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## **New Year's Resolutions: Take Advantage of Free Online Tools, Consult with a Financial Advisor**

BROOKFIELD, Wis.--(BUSINESS WIRE)-- [Fiserv](#), Inc. (NASDAQ: FISV), a leading provider of financial services technology solutions, has developed a set of New Year's resolutions for getting your financial house in order and establishing good investment habits in 2012.

Each New Year offers the opportunity for a fresh start to resolve to lose weight, exercise more and adopt a healthier diet. The New Year is also a catalyst for resolutions to take better control of finances. Many consumers know they need help — but don't know how to find financial advice that best fits the needs of themselves and their families. Today your bank, credit union or brokerage firm may offer free financial tools online, and may have advisors who can answer your questions and help you map your household goals with good financial habits in the New Year.

The first thing investors should know is this: no matter what your financial situation, help is available. Many investors assume you can only get advice if you are "wealthy." However, chances are financial advisors are available to you at one or more of the financial institutions you currently do business with — research what's available and consider taking advantage of this service. In person and online, as you get organized for the New Year and taxes in the spring, 2012 can be the year you begin to leverage the multitude of financial advice management solutions available.

"Market volatility and economic uncertainty are leading many investors to rethink how they handle their personal finances and investments, and the industry is responding," said Cheryl Nash, president of Investment Services, Fiserv. "There is a new advice model emerging and individual investors should explore the options available to them in order to find a financial advisor who meets their needs and can work with them to achieve their goals."

### **Web-Based Personal Financial Management**

Even if you are just starting out, financial advice is within reach. As young investors (the emerging affluent) begin thinking about future expenses--a new car, apartment, marriage--the complexity of finances can be overwhelming. However, the groundwork can be laid by setting aside a little time to plan ahead, using the latest tools, for free.

Some of the best personal finance tools can be found on the web. Personal Financial Management tools can aggregate information on credit cards, checking accounts, investments and savings accounts for a holistic view of all household finances. Personal Financial Management tools can help new investors learn more about their finances and help them better plan, and save, for the future. Check your bank's website to see if they provide this service.

### **Financial Advisor**

For more experienced investors, qualified assistance from a financial advisor could be a profitable solution. Financial advisors offer personalized, face-to-face communication and an individualized experience. Investors should spend ample time searching for an experienced financial advisor to make the most of their investment. Organizations such as Financial Planners Association (FPA), Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) and Certified Financial Planner (CFP) offer search capabilities to locate advisors in your area to interview to find a fit for your household.

A financial advisor will weigh the risks and benefits of varying investment options, will explain how to diversify an investment portfolio and will help protect assets against market volatility. Quality financial advisors listen to financial goals, understand the amount of risk their investor is willing to take and will help them find products that match.

### **Certified Financial Planner**

For investors with more sizeable portfolios, full service investment management and financial planning are available with commensurate pricing. Certified Financial Planners (CFPs) are individuals with a higher level of education and have adhered to the Certified Financial Planning Board standards. CFPs guide investors with big picture goals and higher risk tolerance.

Certified Financial Planners can help investors with each phase of their financial life by building a strategic plan, centered on estate and tax planning, to prepare for the predictable and the unpredictable future.

Compensation structures of Certified Financial Planners vary. A majority of Certified Financial Planners are fee only, and will charge a percentage of an investor's portfolio for their advice. Investors should be wary of advisors who are paid commission solely from product sales.

### **Private Bank**

High net-worth investors with a large share of investable assets can seek financial advice at a private bank. These banks have a separate business unit with designated teams of client advisors and product specialists exclusively for high net-worth individuals. Because of their high net-worth and the ways in which these assets are generally generated, these clients are often considered to have characteristics similar to institutional investors.

### **Ring In the New Year**

"Now is *not* the time to take chances with your investments," said Nash. "My advice for investors in the new year is to begin with a plan. Spend time using tools to see the big picture for your household and talk with one or more financial planners to select an advisor to help you take charge of your financial future and maximize your investment potential."

### **Additional Resources:**

- | Investment Services at Fiserv - [http://www.fiserv.com/sol\\_investment.htm](http://www.fiserv.com/sol_investment.htm)
- | Financial Planners Association: <http://www.fpanet.org/>
- | Financial Industry Regulatory Authority - <http://www.finra.org/>
- | Certified Financial Planner: <http://www.cfp.net>

### **About Fiserv**

Fiserv, Inc. (NASDAQ: FISV) is a leading global technology provider serving the financial services industry. Fiserv is driving innovation in payments, processing services, risk and compliance, customer and channel management, and business insights and optimization. For six of the past eight years, Fiserv ranked No. 1 on the FinTech 100, an annual international listing of the top technology providers to the financial services industry. For more information, visit [www.fiserv.com](http://www.fiserv.com).

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