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For Immediate Release

CUSO Financial Services, L.P. Investment Programs See Increased Growth from Online Tools and Educational Workshops

Broker dealer extends set-up discount to credit unions wishing to use the online Financial Management Center

SAN DIEGO – Dec. 14, 2009 – [CUSO Financial Services \(CFS\), L.P.](#), a full-service broker dealer and Registered Investment Advisor providing customized investment and insurance solutions to the [credit union industry](#), reports credit union investment programs using its Financial Management Center (FMC) and Web-based financial planning tool are seeing increased referrals to their investment programs. In addition, programs that have embraced educational workshops, for which CFS has made materials available online, are seeing a significant increase in asset account size.

Since introducing the FMC approximately 18 months ago, CFS has had almost 12 percent of its investment programs integrate the consumer-facing, investment awareness program into their Websites. Credit unions that made the FMC easily accessible from their investment center home page, such as [Pentagon Federal Credit Union](#), have seen the greatest response.

Overall, the credit unions are receiving an average of 109 new online visits to the investment center per month, with more than 83 percent of visitors engaging in the interactive FMC program. Of six modules available, Retirement Planning, Starting to Invest, and Investing for College are receiving the highest usage. Visitors who engage the self-evaluation tool request investment advisor follow-up calls and appointments at double the rate of more traditional direct mail campaigns. Therefore, CFS has extended a 33 percent set-up discount to new programs that sign before March 31, 2010 to install the program.

“With so much change happening in the financial industry, investor clients have taken a ‘flight to quality,’ foregoing tarnished brand names for credit union advisors who offer easily accessible education and planning tools,” says Valorie Seyfert, CEO of CFS. “Our new educational workshops, single sign-on integration with credit union online banking, and online tools for investors as well as increased online marketing and planning support for advisors are helping advisors and investors succeed. We will continue this support strategy.”

CFS has a longstanding reputation for [investment program technology support](#); for example, the company’s proprietary Web-based data management system, dataVISION® is considered by many as one of the best in the industry. In addition, the Web-based financial planning program offered to advisors has shown two primary results in 2009:

- an expansion of the product mix that advisors can sell
- significant increase in referrals from investors, with greater than 40% offering more than three referrals.

Two new online marketing and educational tools also were added or enhanced this year to better support advisors, the Marketing Awareness Center with personalized workshops tailored to member life stages, and the Marketing Exchange with customizable marketing campaign templates. CFS is seeing an increase of nearly 21% in the asset size of accounts that come in through the workshops.

This increased usage of online tools by advisors is consistent with industry consumer trends, recently reported by the Washington, DC-based trade group, American Bankers Association (ABA.) The ABA's annual study of consumer sentiment indicates that, for the first time, more customers are banking online than going into branches; more important, they actually prefer it. CFS has responded by simplifying credit unions' ability to integrate member investment information into their [online banking programs via single sign-on technology](#). Additional online financial investment tools, such as the FMC, Web-based financial planning, Marketing Exchange and customizable workshops, are an important component to help educate members who feel increasingly more comfortable with technology and for advisors who need increased efficiencies.

About CUSO Financial Services, LP

Established in 1997, CUSO Financial Services, LP (Member FINRA/SIPC) is headquartered in San Diego and has more than 120 credit union users, including 25 of the top 100 credit unions in the country. With branch offices located nationwide, and more than 350 licensed representatives, CFS is a full-service broker dealer and Registered Investment Advisor offering customized investment and insurance solutions to credit unions. For [more information](#), call 858-530-4400 or visit www.cusonet.com. Similar services are provided to community banks and the independent channel through a sister broker dealer, Sorrento Pacific Financial LLC (Member FINRA/SIPC): www.sorrentopacific.com.

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