



SIDEDRAWER™

Case Study

Meet Christopher Dewdney from Dewdney&Co, Part I

The Strategic Perspective



+ Dewdney&Co.

This is Part One of a two-part series on Dewdney&Co and their partnership with SideDrawer.

What is Dewdney&Co.?

Dewdney&Co is a financial planning firm that services retired individuals, pre-retired individuals, self-employed professionals, medical practitioners, and professional athletes, assisting them in estate planning, divorce planning, employee or executive benefit planning, small business financial services, ethical investment planning, tax planning, and much more. The firm prides itself in being a well-rounded financial firm that can address a variety of clients' needs.



Who is Christopher Dewdney

Christopher Dewdney is the founder and principal of Dewdney&Co, and brings almost twenty years of experience to the firm. Christopher started a career in fashion before he pivoted to finance, where he was motivated to have a greater impact to peoples' lives. However, his earlier experience influenced his approach to client service - with a strong emphasis on perfection, attention to detail, service quality, and aesthetics in the firm's presentation, which continues to define their service delivery for clients.

While Christopher is highly accredited in the industry with the CFP, CLU, CHS and CPCA designations, he is particularly proud of his many Board positions. He serves on the:

- **Young Leadership Council** of the Toronto Symphony Orchestra, where he is able to contribute his unique perspective to the organization
- Christopher's mother's nursing background provided a culture of care and empathy, which influenced his decision to join the **Research and Ethics Board of St. Michael's Hospital** in Toronto, where he advises on critical medical developments that, in turn, influence his approach to client service
- Finally, Christopher is also a member of the **Board of Directors for FP Canada**, Canada's governing body for financial planners and the administrator of the Certified Financial Planner designation. This role allows him to bring his diverse experience and perspective to an organization where the objective is to democratize financial planning for Canadians.

Dewdney&Co's Challenges

We firmly believe that the industry should be focused around planning, and that technology has been a major disrupter," Christopher told us in an interview. "There's a ton of accessibility to a multitude of products, but perhaps not the knowledge to use them well. I think that's what the end users are really looking for – is the synthesizing of all of that information, bringing it all together. This is why we believe planning is so important – it is the first step in identifying the needs and the right products."

"The pandemic greatly accelerated the demand for technological resources," said Christopher. "When you are starting any planning engagement, there is a significant data intake that needs to take place. Prior to the pandemic, that would've been done via in-person meetings, traditional post mail, or via email as attachments. All of this is inefficient, it's tedious in the sense that you're going back through email threads to see if everything's been received. It was a nightmare from a business and client service perspective."

When speaking to peers about their processes, the recommendation was always to create a spreadsheet, keep sending emails, and then check a box every time they gave you what you needed. To Christopher, this was far from a solution.

While sharing these frustrations with their colleagues, the team was introduced to SideDrawer, a solution that largely eliminates these challenges.





The Solution

Christopher discussed the process of how Dewdney&Co engages their clients directly with SideDrawer.

"Naturally, we'll have an introductory meeting with the client to see if it makes sense to work with each other," he said. "We need to onboard the client and that includes a letter of engagement. Once that's completed, depending on the direction of that engagement, there are a number of subsequent documents that need to go out. If we're doing an investment portfolio, we need a KYC, we have a risk questionnaire. If we're doing insurance, we analyze their needs, etc. But all this information is highly sensitive."

"We've been able to fully template what is required per client engagement. SideDrawer is a tool that is ready to go, giving us full visibility into the status of the client's onboarding process that's unique to our approach."

Status updates are a particularly useful aspect of SideDrawer during the planning and discovery phase of the engagement. They can be used to trigger notifications to clients on a regular basis to submit information.

"Not only is SideDrawer helping us mitigate risk factors, it's also extremely efficient."

Security and Effective communication

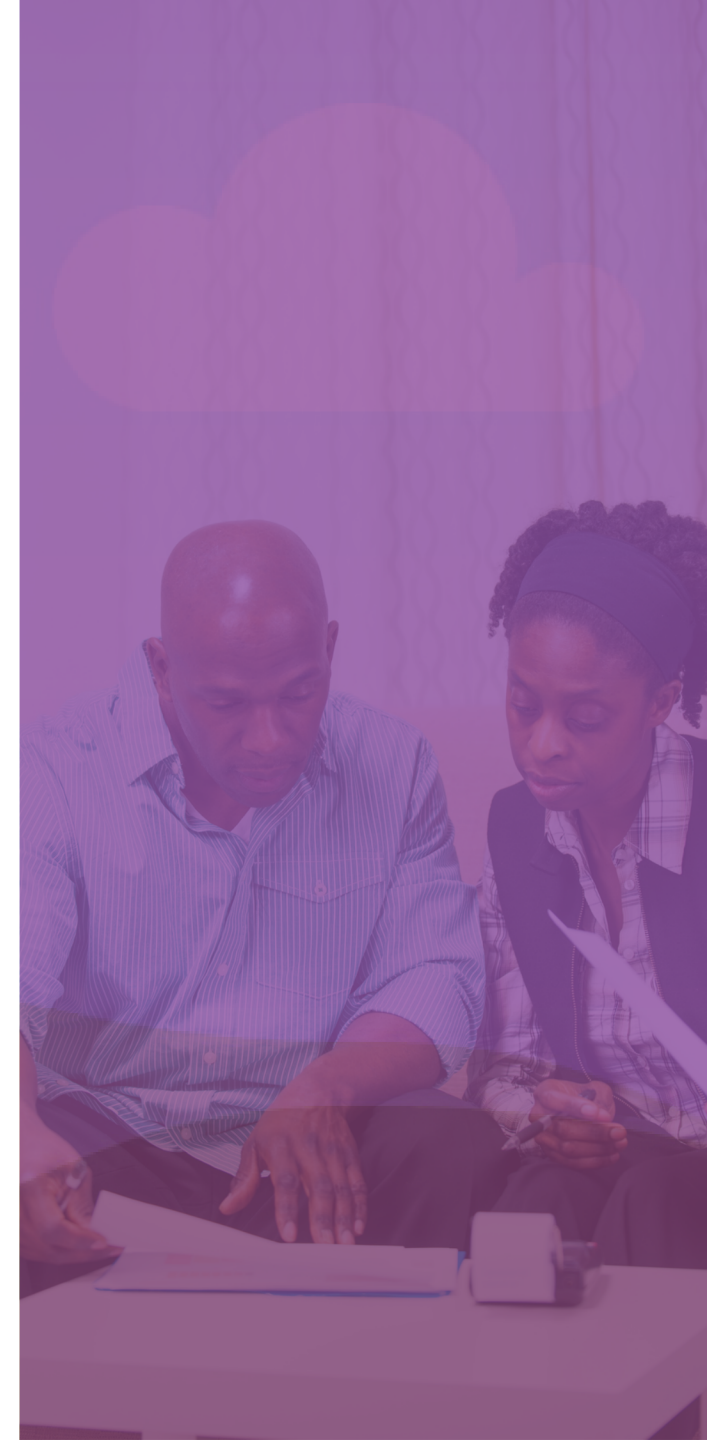
Christopher went on to note that the pandemic has increased his wariness of fraud. "With the significant move to online collaboration, it's increased the exposure and risk that the business and clients face – and we have to ensure we provides means to mitigate this risk," Christopher said.

"We follow a process when we onboard the client in which we send them via email an introduction to the SideDrawer platform to make them aware that this is how we'll engage them on their sensitive documents.

For a vast number of clients, they appreciate that we've proactively taken security into consideration, and we know immediately it's going to resonate well

One of the other key issues that the firm was facing before using SideDrawer was a lack of streamlined communication. SideDrawer now makes it possible for the firm's employees and Christopher to let their clients know what they need, what time it is needed, and where to securely place the necessary documents. Clients experience a branded platform where they can access all the relevant documents that have been shared by Dewdney&Co, and what they are required to share back to the team.

"SideDrawer takes a lot of the issues that we had before out of the equation, and makes us a lot more secure and efficient," said Christopher. "We can focus on what we need to do. When I'm doing the planning, I have to make sure that the right information is coming through, that it's accurate, and it's coming in a timely fashion so I can provide the right output."





When it came down to it, SideDrawer provided Dewdney&Co with a secure and user-friendly platform for organizing and managing sensitive financial documents in a way that prevented a lot of the potential security risks that businesses battle in the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Importance of Usability

Since Dewdney&Co adopted SideDrawer into their practice, it has quickly become an integral part of the firm's process. The firm has designed its processes around various planning-related service engagements, and therefore efficiency, client experience, and collaboration are key considerations.

SideDrawer is the first platform that any client is exposed to. The first invitation for leads, prospects or new clients takes place through the SideDrawer platform.

As a result, the usability, aesthetic design, and intuitiveness, all play a critical role as these elements form the basis by which any new client or prospect would gauge the service offering.

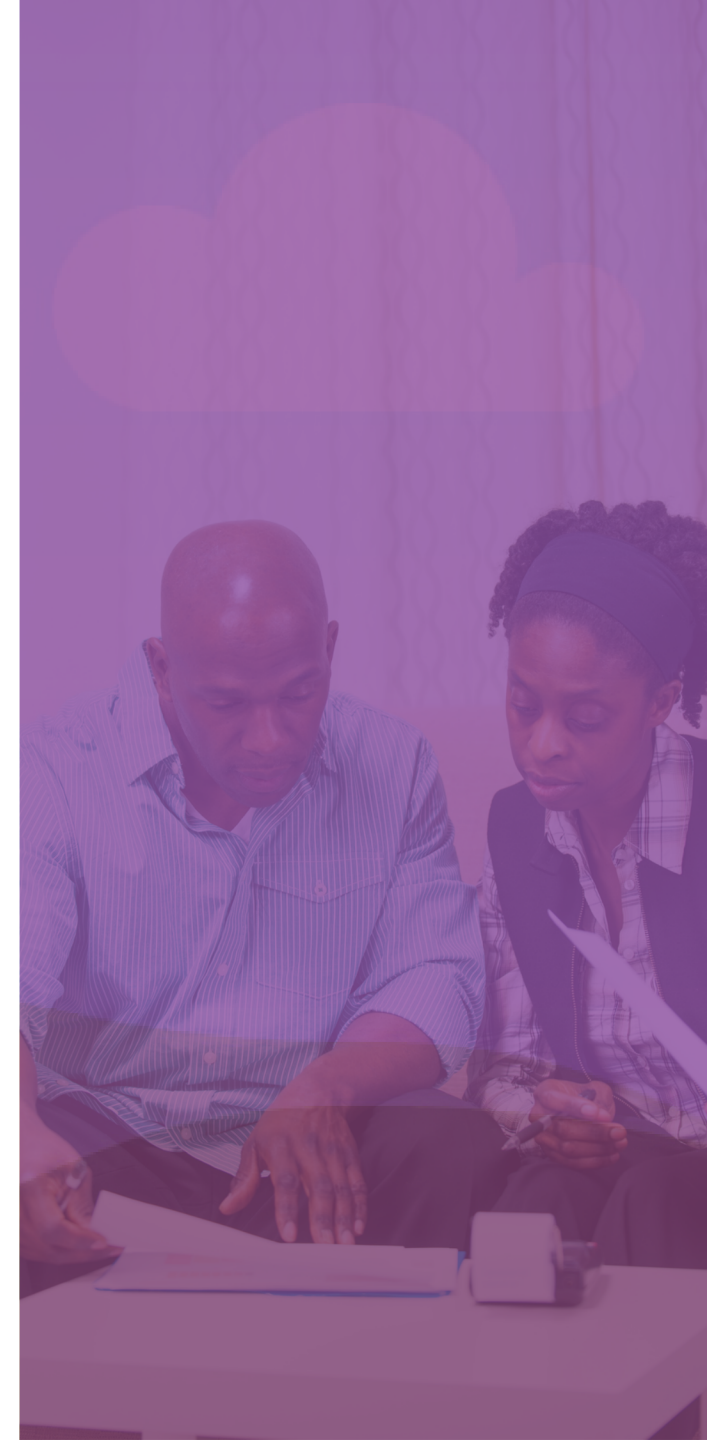
Christopher aptly noted that in other cases there is technology that may have utility for a particular purpose – and it may be very effective in solving that problem. However, given the nature of today's consumer, if it's not aesthetically appealing to the eye, or provide a superior user experience, then it's not going to get used.

As a result, SideDrawer's clean design approach has really helped with the engagement amongst clients – those under the 60-65 age mark have gravitated very well to the product, and are actively engaged. For those above that age, where they may be less familiar with technology, they have involved their adult children to help them navigate, which is not only beneficial to the client, but also to Dewdney&Co's team as they look to engage the next generation on the client's planning needs.

Exceptional Support

SideDrawer's on-demand technical support has also been a benefit to Christopher.

"In terms of feedback and response time, it's been phenomenal," said Christopher. "And that's the truth – we've had no complaints. It's also been great for clients. We don't want to spend hours troubleshooting an issue on a platform that we're paying for. We want it to be resolved as quickly and as efficiently as possible. And that's been our experience with SideDrawer."





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What is SideDrawer?

SideDrawer is a cloud platform that provides financial advisors and individuals services to ensure online document sharing security. It is designed as a physical filing cabinet but with amplified safety. As a result, it benefits organizations and their clients by reducing expenses, time, and resources.

SideDrawer is the perfect solution for organizations dealing with confidential information through email. Financial advisors can send and receive sensitive documents without the risk of forwarding them to the wrong person. Additionally, SideDrawer is protected with several firewalls to secure clients' data completely. Therefore, it is an excellent alternative for financial advisors and their clientele.

In a nutshell, SideDrawer is the solution to all documentation problems. It presents a unique opportunity to increase work efficiency using better workflow, all-in-one-place digital document storage, and virtual problem solving faced by financial advisors. This helps promote a better user experience.

Excited to know what SideDrawer can do for your business?

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