



# Keeping strong in a storm: extensive trading capabilities deliver

Interview with Larry Goldsmith & Michael Bird

**M**arket volatility and high volume have exposed weaknesses in trading systems and technology offerings. This has led to reductions in service and increased down time in trading offerings. Providers with the ability to overcome these challenges have stood in good stead with clients.

“Our extensive trading system redundancies and trading desk availability means we perform even when other systems and desks fail,” explains Michael Bird, senior managing director, Triad Securities Corp. “Market conditions and low-cost self-service technology platforms have increased the amount of time advisors spend managing day-to-day business needs instead of focusing on generating investment return for their clients.”

Time is money or lost opportunity, he says, and Triad aims to help make its clients more efficient. This allows them to spend less time running their business and more time servicing their clients: “We like to tell clients that we are an extension of their business.

“As volume and volatility increased last year it became apparent that investment advisors had to spend more time on investment strategies and less time on running their day-to-day business,” Bird says. “We have always stayed true to our belief in high touch service with direct human interaction; this approach allows our clients more time to focus on alpha generation.”

In addition, being a smaller firm, Triad prides itself on responding to clients swiftly. Larry Goldsmith, Triad’s President and Director of



Operations, emphasises: “We’re nimble and agile because we’re a 35-person shop and therefore clients can get questions answered quickly - we reply in minutes, rather than days. Even during the height of the pandemic customers often commented on our quick response time, without realising all of our employees were working from home. We cut through a lot of red tape and refuse to let our clients get bogged down in mundane tasks. Our model allows clients to be more efficient while we take care of the operational side of things, all at a reasonable cost.”

### Unconflicted trading solutions

Triad is also experiencing an increased interest in how one executes orders with clients asking whether their broker sells order flow or trades principal against that order flow. The firm has always been an agency only trading firm, offering unconflicted trading solutions to clients.

For example, firms with one trader might be looking to grow their team and Triad can act as that second or third trader. Managers can choose to do this initially to save money but there are other efficiencies they can gain from outsourcing their trading capabilities.

Bird comments: “They can feel comfortable dealing directly with our desk for trading. We work with them to reduce their workload as much as possible. This will give them more time to focus on their clients and highlight their unique value proposition. We will allow them to spend as much time as they can delivering on that.”

### Nuanced service

Triad clients may have less than USD100 million AuM and for these types of firms cost control can be a real concern.

Managers on a growth path can benefit from the additional support a provider like Triad can offer. For example, smaller firms with USD10 million in assets might need to hire a back office person.

Larger shops may already have a back-office professional but may need a second to bolster their team. Using Triad’s service means managers of all sizes can save salary costs and access seasoned experts without needing to onboard them directly.

Although technology solutions play a key role in delivering this service, technology needs to be supported by a human touch.

For clients who are looking for a more nuanced offering, a one-size-fits all, off-the shelf technology provider will not work. Bird homes in on the firm’s approach in this regard: “We have maintained our belief that some clients will always want and demand direct person to person interaction coupled with robust technology. We think that the last 12 months just reinforced that belief.”

“Technology can never be a complete replacement for personal interactions. Our business model has always been focused on developing and maintaining long term relationships with our clients.

Remember we are not trying to be the solution for everyone, just those who share in our business beliefs,” says Goldsmith.

Triad’s partnerships currently include Active/Professional traders, RIAs, Hedge Funds, Syndicate Traders and Family Offices. “We are looking for clients who value superior customer service,” Bird underscores. ■

#### Larry Goldsmith President, Triad Securities

Larry Goldsmith is the President of Triad Securities Corporation. Prior to becoming President in 2011, Larry served as Triad’s Director of Operations. Larry has more than 30 years of experience in the securities industry, where he has focused on operations, custody, administration and customer service. Larry played a key role in developing the firm’s Prime Broker Clearing operations and remains at the centre of these operations.

#### Michael Bird Senior Managing Director, Triad Securities

Michael Bird is the Senior Managing Director of Triad Securities Corporation, responsible for the firm’s sales, operations, finances and new business development. Prior to Triad Securities, Michael spent 13 years a senior executive with Bank of America Merrill Lynch in New York. Most recently, as Managing Director, he headed and successfully grew two profitable divisions: Broadcort (trade clearing services) and Global Commission Management. Michael oversaw all aspects of both businesses including profitability, strategy, sales, technology, and client relationships. He was also active in a corporate-wide leadership and oversight capacity, as a member of the Firm’s Client Profitability Committee, Market Structure Committee, Alternative Payment Committee, and Senior Mentor Committee.