

employers)” (August 2006).

While many of the features in the Pension Protection Act have been available for many years, it has helped define three distinct types of managed 401(k)/403(b) providers:

"Mass market" solutions that seem to focus on auto enrollment and provide little if any face-to-face contact with employees. This group includes companies like Morningstar and Financial Engines.

"Cross selling" solutions that provide a managed account service along side other financial services like proprietary mutual funds, insurance products, annuities, and IRA's. The PPA dictates this group use a "computer model" to create portfolios and that all conflicts of interest are disclosed in an easy-to-understand format.

"Personal Account Management" solutions that have a singular focus (don't cross-sell other products) and provide personal face-to-face contact, hand-holding, annual reviews, proactive communications, etc.

Each type of service fills different needs. For example, a company with 150K employees may feel the "mass market" solution would work best for them, and a small company with 10 employees may like the idea of a financial adviser helping with the 401(k) as well as providing other services. Medium-sized companies with 700 to 10,000 employees seem to gravitate to a singularly focused, personal account management solution like Actium LLC's BeManaged service.

Some managed 401(k) providers are questioning the "auto-enrollment into a managed account" model due to the lack of communication between the 401(k) participant and the managed 401(k) provider. "The strength of the managed 401(k) is being able to manage someone's account based on their unique financial situation. If you remove two-way communication via auto-enrollment, how can one effectively manage someone's 401(k) account?" asks Jeff Sinatra, Chief Operating Officer of Actium, a Managed 401(k) provider.

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Posted by Edward Palonek at [6/11/2008 7:58 AM](#) | [Add Comment](#)

[**401k Training Group Launches Online Designation Program for Retirement Sales and Service Professionals**](#)

401k Training Group Launches Online Designation Program for Retirement Sales and Service Professionals

The 401k Service Training Program™, accredited by Robert Morris University, is now available online for retirement professionals. The 401k Service Training Program features a turnkey 401k service model and more than 200 licensed tools and templates to educate, advise, and guide plan sponsor customers through six key plan management responsibilities as defined by ERISA.

Pittsburgh, PA ([PRWEB](#)) June 6, 2008 -- Financial Service Standards, LLC, a national 401k training organization based in Pittsburgh, has launched an online version of The 401k Service Training Program™ for retirement sales and service professionals.

The 401k Service Training Program, accredited by Robert Morris University, follows a curriculum based on ERISA guidance and industry best-practices. The online course consists of the same training content, course instructors, and learning modules as the traditional classroom program and culminates in the Professional Plan Consultant™ (PPC™) designation.

"We developed the online program in response to requests from retirement plan professionals who were anxious to take our program but couldn't fit the travel time into their busy schedules," explained Don Settina, President and CEO of Financial Service Standards. "Our program draws professionals from around the country. We understand the constraints on people's time and are very excited to be able to deliver our 401k training program directly to professionals at the time and place of their choosing."

The 401k Service Training Program offers accredited training, professional certification, and business-building tools for retirement sales and service professionals, including consultants, investment advisors, benefit administrators, and wholesalers. It features a turnkey service model and more than 200 licensed tools and templates to educate, advise, and guide plan sponsor clients through six key plan management responsibilities as defined by ERISA.

The program teaches professionals how to eliminate shortfalls in their existing service model, implement a process to simplify and streamline the management of their business, and use that process to increase retirement assets. "Our program is very practical -- not only do we provide the necessary education, but we also provide a proven process for retirement professionals to use in helping their 401k clients achieve their goals," explained Mr. Settina.

The online program qualifies for 7 CFP continuing education credit hours and 7 PACE recertification credits. Financial professionals with at least three years of financial industry experience are eligible to enroll.

The cost of the online program is \$995 and includes the 401k training and course materials, along with various free publications and trial subscriptions. Please visit www.401kservicetraining.com/online.htm for more information or to view the program introduction.

To enroll, visit www.401kservicetraining.com or call Sharon Pivrotto at 412-977-9304.

About the 401k Service Training Program:

The 401k Service Training Program is offered through Financial Service Standards, LLC and accredited through Robert Morris University, both in Pittsburgh.

Financial Service Standards, LLC was founded in 2005 by investment professionals Donald Settina, PPC™, CFP®, AIFA® and Sharon Pivrotto, PPC™, AIF®. The company is devoted to identifying and raising the service standards of financial professionals. To date, more than 200 retirement professionals have been trained through the program.

About Robert Morris University -- Robert Morris University, founded in 1921, is a private, four-year institution offering more than 30 undergraduate degree programs and 18 master's and doctoral programs. The main campus is just west of Pittsburgh, renowned for education, health care, and finance.

For more information about the new online 401k Service Training Program, contact Sharon Pivirotto at 412-977-9304. You may also visit www.401kservicetraining.com or www.financialservicestandards.com for more information.

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Posted by Edward Palonek at [6/10/2008 9:32 AM](#) | [Add Comment](#)

[Baby Boomers Beg Advisors for Truth on Self-Directed IRAs; PENSICO Trust Offers Mini-Symposium Series for Professional Advisors](#)

Baby Boomers Beg Advisors for Truth on Self-Directed IRAs; PENSICO Trust Offers Mini-Symposium Series for Professional Advisors

The exploding IRA market is expected to hit the \$5.6 trillion mark by 2011. Roughly 75% of Boomer retirees roll their 401(k) retirement funds into IRA accounts, and are begging for help truly diversifying beyond the default choice of stocks and bonds. PENSICO Trust is offering a symposium on self-directed IRAs for real estate and financial professional advisors.

San Francisco, CA ([PRWEB](#)) August 17, 2006 -- PENSICOTrust.com, the forerunner in advanced [self directed IRA](#) education, has launched a new series of free mini-symposiums for tax attorneys, real estate pros, CPAs and financial planners who want to tap the emerging self-directed IRA market. The seminars, to be held in the fall in various cities, explain how advisors can deliver what IRA and 401(k) holders are asking for – safe and savvy, but little-known investment opportunities in private equities and real estate.

The exploding IRA market is expected to hit the \$5.6 trillion mark by 2011. Roughly 75% of Baby Boomer retirees roll their 401(k) retirement funds into IRA accounts, and are begging their advisors for help truly diversify beyond the default choice of stocks and bonds.

John F. Lampe, wealth manager, real estate broker and attorney discovered at a [PENSICO Trust](#) seminar that self-directed IRAs are, "the greatest underutilized wealth management tool available." Only 2% of IRA investors have tapped into the [self directed IRA market](#).

Untapped opportunities for financial and real estate professionals

Because most financial and real estate professionals aren't yet experienced with investments outside the traditional stock market, many IRA holders have nowhere to turn for advice. Mark Robbins, VP of CTX Mortgage, Marin, CA, says, "I have gained tremendous knowledge, experience and industry recognition from PENSICO's training programs. This has resulted in new business for me."

“ That’s why we’re passionate about educating professionals – so they can help their clients get the benefits of holding tangible non-traditional assets in their tax-deferred and tax-free IRA accounts ”
