The baby boomer generation will deliver windfall profits to MDRT members who successfully differentiate their practice and position themselves directly in the path of the boomer retirement tsunami. This unprecedented opportunity could be missed if members fail to uniquely distinguish their retirement services and capabilities from all the other financial advisors in a vast sea of retiring boomers.

But, if you’re going to successfully position yourself as a retirement advisor, you have to be more than an expert on financial products offered by insurance and investment companies. You have to also be an expert on planning strategies and how to integrate them into a long-term retirement plan.

Scope and Opportunity
The sheer magnitude of the opportunity for MDRT members is unprecedented. Just look at some of the demographics:

- Wealthiest generation in history
- Nearly 80 million boomers
- Over 10,000 per day are retiring over the next 16 years
- Nearly 50 percent of those born after 1946 don’t have a retirement income plan
- Average boomer will have a 30-year retirement
- And here’s the icing on the cake: By 2030 over $41 trillion will be passed to the heirs of boomers—setting the stage for windfall profits for the next generation of MDRT members.

Just the demographics alone make me wish I were 20 years younger.

Boomer Concerns
That’s the good news. The bad news is that boomers have some pretty weighty concerns about the future. And they have good reason to be worried because all of their anxiety about retirement revolves around running out of money. They’re uneasy about:

- **Social security income**: Will it be enough? Will it be there at all?
- **Inflation**: How will it affect my retirement income?
- **Health care**: Will I be able to afford explosive costs in the future?
- **Legacy**: Will I be able to leave the kids an inheritance?
• **Market volatility:** How will it affect my retirement income?
• **Longevity:** If I live too long, will my nest egg last as long as I do?

But in those concerns lies the unparalleled opportunity for MDRT members. If you focus your practice on understanding and alleviating those concerns, you’ll deliver peace of mind and retirement security to thousands of clients and make millions for yourself in the process.

So what’s the common thread that virtually all boomers share? It’s simply this: A desire to retire comfortably, but a haunting, stomach-churning fear that their nest egg won’t last as long as they do. That’s it. If you address that one concern, you’ll catch the wave.

Economist, actor, and former MDRT Main Platform speaker Ben Stein said it best in a recent article, “Fear of financial insecurity is a cruel terror. Actual financial insecurity is even worse. Truly running out of money is so frightening it’s almost beyond comprehension.”

**Stand Out In the Crowd**

To capture your share of the burgeoning boomer retirement market, an advisor must be able to do three things exceptionally well.

1. **Have a great story to tell:** Demonstrate that you know the issues and concerns that boomers face in retirement. Not just a great story, but a unique story that differentiates you from all the other advisors in the marketplace with products and services that help guarantee a comfortable and sustainable lifetime income. Have a plan that helps them put all the diverse pieces of the retirement planning puzzle together for a lifetime of sustainable income.

2. **Have someone to tell it to:** Rather than just asking for referrals, why not attract them with unique marketing materials and events? Traditionally, all the emphasis has been on asking for referrals and little or none on attracting them. I suggest that flipping the emphasis will produce better results in the boomer retirement market.

3. **Deliver the goods:** It’s not just about quality products. It’s about delivery of the right products at the right time in coordination with other financial assets. It’s about process and packaging that builds, maintains, and reinforces to clients that you are indispensible to their long-term financial health. It’s about having a process that monitors their progress from year to year and keeps them on track for the rest of their life. That’s what they are looking for. There are no Mulligan’s or do-overs in retirement. You’ve got to get it right the first time. And when you do, you become indispensible to their long-term financial health. I’m going to share with you how we deliver on all three.
All of the various reports, statements and white papers you will see are produced in our office using MS Word and Excel. They’re easy to write, produce, and distribute. All have either been approved by our broker-dealer’s compliance department or FINRA.

**Concept Guides**

To have a great story to tell, we developed a series one-page concept guides to demonstrate that we not only understand the concerns of boomers, but we also offer many of the solutions that will dispel their fears about retirement. Sometimes investment and insurance companies produce similar pieces. Here’s the problem. Their name is on it and it positions them as the expert. To really capture this market, all the focus has to be on you and the services you bring to the table. Creating branded concept guides is easy to do, and it sets you apart from all the other advisors offering retirement advice.

To be effective the guides must address some of the key retirement concerns boomers have. They also have to be “sticky” so that recipients find them hard to throw away. In other words, they have to be good enough to save. Created in-house, these one-page guides prominently display our brand and help position us as the go-to retirement advisors among clients, prospects, centers of influence (COIs), and the press.

We’ve created guides covering a wide variety of vital retirement issues including social security retirement benefits, social security solvency, 5 bucket retirement income strategy, Medicaid planning, immediate annuities (SPIAs), wealth and retirement websites, reverse equity mortgages, key financial facts, and others. It doesn’t matter how good you are if no one knows it. These guides help spread the word.

We also use the Social Security Guide for Lunch and Learn programs for CPAs, attorneys, as well as for service clubs such as Rotary. We can also partner with one of our product wholesalers to offer one hour of CE credit to CPAs. Our concept guides are also mailed out to CIOs as a part of our quarterly drip marketing program. I know they save them and use them because they tell me so. Professionals and community-based organizations are eager to find qualified speakers on important retirement issues. One or two concept guides can make a great one-hour program for any audience at a moment’s notice. Wouldn’t you like to have a one-page handout that people actually keep with your photo and contact information on it?

Here’s the key to producing concept guides. You create it once, use it often, and make sure it’s suitable for multiple audiences, such as clients, prospects, CIOs, and the press.
Social Security Guide

Our most popular piece is the Social Security Guide. Most Americans don’t understand social security retirement benefits and strategies. We’ve also discovered that most attorneys and CPAs don’t fully understand the retirement benefits and strategies of this million-dollar client asset either. To be effective in the boomer retirement market, you must become an expert is social security benefits and strategies.

Here’s how we use our Social Security Guide to explain benefits and strategies for maxing client and spousal benefits for a lifetime of guaranteed income to clients, prospects, and COIs. Since this isn’t a talk on social security, I’m going to go through the guide very quickly to give you a feel for how it’s used with clients.

The Basics: Using a yellow marker, I highlight their year of birth to determine their full retirement age (FRA). If the client was born in 1946, his FRA is age 66. Then I review the disadvantages of filing for benefits early (age 62) and the resulting 25 percent reduction in monthly income. I also illustrate the advantages of delayed filing past age 66 and the resulting 8 percent annual increase in benefits for each year you wait until age 70.

The Beneficiaries: Then I show the basic rules for beneficiaries and say, “Who, other than you, can collect benefits based on your eligibility for benefits?” Your spouse is eligible for the greater of her own benefit or 50 percent of yours. Most couples are pleasantly surprised because this means an increase in retirement income. And at your death, your spouse steps up to the higher of her own benefit or 100 percent of yours. The same is true for unmarried ex-spouses as well. You can even have multiple ex-spouses collecting spousal or survivor benefits.

The Strategies: Page two of the Social Security Guide is devoted to claiming strategies. If the client is not married, I review the general rules of thumb for singles and highlight them accordingly.

For married couples I review two basic claiming strategies—file and suspend and the double dip. The double dip works like this. Take the case of Jim and Kathy, both age 62. Kathy decides to retire and files for social security benefits. Jim will work to age 70 to maximize his social security benefits. When Jim reaches age 66, he files for spousal benefits under Kathy’s account. This immediately entitles him to start receiving 50 percent of her benefit from age 66 to age 70. At age 70, he will file for social security benefits under his own account. He’ll receive a 34 percent larger lifetime monthly benefit than if he’d filed at age 66, and that doesn’t even include COLAs. Since they don’t need Jim’s social security benefits
at age 66, they are able to maximize both guaranteed lifetime income and survivor benefits with the double dip.

This one-page Social Security Guide not only demonstrates our expertise, but also our indispensability to clients and prospects for helping them make the right decisions regarding retirement income for the rest of their life. And it doesn’t hurt that our picture and contact information is branded on the document either.

**Immediate Annuity Guide**

Another popular piece is our Immediate Annuity Guide illustrating the advantages of guaranteed lifetime income at various ages. Page one illustrates a single annuitant while the flip side shows joint annuitants. We show annuity values for ages 65, 70, 75, 80, and 85. The whole focus is on educating clients, prospects, and CIOs about the interaction between annuity certain periods, distribution rates, and guaranteed lifetime income. It’s also interesting to note that most retirement distribution studies conclude that the maximum safe withdrawal from an investment portfolio is around 4 percent. At some ages, the annuity distribution rate is double that. The numbers in the guide assume a $100,000 annuity deposit.

**Wealth and Retirement Website Guide**

The Wealth and Retirement Website Guide is a guaranteed keeper by attorneys and CPAs. This valuable one-page reference guide offering websites with free information will always be at their fingertips. And our brand with contact information and photo is always prominently displayed. This concept guide illustrates US Government websites for Social Security, Civil Service, the Thrift Savings Plan, the Internal Revenue Service, and the FDIC.

The other major categories listing useful websites include investments and investing, education, insurance and annuities, automobiles, financial calculators, real estate, people finder, and miscellaneous.

**Referral Events**

In order to have someone to tell our story to, we developed several magnet events that attract new prospects. Instead of asking clients for referrals, ask yourself this question, How can I create opportunities for clients and CIOs to give me introductions to quality prospects? It’s much easier to attract referrals than it is to ask for them. And that’s just what signature events such as our Ladies Night Out do—they attract new prospects.
So why produce an event targeting women? Women typically control family finances and often earn as much or more than their husbands. While women represent over 50 percent of the workforce in America, studies show that they often trail men in financial literacy—not in intellect or education. Since they often control the family purse strings, why not have an event just for women?

We wanted to create a fun event that would give them a chance to mix, mingle, and network with other successful women. Three years ago we produced our first Ladies Night Out (LNO). We sent invitations to all of our female clients and centers of influence. The invitation also encouraged them to invite a friend to come along to enjoy the evening with them. The response has been overwhelming with each LNO generating about 70 attendees. We are now in the process of planning our fourth annual LNO event.

We hold the event at an upscale location, usually a country club. Other than a minute or two of welcoming remarks, we make no sales or marketing promotion throughout the event. The mix and mingle starts at 6:30 with an open wine bar and heavy hors d’oeuvres. While the ladies are networking, they can stop for a chair massage at one of three massage stations or get a removable tattoo from a henna tattoo artist. The massage therapists and tattoo artist provide their services without charge in return for the opportunity to hand out their brochures and business cards. Then at about 7:30, we have a 30-minute program focused exclusively on women’s issues. We’ve had speakers on women’s health and exercise, female sexuality, and personal safety and self-defense.

Following the speaker though, the real fun begins. While dessert is being served, we start distributing about 15 to 18 door prizes—mostly restaurant gift certificates and bottles of wine. All of the door prize questions relate to women’s financial issues. You can’t imagine the good-natured pandemonium that ensues trying to single out one woman among many shouting out answers. At the end of the evening, each attendee leaves with a goody bag stuffed with our company brochure and other promotional material. A week later we follow up with a letter to guests inviting them to come in for a one-hour free consultation to discuss their personal financial situation.

Events of this type can be expensive, and we usually receive significant financial support from multiple product wholesalers. This support usually covers most or all of the cost of producing the event. Incidentally, while we receive their financial support, we do not promote their products or services in any way at the event. LNO generates rave reviews from the ladies and brings them back year after year with new prospects for us to meet.
**Wealth & Retirement Report (WARR):**

In delivering the goods to our clients, we developed our unique Wealth & Retirement Report (WARR). Described by one client as the, “Cliffs notes of my whole financial life,” this report is the foundation for our regular client reviews. We also use it as a prospecting tool with prospective clients and CIOs to demonstrate our unique capabilities and to further differentiate us from the other advisors.

This one-page report helps make our firm indispensible to the long-term financial health of our clients. It summarizes their long-term financial goals and objectives, as well as their capital, income, contingency, and insurance assets. It also helps reinforce that working with the right professional advisor is not just about price, product, or rate-of-return, it’s the whole package of retirement services delivered by an organization that will guide them through the rest of their life.

In the very first paragraph we remind them why we need to gather information on all of their various financial accounts. “We don’t believe that short- and long-term financial recommendations or strategies should be implemented in a vacuum. That’s why PFG reports not only on the assets we manage for you, but all of your other capital and income assets as well.”

The second paragraph tells them that we will regularly track their financial progress toward achieving and maintaining their primary financial objectives. Then we list their objective in boldface type: Retiring comfortably with a sustainable level of lifetime income or leaving a legacy for children and grandchildren. These goals and objectives are always front and center on this report throughout their life progression.

**Capital Assets**

The chart of Investment Accounts includes all investment, bank, and real estate accounts or properties that will be available to meet their long-term retirement needs. The asset allocation columns show stock and fixed income assets separately so we can determine the percentage of assets in each category. Then we compare it to the target allocation percentages previously established for risk management. We generally like to rebalance either annually or semiannually. We also list Cash/Savings Accounts and Other Capital Assets, however we don’t include them in the asset allocation.

Most financial advisors report only on the assets they manage. We report on all of their various capital accounts so we can see the big picture and determine their total asset allocation and recommend
adjustments if necessary. It also allows us to keep a running inventory of future assets under management (AUM) that will eventually flow to our firm when retirement plans are rolled into IRAs.

**Income Accounts**
The chart of Income Accounts projects future social security benefits as well as pension, annuity, and any other source of sustainable lifetime income. The information is easy to gather and demonstrates our knowledge of retirement plans and survivor benefits. It also gives us the opportunity to talk about social security planning strategies and spousal benefits.

**Lifeboat Accounts (Contingency Accounts)**
When your clients retire, they make momentous and often irrevocable decisions about the rest of their life. They quit their jobs and pull the trigger on social security benefits and company pension plans permanently setting in motion the amount of guaranteed lifetime income both spouses will receive. They’ve also probably made decisions on health care, doctors, and where they’re going to live. Since you don’t get Mulligan’s or do-overs in retirement, why would you go into the final chapter of your life without having a contingency plan—lifeboats?

Everyone knows the story of the Titanic. Ship hits iceberg, ship sinks, and lots of innocent people die. The story behind the story has some interesting parallels with retirement planning. The ship builders had a great plan: Build an unsinkable ship. But they had a really lousy contingency plan: Only enough lifeboats for one-third of the passengers. Inadequate contingency planning resulted in over 1,400 passengers needlessly losing their lives. The great irony of the Titanic is not that the ship sunk, it’s that with adequate contingency planning, all of the passengers would have survived.

While we rarely recommend reverse equity mortgages, we want our clients to know how they work. We want them to be familiar with the lifeboat characteristics this option offers. We also want them to know that long-term care insurance is just another lifeboat filled with cash that can extend the life of their retirement nest egg. The same is true with permanent life insurance and potential inheritances from parents and grandparents. We want to keep these things on our clients’ personal radar screen because, collectively, these assets represent “the last two seats on the last lifeboat on the Titanic.”

**Risk Management Assets**
The chart of Risk Management Accounts is a summary of life, disability, and long-term care insurance assets. When I look at their WARR, I can see all of their various policies. I don’t have to remember when
their 20-year level term policy expires or what the benefit period is for their long-term care policy because it’s listed on the WARR. This listing also has the added benefit of reinforcing to the client that term insurance has an expiration date while permanent insurance never expires.

For our clients the WARR is so much more than a balance sheet. It’s truly the Cliffs notes of their whole financial life. For me as an advisor, though, it’s even more than that. It’s a quick reference sheet, just a mouse click away, that provides:

• Instant recall when a client is on the phone asking questions
• An inventory future AUM that will eventually flow to our firm when the client retires
• An asset allocation tracking tool allowing me to make more informed recommendations
• Unique service giving me a competitive advantage in the retirement planning market
• An aid to attorneys and CPAs in understanding our mutual clients’ financial situation
• A tool that reinforces to clients the value I bring to the relationship by subtly reminding them that it’s not just about price, product, and rate-of-return, it’s the whole package of retirement services delivered by an organization that will guide them through the rest of their life
• It’s delegable and easy to create and update. The entire document was created with MS Word and Excel so everything is totally customizable. Except for the investment accounts, most information and assets don’t need to be updated regularly. Other templates have also been created for clients with 529 plans, stock options, or legal documents.

Ending
I’ve had fun showing you how we tell our story, how we attract people to tell it to, and how we deliver the goods. I hope you’ve heard some ideas you can use in your practice.

Now let me leave you with this parting thought: Windfall profits await MDRT members who decide to catch the boomer retirement wave. What will you do to ride the crest of the retirement tsunami?