

# THE STATE OF THE AFFLUENT 2014

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AN INDUSTRY INTELLIGENCE REPORT FROM  
CEG WORLDWIDE AND WEALTHENGINE

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*In Partnership with*  
**WealthEngine**<sup>™</sup>

## **The State of the Affluent 2014**

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## Introduction



**A**s 2014 begins, there is reason to be optimistic that the financial turmoil that began in 2008 is largely behind us. The markets have rebounded, real estate has stabilized and the U.S. economy continues its steady—albeit slow—growth.

Nonetheless, significant economic and political ambiguity remains. For many affluent individuals scarred by the downturns of 2008-09 and the ensuing uncertainty, the path forward remains unclear. They understand that a brightening economic picture alone does not ensure that they will achieve their most important financial goals or solve their most important financial challenges.

Those who work with financial advisors—and CEG Worldwide's past research shows that most affluent individuals do—look to their advisors to provide the expertise that will maximize their chances of achieving what is most important to them while avoiding costly mistakes. While many are satisfied with their relationships with their financial advisors, many are not. Some are actively seeking new advisor relationships in order to obtain the guidance they need.

For the financial advisors who can provide the type of assistance the affluent require, this presents both a substantial opportunity and a substantial challenge. To serve the affluent effectively, advisors need more than investment management capabilities; they must provide a complete wealth management experience that addresses the range of financial concerns—

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often complex ones—beyond investments. This level of service is possible only when financial advisors build and nurture successful relationships with their clients—something that in turn is predicated on having deep knowledge about who their clients are and what they most need.

At the end of the day, the financial advisors who can effectively address financial concerns *and* do so within the context of a deeply client-centric relationship will stand out from the competition and succeed in capturing more than their share of the affluent market. Just as important, their affluent clients will be far better served.

Our goal with *The State of the Affluent 2014* is to provide insight that will enable financial advisors to initiate and build relationships with the affluent individuals whom they can best serve along with specific tactics that will enable them to fully leverage that knowledge to grow their businesses.

To accomplish this, CEG Worldwide partnered with WealthEngine, the leading provider of sophisticated wealth identification and prospect research solutions. By combining the extensive wealth intelligence of WealthEngine with CEG Worldwide's expertise in the best practices of leading financial advisors, *The State of the Affluent 2014* offers a unique perspective: both the knowledge and the actions that advisors need to succeed with the affluent.

In **Part One: A Portrait of Today's Affluent**, we provide key demographics of the affluent market along with broad context on the finances, interests and lifestyles of the affluent. **Part Two: Working Profitably with Today's Affluent Clients** then spells out how financial advisors can use this information to more effectively attract, serve and retain affluent clients.

## Part One: A Portrait of Today's Affluent

Many financial advisors have a tendency to treat all clients and prospective clients largely the same. However, the affluent can be very different from those of more moderate wealth, and concrete knowledge about them can be elusive. This makes understanding the unique qualities of the affluent one of the biggest challenges for financial advisors seeking to work in this market.

To set the stage, it's useful to define "affluence." As **Exhibit 1** shows, we will consider three distinct levels of affluence, ranging from the affluent who hold investable assets in the range of \$1 million to \$5 million; the super affluent who have between \$5 million and \$25 million in investable assets; and the ultra affluent, who have more than \$25 million in investable assets.

### About WealthEngine Data

Influenced by more than 60 data sources, WealthEngine offers the most comprehensive wealth profiles available. These include popular and unique data from the following sources:

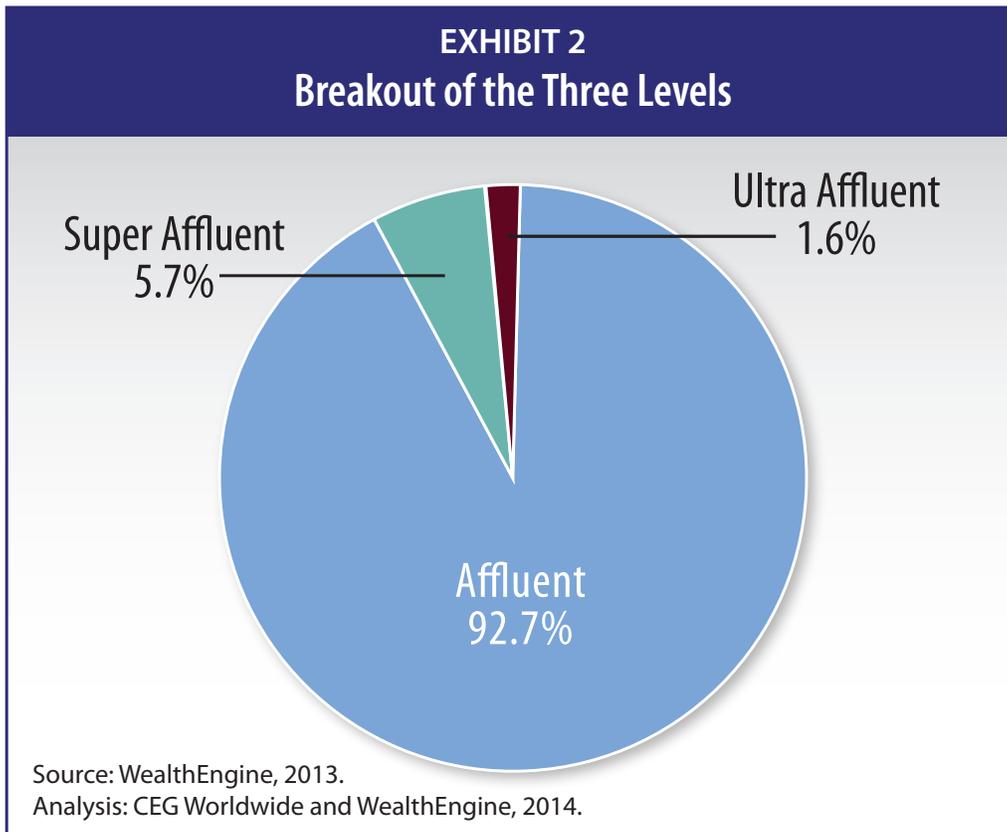
- Acxiom household profiles
- D&B business information
- Hoover's
- State business registrations
- DataQuick real estate
- LexisNexis
- SEC Daily Stocks Transactions
- Reuters Market Guide
- GuideStar directors and trustees
- Federal and state political donations
- WealthEngine philanthropic donations
- Marquis Who's Who
- Airplane and boat ownership
- And more ...

Depending on the source, WealthEngine data may be self-reported, regulatory or modeled. To view WealthEngine's privacy policy, please visit this page.

**Exhibit 2** tells us that the affluent category is by far the largest, comprising 92.7 percent of all affluent households. For a great many financial advisors, the affluent stratum represents the “sweet spot” for clients and prospective clients—the one where they can most effectively add substantial value to their clients’ financial lives. Those in the two upper strata, particularly the ultra affluent, frequently present financial challenges of such complexity that they are better addressed in a traditional or commercial family office setting. For this reason, we will focus much of our discussion on those in the affluent category.

EXHIBIT 1 Levels of Affluence	
Investable Assets	Level
\$1 million-\$5 million	Affluent
\$5 million-\$25 million	Super affluent
More than \$25 million	Ultra affluent

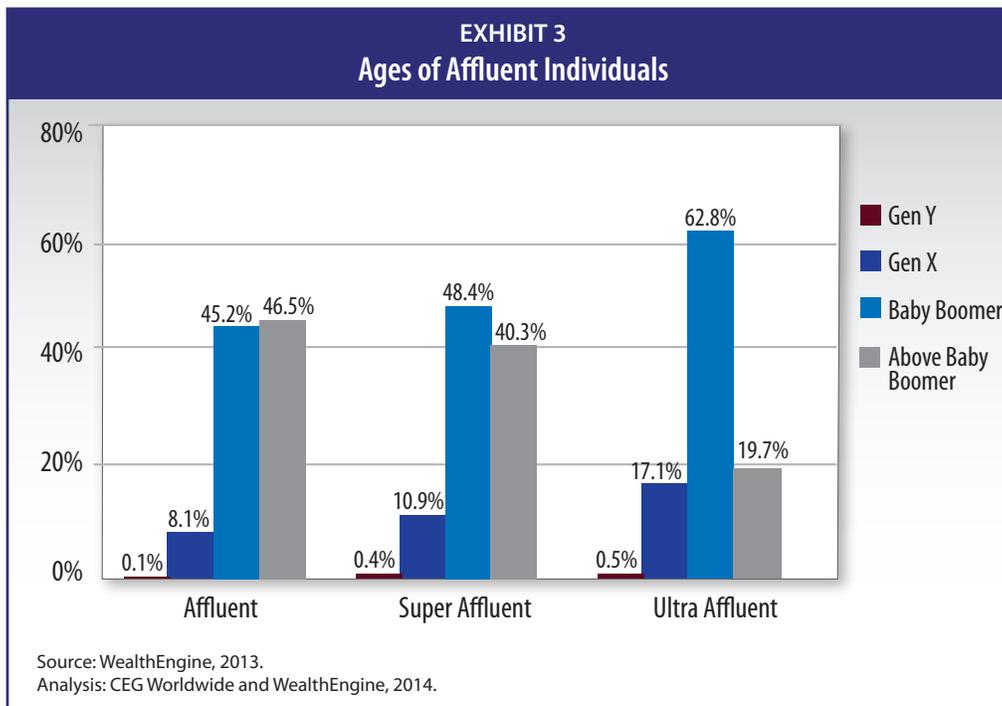
Source: CEG Worldwide.



## Who the Affluent Are

The WealthEngine data illuminate the characteristics of the individuals in each of the three categories of affluence. While many of the data are not surprising, we believe that it is always worthwhile to look in order to uncover any unexpected insights.

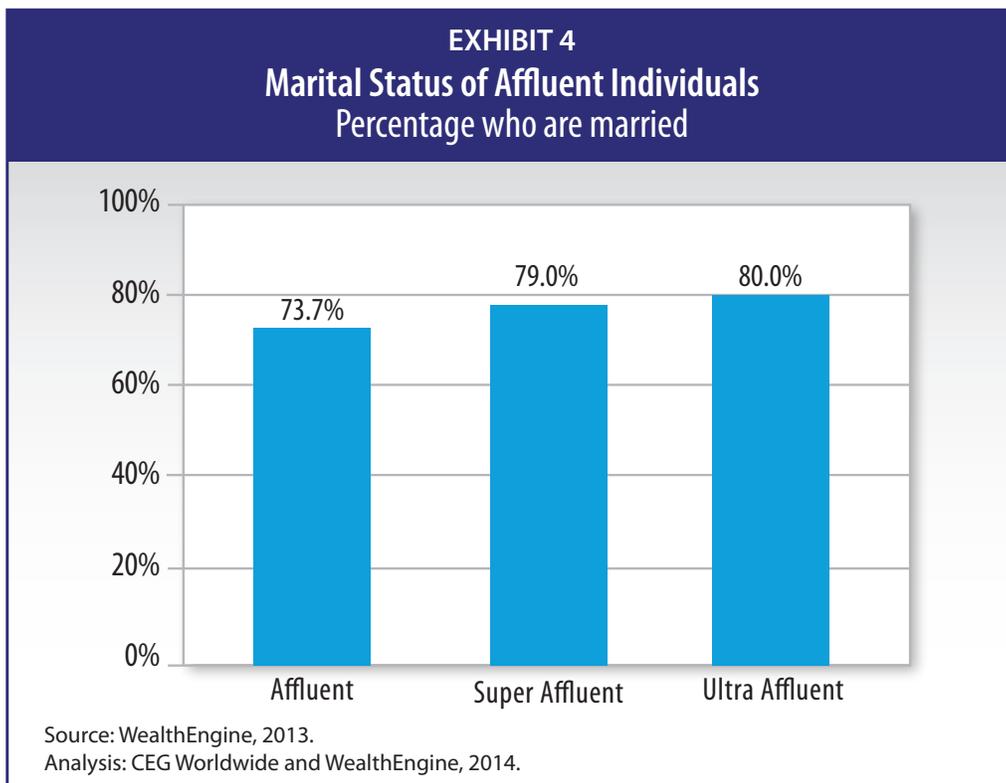
To begin, we see in **Exhibit 3** that the affluent in all three categories are primarily baby boomers (born between 1946 and 1964) or older. Specifically, in the affluent category, more than nine out of ten (91.7 percent) are 50 years of age or older. Relatively few of any category are of Generation X (born from the early 1960s to the early 1980s) and even fewer are millennials (also called Gen Y, or those born from the early 1980s to the early 2000s).



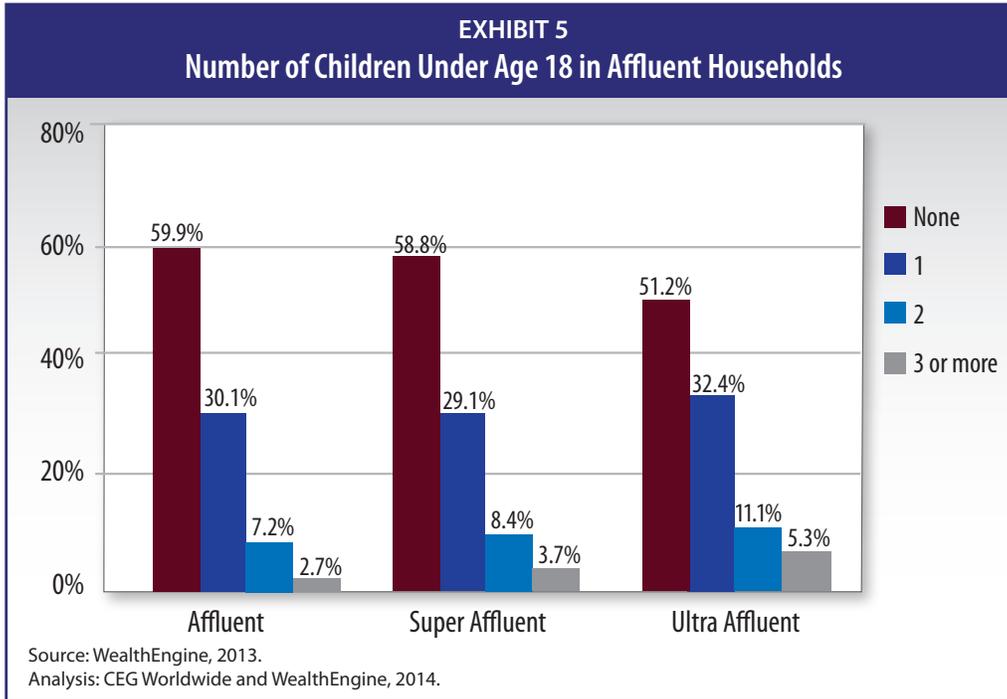
Anecdotally, we hear many financial advisors talk about their desire to work in the market of younger investors because they believe that that is where future wealth will be. That may certainly be the case, but the data clearly show us that the real wealth is currently with the baby boomers and, to a somewhat

lesser degree, the generation older than the boomers. Those who focus on the younger market should recognize that doing so is a long-term proposition. For the shorter term, the wealth lies in the baby boomer generation.

In terms of marital status, nearly three-quarters of those in the affluent category (73.7 percent) are married, as are four out of five in the super affluent and ultra affluent categories. (See **Exhibit 4.**) In contrast, U.S. Census data tell us that, in 2010, 56.4 percent of all persons 18 years of age or older in the United States were married. Thus, the affluent appear to be more likely than the general population to be married.



In **Exhibit 5**, we see that over half of affluent households overall have no children under age 18 residing in the home. In the affluent category, six in ten, or 59.9 percent, have no children in the home. Three in ten (30.1 percent) have just one child living at home, and fewer than 10 percent have two or more children at home.

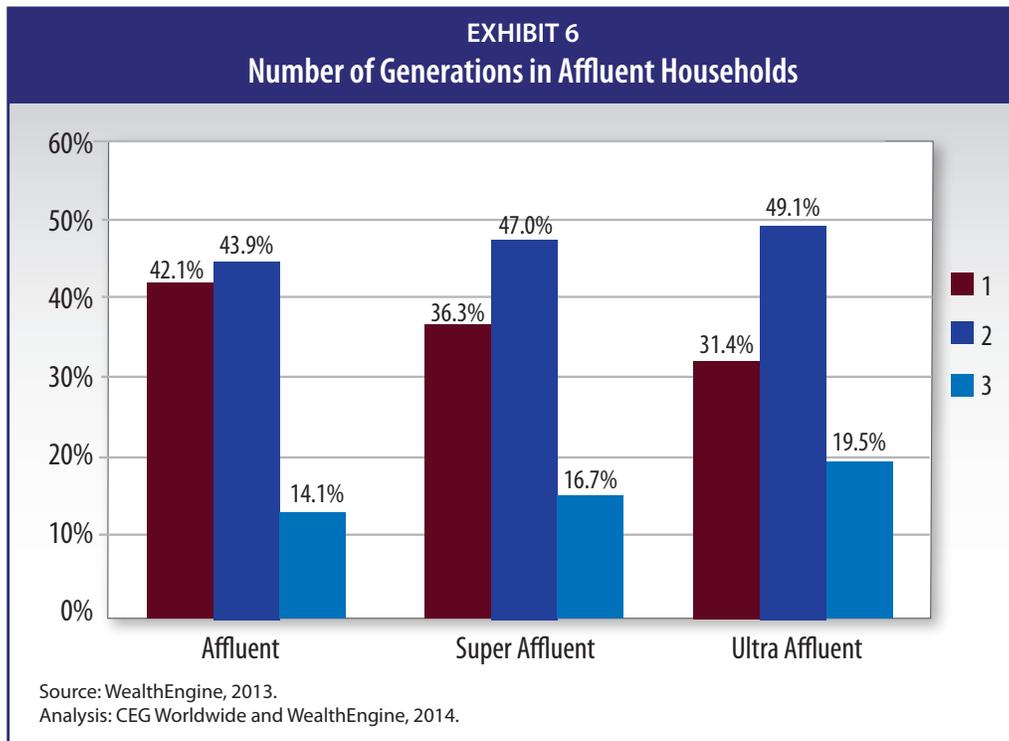


We can contrast this with the overall population, where households are more likely to have children. According to U.S. Census data from 2010, 55 percent of households had no children under age 18, while 19 percent had one, 16 percent had two and 9 percent had three or more.

That affluent households are more likely to have no children or fewer children present might be accounted for by the fact that the affluent are generally older than the general population. Regardless of the reason, it is something for financial advisors to bear in mind when they have conversations with affluent prospective clients.

**Affluent households are more likely to have no children or fewer children present than the general population.**

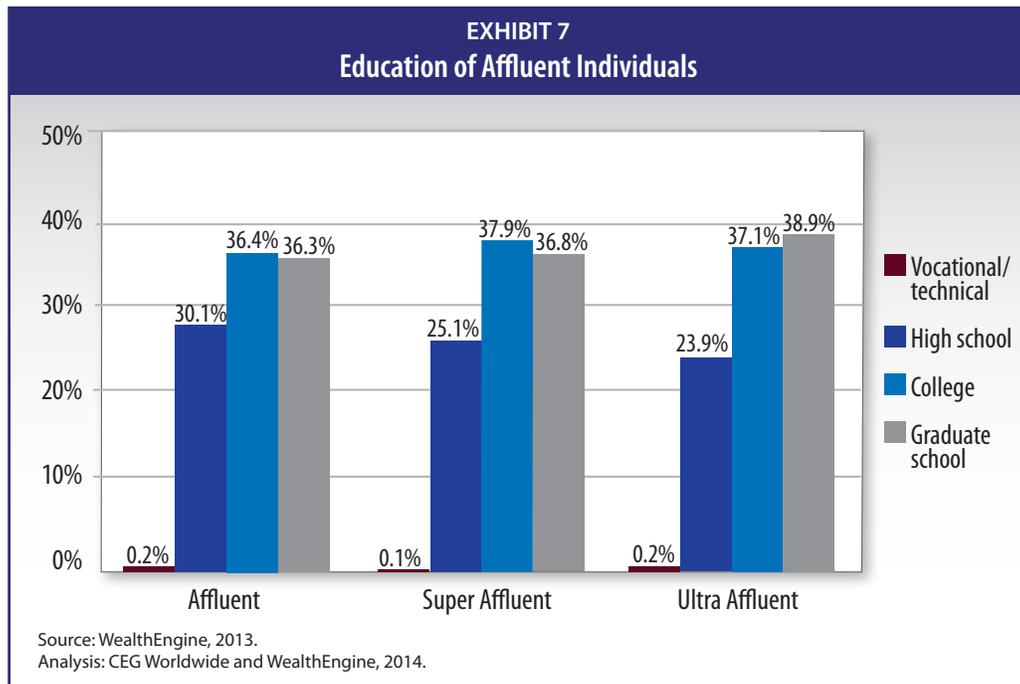
While affluent households are more likely than the general population to have no children at home, they are more likely to have multiple generations residing in the home. As **Exhibit 6** demonstrates, 43.9 percent of the affluent category have two generations at home, while 14.1 percent have three.



The super and ultra affluent are even more likely to have multiple generations residing in their households. At the upper end, fully one out of five (19.5 percent) of ultra affluent households contain three generations. In contrast, U.S. Census data from 2011 said that just 5.6 percent of all U.S. households had three or more generations.

That more affluent are in the “sandwich generation”—that they may have both children and older parents to care for—has significant planning ramifications for financial advisors serving these families. As financial advisors initiate conversations with the affluent, they need to realize that nearly half the time there will be two generations in the house—and occasionally three.

We turn next to the education levels attained by the affluent. As seen in **Exhibit 7**, those with college and graduate degrees predominate. In the affluent category, 36.4 percent have college educations while 36.3 percent have attended graduate school. Similar patterns exist among both the super and ultra affluent. About a quarter (27.2 percent of the affluent group) completed only high school and very few have vocational or technical educations.



The proportion of the affluent that have at least some graduate education stands higher than the population overall. According to U.S. Census records for 2010, 27.36 percent of all people 25 and older in the U.S. had only a high school diploma, while 36.3 percent had some college or a college degree and 16.8 percent had some graduate school or a graduate degree.

We look next at where the affluent live. **Exhibit 8** lists the top metropolitan areas in the United States by median investable assets. The San Francisco Bay Area, where there is a median of \$296,490 in investable assets among residents, stands out at the top of the list. The next four wealthiest areas—

Greater New York City, Greater Boston, Greater Washington, DC, and Greater Los Angeles—all have median investable assets clustered in the \$241,000 to \$250,000 range.

**EXHIBIT 8**  
**Top 10 Metropolitan Areas Ranked by Median Investable Assets**

Metropolitan Area	Median Investable Assets	Population
San Francisco-Oakland-Hayward, CA	\$296,490	4,335,391
New York-Newark-Jersey City, NY-NJ	\$249,403	19,567,410
Boston-Cambridge-Newton, MA	\$247,862	4,552,402
Washington-Arlington-Alexandria, DC-VA	\$247,144	5,636,232
Los Angeles-Long Beach-Anaheim, CA	\$241,748	12,828,837
San Diego-Carlsbad, CA	\$231,412	3,095,313
Seattle-Tacoma-Bellevue, WA	\$224,667	3,439,809
Baltimore-Columbia-Towson, MD	\$214,530	2,710,489
Denver-Aurora-Lakewood, CO	\$210,047	2,543,482
Miami-Fort Lauderdale-West Palm Beach, FL	\$205,217	5,564,635

Sources: WealthEngine, 2013 and U.S. Census, 2010.  
 Analysis: CEG Worldwide and WealthEngine, 2014.

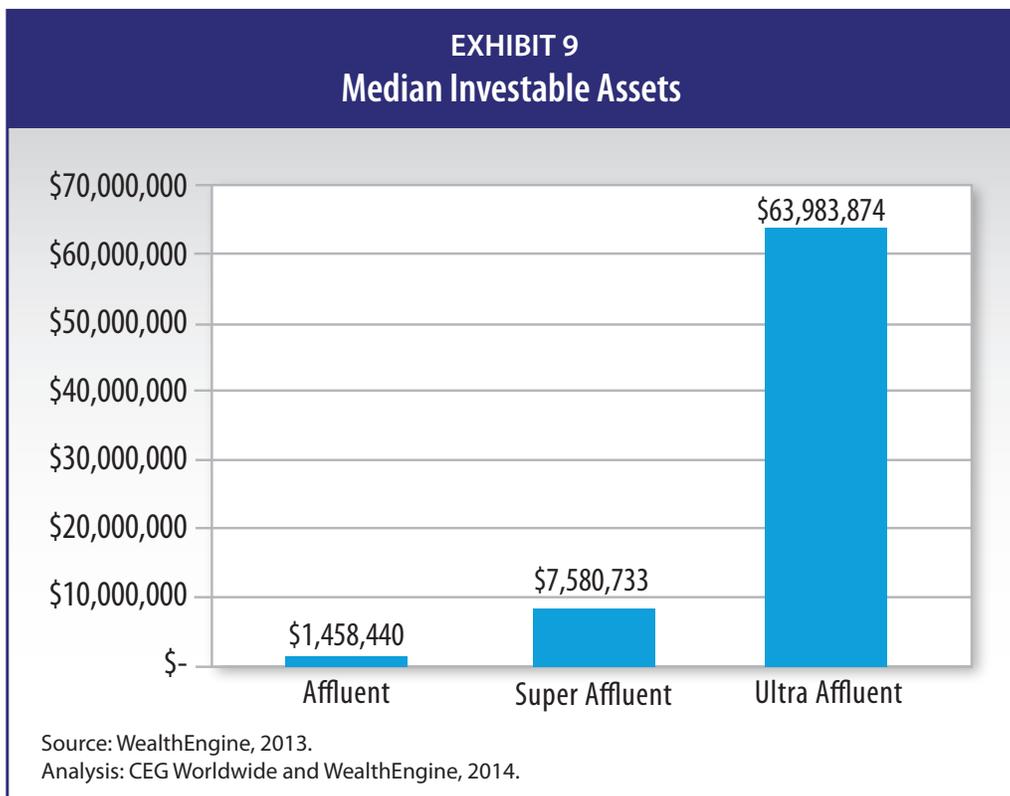
It is notable that even though Greater San Francisco scores the highest in median investable assets, it has the smallest population of the top five areas. This gives it the greatest concentration of wealth among these areas, particularly in comparison to New York and Los Angeles.

**The Finances of the Affluent**

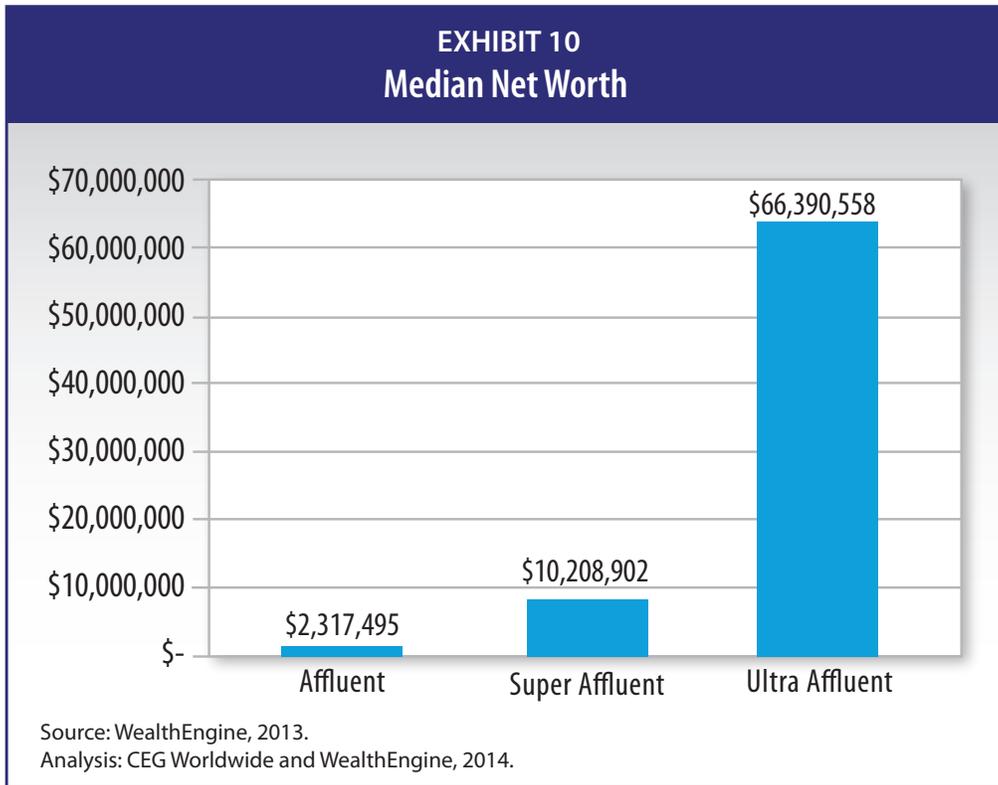
With an understanding of the general demographics of the affluent in place, we turn now to their financial pictures. This part of our portrait of the

affluent sheds light for financial advisors on the scale of the opportunities to serve them. To provide perspective on the opportunity in each level, we will continue to examine the data according to the three strata of affluence, with particular focus on the affluent stratum.

Investable assets (defined here as total assets minus total real estate value) is perhaps of most interest to financial advisors who want to understand the opportunity in serving the affluent. **Exhibit 9** tells us that among households in the affluent category, there is a median of just under \$1.5 million in investable assets—certainly an attractive number to many wishing to work in this market. Median investable assets jump to just over \$7.5 million among the super affluent and skyrocket to nearly \$64 million among the ultra affluent.

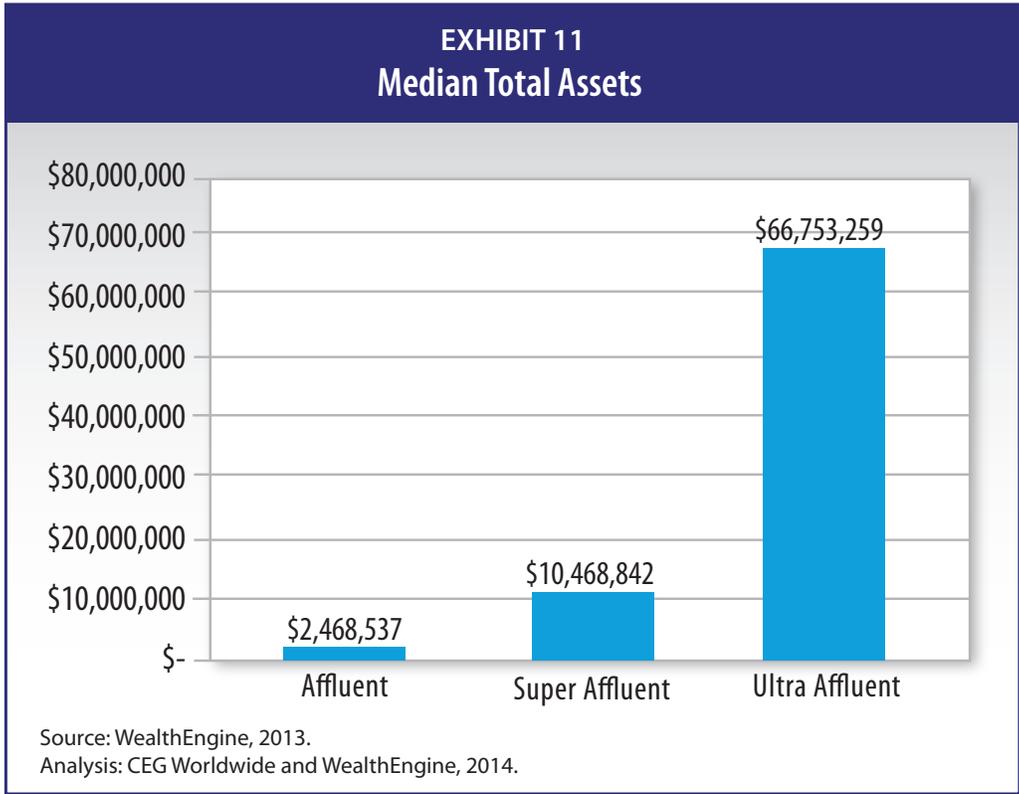


**Exhibit 10**, which shows the median net worth of households in the three categories, essentially adds in the value of real estate to the investable assets figures. It tells us that among the super and ultra affluent, the real estate slice is a relatively small portion of overall net worth. Among the affluent, it is proportionately higher.



**Exhibit 11** gives us the biggest picture of affluent assets, showing the median total value of both financial and nonfinancial assets held by affluent households in each category. By comparing Exhibits 10 and 11, we can see that the proportion of nonfinancial assets is small in all three categories.

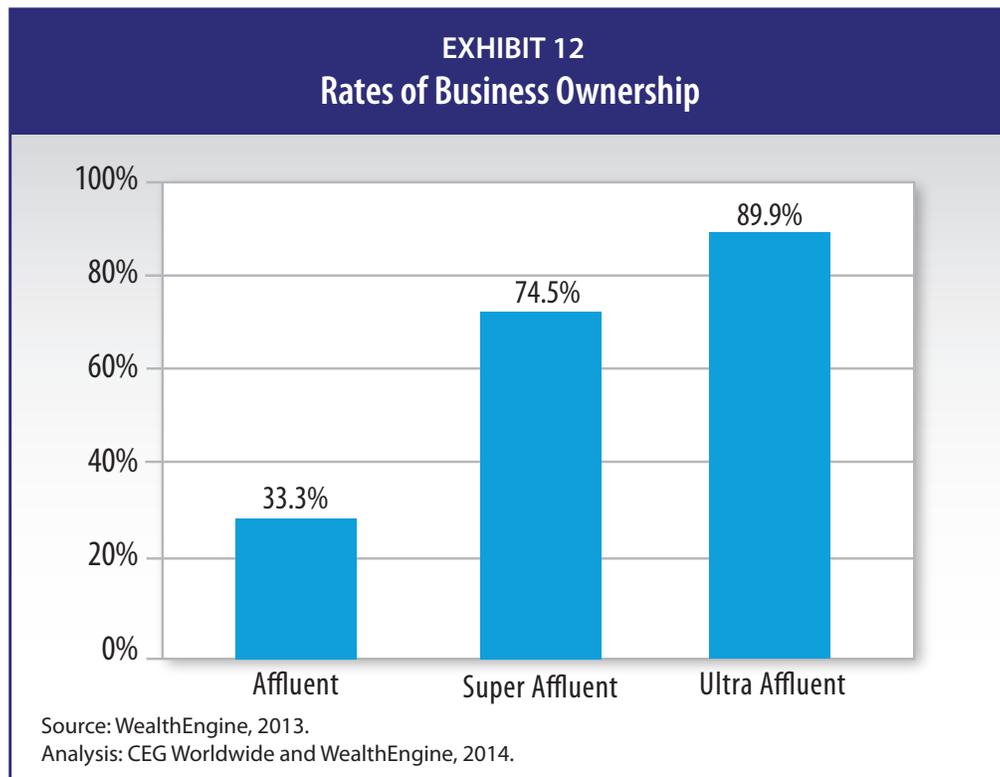
Among the super and ultra affluent, the real estate slice is a relatively small portion of overall net worth.



Taken together, **Exhibits 9, 10 and 11** paint a picture of a high-net-worth market that is doing quite well. With strong recent performance in the equity markets and a comeback in real estate, we see substantial growth and accumulation of wealth coming out of the 2008-09 recession.

An important part of the wealth of the affluent can be attributed to business ownership, as our next data attest. **Exhibit 12** shows that one-third of the affluent, three-quarters of the super affluent and nearly nine out of ten of the ultra affluent own businesses.

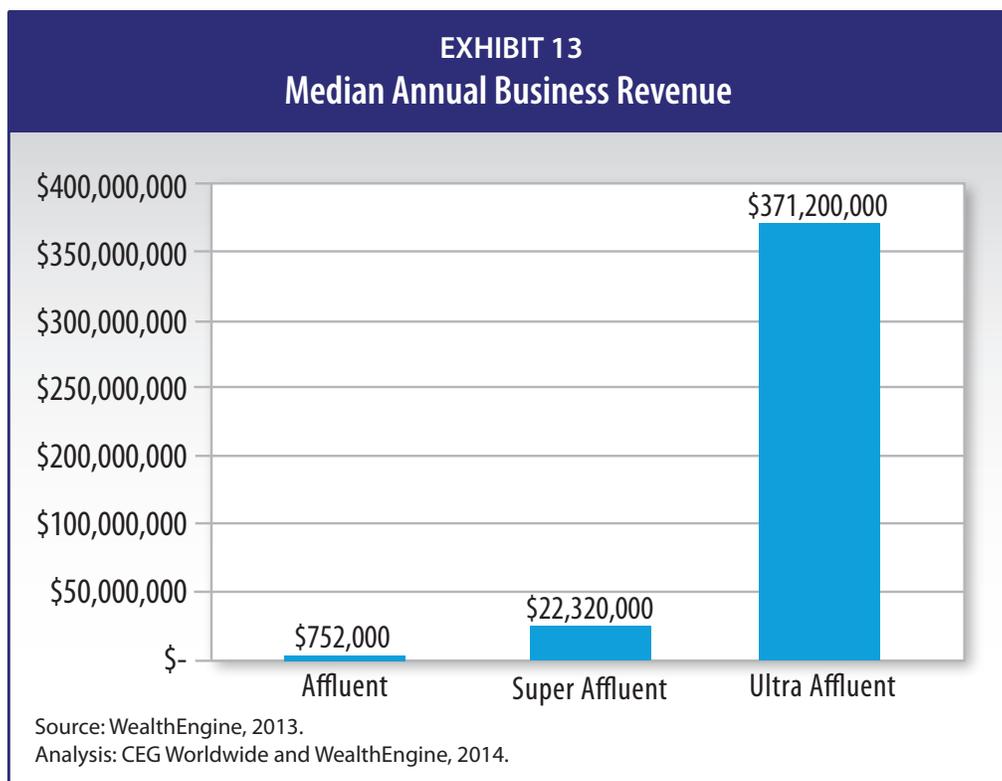
An important  
part of the wealth  
of the affluent  
can be attributed  
to business  
ownership.



We know that many financial advisors focus their client attraction efforts on private business owners, making this a very competitive market. And while the data show that many of the affluent are business owners, many are not, particularly in the sweet spot of the affluent category. This leaves a lot of the market open and potentially underserved.

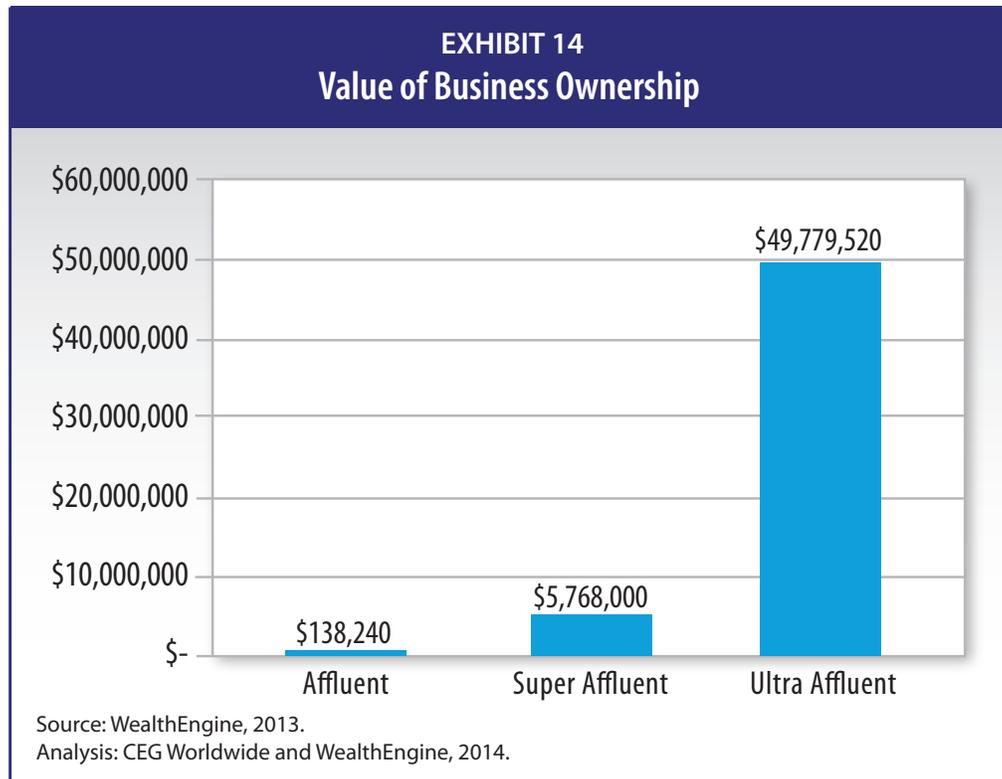
But for financial advisors who do specialize in serving business owners—or who would like to—what does that opportunity look like? **Exhibit 13** illustrates the dramatic differences in the sheer sizes of businesses owned by individuals in each of the three categories. With median annual revenue of just over \$750,000 for those in the affluent category, these are truly small businesses; in many industries, they would be considered very small businesses.

Businesses of this size can have potential for substantial growth and are frequently agile enough to respond quickly to conditions in the marketplace—both pluses for advisors who would like to work with successful small-business owners. But they also often face significant challenges of undercapitalization, limited business management skills and rising fixed costs that threaten margins. So as a group, the small-business owners in the affluent category offer a mixed bag for advisors seeking them out as clients.



The story is very different for business owners in the super and ultra affluent categories. With median annual revenue of more than \$22 million for the super affluent and more than \$371 million for the ultra affluent, these businesses are generally fully established, have access to capital to fund growth, benefit from professional management and have long-term succession plans. As a result, there may be greater opportunities for financial advisors to add value to the financial pictures of these business owners.

**Exhibit 14** reinforces this view. With median equity of just over \$138,000, business owners in the affluent category are unlikely to have an equity event of any significance in their futures. This stands in sharp contrast to both the super affluent (median of \$5.8 million in business equity) and the ultra affluent (\$49.8 million).

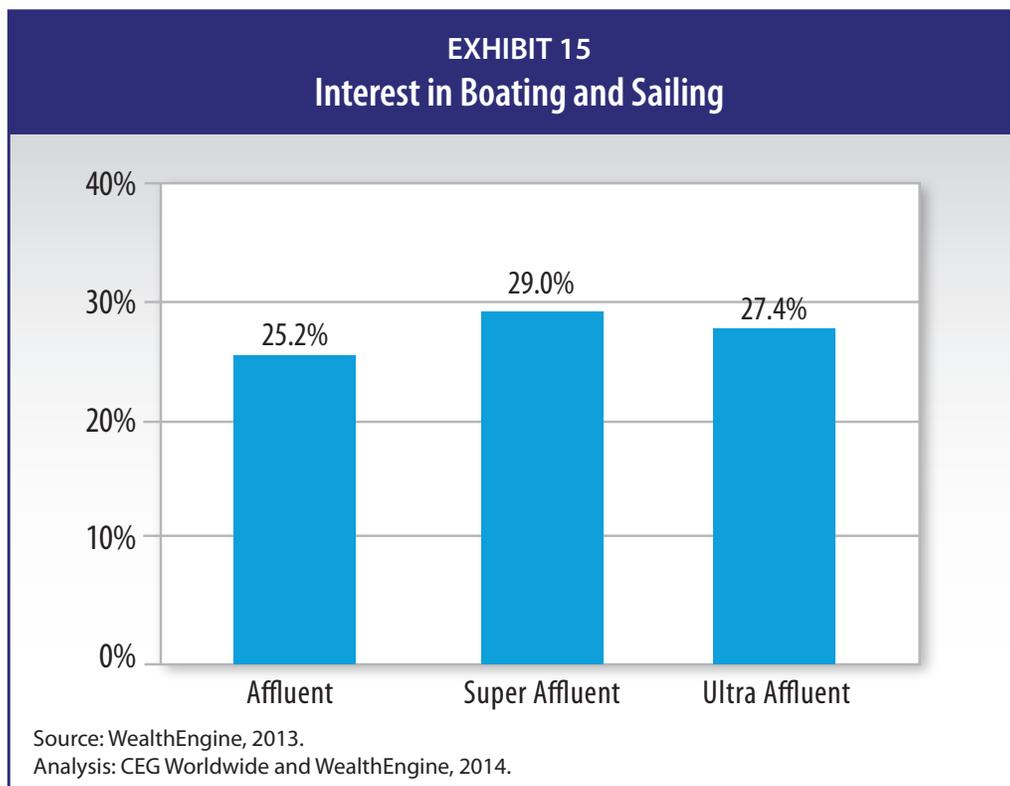


These data regarding business ownership of the affluent should spur financial advisors to carefully question something that has largely become conventional wisdom—that small-business owners make highly attractive clients. While this may be the case at times, specializing in serving these business owners is probably not the sure route to greater success that many believe it to be.

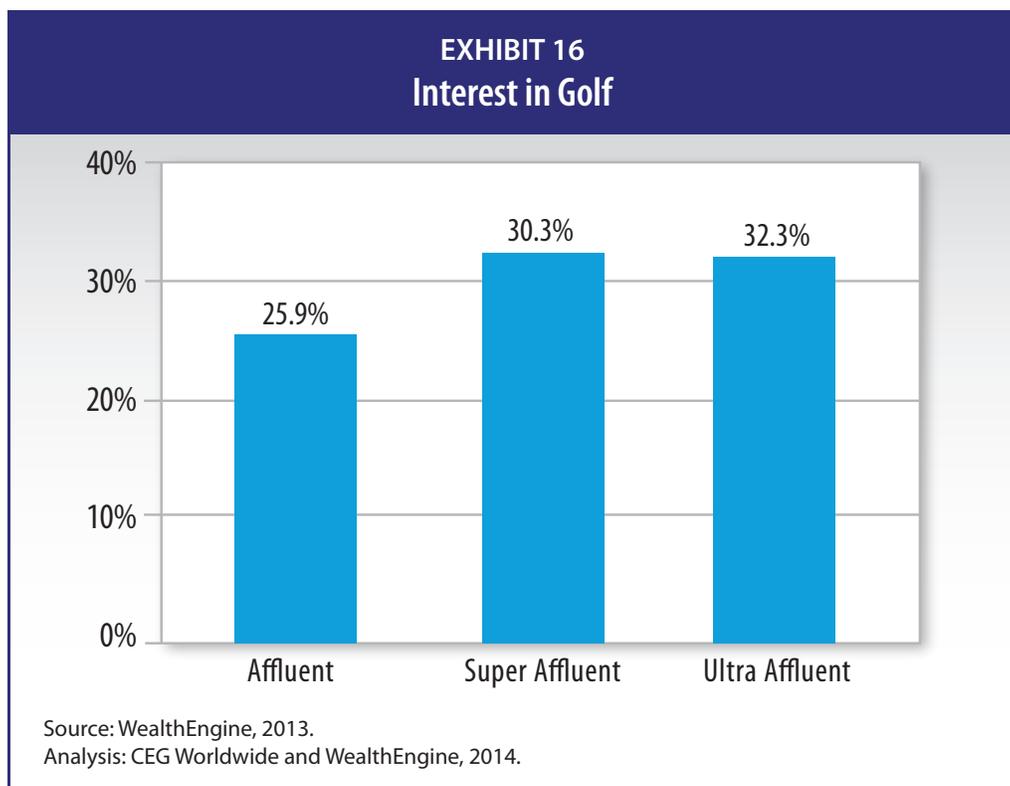
## The Interests and Lifestyles of the Affluent

We will now take a brief high-level view of some of the lifestyle interests of the affluent. These are areas that can be difficult for financial advisors to grasp, even anecdotally, across their client bases. But by knowing what is of interest to clients and prospective clients, this type of insight helps financial advisors engage in the right conversations.

**Exhibit 15** shows the scope of interest in boating and sailing across the three levels of affluence. About one-quarter of the affluent group indicate this interest, and slightly more among the super and ultra affluent. Bear in mind that this interest may be borne out very differently by different individuals in each category. “Boating interest” to someone in the affluent category may mean the motorboat used for pulling water skiers at the lake but a luxury oceangoing yacht to someone in the ultra affluent group.

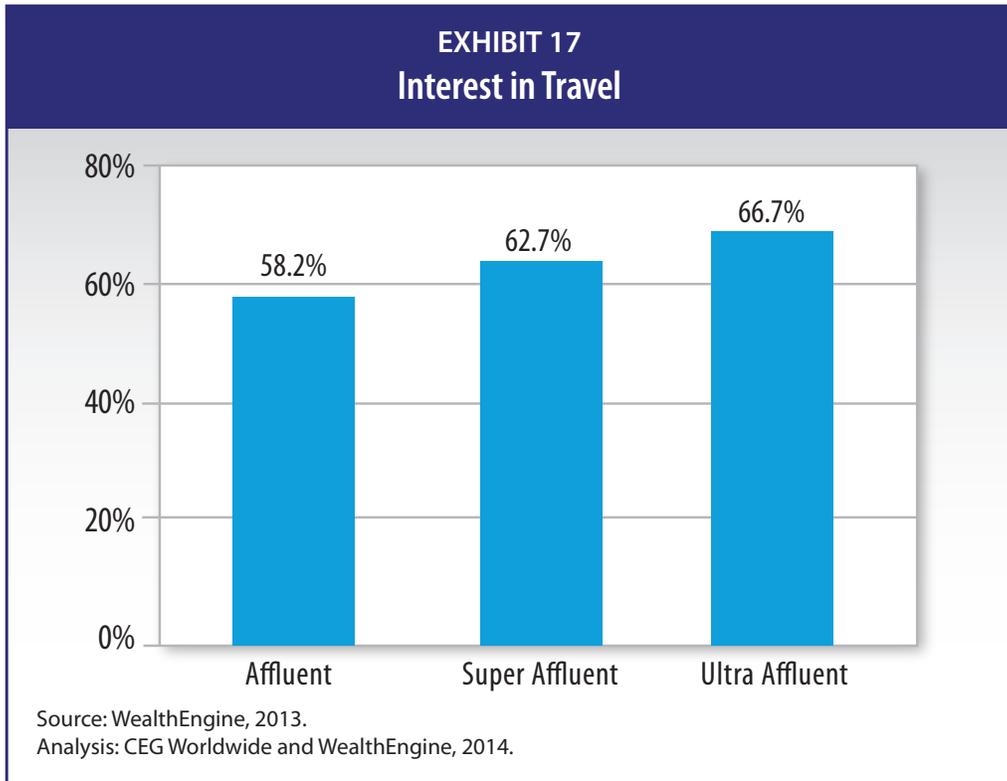


In **Exhibit 16**, we see a similar moderate interest in golfing across the three wealth strata. About one-quarter of those in the affluent category are golfers, as are three in ten among the super affluent and about one-third among the ultra affluent. These data also should cause financial advisors to question the conventional wisdom—which has become almost a cliché—that lots of affluent people (and prospective clients) can be found on the links. While a substantial portion of them are golfers, many more are not.



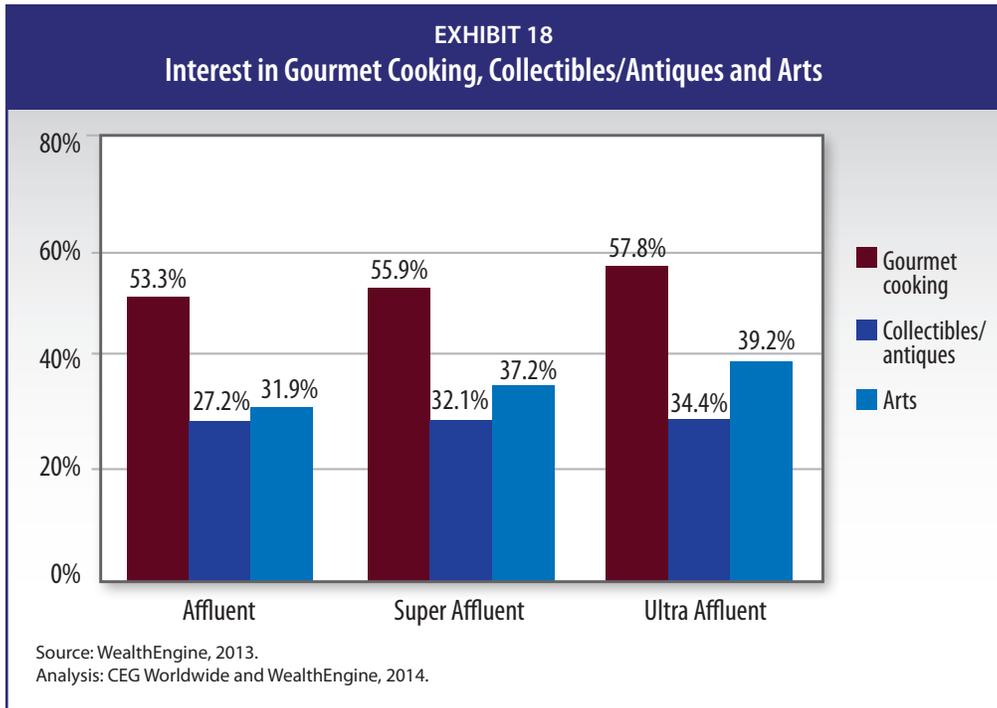
**Exhibit 17** displays the interest in travel among the three groups. It is fairly substantial, indicated by 58.2 percent of the affluent, 62.7 percent of the super affluent and 66.7 percent of the ultra affluent. The caution here is that

interest in travel has a very broad definition, including interest in domestic travel or international travel, recreational vehicles, family vacations or cruise vacations.



**Exhibit 18** rounds out our look at affluent interests and lifestyle, showing the interests in gourmet cooking, collectibles and antiques, and arts. The interest in the arts includes interest in fine arts such as painting, sculpting, filming, architecture, literature or textiles. As shown, sizable proportions of each affluent group express an interest in these areas.

When financial advisors understand their clients' motivations and goals around giving, they gain key insight into what is truly most important to them.



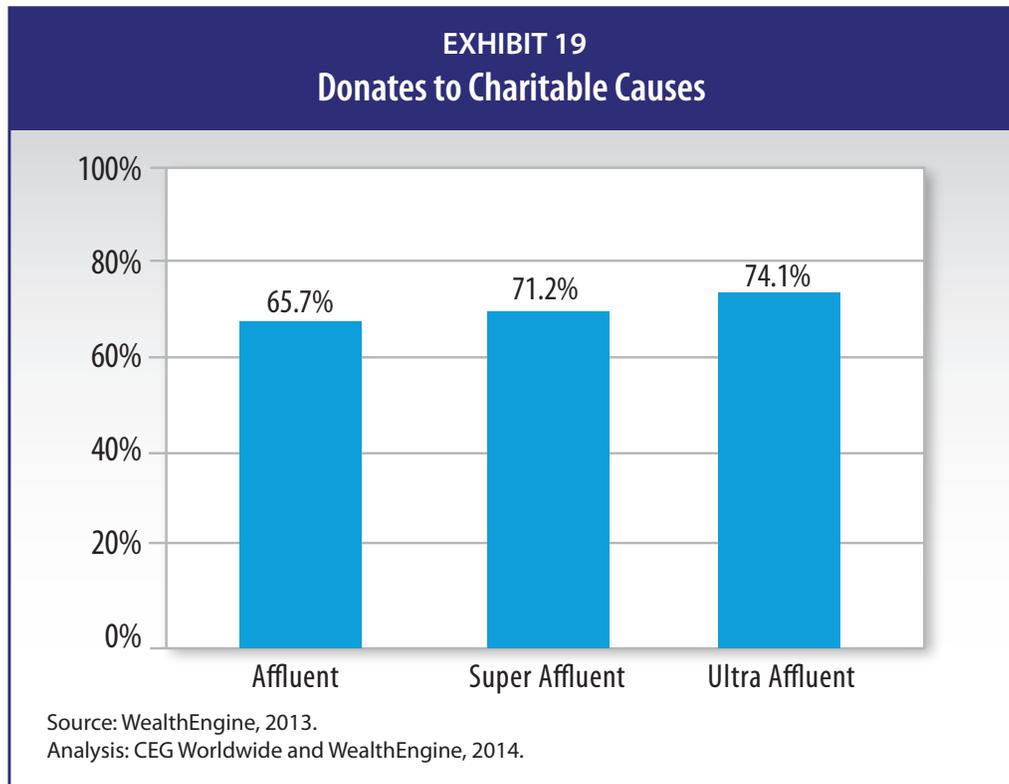
## How the Affluent Give

As the data will show, giving—to both charitable and political causes—is important to substantial numbers of the affluent.

It’s crucial for financial advisors to understand the scope of their clients’ giving intentions in order to provide the planning and strategies that will maximize the impact of their giving. Charitable giving can also play an important role in helping clients achieve other financial goals such as minimizing taxes and optimizing wealth transfer opportunities.

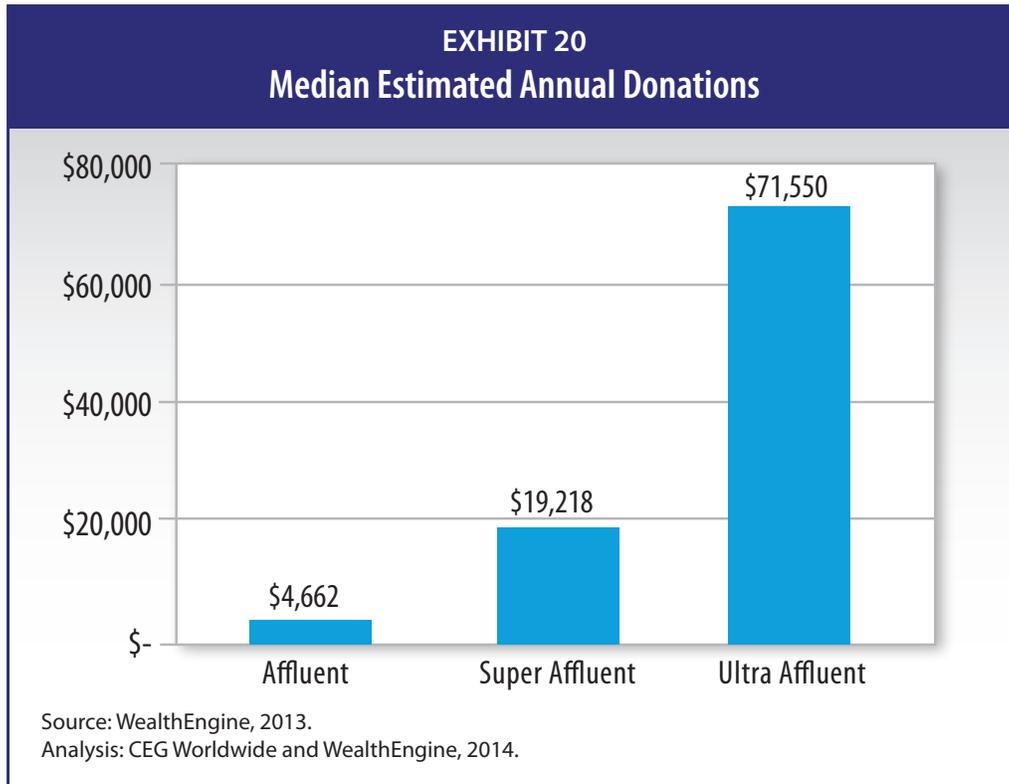
Perhaps just as important, when financial advisors understand their clients’ motivations and goals around giving, they gain key insight into what is truly most important to them. Discussion of shared values and activities around making a difference can be an important avenue for deepening the advisor-client relationship.

We start by looking at overall giving to charitable causes. **Exhibit 19** shows giving is widespread in all three groups, from just under two-thirds (65.7 percent) of the affluent donating to charities up to just under three-quarters (74.1 percent) of the ultra affluent group.



As we would expect, the dollar amount given to charitable causes varies substantially by level of affluence. The estimated median amount given by individuals in a given year ranges from \$4,662 for those in the affluent category up to \$71,550 for those in the ultra affluent group. (See **Exhibit 20**.)

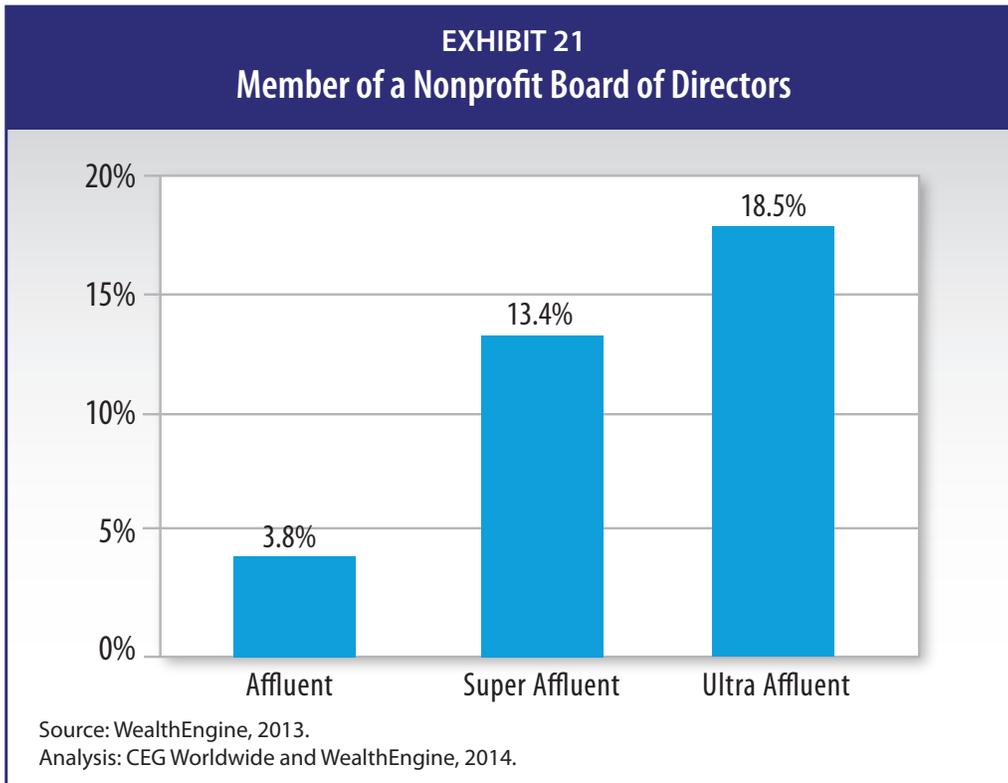
The dollar amount  
given to charitable  
causes varies  
substantially by level  
of affluence.



**Exhibit 21** shows us that many of the affluent are interested not only in supporting charitable causes financially but also in assisting them by providing leadership in the capacity as members of the boards of directors

Many of the affluent are interested not only in supporting charitable causes financially but also assisting them by providing leadership.

of nonprofit organizations. While serving on nonprofit boards is relatively unusual among the affluent group (just 3.8 percent), it is seen much more frequently among the super affluent (13.4 percent) and especially the ultra affluent, where nearly one out of five (18.5 percent) serve on nonprofit boards.



Where do the affluent serve as board members? As seen in **Exhibit 22**, philanthropy, voluntarism and grant-making organizations lead the list among all three categories of the affluent, followed by educational institutions, human services organizations, and organizations devoted to arts, culture and the humanities.

For financial advisors who have the interest and skills to serve on nonprofit boards, doing so may offer an opportunity to cultivate relationships with other board members who become clients or to provide financial services to the organization itself. However, we believe that the motivation to grow business should be secondary to the desire and ability to provide quality leadership as a board member.

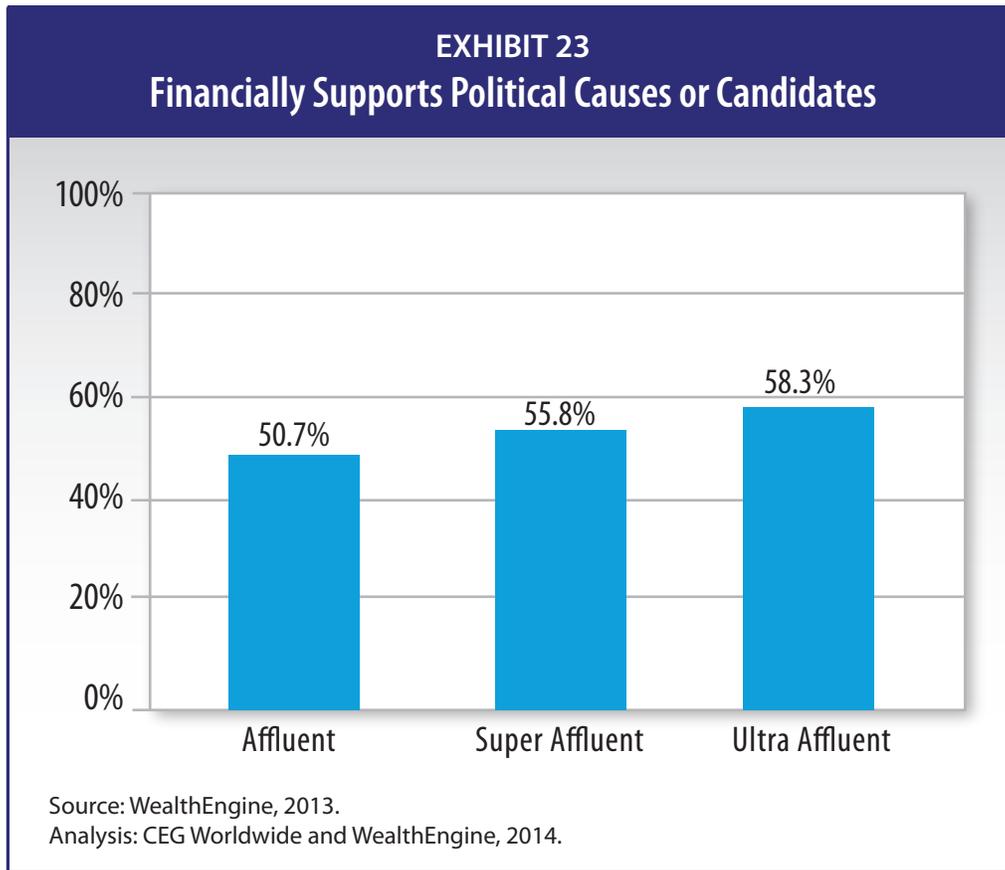
**EXHIBIT 22**  
**Top Four Types of Nonprofit Organizations**  
**Where the Affluent Serve**

<b>Affluent</b>	Philanthropy, voluntarism and grant-making (25%)	Educational institutions (12%)	Human services (11%)	Health—general and rehabilitative (9%)
<b>Super Affluent</b>	Philanthropy, voluntarism and grant-making (37%)	Educational institutions (11%)	Human services (8%)	Arts, culture and humanities (6%)
<b>Ultra Affluent</b>	Philanthropy, voluntarism and grant-making (42%)	Arts, culture and humanities (11%)	Human services (11%)	Educational institutions (8%)

Source: WealthEngine, 2013.  
Analysis: CEG Worldwide and WealthEngine, 2014.

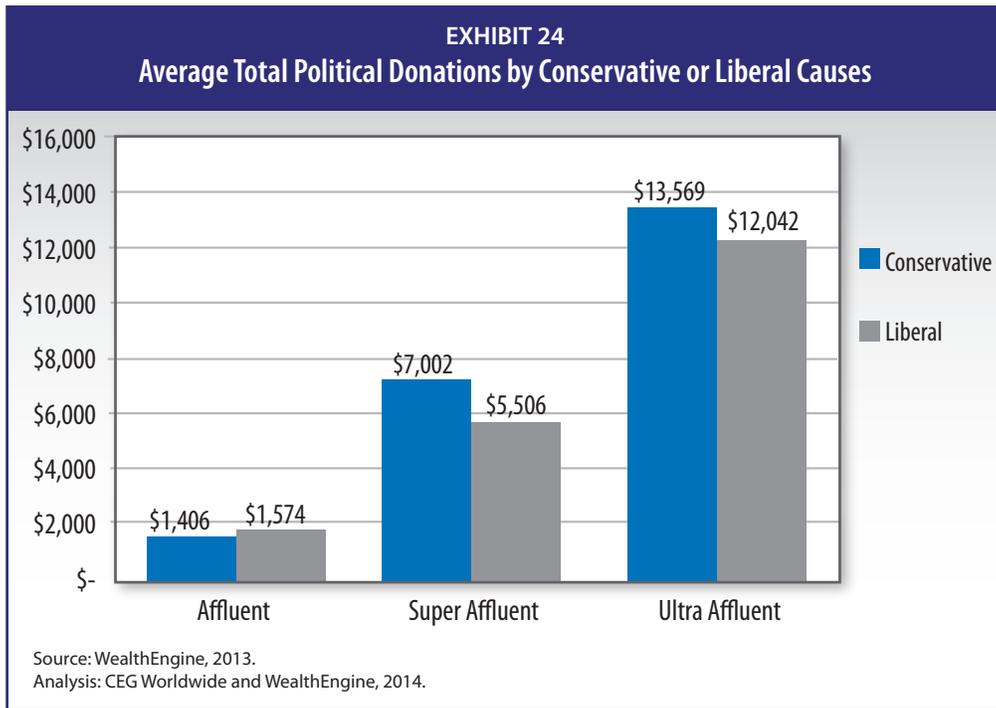
Giving to political causes or candidates is somewhat less important to the affluent overall than charitable giving. The rate of political giving is at 50.7 percent in the affluent group, 55.8 percent among the super affluent and 58.3 percent among the ultra affluent. (See **Exhibit 23.**)

**Giving to political causes or candidates is somewhat less important to the affluent overall than charitable giving.**



How much are the affluent giving politically and where are those contributions going? **Exhibit 24** shows the total average amounts individuals have contributed to political causes at both the federal and state level over their lifetimes.

These amounts are clearly much lower than charitable contributions, where median annual donations far exceed average lifetime political donations. So while political giving is of interest to the majority of the affluent, we can conclude that overall it is much less important to their financial lives than charitable giving.



**Exhibit 24** also breaks out the contributions as going to liberal or conservative causes, as self-defined by the contributors. As shown, there is little significant difference between the amounts reported to each political persuasion.

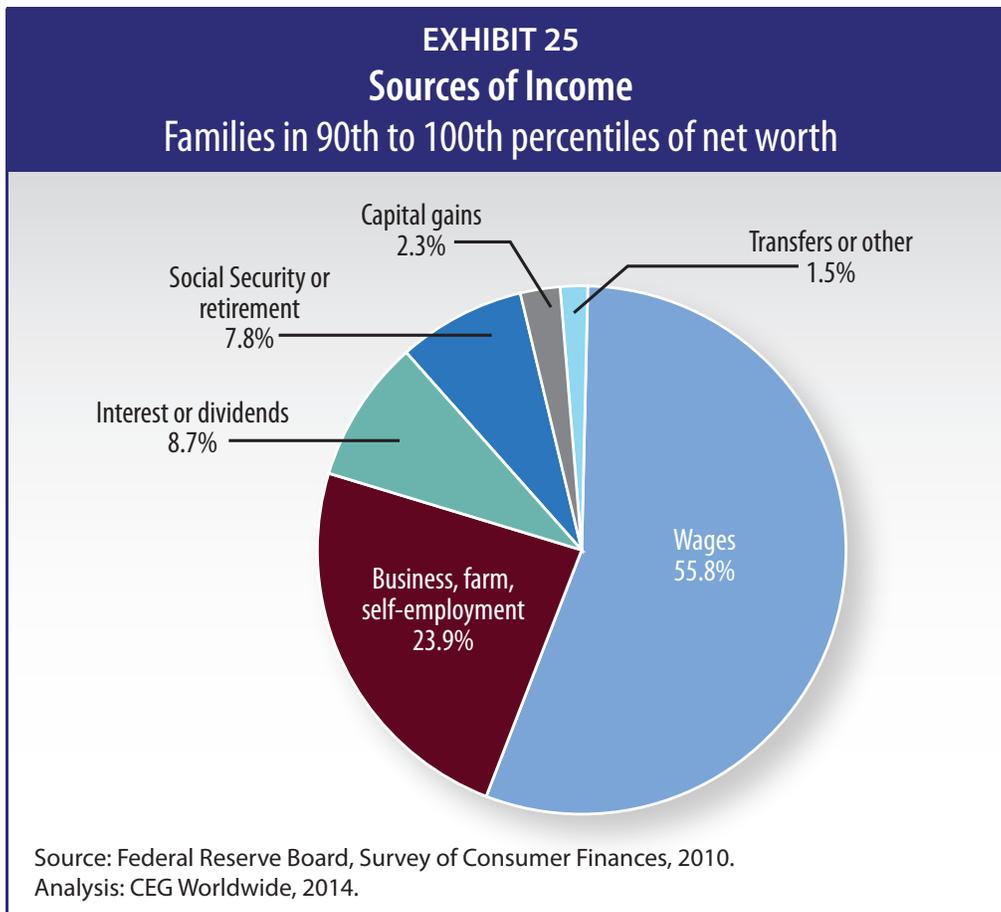
### A Profile of the Typical Affluent Family

We will now pull our portrait of the affluent into sharper focus by zeroing in on the financial situations of families within one narrow band of wealth—those whose net worth falls in the 90th to 100th percentiles of all families in the United States.

The median net worth of families in this group is \$1,864,100 and their median annual income is \$163,200. As such, we believe that these families provide a very fair representation of the affluent category and, more important, of that sweet spot that many financial advisors can serve very well and profitably. The following data should provide a clear understanding of the scope of opportunity in this sweet spot, as well as insight on how they could be better assisted by financial advisors.

For this profile, we draw on data from the most recently completed Survey of Consumer Finances, which is conducted every three years by the Federal Reserve Board. The most recent available data were collected in 2010, before much of the recovery in the equity markets. So while the data may not reflect the current magnitude of wealth, we believe it provides important and valid insight into how the affluent manage their wealth.

**Exhibit 25** shows a breakdown of the various sources of income for families in this group. As shown, wages make up the majority of income at 55.8 percent, followed by self-employment income at 23.9 percent. Much less important is Social Security or retirement income, interest or dividends, and capital gains. The breadwinners in most of these families are clearly not yet retired.



**Exhibit 26** provides insight into the investments of these families, including their use of various assets, their asset allocation choices and the value of the various assets held. As shown, virtually all families hold transaction accounts, and these hold a median value of \$60,800—a solid cash position. Nearly nine out of ten (87.8 percent) own retirement accounts, which have a median value of \$413,000. Nearly nine out of ten (87.8 percent) own retirement accounts, which have a median value of \$413,000.

**EXHIBIT 26**  
**Financial Assets: Percentage of Families Holding and Median Value of Holdings**  
Families in 90th to 100th percentiles of net worth

Type of Financial Asset	Percentage of Families Holding	Median Value of Holding
Transaction accounts	99.9%	\$60,800
Retirement accounts	87.8%	\$413,000
Stocks	54.9%	\$110,000
Pooled investment funds	41.8%	\$245,000
Cash value of life insurance	36.8%	\$30,000
Certificates of deposit	27.7%	\$65,000
Savings bonds	22.8%	\$3,000
Other managed assets	19.3%	\$150,000
Bonds	12.0%	\$220,000
Other	13.7%	\$70,000

Source: Federal Reserve Board, Survey of Consumer Finances, 2010.  
Analysis: CEG Worldwide, 2014.

The opportunities for financial advisors for providing investment management assistance lie primarily with these families’ stock holdings (held by 54.9 percent, with a median value of \$110,000) and mutual funds (owned by 41.8 percent, with a median value of \$245,000). Other investable assets, including other managed assets and bonds, are held at much lower rates (19.3 percent and 12.0 percent, respectively), but among the families that do hold these assets, their value is fairly significant (\$150,000 and \$220,000, respectively).

As we know, the financial needs of the affluent extend beyond investment management. The scope of these families’ financial holdings point to additional needs, including tax mitigation for investment income and capital gains and wealth transfer to ensure that financial assets are passed to the next generation as cost-effectively as possible. For charitably minded families, these assets also offer opportunities to achieve their giving goals while minimizing taxes.

Nonfinancial assets are an important part of these families’ wealth, as shown in **Exhibit 27**. The overwhelming majority (97.1 percent) own their primary residence, which has a median worth of \$531,500. Just over half (51.7 percent) own other residential property, which has a median worth of \$350,000. And perhaps most notably, nearly half, or 46.6 percent, have equity in their business with a median value of \$600,000.

All of these point to some of the opportunities to serve the affluent in noninvestment management capacities, including asset protection and succession planning.

**EXHIBIT 27**  
**Nonfinancial Assets: Percentage of Families Holding and Median Value of Holdings**  
 Families in 90th to 100th percentiles of net worth

Type of Nonfinancial Asset	Percentage of Families Holding	Median Value of Holding
Primary residence	97.1%	\$531,500
Vehicles	95.2%	\$32,700
Other residential property	51.7%	\$350,000
Business equity	46.6%	\$600,000
Equity in nonresidential property	27.9%	\$250,000
Other	19.7%	\$50,000

Source: Federal Reserve Board, Survey of Consumer Finances, 2010.  
 Analysis: CEG Worldwide, 2014.

Finally, we round out our profile of typical affluent families by looking at their financial liabilities. Overall, as **Exhibit 28** shows, they are not holding excessive unsecured debt, with installment loans carried by 21.9 percent with a median amount of \$17,700, credit card balances carried by 20.9 percent with a median amount of just \$5,000, and balances on unsecured lines of credit held by just 3.0 percent. Their mortgage debt (held by 58.6 percent of families) and home equity loan or line of credit debt (held by 17.8 percent) is reasonable compared to the value of their primary residences.

**EXHIBIT 28**  
**Debt: Percentage of Families Holding and Median Amount of Debt**  
 Families in 90th to 100th percentiles of net worth

Type of Debt	Percentage of Families Holding	Median Value of Debt
Primary residence (secured by residential property)	58.6%	\$216,500
Other (secured by residential property)	17.8%	\$195,000
Installment loans	21.9%	\$17,700
Credit card balances	20.9%	\$5,000
Lines of credit not secured by residential property	3.0%	\$30,000
Other	4.5%	\$25,000

Source: Federal Reserve Board, Survey of Consumer Finances, 2010.  
 Analysis: CEG Worldwide, 2014.

Overall, these data describe families with solid financial pictures. Their wealth is held across a range of financial and nonfinancial asset classes, they are managing their debt effectively, and a majority are still working—and presumably continuing to accumulate wealth. Given their affluence, it is more than likely that many can benefit from the guidance of financial advisors who are well-positioned to address their needs over the long term.

The opportunity for more financial advisors to move upmarket to work with these families clearly exists. But to capture this opportunity, they must attract

and then serve these clients in the ways that the clients prefer. The insight into the affluent provided by the data we have presented here in **Part One: A Profile of Today's Affluent** forms the basis for doing so.

**In Part Two: Working Profitably with Today's Affluent Clients**, we will build on that foundation by providing the specific actions that highly successful financial advisors take to effectively attract, serve and retain affluent clients.

## Part Two: Working Profitably with Today's Affluent Clients

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CEG Worldwide's long experience in working with elite financial advisors through our coaching programs and our ongoing empirical research into advisor best practices clearly tell us that financial advisor success depends on doing three things very well: attracting the right affluent clients; effectively addressing the entire range of those clients' financial concerns, including those beyond investments; and continuously striving to retain their clients.

Time and again, we have seen that the financial advisors who are succeeding most in each of these areas have one thing in common: They are client-centric. Their primary focus is on deeply understanding their clients and prospective clients not just so they can provide appropriate financial solutions, but so they can build and nurture their personal relationships with each client over the long term. The client-centric approach is grounded in deep knowledge of clients and thus informed by the very type of wealth intelligence presented in **Part One** of this report.

Here in **Part Two: Working Profitably with Today's Affluent Clients**, we will look closely at what is working in client attraction, service and retention.

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For each area, we will provide three specific recommendations that have been proven to be effective again and again. In every case, we will break these down, step by step, to help you implement them in your own practice.

## Attract Effectively

Affluent individuals on average receive more than 4,000 marketing messages each day—so many that most are tuned out. If you attempt to reach an audience of prospective affluent clients through traditional means of advertising, brochures, web sites and public seminars, expect to be disappointed. No matter how well done, these simply will not enable you to stand apart from your competition in any meaningful way.

To attract the right kind of affluent clients whom you can serve extremely well, you need to first position yourself for what affluent clients want and then use the specific methods that will draw qualified prospective clients into your client service experience.

### 1. Position Yourself for What Affluent Clients Want

To stand out from your competition, you must carefully position yourself—how you and your firm are seen by clients and prospective clients. You need to be able to communicate what makes *you* the best-qualified financial advisor for these individuals and families and why they should choose you from among all their other options. They need to know what your compelling value is that they can find nowhere else.

CEG Worldwide's empirical research on the affluent and our direct experience in working with elite advisors serving the affluent have provided us with excellent perspective on what the affluent want from their financial advisors. Overwhelmingly, they first want expert assistance in solving all of their unique financial challenges—not just investment management—so that they can achieve all that is important to them. Second, they want that

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assistance within the context of close, personal, consultative relationships with their financial advisors.

Our first recommendation for attracting affluent prospective clients to your practice, then, is to position your business to provide the client experience the affluent want and to communicate that positioning effectively. We suggest these five steps for doing so:

1. Identify your *compelling value proposition*. This is the single most important value you offer to your clients that sets you apart from your competition: expertise in helping your clients address their financial concerns and doing so through a consultative relationship. As you will see later, the best way to do this is by using the wealth management model.
2. Write your *positioning statement*. This is a succinct description of your compelling value proposition. It should be clear and brief and describe the value that you can provide to your select group of clients.
3. Create an *elevator speech*. This is a short, persuasive speech that motivates prospective clients to explore working with you. It should very quickly communicate your value in addressing their key financial challenges through a consultative experience.
4. Construct a *call to action*. This is the specific first step you would like prospective clients to take in order to take advantage of the value you described in your elevator speech. Usually this will be to schedule a meeting with you to explore working with you.
5. Share your *personal story*. This is a brief (lasting no more than two minutes) story that explains why you care so much about serving your clients extremely well. It will move your initial contact with prospective clients to a more personal level and set the stage for building a warm, long-term relationship.

## **2. Pull In Prospective Clients Through Client Introductions**

Once you are able to successfully communicate your compelling value, you need to create the opportunities to be in front of the right prospective clients. Research into the affluent is again very useful here. It tells us that one of the top two ways that affluent individuals prefer to find their financial advisors is through introductions from current clients.

Referrals from existing clients are indeed a valuable source of new clients for many financial advisors, but in our experience very few advisors employ a systematic process for obtaining these referrals or for ensuring that the referrals they do receive are qualified. They instead simply assume that satisfied clients will provide referrals without being asked. This hit-and-miss approach greatly reduces the potential for client referrals to build significant business.

Many financial advisors in our coaching programs have experienced considerable success in attracting affluent prospective clients by offering a second-opinion service. This is an offer to provide friends, associates and family members of clients a free diagnostic of their financial situations, including recommendations that you would make to help them more effectively address their financial concerns.

These are the steps we recommend for a successful second-opinion service:

1. Frame your referral request to clients not as a favor to be granted but as an offer to provide a real benefit to the people they care about most. You will deliver this benefit in the form of a complimentary second opinion on the financial situations of the people they introduce to you.

2. Ask clients to reach out directly to the people they believe will benefit from your second-opinion service. This personal contact from the client makes the prospective client more inclined to meet with you.
3. Follow up immediately with each prospective client with your offer to conduct a full diagnostic of his or her financial situation.
4. Regardless of how each introduction works out, thank your clients. Acknowledging their assistance will encourage them to provide additional introductions going forward.

### **3. Appeal to Prospective Clients Through Strategic Relationships**

The second way that affluent individuals prefer to find their financial advisors is through introductions from their other professional advisors, such as accountants and attorneys. And not only do the affluent like to find their financial advisors through this route; these introductions are frequently the source of financial advisors' most qualified prospective clients—who often turn out to be among their best clients.

The reason for this is simple: The professionals who provide these referrals typically know their clients well and are quite familiar with the financial challenges they face. This enables them to refer their clients to financial advisors who specialize in addressing the specific challenges the clients face. The resulting matches are beneficial for both clients and advisors.

However, you cannot count on professional advisors to provide you with qualified referrals without a clear, mutually beneficial framework for doing so. Even the casual referral arrangements that many advisors focus on creating with other professional advisors typically produce dismal results.

Instead, the most successful relationships with other professional advisors are strategic partnerships designed to benefit all parties, beginning with clients.

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These guidelines are most important in building this type of relationship with other professional advisors:

1. The right candidates will have an entrepreneurial outlook. Like you, they should be looking for opportunities to actively grow their businesses while better serving their clients.
2. The arrangement must offer a compelling value to the other professional's clients. Typically, this will be your ability to address one or more of the specific financial challenges faced by their clients.
3. Your arrangement should also create a vested economic interest in each partner to help the other grow. This agreement should be clearly spelled out and committed to by both parties.

## Serve Extremely Well

As we have seen, effective client attraction is client-centric: focused on communicating how you can solve prospective clients' specific financial challenges and then drawing them in through the channels that they most prefer.

Your client service should be equally client-centric. Using the wealth management model is the foundation for this, but your choices on how many and what type of clients to serve will also have great bearing on your ability to provide the world-class experience that the affluent want.

### 1. Employ the Wealth Management Model

Virtually all financial advisors provide investment management—some better than others—but relatively few provide true wealth management whereby they address the entire range of affluent clients' financial concerns within a highly consultative process. This means that there is a substantial

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opportunity for you to serve affluent clients very well—and stand apart from your competition by doing so.

It is easy to see why the affluent would choose to work with wealth managers over traditional investment generalists:

- **Simplified financial management.** With wealth comes complexity: more financial solutions and services to choose from, more types of expertise to retain, and more information to manage. Wealth management is attractive to affluent individuals because it enables them to simplify their financial lives by working with a single wealth manager who can coordinate their range of needs.
- **Enhanced client-advisor relationship.** As we have seen, many affluent are looking to work with their financial advisors within the context of a personal, long-term relationship. They want the rapport that ensures that their advisors fully understand their evolving needs. The consultative nature of the wealth management process provides an environment for these relationships to flourish over time.
- **Access to required expertise.** True wealth managers work with teams of professionals who provide expertise in the many areas of financial concern beyond investment management, including wealth enhancement, wealth protection, wealth transfer and charitable giving. They bring these professionals in as needed on a case-by-case basis to address the specific challenges of particular clients.

At CEG Worldwide, we recommend a five-meeting consultative process for wealth managers:

1. **The Discovery Meeting.** The financial advisor uses a systematic, in-depth interview process to determine each prospective client's current financial situation and, just as important, his or her most important values and goals.

2. **The Investment Plan Meeting.** The advisor presents the prospective client with a detailed investment plan that describes his or her needs and risk tolerances and provides benchmarks for tracking progress toward key goals. The advisor then asks for a firm commitment to take the action needed to implement the plan.
3. **The Mutual Commitment Meeting.** This meeting provides the prospective client the opportunity to ask any questions or air any concerns about the investment plan. It also allows the advisor to execute all documents needed to begin to implement the plan and educate the client about reasonable investment expectations.
4. **The 45-Day Follow-up Meeting.** At this meeting, the advisor helps the client understand and organize his or her financial paperwork.
5. **Regular Progress Meetings.** These meetings allow the advisor to continue building the relationship with each client by asking about changes in the client's personal and financial situations, reviewing and explaining portfolio performance, and answering questions. At these meetings the advisor also begins to address financial issues beyond investments. These might include financial planning, estate planning, retirement planning, tax planning, life insurance, asset protection, cash flow or debt management—in short, the entire wealth management offering.

Because no one individual can provide the entire range of technical expertise affluent clients require, an important part of a successful wealth management experience is access to professionals who can provide those capabilities. You may already have access to an in-house team of experts, particularly if you work with a large firm. If you do not, we recommend creating a team

of independent professionals that you can consult on a regular basis. We suggest these steps:

1. Assess your clients' needs to determine the specific expertise they need. We have found that the three professionals most often needed on an expert team are an estate planning attorney, an accountant and a life insurance specialist.
2. Create a list of candidates. Consider resources from financial firms where you already obtain services or products, referrals from clients, and referrals from other financial advisors.
3. Conduct research on each candidate to determine his or her potential for adding value to your clients' financial lives.
4. Meet with and interview each candidate. You want to understand the depth of the candidates' expertise, how they work with their own clients and how well you might work together on addressing your clients' challenges. Just as important, you want to determine that they work with a high degree of integrity and professionalism.
5. Conduct a test run with the best candidates by inviting them to consult with you and other members of your team on specific client cases. This will help confirm whether you have made the right choice.

## **2. Serve Fewer Clients**

When it comes to the optimal number of clients to serve, many financial advisors assume that more is always better. We have repeatedly found that this is not the case, however, particularly for advisors determined to build client-centric businesses serving the affluent. In fact, in our research, higher advisor incomes are frequently associated with fewer clients, not more.

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Working with a smaller number of clients enables financial advisors to spend more time with each client building the relationship and ensuring satisfaction. Higher client satisfaction leads in turn to greater client loyalty and increased client inclination to provide introductions to qualified prospects, as well as additional assets to manage. And freedom from the pressure to add ever more clients allows advisors to focus on attracting highly qualified prospective clients—those to whom they can provide the greatest value.

Requiring a minimum account size is a proven mechanism for enabling you to work with fewer clients while ensuring that you can serve them profitably. We recommend that you set a minimum account size—\$500,000 to \$1 million is typical for financial advisors seeking to work with the affluent through the wealth management model—and then firmly adhere to it.

While it may be difficult to turn anyone away, especially in the beginning, doing so is essential for focusing on the clients whom you can serve very well. We recommend these steps for declining to work with prospective clients who do not meet your asset minimum:

1. Explain that when you turn away potential clients due to insufficient assets to meet your minimum, it is because you would not be able to add enough value to justify your fee.
2. Make it clear that you always want to make an impact above what you charge, but that you would not be able to do so in their case.
3. Recommend a financial advisor who is well-positioned to serve their unique needs.
4. When the prospective clients ask about coming back to you when they have enough assets (they often do, as they have never before been turned away by a financial professional), tell them that you will be happy to meet with them again down the line when it's appropriate.

### **3. Specialize in Serving One Select Group**

When you focus on serving one particular type of client, you and your team of professionals will develop heightened expertise in addressing their specific financial concerns. If you choose your client specialty well, you may be one of only a few financial advisors—perhaps the only one—who specialize in serving them. This means your clients will receive the expertise they need and you will enjoy an enviable competitive advantage.

We recommend the following steps to identify the client specialty, or niche, that is best-suited to you and your practice:

1. Identify the largest concentrations of wealth in your area, such as specific communities, industries, companies or professional organizations.
2. Narrow down to three to five promising niches. Each should have a concentration of wealth where you could deliver substantial value to people with whom you would enjoy working.
3. Identify the most significant opportunities. The best means for doing so is to conduct focused interviews with centers of influence in each niche. These will help you better understand the niche and how you could serve it.
4. Analyze your client base to see if you have any clients who belong to any of the niches you are considering. If you do, ask these clients for their perspectives on their communities as well as for introductions to those communities' centers of influence.
5. Choose the one niche that offers the most opportunity yet is narrow enough for you to focus on effectively. The market will quickly tell you whether you have made the right choice.

## Retain for the Long Term

We arrive now at the final element of serving affluent clients well and profitably: keeping them over the long run. Here you will reap the rewards of attracting the clients you can serve best and then designing your business to add the greatest possible value to those clients' financial lives. And your clients will benefit in turn from working with an advisor who deeply understands their long-term goals and who is well-positioned to assist in achieving them.

Lasting client retention is grounded in knowledge about what is truly important to your clients—which extends far beyond money. From there, you must continue to foster your client relationships through meaningful, ongoing conversations. Finally, by acquiring more of your clients' assets to manage, you will create yet additional opportunities to serve your clients and cement their relationships.

### 1. Know Your Clients Extremely Well

The foundation of successful wealth management is the ability to truly know and understand your clients. We believe that client knowledge should extend beyond their financial pictures and into the realm of their most important values, relationships and lifelong dreams.

To encourage clients to share with you at this deeper level, we recommend that you create a Total Client Profile for each client. This is a comprehensive portrait of the most important aspects of each client's life. To build the profile, ask clients questions in these seven key areas:

- **Values:** These questions focus on what is most important to clients about money and how it can be used to help attain their highest values.

- **Goals:** These questions uncover personal, professional, family and giving goals.
- **Relationships:** These questions will help you determine who is most important in clients' lives.
- **Assets:** These questions concern sources of income, where and how assets are held, and specific issues of taxes, insurance and wealth transfer.
- **Advisors:** These reveal who clients' other professional advisors are and how clients feel about their relationships with those professionals.
- **Process:** These questions pinpoint the exact ways in which clients want to be involved in managing their finances.
- **Interests:** This last category of questions uncovers clients' personal interests in areas such as hobbies, sports, travel, entertainment, fitness and charitable giving. It's in this area that you will frequently discover areas of common interest with clients.

## 2. Build Loyalty Through Frequent, Meaningful Contact

When financial advisors can talk to affluent clients on a regular basis about issues that clients find important—and not just financial issues—they can go far toward building their clients' long-term loyalty. There are three important reasons for this:

- Contact provides the opportunity to address otherwise unexpressed client issues. The more advisors talk with their clients, the more their clients tell them. When clients are never given a good chance to raise issues, they more than likely never will.
- Contact identifies new opportunities to serve clients. Unless advisors know about events in their clients' lives that represent opportunities

to further serve—the birth of a child, for example—they can't act on those opportunities.

- Contact provides the ability to build overall rapport. Meaningful conversations help form a personal connection between advisors and clients that can hold them together across time and through good and bad markets.

Regular and meaningful interaction with your clients won't happen unless you are thoughtful and deliberate about it. We recommend these actions:

1. Make your contacts personal. A client newsletter is not a substitute for a meaningful conversation. Pick up the phone or send a personal email.
2. Make client contact a systematic part of your everyday work. Leverage your client relationship management technology to prompt regular contact.
3. Make your contact about more than just money. Talk with your clients about other issues that are important to them, such as family issues, sports, hobbies and current events. This type of conversation will build personal relationships much faster than a discussion of last quarter's performance.

### **3. Manage More of Your Clients' Assets**

Research tells us that the more affluent individuals are, the more likely they are to have multiple financial advisors. When they do so, it frequently becomes impossible for any single wealth manager to gain a clear picture of their entire financial situations.

By acquiring more of your affluent clients' assets to manage, you will be more likely to retain those clients over the long term. The new assets will

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provide added opportunities to serve your clients well, including providing more frequent occasions for client contact. This in turn enhances their trust and loyalty, paving the way for you to receive yet more assets—and more opportunities to serve—in the future.

Unprompted, clients will rarely provide you with additional assets. Use these steps to effectively request those assets:

1. Make sure you have a clear understanding of all the assets your clients have and who is managing them. Also be alert to changes in your clients' lives or portfolios that provide openings for a transfer of assets.
2. Frame your request as an offer to conduct a no-obligation diagnostic review of all accounts—those held with you as well as those held at other firms—to determine whether the overall portfolio is properly balanced.
3. When your diagnostic determines that a transfer of assets to your services is appropriate, make that recommendation to the client.

## Conclusion

As the data presented in **Part One: A Profile of Today's Affluent** show, there is substantial opportunity for financial advisors to work with the affluent. This is a healthy market that has largely recovered from the turmoil of 2008-09 and that needs the services of financial advisors committed to understanding the affluent and their challenges in order to craft optimal solutions.

These data set the stage by providing financial advisors with a clear framework for attracting, serving and retaining the affluent. When we add in anecdotal evidence and experience, we have a robust, client-centric approach that has been proven highly successful by the financial advisors who employ it.

We encourage you to take advantage of both the data and the recommendations to attract, serve and retain affluent clients. These families are looking to financial advisors for leadership and guidance. By seizing this opportunity to meet this need, not only will you serve them very well and profitably, but you also will benefit your business and your own family. We wish you the best of success.

## About CEG Worldwide

CEG Worldwide is the #1 coaching organization for the financial services industry. We coach financial advisors to achieve breakthrough results in their careers by substantially increasing assets under management, accelerating affluent client acquisition and growing personal net income—all while serving their clients well. We deliver insights garnered from empirical research on industry best practices and coach financial advisors to implement these practices in their businesses. The result: focused, energized and enriched financial advisors who build substantial economic value in their practices, deliver a world-class experience to their clients and ensure a high quality of life for themselves.

CEG Worldwide also works collaboratively with leaders of financial institutions to grow new net assets under management and the loyalty of their top financial advisors while attracting new top financial advisors. We provide insights, developed from empirical research, into what motivates top financial advisors, how to help them stay fully engaged and how to accelerate the achievement of their professional goals. Our services secure the long-term success and allegiance of top financial advisors who generate significant income for financial institutions.

## About WealthEngine

WealthEngine™, Inc., is a leading provider of sophisticated wealth identification and prospect research services. It has built a strong reputation as the leading provider of wealth identification and prospect research solutions that have helped its clients collectively raise billions in funds. In addition to having the largest wealth database on the market, WealthEngine helps thousands of organizations identify and target prospective donors and clients with its proprietary analytics and rating systems.

Headquartered in Bethesda, Maryland, WealthEngine provides clients in the United States and the United Kingdom with solutions that provide a complete picture of the people they already know and tools to find new people they would like to get to know. It works with nonprofits, hospitals, institutions of higher education, political campaigns and advocacy groups of all sizes, as well as luxury organizations and financial services firms, to help them effectively identify individuals with the net worth, income, lifestyle and affinity to become their next top donor or client.

For more information, visit [www.wealthengine.com](http://www.wealthengine.com).

## About the Authors



### John J. Bowen Jr.

CEO John Bowen founded CEG Worldwide in 2000, with the goal of bringing to bear the lessons he had learned during his career for the benefit of financial advisors and the institutions that work with advisors. His 26 years as a financial advisor and investment firm CEO had taught Bowen that many advisors lacked the high-quality empirical data and pragmatic business experience necessary to build hugely successful businesses. Bowen founded CEG Worldwide to fill that void, with the belief that providing financial advisors and institutions with research about the best practices of elite financial advisors—and the coaching to use these practices effectively—would help them achieve new levels of success while serving their clients extremely well.

CEG Worldwide represents the culmination of Bowen's unique financial services industry experience. That experience encompasses a career as a financial advisor, including eight years as CEO of Reinhardt Werba Bowen Advisory Services, where he was responsible for more than \$1.6 billion in assets. Bowen sold that company and subsequently became CEO of Assante Capital Management, where he served as a member of the senior team as the firm more than tripled assets under management to more than \$25 billion. Through these experiences, Bowen learned firsthand the best practices for substantial success. He also learned that the vast majority of financial advisors and institutions lacked a road map to build a simple and elegant practice—so he founded CEG Worldwide to provide other financial advisors and institutions the lessons his experience had taught him.

Bowen is widely recognized as a leader in the financial services industry. He writes a highly acclaimed monthly column for the leading U.S. financial services trade journal, *Financial Planning*. He is the author or co-author of several books, including *Breaking Through: Building a World-Class Wealth Management Business*, *The Prudent Investor's Guide to Beating Wall Street at Its Own Game* and *Creating Equity: How to Build a Hugely Successful Asset Management Business*.

## Paul Brunswick



Paul Brunswick brings proven coaching and leadership skills to the CEG Worldwide team. He has extensive financial services experience and a proven track record working with both institutional and ultra-high-net-worth clients, as well as with financial advisors and branch managers. Brunswick has both field and corporate expertise in developing talent at all levels within a financial services organization.

Brunswick has had more than 20 years of success in the financial services industry. Most recently, he was the director of national business development for Smith Barney, where he provided strategic and tactical direction to the firm's entire private client distribution channel. He led campaigns designed to increase financial advisor net asset flow, grow fee-based revenue, and improve financial advisor competency in such key areas as investment and wealth management. He also had responsibility for internal communications, new product approval and the research strategy group.

Earlier, he worked at Smith Barney in a variety of management positions across the country. He started his financial career as a financial consultant for Merrill Lynch in St. Louis, Missouri.

## James Dean



James Dean is the senior vice president and head of commercial practice and partnerships at WealthEngine. He joined WealthEngine in 2009 as vice president and head of the firm's luxury and financial services practice. As senior vice president, he now also develops commercial partnerships and alliances and manages key accounts. While driving the growth of WealthEngine's financial services practice, Dean launched the luxury practice in 2009 and has achieved great success growing it into an important industry for the firm. As a member of the WealthEngine leadership team, he is very involved in setting strategy of the organization as well as setting direction of product development.

Dean's career spans nearly 20 years. Prior to his work at WealthEngine, he led the sales efforts at BroadReach Partners, a financial and technology lead generation firm where he deployed a proprietary lead generation strategy instrumental in the growth of the organization. Previously, he was VP, Sales at Institutional Shareholder Services, where he developed a new market for its corporate governance rating business. He spent several years at I/B/E/S, later purchased by Thomson Financial, where he sold financial data and portfolio management software and was the top salesperson for nearly five years.

Dean earned his BS from Northeastern University and master's degree in international business from Pepperdine University.

## Jonathan J. Powell



Jonathan Powell's considerable expertise in developing top-performing financial advisors is a great asset to the clients he serves through CEG Worldwide. Working with many of the nation's top financial firms, he enjoys helping financial advisors transform their professional and personal lives by using CEG Worldwide's research-backed principles.

Powell has hired and coached hundreds of the industry's top financial advisors—in multiple distribution channels—for more than 25 years. After starting his career as an independent financial planner in the San Francisco Bay Area, he went on to spend more than two decades with Citigroup before retiring to pursue his passion for training and coaching.

In his lengthy career, Powell has managed branches for Smith Barney and led Citibank's West Coast brokerage business, overseeing 290 financial advisors and 20 managers. While at Citigroup, Powell was a sought-after speaker for national and regional conferences on topics including time management, financial advisor strategies for success and effective recruiting.

Powell earned a BA in economics from Stanford University and holds the CFP® certification. He is a co-author of *Breaking Through: Building a World-Class Wealth Management Business*.

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