January 7, 2009

SEI Quick Poll: Advisor Resolutions Fixed on Growth, Not Just Survival, in 2009

Assessing Client Risk Tolerance, Adjusting Long-Term Goals Key to Strengthening Client Relationships and Growing Assets in Year Ahead

OAKS, Pa., Jan. 7 /PRNewswire-FirstCall/ -- Independent advisors remain positive about the potential for success in the coming year despite a challenging 2008, according to the most recent Quick Poll released by SEI (Nasdaq: SEIC). In the poll entitled *"The Year Ahead,"* more than half of advisors (51 percent) surveyed predict the markets will rebound by the second quarter of 2009. In addition, advisors offered New Year's resolutions such as "grow the business 20 percent," "add $30 million in assets under management," and "increase revenue by 15 percent," which indicate they are focused on growing their practices, not just sustaining them. Other key themes that emerged from the poll included:

1. When life gave advisors lemons, they made lemonade. When asked what made 2008 a good year, many advisors recognized positive client relationship opportunities. For example, 40 percent of advisors said that although volatile markets made clients anxious, it also created an opportunity for them to strengthen client relationships. Similarly, 28 percent of advisors stated that the past year helped clients recognize the value of their strategic personal advice versus investment-only perspective.
2. Advisors will remember the bad with the good, too. "Keep my head above water" was one advisor's New Year's resolution, indicating that while respondents are optimistic about the coming year, they have not forgotten the challenges of 2008. In fact, 56 percent of advisors agreed that it was the nearly 40 percent pay cut they experienced due to market depreciation that made 2008 a tough year. A number of advisors (30 percent) also stated that the need to scale back business expansion plans was their biggest gripe about the previous year.
3. Advisors still believe in growth. To replace lost revenues from 2008, 45 percent of advisors stated they would explore new initiatives to proactively acquire clients. Many advisors (24 percent) also said they would increase their efforts with center of influence contacts such as accountants and estate attorneys, while another 24 percent will strengthen existing referral processes. Only seven percent said they planned to do nothing but focus on retaining existing clients.
4. Clients aren't as tolerant as they used to be. Advisors also believed that last year's market conditions taught clients valuable lessons about themselves, particularly with respect to risk tolerance. Almost half of advisors polled (49 percent) felt that clients realized they weren't as risk-tolerant as they'd thought they were, while 33 percent said clients learned they could handle volatility if

   they focused on long-term goals.
5. It's all about trust. Based on what they'd learned from 2008, when asked what advice they'd give new advisors entering the business, 57 percent of advisors recommended they position themselves as a trusted advisor by "providing advice and not just investments from the onset."

"Even in the face of the challenging conditions of 2008, advisors are determined to find ways to add value to their client relationships," said Stephen Onofrio, Senior Managing Director, SEI Advisor Network. "This past year was SEI's biggest for new advisor recruitment, and we found that most advisors were focused on providing strategy that went above and beyond just investments."

The poll included feedback from 285 independent advisors, including New Year's resolutions about both their clients and their businesses. The top nine resolutions for 2009 included:

1. Grow referrals.
2. Conduct more marketing initiatives.
3. Hire staff.
4. Be more proactive with clients.
5. Retain existing clients.
6. Add services to practice.
7. Truly focus on clients' needs.
8. Obtain larger clients.
9. Manage expenses better.

To obtain a copy of the complete poll and its findings, please email SEI at seiadvisorfeedback@seic.com.

About the SEI Advisor Network

The SEI Advisor Network provides independent advisors with outsourced wealth management platforms that are designed to meet the demands of a new generation of wealthy clients. In an evolving wealth management industry, the group offers an end-to-end process for successfully transforming their clients' businesses in every critical area, including marketing, practice management, investment strategy and client relationship platforms. The SEI Advisor Network is a strategic business unit of SEI. For more information, visit www.seic.com/advisors.

About SEI

SEI (Nasdaq: SEIC) is a leading global provider of outsourced asset management, investment processing and investment operations solutions. The company's innovative solutions help corporations, financial institutions, financial advisors, and affluent families create and manage wealth. As of September 30, 2008, through its subsidiaries and partnerships in which the company has a significant interest, SEI administers $431 billion in mutual fund and pooled assets and manages $162 billion in assets. SEI serves clients, conducts or is registered to conduct business and/or operations, from more than 20 offices in over a dozen countries. For more information, visit www.seic.com.

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