



How financial advisors can fuel business growth through the virtual classroom

Top trends, insights and tips to maximize client acquisition

FMT
SOLUTIONS™



83%

of finance professionals
say they can be effective
working remotely

Virtual education is converting prospects—and nonbelievers—and it's here to stay

When the pandemic began to spread in the Spring of 2020, like many that depend on live in-person events, we pivoted quickly to craft our courses for the virtual world. The team at FMT was determined to help advisors keep client acquisition flowing, whatever it took.

REMOTE
WORKS

We were surprised.

Looking back on more than **500 virtual courses** conducted during 2020 and the first part of 2021, online seminars attracted an average of **20% more attendees** compared to pre-COVID in-person courses.

20%
MORE ATTENDEES
WITH VIRTUAL

.....
IN-PERSON
LATE 2019 - EARLY 2020
.....



.....
VIRTUAL
LATE 2020 - EARLY 2021
.....

Advisors who offered virtual courses through FMT saved a significant amount of time, foregoing the usual research, coordination and setup that comes with in-person classes. Add in major cost savings in securing venues—sometimes up to \$1400 per course—it's no surprise marketing ROI increased. Starting from a larger and different prospect base, advisors were also reporting increased classroom engagement—with many converting more prospects into clients.

Highlighting the pre-COVID virtual environment, as an article from Forbes.com¹ points out:

- Many organizations were embracing online meetings even before the pandemic
- Virtual connections allow for immersive experiences such as livestreaming and video
- Virtual technology allows businesses to engage with people at a much larger scale, which is of particular importance to advisors seeking to grow their businesses

- ✓ **RESEARCH**
- ✓ **COORDINATION**
- ✓ **SETUP**

¹ Scales, Don. "With Virtual With Virtual Events Likely Here To Stay, Make Them Succeed For You." Forbes.com, accessed May 5, 2021.

It's clear that, even in a post-pandemic world, virtual engagement is **HERE TO STAY**

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This special report explores some of the key areas where financial advisors can leverage digital marketing, education and the virtual classroom to reach more qualified prospects, increase conversion and significantly boost their AUM.

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PART

1

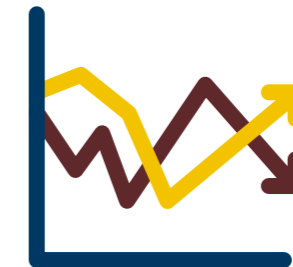
**The advisor as educator:
Addressing a new set of
financial fears**

Positioning yourself as the subject matter expert

Like investors in other brackets, virtually all high-net-worth prospects have had their attitudes, activities and sensibilities—and in some cases, their entire lives—altered by the pandemic. However, now more than ever, they have a great need for knowledgeable, objective financial advice and guidance.

That's because for many, their objectives may have shifted, and their portfolios may now be out of sync with those goals. According to a recent study by Allianz, nearly 75% of Americans believe markets will be very volatile in 2021, and more than half think that a market crash is on the way.²

For prospects in or nearing retirement, the search for yield continues to be elusive, prompting many to consider different wealth, income and tax planning strategies. Also, the pandemic has shined a powerful spotlight on the need for solid legacy and wealth transfer strategies, as the unexpected can surface at any time.



NEARLY 75% BELIEVE
**MARKETS WILL BE
VERY VOLATILE**
IN 2021

² 2021 Q1 Allianz Life Quarterly Market Perceptions Study, February 2021. AllianzLife.com, accessed May 5, 2021.

Checklist for differentiation

Advisors seeking to take advantage of this opportunity need to ensure their marketing capabilities are robust enough to attract and retain the attention of these prospects. Steps you can take now include:



Defining and honing your brand

The perception of a monolithic financial “market” and the rise of passive strategies are driving the commoditization of financial advice. It’s more important than ever to establish your brand and style, differentiated by your practice’s value proposition and unique personality.



Focusing on a clear market segment

Too many advisors define their ideal clients as “people with money.” Specializing in a particular affluent segment that aligns with your mission, values and goals—e.g., working professionals, pre-retirees and retirees—gives you the ability to provide education and services at higher margin.



Fueling growth by investing in marketing

Do you know how much, exactly, you’re investing in marketing? And how your current efforts are impacting (or undermining) your pipeline and bottom line? In order to truly grow your practice, consider investing 10% or more in marketing that delivers better experiences for prospects and clients. So, you can meet them when, where and how they prefer to engage.



Virtual channels offer flexible, cost-effective ways to present your value proposition—through engaging content, and of course, through live, virtual educational courses and advice sessions.

A moment of flux

Even though the pandemic upended modern life, many surveys show that new—or, in some cases, chronic fears have emerged to supersede the virus.

For example, the looming specter of inflation has captured headlines, as supply chain issues, changing consumer demand, and an uneven recovery threaten to drive prices higher. A global survey of investors conducted by Bank of America showed 37% citing inflation as their primary concern, well ahead of the less than 15% who cited the coronavirus.³

Similarly, many people fear that higher taxes are on the way—potentially impacting capital gains and wealth transfer.



³ Source: Bank of America Global Fund Manager Survey. A total of 220 institutional investors were surveyed March 5-12, 2021.

Advisors have a clear opportunity to offer in-depth subject matter

By demonstrating your experience and knowledge of these issues, you are more likely to become the “first call” for investors and families needing definitive, customized strategies. Some areas of interest to consider include:

- **Retirement income planning**

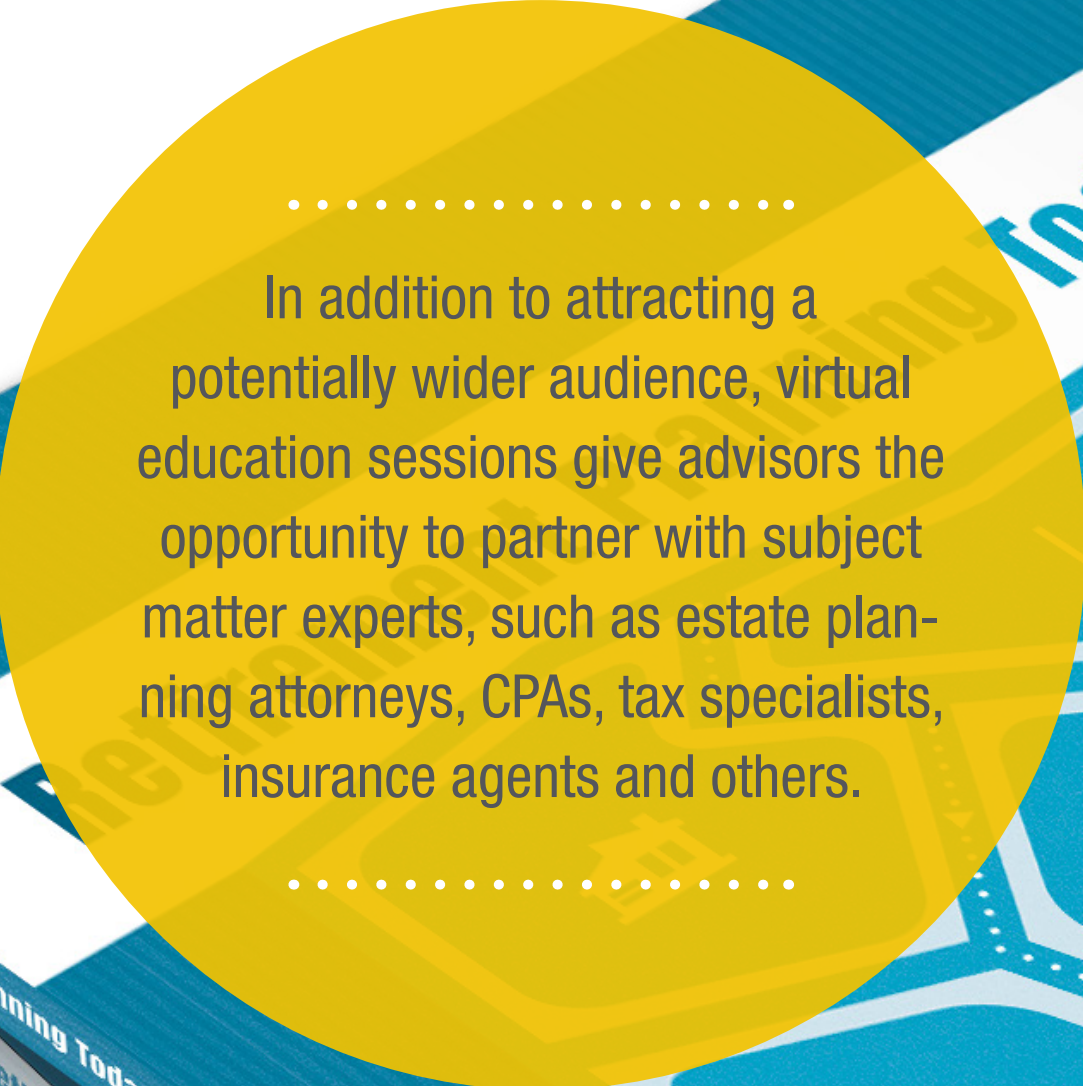
Educating investors so they can more precisely align their income strategy with their goals, especially in a low interest rate environment

- **Wealth transfer**

Helping families look at ways to facilitate asset transition that may include insurance, trusts and gifting to pass on wealth the way prospects want

- **Family changes**

Helping prospects understand how to prepare for the financial impact of issues like tuition, elder care, children with special needs, divorce, loss of a principal wage earner and other family concerns



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In addition to attracting a potentially wider audience, virtual education sessions give advisors the opportunity to partner with subject matter experts, such as estate planning attorneys, CPAs, tax specialists, insurance agents and others.

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PART

2

**Keeping up with digitally
connected clients**

Accelerating trust via digital

While financial advisors long had the capability to hold virtual meetings and seminars before the pandemic, few took advantage for fear that clients would balk or that it would detract from the “personal touch.” **However, according to a recent Think Advisor article, advisors who held virtual seminars and meetings saw business increase and were “shocked” to find how much faster they could “build rapport and meaningful relationships.”**⁴

The Covid-19 crisis has pushed these digital technologies further into the mainstream and many consumers and businesses are choosing to continue embracing these online interactions, from remote working to Zoom concerts.

⁴ Nagy-Todd, Salit. “How Advisors Are Finding Unexpected Upsides to Zoom Calls.” ThinkAdvisor.com, accessed May 14, 2021.



There's no better time to engage virtually

A consistent, expertly executed strategy offers several growth-oriented advantages, including:

Going where your prospects want to be

Consumer behavior, especially at higher income levels, is changing. Clients want convenience, speed and flexibility—on their terms, on their timetables.

Elevating your practice and its perception

Enhancing your technological capabilities provides the added value your clients will come to expect, such as virtual advice, guidance and educational events.

Meeting new prospects worldwide

No longer is your practice limited to a physical office or workplace visits, or semi-annual trips to retiree havens. Now you can reach your target audience wherever they may be, from expatriates who keep funds stateside, to busy executives who may not have time for a formal in-person sit-down.



As the pandemic has created a smoother, wider path for digital interaction, it's given financial advisors an entrée to upgrade their services, operations and interactions with clients and prospects.



PART

3

Where virtual gets real

How FMT is helping financial advisors win new clients

Expanding the reach of the advisor value proposition

For more than 20 years, FMT has been helping fiduciary advisors leverage the power of financial education to attract and engage pre-qualified prospects. Founded by a team of financial education experts, our firm develops and perfects FINRA-reviewed seminars designed to differentiate growth-minded advisors in a crowded and commoditized marketplace.

Our work across the financial education spectrum offers powerful content and courses for any practice, from large teams to boutique independent advisors.

As the pandemic caused an abrupt shutdown of in-person events, FMT immediately adjusted to provide online virtual courses. Along with hundreds of advisor instructors, we learned, adapted and discovered lasting and previously untapped value in the virtual format. As a result, in addition to in-person seminars when and where conditions permit, we're permanently adding online and hybrid courses to our suite of course offerings.



VIRTUAL COURSES: CREATED FOR THE CRISIS,
EVOLVED FOR WHAT'S NEXT

These online capabilities allow you to connect with prospects nationwide

This gives you a cost-effective and convenient way to tailor your presentation style and personal brand to working professionals, pre-retirees and retirees. And because investors pay to attend the courses, you'll attract exceptionally qualified, motivated prospects who are looking for answers and guidance. Our services include:

FINRA-reviewed course design

You'll be equipped with engaging course content built to position you as a subject matter expert—enabling you to quickly build trust, credibility and rapport with prospects.

High-end attendee experience

Attendees receive comprehensive workbooks specially developed to increase engagement and participation. We also survey participants to get valuable feedback so you can perfect your presentation style and take action on proprietary insights and data.

Concierge instructor training, conversion coaching and RSVP support

You can count on us to handle all the details—including campaign planning, implementation and registration management, so you can concentrate on instructing and building lifelong relationships.

Best of all, you'll get step-by-step guidance from an expert team committed to your success.

“These individuals who are coming in to virtual classes, they are more serious. They are wanting some direction.

- Lynore Yates, MSFS, CLTC®, financial advisor & FMT client

Offering a better platform for virtual classroom success

Some advisors are initially unsure of being able to convey the same depth and quality of material in an online format. Others are nervous about their on-camera presence and their ability to effectively engage a remote audience.

FMT helps you present with confidence using proven coaching, training and feedback designed to refine your presentation, strengthen engagement, deepen relationships and drive client acquisition.

HOW YOU BENEFIT



**Comprehensive
training**



**Conversion
mastery**



**Ongoing
coaching**



**Timely insights, best
practices and more**

“ By educating first, the clients will follow.

- Brenda Dozier, Ph.D., CDFA, RICP®, financial advisor & FMT client

Maximizing conversion potential

How FMT is helping financial advisors capitalize on timely opportunities

Many advisors believe that virtual attendees aren't likely to convert. The evidence, gathered over more than a year of delivering online courses to prospects nationwide, shows that these affluent audiences convert at the same or, in some cases, higher rates than attendees of in-person courses.

We believe these conversions continue to be driven by anxious and increasingly digital-savvy consumers seeking help and expertise to help them navigate post-pandemic markets. Advisors we work with have reported that virtual courses are attracting their biggest AUM households ever.

FMT's dedicated conversion specialists will work with you to provide best practices for driving more appointments with virtual attendees. You'll see how to build trust and credibility at each phase of the client acquisition process—from pre-class to post-class follow-up.

One advisor's virtual course
attracted three clients, each of whom brought
in at least \$3 million in household AUM.

One advisor's FMT virtual course results



Virtual courses:	2	New clients:	6
Attendees:	46	AUM transferred:	\$4.5M
Appointments:	22	Potential AUM in pipeline:	\$4M

“ Online worked great. Less time than teaching in person. Attendance and meeting results very similar to in-class teaching. Probably one of our best AUM classes in the last 10 years.

Ready to win new clients with FMT?

It's time to offer high-net-worth prospects the opportunity to gain financial insights the way they want, targeting their unique goals for the future.

By leveraging all that the virtual classroom has to offer, you'll gain more impactful, valuable ways to acquire your best lifelong clients and future-proof your practice.

FMT
SOLUTIONS™

*Educational Marketing Systems
for Fiduciary Investment Advisors™*

**Thrive in
changing times**

Unleash the power of the
virtual classroom with FMT

CONTACT US TODAY

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