

Multi-family office profile: Market Street Trust Company

Kristen Oliveri explores how Market Street Trust Company has grown from a single-family office into a trustee for more than 300 trusts and an advisor to nine family foundations



Marianne Wilder Young



Beth Landin

Corning, New York-based Market Street Trust Company, a family office and New York State private trust company, began as a single-family office in 1909 for the Houghton Family.

The family founded Corning Incorporated roughly 150 years ago by developing and producing incandescent lamp envelopes for Thomas Edison. Since then, Corning Incorporated has become known for introducing high technology products such as optical fiber, flat glass display panels for television and Gorilla Glass for mobile devices.

While the family no longer has a controlling interest in the company, today the family office is a true shared family office with an operating trust company for the last 25 years and is a trustee for about 300 trusts and an advisor to nine family foundations, explained Marianne Wilder Young, president. A unique aspect of the firm is its client

Young and Landin, believe in high-level asset allocation where the investment management team provides clients exposure to a dozen or so asset classes they've carved out and find managers that specialize in these niche areas. For example, in the high-yield debt area, the firm works with emerging market debt managers in both dollar denominated and local currencies. The firm currently favors emerging market debt and equity as well as energy infrastructure with a focus on MLPs. It also maintains clients' exposure to high-quality credit for downside protection.

"One of our themes is protecting assets on the downside," said Young. "It's something we continually review with our investment team and our client owners' input is very important." She noted that on the investment advisory board, the firm has outside advisors, which allows them to leverage its talent base and provide solutions quicker. "We tend to focus on preserving purchasing power on an after-tax basis over a long period of time."

The firm's internal team, of four investment management professionals spends a great deal of time on manager due diligence. If they are looking for an outside manager, explains Landin, it uses databases such as Factset and other resources in the hedge fund and private equity arenas, including their own contacts and centers of influence. "We additionally work with a network of family offices in an informal way," she added.

Beyond investments, the family office is focused on talking about wealth with their clients sooner rather than later. It helps clients facilitate family meetings, discussions surrounding estate plans, and provide support for family foundations. "We get very involved with educating the next generation, beginning when they are children. We have assisted families in establishing youth boards for family foundations, and teach the next gen financial literacy and how to stay engaged with their family legacy," said Landin.

The firm often talks with teenage family members about how they think about spending their money and work with them on exercises on where families may end up if they take certain actions. They also encourage the next generation to learn about budgeting and how best they too can be a wealth creator.

The duo declined to comment on the firm's assets under management. ■

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ownership model. "Market Street has grown in the past decade by selectively partnering with families. Our model for growth is a controlled one, so that we continue to provide the exceptional, high-touch level of service that we are known for," said Beth Landin, vice president, client and strategic relationships.

In terms of the firm's investment platform, both