

# Investment ADVISOR

**The Broker/Dealers of the Year for 1998 did more than make it through another 12 months without being acquired. They gave their planners something to rave about**

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## VOTE OF CONFIDENCE

**I**N THIS YEAR OF THE MEGAMERGER, DURING which several leading independent broker/dealers became a lot less independent, how do financial planners view their B/Ds? Every year, we invite readers to rate the B/Ds they use in 14 categories, ranging from compliance, due diligence, and technological support to trading capabilities, back-office support, and fee-based programs. We also ask for an overall rating for performance and service. Then, once the faxes flood in, we tally the votes and order trophies for our winners.

But we also try to read the tea leaves of the responses, searching for clues about advisor sentiments. This year, signs of discontent filtered in. For example, a 1996 winner, Financial Services Corp., since bought out by SunAmerica, didn't rate a single response. And while we did hear from more than 100 financial planners affiliated with another SunAmerica subsidiary, Royal Alliance, several took the trouble to write in a few choice words of dissatisfaction.

Meanwhile, though, advisors had plenty of praise for our winners—represented (right) by their statueque presidents. From left: HTK's Rohn Zimmerman, Commonwealth's Joe Deitch, Sigma's Jerry Rydell, and Signal's Jerry Singleton.



DIVISION I (1,000+ REPS)	DIVISION II (500 TO 999 REPS)	DIVISION III (200 TO 499 REPS)	DIVISION IV (UNDER 200 REPS)
<b>HONOR, TOWNSEND &amp; KENT INC.</b>	<b>COMMONWEALTH EQUITY SERVICES</b>	<b>SIGMA FINANCIAL CORP.</b>	<b>SIGNAL SECURITIES INC.</b>
HORSHAM, PENNSYLVANIA	WALTHAM, MASSACHUSETTS	ANN ARBOR, MICHIGAN	FORT WORTH, TEXAS
ROHN ZIMMERMAN, PRESIDENT	JOSEPH DEITCH, PRESIDENT	JERRY RYDELL, PRESIDENT	JERRY SINGLETON, PRESIDENT
<b>SERVICE SCOREBOARD*</b>	<b>SERVICE SCOREBOARD*</b>	<b>SERVICE SCOREBOARD*</b>	<b>SERVICE SCOREBOARD*</b>
Compliance 74%	Compliance 84%	Compliance 89%	Compliance 73%
Back-office support 57%	Back-office support 72%	Back-office support 86%	Back-office support 56%
Payout 41%	Payout 64%	Payout 95%	Payout 49%
Technology support 46%	Technology support 68%	Technology support 65%	Technology support 52%
Fee-based programs 34%	Fee-based programs 52%	Fee-based programs 68%	Fee-based programs 38%

\* Percentage of advisors rating each service highest on a scale of 1 to 5

# THE HIGHEST RATED BROKER/DEALER YOU PROBABLY NEVER HEARD OF

Although Sigma Financial Corporation has been in business for 15 years, we've kept a low profile by growing slowly, steadily and responsibly. By measuring success against individual productivity rather than head count. And by working to boost the effectiveness of each and every rep.

So it's not surprising if you haven't heard of us.

The important thing is that our 450+ reps know us very well. They'll tell you we're accessible. Fair. Concerned. Committed to their success.

In fact, 97% of Sigma reps polled in our most recent annual survey said that the company cares about their business. They also gave the Sigma staff high ratings on positive attitude and willingness to help.

We view our annual survey as a stepping stone. A means of obtaining important feedback. And if there's any area where we fall below our own high standards, we work harder than ever to regain the good opinion of our associates.

If you'd like more information, call Jennifer Bacarella, Director of Recruiting, at 800-373-1612. After talking with her, you may be very glad you heard of Sigma Financial Corporation.

*"Sigma is genuinely concerned about the welfare of each and every rep. Having Sigma as my broker/dealer gives me a feeling of confidence and security because I know that things are being handled by some of the best professionals in the business and a leadership second to none."*

—Ron Dahlke

*"I feel very fortunate to be licensed with a broker/dealer whose emphasis is on placing the client first. Also, I have complete trust in Sigma's sound moral values and ethical standards, which are very important to me."*

—Sue Waterhouse, CFP

*"It's a breath of fresh air to have Sigma Financial as our broker/dealer. Their staff is extremely knowledgeable, and the support is outstanding. They help us do our jobs as efficiently as possible."*

—Dean G. Campbell



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