



Client Success Story **Voya Financial**

## 20 Years of Building Better Lineups With Portfolio Blueprint

“Voya is a top provider in the retirement marketplace and we worked with such a well-known, well-branded investment firm in Morningstar Investment Management. That, I think, is one of the reasons why we’ve had continued success for the last 20 years.”

**Bill Elmslie**

SVP, Emerging Markets Sales

**Company**

Voya Financial

**Product used**

Fiduciary Services

**Use cases**

Fiduciary Support

**Industry**

Financial Services

### The Challenge

In 2003, Bill Elmslie, senior vice president, emerging markets sales at Voya Financial, recognized that building plan lineups for their retirement plans was a complicated process for many plan sponsors and their advisers. “We wanted to provide a service for intermediaries to bring to plan sponsors to ensure both an effective way of managing their investment fiduciary responsibilities and their overall plan,” Bill said. So, he turned to Morningstar Retirement<sup>1</sup> to help create a new service that would drastically shake up the marketplace.

### The Response

Along came Portfolio Blueprint, a brand-new fiduciary services product from Voya and Morningstar Retirement aimed at providing retirement plan sponsors help with the research, selection, and monitoring of plan investments. Morningstar Investment Management provides Voya plan sponsors with a menu of diverse investment options based on their specific workforce demographic profile. The service also offers fund analysis and ongoing investment monitoring.

“Back then, different investments just got added to plan lineups left and right—no real reason for it,” said Brock Johnson, president of Morningstar Retirement. “So, we feel, this was a way for us to come in and really add value at all kinds of levels. Add value to the plan sponsor, add value to the adviser, and add value to the end participant with a product designed to help participants build a portfolio appropriate for their circumstances.”

But the product wouldn’t have been so impactful if not for the key roles Voya and Morningstar Retirement played. As a retirement plan offering that had never been seen in the industry before, the value of this kind of fiduciary oversight was not immediately understood. “We did a lot to educate the marketplace,” Bill said. “Having sponsors and their intermediaries—their consultants, their advisers—recognize their fiduciary responsibility, and hence, potential liability for these plans.”

“After that education happened,” he said, “the program started to be welcomed in the industry, which was just recognition that there wasn’t the knowledge or understanding of what it meant to be a fiduciary through a qualified plan.”

In our opinion, Portfolio Blueprint could not have had such a lasting impression if not for Voya and Morningstar Retirement working together. “Voya is a top provider in the retirement marketplace,” Bill said, “and we worked with such a well-known, well-branded investment firm in Morningstar Investment Management. That, I think, is one of the reasons why we’ve had continued success for the last 20 years.”

## Stronger Together

From the start, Voya and Morningstar Retirement agreed on their overall goal: allowing participants to achieve the retirements they want.

“We were always, always aligned on wanting to do what was right and having a service in the marketplace that would actually help give people a better outcome,” Brock said. “That’s a big reason why our relationship’s been so strong over the years.”

Bill echoed that sentiment. “What we’re trying to achieve is to help one person, one family, and one institution achieve that successful outcome. And if the sponsor doesn’t have a plan, well, the institution can’t have the successful outcome, the participant can’t, the family can’t.” But what exactly was the mechanism that underpinned making these retirements a reality?

## Fiduciary Responsibility

“We have always taken our fiduciary responsibility very seriously with this program,” Brock said. “There are others who have jumped into the industry and will approve every single investment out there. And we do offer a service that I think has a lot of flexibility, but offering a fiduciary program comes with a lot of weight to it. We take that very seriously.”

The methodology behind Portfolio Blueprint is one that Morningstar Investment Management stands behind as a fiduciary, which affords the plan sponsor some amount of protection.

“We’d astound some people when we talked about what Morningstar Retirement is truly placing behind this program,” Bill said. “We’d ask if the other program has a written document, do they offer protection against ‘this kind of event’? To literally be able to show them in your written document, your contract, the fiduciary practices by Morningstar Investment Management, if challenged in a lawsuit, sets the program apart.”

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**Brock Johnson**

President, Morningstar Retirement

## A Lasting Impact

Commitment to rigorous fiduciary oversight coupled with the mutual goal of improving workplace retirement plans contributed to the program's overall impact. What was once a singular innovation from two entities in the retirement landscape, we believe can now be considered a pioneer in the fiduciary services segment of the industry.

"We're very proud at Morningstar Retirement to be part of that evolution," Brock said.

"You've got something that's been around for 20 years and is continuing to resonate and stay important in the industry."

"We were complementing what plan advisers already brought to the table," Bill added. "I chalk that up as one of the reasons this has been such a success. We never diminished their value proposition."

"And, even more exciting," Bill continued, "is, after 20 years in the making, Portfolio Blueprint hasn't waned from being viewed as a strong solution in the marketplace. That's all thanks to this relationship. That's why it worked."

- ▶ Portfolio Blueprint has relationships with more than 12,000 plans with \$37 billion in assets under management and advisement.<sup>2</sup>
- ▶ Morningstar Investment Management's fiduciary services offerings overall have relationships with 23,000 plans with \$56.1 billion assets under management and advisement.<sup>3</sup>
- ▶ Morningstar Retirement and Voya Financial have been offering Portfolio Blueprint since 2003.

## Ready to see for yourself?

Talk to a specialist about how a fiduciary services program like Portfolio Blueprint can impact your business.

Visit: <https://www.morningstar.com/products/fiduciary-services> to learn more about Morningstar Retirement's fiduciary services capabilities.

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Through a relationship with Morningstar Investment Management LLC, a registered investment advisor and wholly owned subsidiary of Morningstar, Inc., Voya makes available Portfolio Blueprint® and Portfolio Blueprint® Investment Oversight, services offering investment solutions and fiduciary support from Morningstar Investment Management for plan sponsors. Morningstar Investment Management makes its fund selections from the fund platform that is available under the applicable Voya product, which is a subset of the broad fund universe, and which consists of Voya proprietary funds and unaffiliated funds that may have agreed to pay Voya compensation in connection with sales of those funds and/or payments for services provided by Voya or its affiliates on behalf of the funds. Voya may at times request that Morningstar Investment Management review specific fund selections but the final decision on which funds are selected for Portfolio Blueprint is Morningstar Investment Management's. Morningstar Investment Management has no ability to choose the funds that are made available under Voya's products and contracts. The services are either performed by Morningstar Investment Management or an affiliate. The Morningstar name and logo are registered marks of Morningstar, Inc. All other logos and marks are the property of their respective owners. Voya and its companies are not affiliated with the Morningstar family of companies.

The endorsement of Morningstar Investment Management LLC for the Portfolio Blueprint service is made by Voya in the capacity of a client of Morningstar Investment Management. Cash and non-cash compensation will be provided to Voya for this endorsement if you enroll in the Portfolio Blueprint service. Voya has material conflicts of interest giving this endorsement of Morningstar Investment Management on this commentary because Voya's compensation for services under the Blueprint service is dependent on customer use of Morningstar Investment Management's investment advisory services. Morningstar Investment Management's investment advisory services are the only investment advisory services offered under the Blueprint service/ program and lack of customer's use of Morningstar Investment Management's investment advisory services would, therefore, result in Voya unable to receive compensation for this product. For more information about the compensation, we receive and our material conflicts of interest, please click here.

<sup>1</sup>Morningstar Retirement offers research- and technology-driven products and services to individuals, workplace retirement plans, and other industry players. Associated advisory services are provided by Morningstar Investment Management LLC, a registered investment adviser and subsidiary of Morningstar, Inc. The fiduciary services offered by Portfolio Blueprint are provided by Morningstar Investment Management.

<sup>2</sup>As of 31 March 2024.

<sup>3</sup>As of Dec. 31, 2023. Morningstar Investment Management's total assets under management and advisement was \$285.9 billion. Sept. 30, 2020.