph Darpel, and his Succession team at Advisor Legacy.

Oliver was asked to prepare some key talking points for the meeting. “I prepared a strategy for how I would take over the business and also shared my investment philosophy.” Oliver shares that “when I talked with Joe and his wife, we hit it off. Our investment philosophies were similar, and I was able to bring to the table the necessary support and infrastructure to modernize the practice and bring it to the next level.” The positive experience during the meeting prompted Oliver to place a formal bid. By July he learned he had been selected as the final buyer.

Process

Expert support helps get the deal across the finish line, even when acquiring outside your platform.

Tackling A Major Challenge

Both parties began working through negotiating the formal deal structure and the transition. “Joe was great to work with. Very easy,” notes Oliver, who adds, “we each had to hire an attorney but there wasn’t a whole lot of back and forth. It was pretty friendly.” Advisor Legacy supported the process. Todd Doherty, M&A Consultant, and Anthony “Tony” Whitbeck, CEO of Advisor Legacy, worked together to help facilitate the transition of the practice.

Oliver explains, “it was a bit challenging because we were moving from a broker dealer platform to an RIA platform, but Tony helped bridge the gap.” The transition required new agreements and forms from all clients to complete. Notes Oliver, “we only had six weeks to do it. It was a real fire drill, but Tony remained calm throughout the process and helped put the right people in contact so we could work it all out.” Although the change from broker dealer to RIA did create some challenges, it did force the team to meet with every single client, which Oliver says worked out good for building rapport and engagement with the clients.

Exceeding Expectations

“Overall, we really exceeded expectations,” says Oliver who shares that revenue has already increased by nearly 40%. “My goal was to get it over a million and I thought it would take over 3 years to accomplish it but its already knocking on the door.” Oliver credits Darpel and the in-house team for helping make that goal a reality through hard work and by identifying opportunities for clients. “We were able to introduce a value proposition to the clients that lowered their fee and gave them better performing funds while increasing the external fee.”

“I felt like I was competing in a much smaller pool, which made me feel like I had a chance.”

Advantages

Oliver acknowledges that there were many advantages to working with Advisor Legacy versus the other venues he explored. “I felt like I was competing in a much smaller pool, which made me feel like I had a chance,” shares Oliver. He continues by sharing that Advisor legacy was “easy to get hold of, easy to connect with and very transparent – there was nothing that was unclear.” Ultimately, he says, “they delivered on everything they said they would.”

New Opportunity

In reflecting on his first acquisition Oliver states that “its all been moving so fast. I am surprised by the early success and level of success we are having.” He notes that Darpel has been instrumental in the success of the transition. “We had a good working relationship and a good personal relationship. It made sense to keep him on board to run the office.”

More About Oliver Wealth Management

Oliver Wealth Management is a fee-only, fiduciary financial advisory firm based in Towson, Maryland but serving investors nationwide. Our mission is to help successful business owners and professionals put the appropriate controls in place so you can achieve financial freedom.

Their mission is to always serve the clients best interests by using all available technology and financial sciences to deliver proven methods for successful planning, helping deliver peace of mind, and always being there for clients through all their financial decisions.

To learn more, go to <http://oliverwealth.com>

ADVICE FOR FIRST TIME BUYERS

It's important not to just look at the value of the practice but also "what value can you bring to the practice."

When asked what advice he would give to a first-time buyer, Oliver says "try to see value where others may not see it." He explains that on the surface a practice may not look like it has everything you are looking for, but you can make changes and adjustments to get it where you need it to be.

In this scenario, "Joe and his dad had really strong relationships and a strong niche. The opportunity lay in our ability to modernize the practice with a CRM so clients could get regular, scheduled touches and increase the service level." That's why he states it's important not to just look at the value of the practice but also "what value can you bring to the practice."

With his first acquisition behind him, Oliver says he's "got an appetite to find the next opportunity."



Advisor Legacy can help you through every stage of an acquisition, from the first step to a successful outcome.



BUSINESS
VALUATIONS



CONTINUITY
PLANNING



LENDING &
LEGAL SUPPORT



DEAL
SUPPORT



PRACTICE
SALES



SUCCESSION
PLANNING

Your future is our only priority.

You wouldn't leave your client's legacy to chance. Why leave yours?

CONTACT US



50 Big Beaver, Suite 175
Troy, Michigan 48084



248.328.4100



info@advisorlegacy.com

www.advisorlegacy.com