
ascensus®
Always have a plan
LET'S MAKE A PLAN
Ascensus Retirement Plan Overview

# WHY THE RIGHT PLAN MATTERS

Making the decision to provide employees with a plan to save for the future is a great thing.

But it's also smart from a business perspective and can make all the difference when it comes to these measures of success.

## Employee focus and satisfaction

**60%** of U.S. employees indicate they are worried about saving for retirement.[1]

**Only 5%** of workers report feeling "extremely well prepared" for retirement.[2]

**57%** of employers use retirement plans to earn the loyalty of current employees.[1]

## Lower long-term business costs

Employees with the lowest levels of financial wellness can cost employers up to **$198 annually** per employee.[3]

**30%** of pre-retirees plan to work until age 66 due to a lack of retirement savings.[2]

**73%** of employers are planning for increased benefits costs required to handle older workforce.[2]

## Tax benefits

**Tax credits**
The IRS offers small business owners a tax credit for costs of starting a retirement plan, including set-up costs and employee education costs.

**Reduced tax burden**
Employer contributions to employee retirement plans are tax deductible, which lowers a business's overall tax burden.

[1] SHRM Research: Retirement Savings and Planning Benefits, Society for Human Resource Management, March 2016.
[2] LIMRA Secure Retirement Institute 2015 Plan Sponsor Survey, December 2015.
[3] *Financial Finesse ROI Special Report,* Financial Finesse, Inc., October 2016.

# YOUR PROVIDER OF CHOICE

## You and your employees want to be ready when today meets tomorrow. We're here to help.

Here at Ascensus, we work hard every day so over 7 million Americans can save today for a brighter, more secure future.

Our core values—People Matter. Quality First. Integrity Always.®—serve as the basis for how we build relationships with you and your employees.

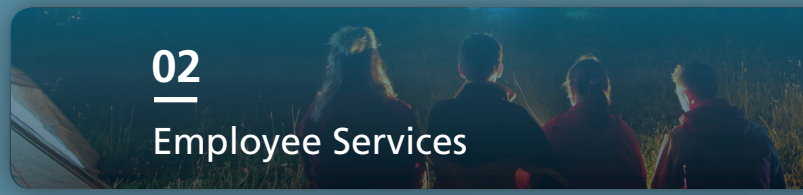
**54,000+** retirement plans

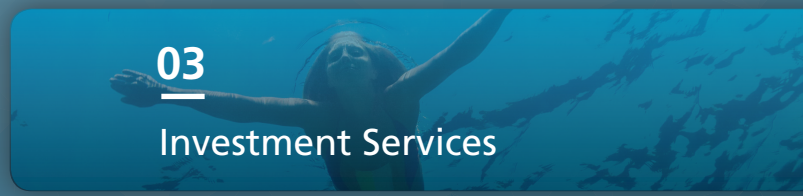
**1.5+ million** IRAs and health savings accounts administered

**4+ million** 529 accounts administered

**$163 billion** in assets under administration



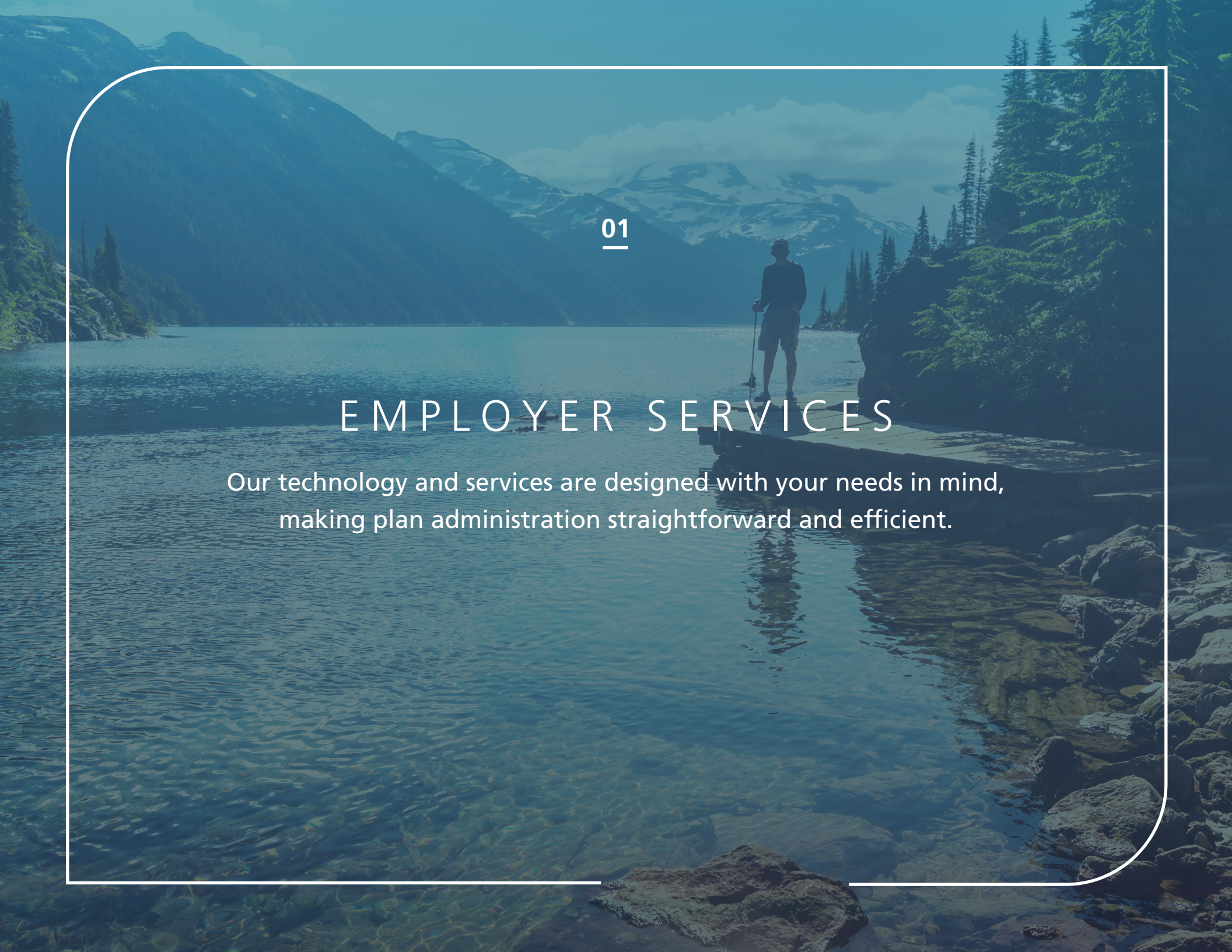










As of December 31, 2017



01

# EMPLOYER SERVICES

Our technology and services are designed with your needs in mind, making plan administration straightforward and efficient.




**The plan website: Your one-stop resource**
It makes it possible for you to stay as involved as you want in the day-to-day oversight of your plan.

# GET SUPPORT YOU CAN COUNT ON

## Plan management at your convenience

Our plan website features a user-friendly digital dashboard that provides a single point to:

- Quickly and securely view and update plan information
- Access educational tools, tips, and informational updates
- View or run customized reporting of plan activity

## Personal service from our experts

Your experienced retirement service team will serve as your point of contact for all plan needs:

- Monitor and manage plan activities
- Deliver plan-related communications
- Address any questions and provide quick resolutions
- Collaborate with our compliance team to assist with complex regulatory developments

*Our technology enables you to administer your plan on your terms.*

# TAKE A SMART APPROACH TO PAYROLL PROCESSING

## Guidance from the start

During onboarding, our payroll consultants will help you establish the payroll calendar, which sets the basic rules for your plan's payroll frequency.

## Flexible submission methods

We offer multiple payroll data submission methods for your ultimate convenience.

### Payroll360

This takes our partnership with your vendor one step farther, seamlessly integrating our recordkeeping information with your payroll system. When employees make changes related to deferral rates and loans on the employee website, the data will be transmitted directly to your payroll company.*

### Payroll vendor partnership

We can work directly with your external payroll provider so you can focus on other business needs. With this method, you simply ensure that payroll data is transmitted to your vendor and confirm the final totals provided by our service team.*

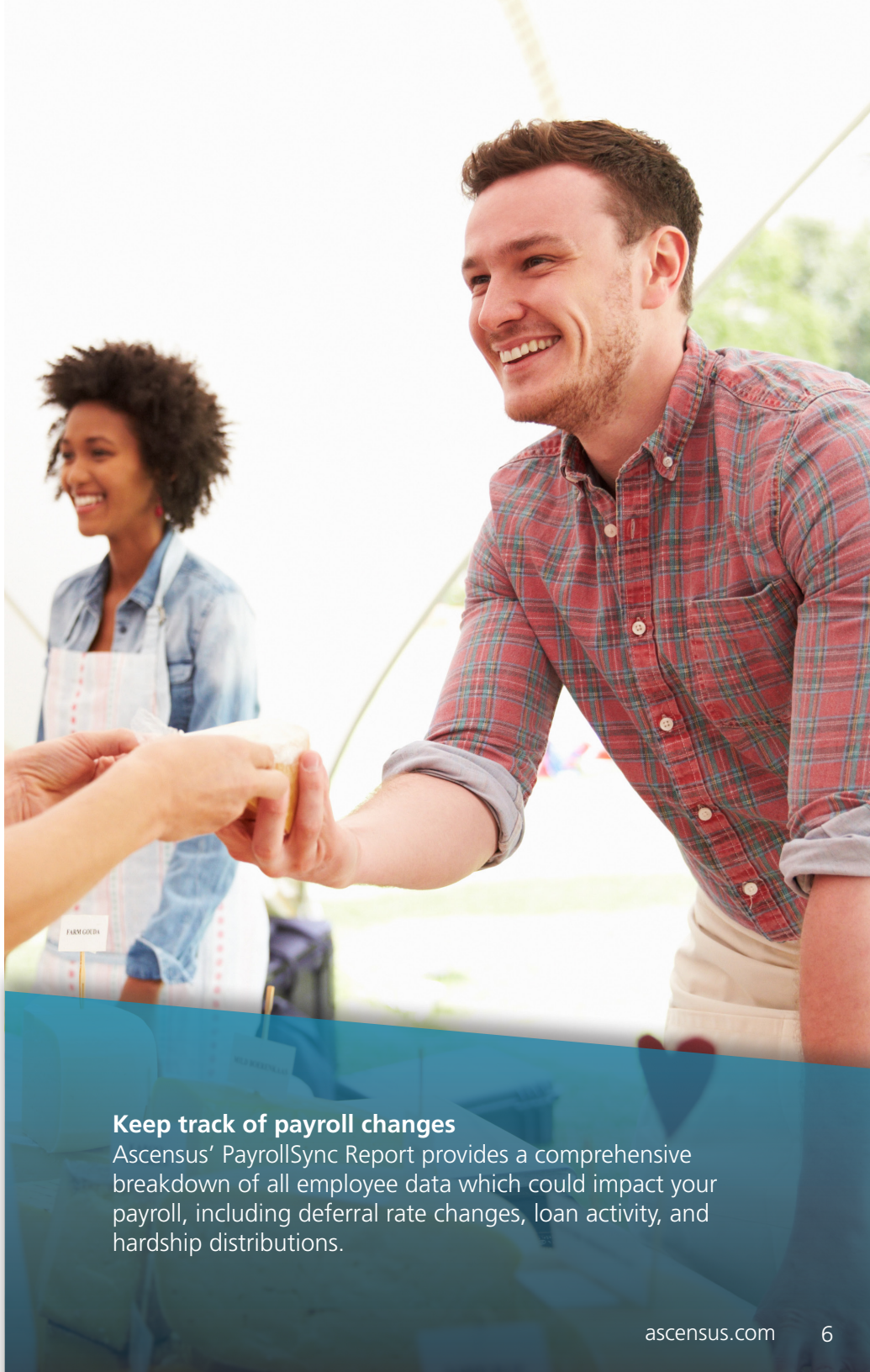
### Payroll file transfer

Upload your payroll file directly to your plan website.

### Direct entry

Enter your plan's contributions via our simple interface on the plan website.

*Applies to select, approved payroll vendors only



**Keep track of payroll changes**

Ascensus' PayrollSync Report provides a comprehensive breakdown of all employee data which could impact your payroll, including deferral rate changes, loan activity, and hardship distributions.



**We also offer advanced administrative services, including loan and distribution approval and processing, to make your days even easier.**

# SAVE TIME AND EFFORT

## Plan administration with ease

Ascensus reviews, filters, organizes, and stores plan information so you don't have to. Here are some of the ways we simplify administration.

### Compliance testing

Using the data stored in our system, Ascensus automatically generates and delivers your plan's year-end test results. For more frequent updates, you can run the test anytime using our online reporting tools.*

### Notice delivery service

Ascensus can deliver certain annual participant notices for you, so you can get more time back in your day. We'll assemble, print, and mail them directly to the participant's home. You can elect the annual service:

- Directly on the plan website
- By paper form

### Eligibility tracking done for you

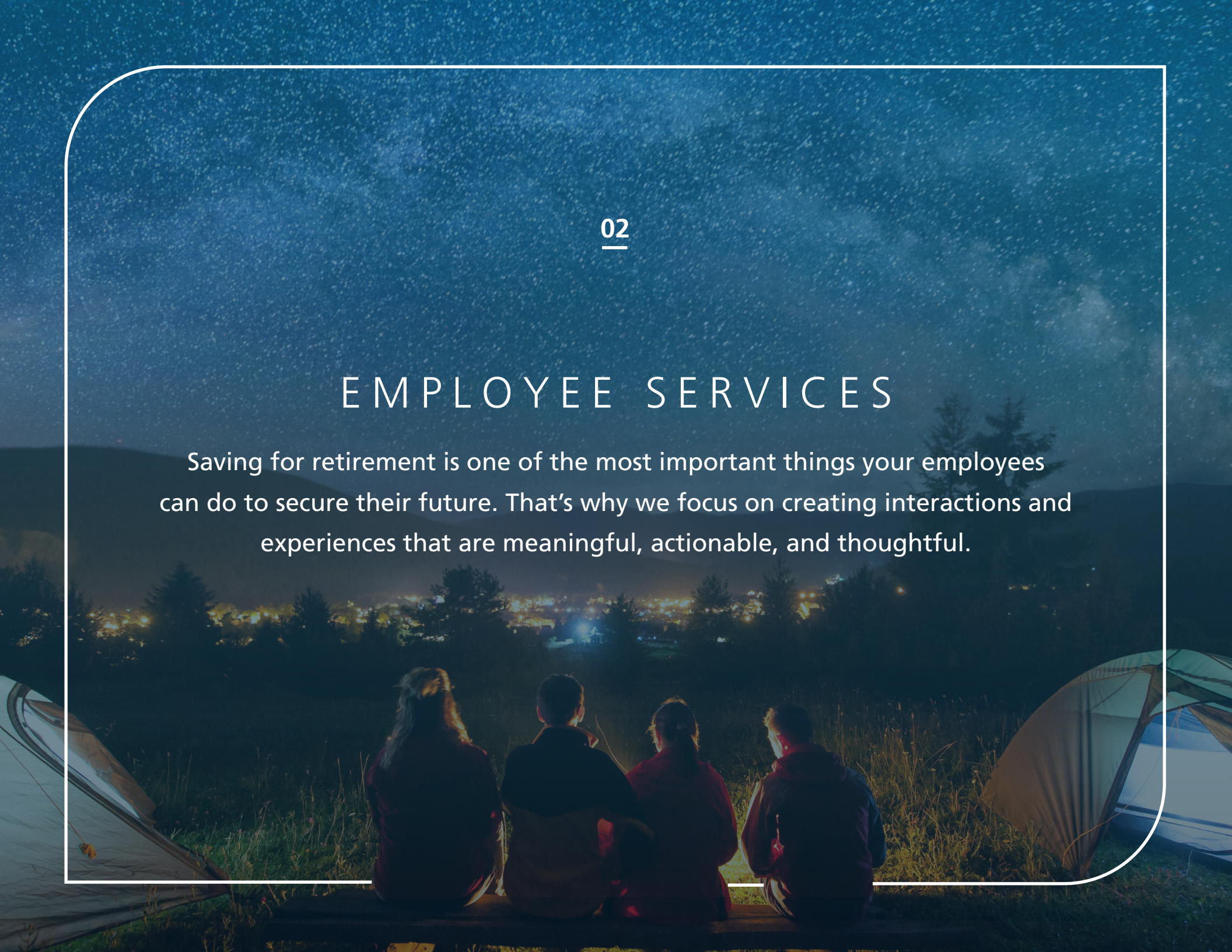
You don't have to worry about tracking, ordering, or delivering enrollment guides. Ascensus automatically mails or emails enrollment guides to you for distribution in advance of an employee's first eligible payroll cycle.

*Not available for 403(b) plans

02

# EMPLOYEE SERVICES

Saving for retirement is one of the most important things your employees can do to secure their future. That's why we focus on creating interactions and experiences that are meaningful, actionable, and thoughtful.



# DRIVE POSITIVE OUTCOMES FOR EMPLOYEES

## Personalized for impact

Ascensus offers multiple touchpoints to keep employees engaged in the development of their retirement goals. Personalized materials and supporting communications help demonstrate the importance of saving for retirement and encourage action.

### Enrollment guide

With motivational messaging and meaningful visuals, our enrollment guide:

- Is customized for your plan
- Is available in Spanish
- Makes joining the retirement plan easy

## Make contributions automatic

To give your plan and employees a strong start, Ascensus offers automatic enrollment. This program helps you enroll your eligible employees into the plan, enabling you to set employee deferral rates, the schedule by which deferrals increase, as well as the plan's default investment option.

*Participation rates for retirement plans at Ascensus with automatic enrollment are approximately 10% higher than those without it.**

*Source: Ascensus platform, as of December 31, 2017

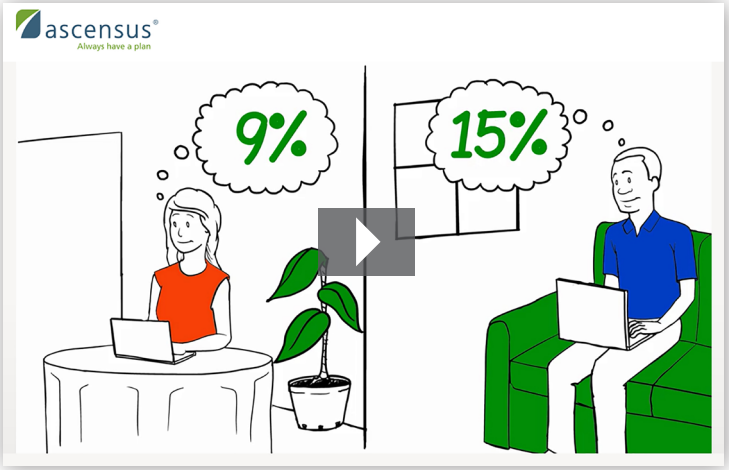
**This retirement planner demonstrates the level of personalization available.**

1. Customized for your plan and can be personalized for your employees
2. Based on your plan document
3. Examples based on actual paycheck




**Tools to help them plan**

- Enrollment support
- Multilingual services
- Personalized communications



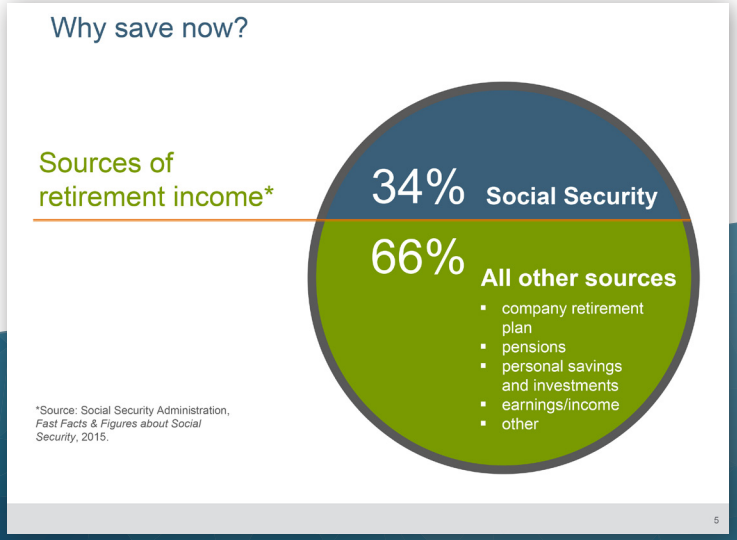

***Why Save Now*? video**

# MAKE JOINING THE PLAN EASY

## Enrollment meeting support provided by Ascensus

Engaging enrollment meetings can build awareness about your retirement plan and drive participation.

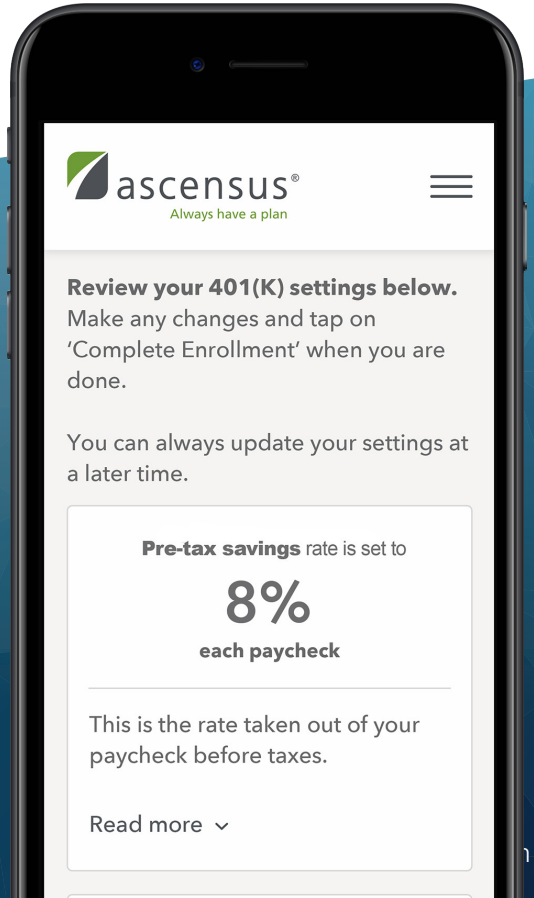
- **Meeting presentation:** Like the enrollment guide, this highly visual presentation encourages positive contribution behaviors and is easy to follow.
- **Meeting promotion:** Spread the word with a customizable enrollment meeting announcement. Simply add your meeting details and share with employees.
- ***Why Save Now?*:** This informal, animated video highlights the benefits of saving in your plan in just over a minute. It encourages employees to start contributing today for maximum earning potential.




**Enrollment meeting presentation**

**Tip:**
During enrollment meetings, encourage your employees to join the plan on the spot. Our simple mobile enrollment process can be completed in as few as three taps.

1. Set the deferral rate.
2. Select the investments.
3. Join the plan!



# HELP THEM TRACK PROGRESS

## Information the way they want it

It's all about personal attention. Your employees can choose the way they want to receive account information, track progress, and make planning decisions.

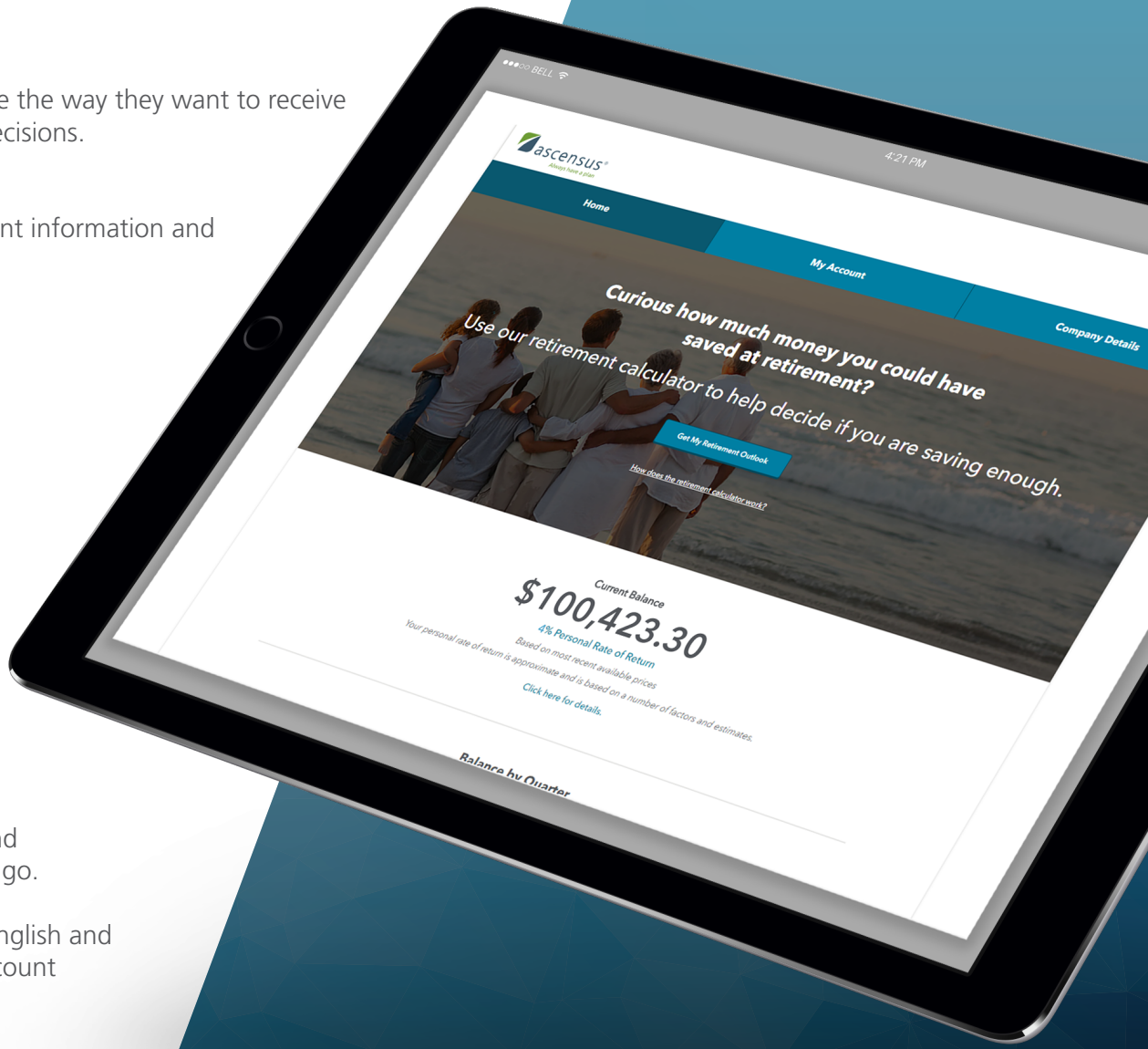
### Online

Our employee website provides centralized access to account information and planning tools. Employees can go here to:

- Enroll in the plan
- Set retirement goals
- Track retirement readiness
- Check their balance
- Update account settings
- View account activity
- Calculate their personal rate of return

### By phone

- Our mobile website enables your employees to quickly and easily view their progress and check their account on the go.
- Our interactive voice response (IVR) system, available in English and Spanish, provides a convenient way to get up-to-date account information and complete core transactions.
- Highly trained professionals are available to answer questions and provide assistance during business hours.




**A personalized view**

Employees can use Retirement Outlook to set and refine their retirement goals in real-time. Based on personal retirement variables, this online tool provides projected monthly income in retirement and presents options to fine-tune their strategy.

# KEEP THEM ENGAGED

## Quarterly statements

Clear and concise information is key. Our quarterly statements provide an easy-to-follow breakdown of account details and performance over time, showing an employee's:

- Personal rate of return
- Asset allocation
- Investment performance
- Loan balance

## Targeted communications

For employees who need additional reminders or motivation to take advantage of your plan, we offer several types of educational communications. Sent directly to the home, these pieces use personalized illustrations with actual dollar amounts to encourage appropriate contribution behaviors.

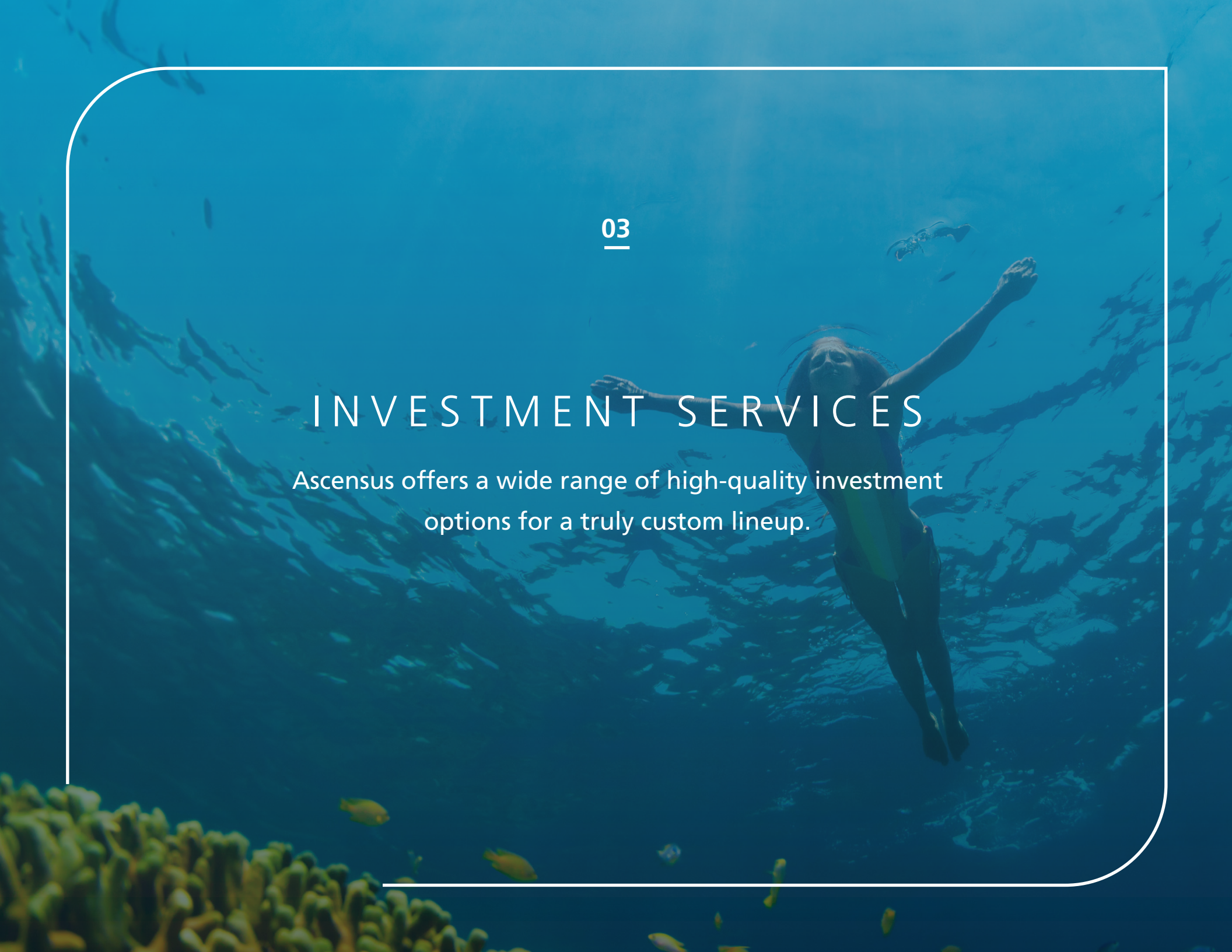
- **For those not enrolled:** We offer options to show the long-term benefits of saving for retirement and information on enrolling. You can choose to use either a standard mailer or a quick enrollment mailer with a prepaid business reply card for easy entrance into the plan.
- **For those enrolled:** We offer an option that lets employees know whether they are on track to retire on time and on target.

*Put targeted communications to work for your plan. For no additional cost, we can mail targeted communications to eligible employees who are not participating in the plan.*



**Tools to help them plan**

- Personalized communications
- Ongoing employee reminders and education



03

# INVESTMENT SERVICES

Ascensus offers a wide range of high-quality investment options for a truly custom lineup.

# GET FLEXIBILITY TO CUSTOMIZE PLAN INVESTMENTS

## Broad selection

Our investment platform offers a customized and diverse investment menu that can be designed to suit your objectives.

### No proprietary requirements

Changes to your investment menu have no effect on our recordkeeping fees.

This means you and your financial advisor have the liberty to fulfill your fiduciary responsibilities and offer your employees the best lineup at the lowest possible cost.

### True, open architecture

We offer you choice from over 16,000 funds and hundreds of fund families, including:

- Mutual funds
- Collective investment trusts
- Exchange-traded funds
- Money market, guaranteed accounts, stable value, and FDIC options available

### Qualified default investment alternatives

- Target and risk based mutual funds
- The ability for your financial advisor to create models for the plan
- Balanced funds
- Morningstar Managed Accounts

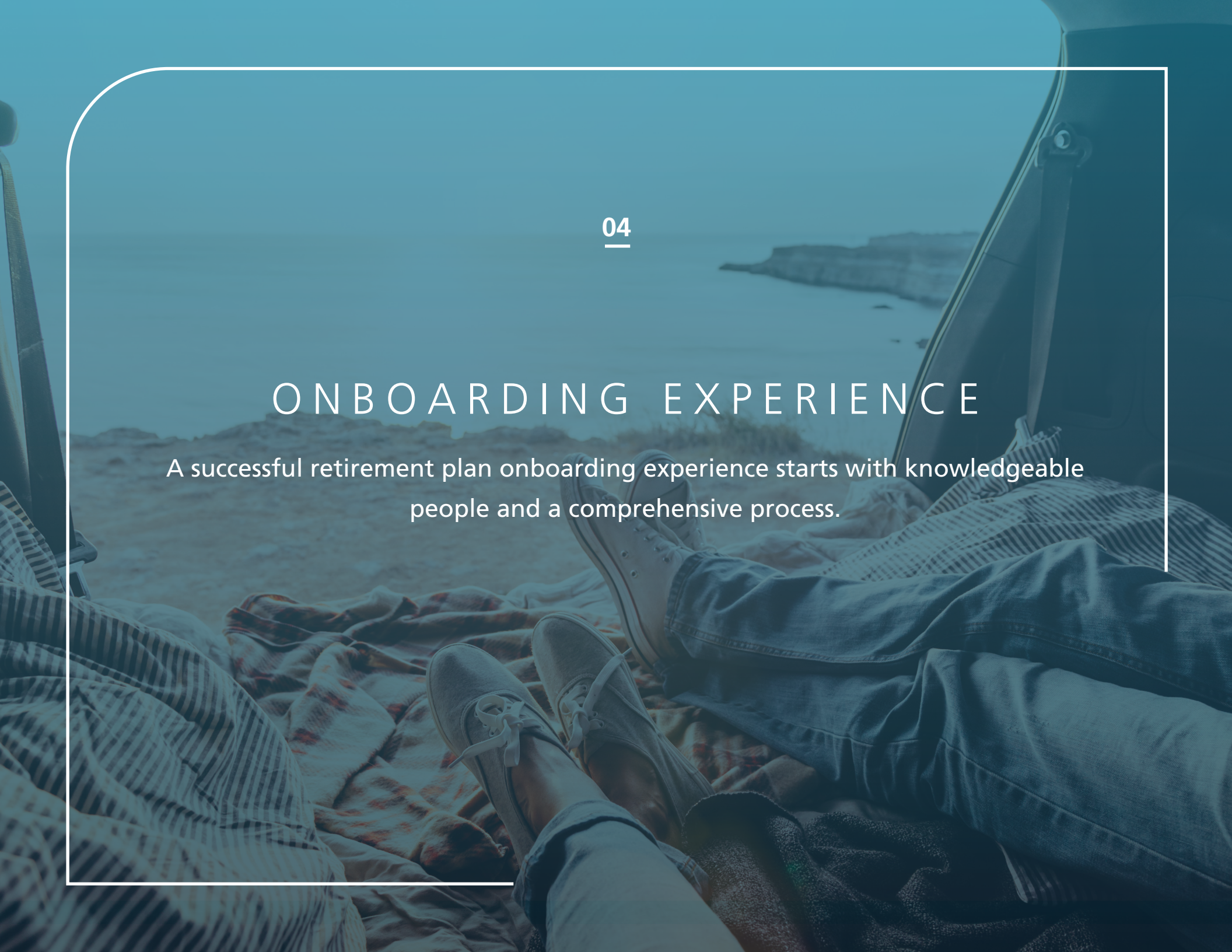
## Professional guidance for your employees

Your employees don't have to be investment experts to implement a personal contribution strategy that's right for them. Through a partnership with Morningstar Associates, LLC, a leading provider of investment advisory services to the retirement industry, Ascensus makes available Morningstar® Retirement Manager℠.

This online tool provides investor education and objective advice to help your employees navigate and understand their options.

- **Managed by Morningstar:** Their professionals create personalized portfolio allocation recommendations and provide ongoing account management with a level of fiduciary protection for a fee to the employee and no cost to the plan.
- **Managed by You:** Morningstar creates personal portfolio allocation recommendations and targeted deferral rates at no cost to you or your employees.

Morningstar® Retirement Manager℠ is offered by and is the property of Morningstar Associates, LLC, a registered investment advisor and wholly owned subsidiary of Morningstar, Inc., and is intended for citizens or legal residents of the United States or its territories. The Morningstar name and logo are registered marks of Morningstar, Inc. Morningstar Associates and its affiliates are not affiliated with Ascensus and its affiliates.



04

# ONBOARDING EXPERIENCE

A successful retirement plan onboarding experience starts with knowledgeable people and a comprehensive process.




**Our digital onboarding timeline helps you keep track of key milestones and action items.**

# GET STARTED

To get started, you'll be paired with an installation contact (IC) who is responsible for onboarding your plan. Weekly status calls paired with these four key checkpoints is all it takes for us to get your plan up and running.

## ✓Plan Installation (1 hour)

We will review the following with you and your advisor:

- Plan design and fund availability
- Fee disclosure requirements and plan document package

## ✓Document Execution (1 hour)

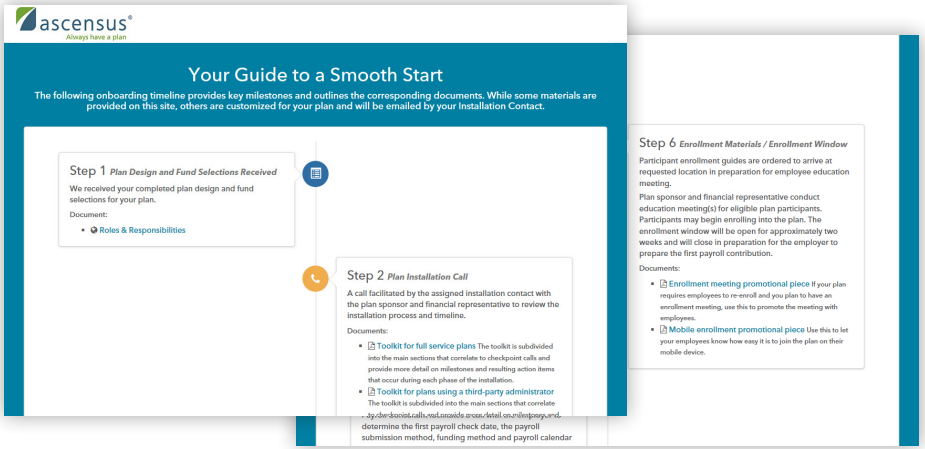
Your IC will provide the Adoption Agreement, Amendments, and Recordkeeping Service Agreement (RSA) to you for review and signature.

## ✓Payroll (1 hour)

Your payroll consultant will review payroll data submission options, funding methods, and the payroll calendar.

## ✓"Go Live" (1 hour)

As the installation is nearing completion, your IC will introduce you to your client service team.


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Your Guide to a Smooth Start

The following onboarding timeline provides key milestones and outlines the corresponding documents. While some materials are provided on this site, others are customized for your plan and will be emailed by your Installation Contact.

Step 1 *Plan Design and Fund Selections Received*

We received your completed plan design and fund selections for your plan.

Document:

- Roles & Responsibilities

Step 2 *Plan Installation Call*

A call facilitated by the assigned installation contact with the plan sponsor and financial representative to review the installation process and timeline.

Documents:

- Toolkit for full service plans The toolkit is subdivided into the main sections that correlate to checkpoint calls and provide more detail on milestones and resulting action items that occur during each phase of the installation.
- Toolkit for plans using a third-party administrator The toolkit is subdivided into the main sections that correlate ... determine the first payroll check date, the payroll submission method, funding method and payroll calendar

Step 6 *Enrollment Materials / Enrollment Window*

Participant enrollment guides are ordered to arrive at requested location in preparation for employee education meeting.

Plan sponsor and financial representative conduct education meeting(s) for eligible plan participants. Participants may begin enrolling into the plan. The enrollment window will be open for approximately two weeks and will close in preparation for the employer to prepare the first payroll contribution.

Documents:

- Enrollment meeting promotional piece If your plan requires employees to re-enroll and you plan to have an enrollment meeting, use this to promote the meeting with employees.
- Mobile enrollment promotional piece Use this to let your employees know how easy it is to join the plan on their mobile device.



05

# PLAN HEALTH AND VALUE

Our reporting tools offer you the information you want when you want it, so you can stay up-to-date on plan health and value.




# SIMPLIFY REGULAR CHECK-INS

## Daily

On-demand and scheduled reports give you real-time access to employee and plan information.

## Monthly

An online monthly plan confirmation statement shows a compilation of the important employee activity for the past month.

## Quarterly

Our Plan*illustrator* report provides details and analysis of your plan's activity, covering plan demographics, cash flow, asset allocation, participation rates, and investment diversification.

*From payroll processing to employee transactions to plan compliance status, reports can be scheduled, so they're ready when you are.*

# DEMONSTRATE PLAN VALUE

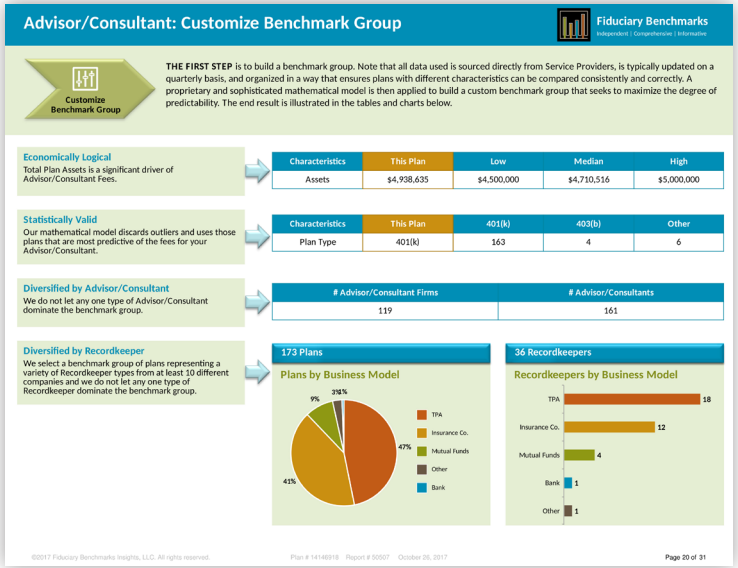
## You're getting a good deal, but don't just take our word for it.

**When selecting a retirement plan for your company, Ascensus knows you have many options.**

To help demonstrate the value you receive with our services and fees, Ascensus offers the objective assessment of Fiduciary Benchmarks, Inc. (FBi), an independent, third-party leader in plan benchmarking technologies.

**The complimentary FBi benchmarking report includes a comparative analysis of:**

- Plan fees
- Plan design features
- Employee success measures
- Employer and employee services



Advisor/Consultant: Customize Benchmark Group

Fiduciary Benchmarks
Independent | Comprehensive | Informative

Customize Benchmark Group

**THE FIRST STEP** is to build a benchmark group. Note that all data used is sourced directly from Service Providers, is typically updated on a quarterly basis, and organized in a way that ensures plans with different characteristics can be compared consistently and correctly. A proprietary and sophisticated mathematical model is then applied to build a custom benchmark group that seeks to maximize the degree of predictability. The end result is illustrated in the tables and charts below.

**Economically Logical**
Total Plan Assets is a significant driver of Advisor/Consultant Fees.

| Characteristics | This Plan | Low | Median | High |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Assets | $4,938,635 | $4,500,000 | $4,710,516 | $5,000,000 |

**Statistically Valid**
Our mathematical model discards outliers and uses those plans that are most predictive of the fees for your Advisor/Consultant.

| Characteristics | This Plan | 401(k) | 403(b) | Other |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| Plan Type | 401(k) | 163 | 4 | 6 |

**Diversified by Advisor/Consultant**
We do not let any one type of Advisor/Consultant dominate the benchmark group.

| # Advisor/Consultant Firms | # Advisor/Consultants |
|---|---|
| 119 | 161 |

**Diversified by Recordkeeper**
We select a benchmark group of plans representing a variety of Recordkeeper types from at least 10 different companies and we do not let any one type of Recordkeeper dominate the benchmark group.

173 Plans

Plans by Business Model



36 Recordkeepers

Recordkeepers by Business Model



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**Request an FBi report annually to make sure your plan is delivering the value your employees deserve.**

When you choose Ascensus, you have the industry experts on your side.

We will work with you and your financial advisor to craft a plan that will keep your employees happy and engaged while planning for the retirement of their dreams.

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