

# How to Engage with Prospects and Clients in a Digital-first Environment

When financial professionals engage in business development, reaching those prospective clients and building trust for a meaningful client relationship are top priorities. And while COVID-19 has challenged some traditional approaches, eMoney's research shows it has also brought new opportunities with prospects and existing clients.

## Reaching out to Prospects

Key findings from our study\* revealed where and how people search for financial professionals, and how long it takes them to choose who to work with.



42% start the process of researching an advisor using search engines like Google.



98% stated that the advisor's website is somewhat or very important to them, while one-third say that it is extremely important.



Asking friends and family for a referral is the second most popular method. Those aged over 54 tend to lean more on their friends and family for recommendations.



Age, experience, and credentials were a top consideration (among 65% of the responses) when choosing a financial advisor.



While 36% said they have used a financial advisor that reached out to them over social media, looking at the 18-24 demographic that number jumps to 60% and 41% for those aged 25-34.



43% would take 1-2 weeks to research advisors, while those over 54 were more likely than other demographics to make a decision in less than a week.

## Key Tactics for Reaching Prospects



Align your brand to appropriately reflect and capture your persona across digital platforms.



Invest in a strong digital presence, your website and social profiles should showcase you and your services.



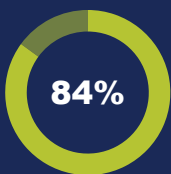
Use SEO and local marketing to ensure your target audience can find you online.



Schedule an outreach cycle that aligns with your audience's decision-making timeline.

## Working with Clients

While in-person meetings remain the preferred method of communication, our study revealed clients are becoming more comfortable with virtual engagement, and personalized content is key to a financial professional's relationship-building efforts.



84% believe receiving personalized content is very important.



Nearly four in ten people prefer in-person communication above all other methods.



Digital meetings and personalized emails trail second and third as the preferred communication. For those aged 18-24, in-person meetings and personalized email were nearly tied as their preferred method (28% versus 27%).



More than half (59%) are open to hearing from advisors via social media. More than three quarters (78%) of those aged 18-24 would be willing to connect with advisors via social media.

## Key Tactics for Connecting with Clients



Clients are more likely to build relationships with those who connect with them in their preferred modes of engagement.



Content marketing and personalization is extremely important to a digital strategy.



Social media can be an influential platform for sharing content, depending on the preferences of your clients.

To learn more tips for prospecting and engaging your clients, follow [@marketingmarVal](#) on Twitter.

\*Source: 2020 eMoney Consumer Marketing Survey, September 2020, n=2,000 The study was conducted by online research company Pollfish. Respondents were composed of a nationally representative sample of 2,000 American adults aged 18 and above. The survey was fielded between September 17th and 18th, 2020.