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BrightScope Opens its Doors to All Financial Advisors, Providing Access to Millions of Investors with Enhanced Advisor Pages

Through Free and Premium Profiles, Badges, Advanced SEO Tools and More, Financial Advisors Can Now Grow Their Online Presence in a Compliance-Friendly Environment

SAN DIEGO, Calif. (December 12, 2013) – BrightScope (www.brightscope.com), a leading provider of independent financial information and investment research, today announced a major update to its Advisor Pages platform. Financial advisors can now claim and maintain their profile at no charge, and additionally gain access to new exposure tools with two premium account options. BrightScope is also releasing a series of badges that allow advisors to highlight experience and conduct, and help investors more easily identify wealth management advisors with clean regulatory histories and desired industry experience.

"BrightScope was early in figuring out that all financial advisors need to have a useful online presence and a place to display their experience and credentials," said Joshua M. Brown, author of The Reformed Broker blog and CEO of Ritholtz Wealth Management. "Now that Advisor Pages is opening up to everyone, it's only a matter of time before these profiles become the industry standard and the go-to resource for investors."

Now, financial advisors can access and update their basic profile for free, and showcase their expertise by engaging in open discussions with investors on BrightScope's financial Q&A forum. Those looking to further expand their digital footprint can upgrade to one of two new premium account options that include a wide variety of tools to help advisors increase the exposure their profiles receive online. The new badges allow consumers to quickly see whether a wealth management advisor has experience, expertise and a clean record.

"The internet is increasingly becoming a tool for basic due diligence in any industry, including financial services, yet comprehensive quality information remains fractured and difficult to find" said Michael Kitces, partner and director of research for Pinnacle Advisory Group and publisher of the financial planning industry blog Nerd's Eye View. "Giving consumers the opportunity to 'BrightScope' a prospective advisor will bring much needed transparency. The Advisor Pages enhancements should make it even easier for advisors to further flesh out their profiles beyond the minimum standards that regulators require, ensuring that consumers are getting all the key information they should have to make a good decision."

A comprehensive directory of nearly 600,000 financial advisors, BrightScope's Advisor Pages, aggregates hard-to-discover but publicly available information, making it easy for people to find

the companies and professionals most suitable for specific financial needs. Since its launch in 2011, Advisor Pages has attracted nearly 3.5 million investors seeking financial advice or looking to find, evaluate and engage with wealth management professionals.

New Options for Advisors

All of the new Advisor Pages features have been combined into three new profile options:

- **Basic (Free)** – Advisors can showcase their expertise in the place where investors do their due diligence by updating basic information on their profile and answering real investor questions in BrightScope’s Financial Q&A forum.
- **Plus (\$25 a month)** – Advisors can highlight their specialties and differentiate themselves from the competition by adding a profile tagline and expanding the description of their practice.
- **Pro (\$95 a month)** – Advisors can maximize their exposure to BrightScope’s more than 350,000 unique monthly visitors by being featured in geo-targeted advertisements across the website. With a Pro profile, advisors can also unlock visitor insights and advanced profile performance analytics.

“Research shows that almost half of US consumers who opened a brokerage account last year first researched their choices online,” said Mike Alfred, co-founder and CEO of BrightScope. “Our newest update gives all advisors the unique opportunity to interact with these investors while they are researching their options. It also makes it even easier for investors to find a wealth management professional with expertise that fits their unique investment needs.”

BrightScope obtains its data directly from publicly available sources, including required regulatory filings from the Securities Exchange Commission. Any advisor registered with the Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) or Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) can claim a profile.

For more information, please visit <http://www.brightscope.com/advisor-pages/>.

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About BrightScope

BrightScope is a financial information company that brings transparency to opaque markets through independent research and analysis. Delivered through web-based software, BrightScope data drives better decision-making for individual investors, corporate plan sponsors, asset managers, broker-dealers, and financial advisors. The BrightScope Rating, developed in partnership with leading independent 401k fiduciaries, reviews more than 200 unique data inputs per plan and calculates a single numerical score which defines plan quality at the company level. In April 2011, the company launched BrightScope Advisor Pages, the first comprehensive and publicly available directory of financial advisors designed to help consumers discover information and conduct due diligence on wealth management professionals. BrightScope also markets a suite of data analytics software products to Fortune

1000 companies, asset managers, broker-dealers, financial advisors, and other market participants. Public ratings for nearly 50,000 retirement plans as well as rating definitions, criteria and methodologies, and information on nearly 600,000 financial advisors and nearly 40,000 advisory firms are available for free at www.brightscope.com.