



★ *Securities* ★

Founders Financial Securities, LLC

FOUNDERS FINANCIAL SECURITIES, LLC:

Why Technology Gives a Mid-Sized Firm a **BIG** Advantage

A Case Study by **eMoney**  
Advisor

# FOUNDERS FINANCIAL SECURITIES, LLC: Why Technology Gives a Mid-Sized Firm a Big Advantage

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## INTRODUCTION

Let's face it. The financial services industry is a competitive one. It seems like every day, a new challenge or demand is in the spotlight, forcing advisors and the firms that support them to reevaluate how they're serving the needs of their clients, or risk losing them.

The reality is, they should be reevaluating their resources.

The effect technology is having on the way investors interact with their money is unprecedented. But clients aren't the only ones with skyrocketing expectations in terms of the digital tools they have access to. Savvy advisors are quickly seeing a need to step up their tech game and looking to their firm leadership to help them do so with a technology infrastructure that not only keeps up with advisor/client demands, but blazes the trail.

The following Case Study documents how one mid-sized Broker Dealer/RIA located in the Mid-Atlantic Region developed and implemented a holistic, enterprise-wide technology strategy, and why they believe it's giving them and their advisors the competitive advantage they needed.

## FOUNDERS FINANCIAL SECURITIES, LLC

### Business Profile:

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- **Advisory Model:**  
FINRA Broker Dealer and SEC RIA
- **Executive Leadership:**  
Michael O. Brooks, Founder, Chairman & CEO; Brad Shepherd, President
- **Headquarters:**  
1020 Cromwell Bridge Road, Towson, MD 21286
- **Years in Business:**  
8
- **Number of Advisors:**  
75
- **Assets Under Management:**  
\$2 Billion

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According to Brad Shepherd, President of Maryland-based Founders Financial Securities, LLC, in the tale of David and Goliath, Goliath—though heavily favored for what seemed like obvious reasons—never really stood a chance against the victor, David. You see, Goliath was a lumbering giant with size as his only advantage. While David, on the other hand, was not only agile enough to defend Goliath’s advances—he also had the right tools to win.

Bradley M. Shepherd  
President of Founders Financial Securities, LLC



## A UNIFIED VISION

The parent company of Founders Financial Securities, LLC was established in 1994 by Michael O. Brooks, Chairman and CEO. Today, Founders Financial is a private member enterprise serving independent wealth advisors. Since its inception, the firm has placed great emphasis on providing systems and tools that, upon understanding and use by the whole of the enterprise community it serves, renders leadership more effective and purposed. This vision has enabled Founders to build and foster a private community of character-rich leaders dedicated to achieving their shared mission: “To Positively Impact The Lives And Professions Of Those We Serve, Always Building A Community Of Spirit And Purpose As We Grow Our Collective Human Quotient™”. For Founders, a commitment to Shared Resources and Shared Values is what sets them apart, particularly when it comes to technology.

“Black-box broker-dealers have limitations on the technology resources they can offer at the advisor level,” said Shepherd.

“Because many broker-dealers don’t have a collected and common voice representing the whole of the group, their solution is often to build relationships with various technology companies. It’s then left up to the individual advisor to figure out who they want to work with, how it helps their business, and how it can be implemented efficiently and effectively.”

For Founders, this approach not only fails to provide advisors with the technology infrastructure and support they need to be successful, but it also undermines the value proposition of being a Member Partner. Unlike many sales organizations, at Founders, they don’t use the term “rep” or “advisor” to describe their client-side organization; rather they identify this group as “Partners”.

Instead, Founders’ leadership was interested in a strategy that would put their philosophy of Shared Resources and Shared Values into practice. In order to improve Partner success, satisfaction and retention, and help the firm distinguish itself as go-to destination for top talent looking for a more supportive firm culture, they needed an Integrated Technology Suite built out of one, common vision.

## THE RIGHT SOLUTION FOR THE RIGHT REASONS

Today, Founders offers their Partners a full suite of integrated and interdependent services all designed to create efficiency and scale, promoting greater balance of business and effective leadership.

But for Founders to remain true to its mission, it was imperative that the advisor community be a part of the discovery and decision making process. The firm's leadership asked its Partners to take an active role in identifying the needs that Founders could help meet through the implementation of technology.

The team came to the conclusion that all advisors need technology to address these five universal challenges in order to be successful:



1. **CLIENT EXPERIENCE:** Immediate access to their most important financial information, delivered in an engaging and interactive online platform, with access to rich content, robust analytics and mobility.



2. **CLIENT MANAGEMENT:** A single, seamless resource that collects and manages client data, and adds accountability, productivity, and efficiency to an advisor's business.



3. **COMPLIANCE AND OPERATIONS:** Business processing at its best, integrating key systems that reduce duplication, streamline operations and help advisors reach their workflow goals.



4. **RESEARCH, EDUCATION AND MARKETING:** Resources that help advisors work smarter—not harder—and position themselves as the primary trusted advisor in their clients' lives.



5. **SERVANT LEADERSHIP:** The Strategic Enterprise Program is about building a business whose purpose is greater than any individual; is values-based and relationship centric; has a professional purpose and calling to serve; is strategic rather than fragmented and disorganized in approach; and is built to last generations if so desired. This is accomplished using servant leadership disciplines and the tools of an Enterprise Management System.

After a significant vetting process, eMoney Advisor was selected as the technology platform upon which Founders would build their enterprise solution because it solves all five universal needs. Unique from other tools on the market, Shepherd identified eMoney as "a game changer in their business." With eMoney in place, greater success was not only within reach, it was at their fingertips.

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## A WINNING FORMULA

The collective buying power Founders gained when sourcing a solution for its entire community of advisors, as opposed to an individual or team, proved to be a winning formula for the firm, its advisors and the technology providers with whom they partnered.

Involving advisors in the process of identifying their universal challenges not only ensured that their needs would be met in the right way, but also reinforced the Partner-centric philosophy of the firm. Perhaps most importantly, however, it created a roadmap for success by which all parties could be held accountable.

**“Because eMoney exists, we’re able to execute our technology mission,” Shepherd explained.**

And this mission—**getting their entire organization not only to adopt a technology solution but to embrace their technology philosophy**—has empowered Partners to be more successful. It’s also enabled Founders to out-compete many larger firms when it comes to advisor resources.

A new model for success—what they call the Interdependent Broker Dealer Model—was built from a shared vision and the right technology resources to bring it to life. Most importantly, it has given the small but impressive Founders Financial their “David” advantage and reminds us that even the underdog, with the right tools in place, can be unstoppable.



## ABOUT FOUNDERS FINANCIAL:

The parent company Founders Financial Securities, LLC was established in 1994 as a private member enterprise serving independent wealth advisors seeking a rich and purpose based relationship. At the time of our launch in 1994, great emphasis was placed upon building our “tools” as aligned with our mutual purpose which is represented in our Mission and Value Statements.

Today, we offer all stakeholders of the Founders Financial enterprise a full suite of services from which to effectively manage and efficiently grow their business in an ever changing environment. The unique difference between our service offerings compared to most others is best found in the purpose of our actions. As a servant leadership enterprise, we call upon all Partners to add value and insight to fuel the collective growth that our works create and, more importantly, the impact of our mission. Some of these offerings for which you can explore further within include our Stakeholder Service and Communication Platform, our highly acclaimed Institutional Capital Management Platform, our Integrated Technology Suite and our highly valued business development platform, Strategic Enterprise Program.

**For more information about Founders Financial, contact:**

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## ABOUT eMONEY ADVISOR:

eMoney Advisor, based in Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, is the leading wealth-planning system for financial advisors. An award-winning technology envisioned and created by advisors for advisors, eMoney is more than just wealth management software — it's a better way of doing business. Tailored to transform an advisor's ability to deliver expertise, eMoney is the silent partner in the business of more than 25,000 of the industry's top financial professionals, helping them leverage technology to gain new assets, strengthen client relationships and differentiate themselves from their competition. Driven to lead through innovation, eMoney is committed to positioning its advisors for greater success. For more information, please visit: [www.emoneyadvisor.com](http://www.emoneyadvisor.com).

eMoney serves an extensive network of independent RIAs, individual financial advisors and planning professionals, and works with 46 of the top 50 broker dealers as well as 50 percent of the top insurance companies in the U.S., including: Allstate Financial Services, The Guardian Life Insurance Company of America, Lincoln Financial Advisors Corporation, LPL Financial, Mass Mutual Financial Group, MetLife, New York Life, Northern Trust, RBC Capital Markets, Securian Financial Services, and TD Ameritrade.

For more information about eMoney Advisor or to try our software for free, contact:

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