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## **Cetera Financial Group Announces Strategic Vision for Future Technology Ecosystem**

**Firm Utilizes DOL Fiduciary Rule as Catalyst to Redefine Delivery of "Best Interest" Retail Financial Advice**

**Adopts PIEtech's MoneyGuidePro<sup>®</sup>, myMoneyGuide<sup>®</sup> and Best Interest Scout<sup>SM</sup> Tools as First in a Series of Strategic Alliances with Top Technology Providers**

**New Technology Ecosystem, Created Through Cetera's Industry-Leading Scale and Resources, More Closely Connects Broker-Dealer, Financial Advisor and Retail Investor Client Relationships**

**Los Angeles, CA** – Cetera Financial Group ("Cetera" or "the Company")\*, a leading network of independent broker-dealer firms, today announced its strategic vision to redefine the delivery of "best interest" retail financial advice in a post-DOL industry with the launch of a new technology ecosystem aimed at driving significantly closer connections among its broker-dealers, financial advisors and retail investor clients. Cetera has commenced this initiative with the establishment of a new strategic alliance with PIEtech, Inc., which will provide MoneyGuidePro<sup>®</sup>, myMoneyGuide<sup>®</sup> and Best Interest Scout<sup>SM</sup> to the Company's financial advisors and financial institutions. These tools work together to gather client data on a scalable basis, evaluate each client's financial situation to better understand the client's goals and overall financial wellbeing, and align advice recommendations in a manner that complies with the new DOL regulations.

Specifically, PIEtech's tools provide the following:

- Best Interest Scout<sup>SM</sup> is a stand-alone discovery tool that gathers client data to help advisors evaluate their clients' full financial circumstances and determine whether they are invested in accordance with their best interests.
- myMoneyGuide<sup>®</sup> is a guided online planning experience which enables clients to build their own personalized plan for retirement.
- MoneyGuidePro<sup>®</sup>, recognized as the leading financial planning software, gathers client information directly into a financial plan and enables professional advisors to engage with their clients to explore the full range of their expectations, concerns and goals, and to drive advice and document the process that leads to each account action and recommendation.

Cetera has received support and guidance in the process of developing its vision for a new technology ecosystem from Edmond Walters, the founder of eMoney who now serves on the Board of Directors of Cetera's parent company, Aretec. The Company has leveraged Mr. Walters' unparalleled expertise in working with financial services technology solutions to formulate strategy, as well as to identify and form relationships with best-of-breed financial technology providers. The Company's leadership team has also worked closely with Mr. Walters to ensure a smooth and seamless launch of the new technology ecosystem.

Robert Moore, Chief Executive Officer of Cetera Financial Group, said, "This alliance is the first in a series that will come together to form a technology ecosystem capable of placing Cetera, its advisors and its institutions on the winning side of the demographic, technological and regulatory changes that are transforming our industry." Mr. Moore continued, "Our efforts in this area have been accelerated tremendously through the strategic guidance provided by Edmond Walters – a widely recognized pioneer in the financial technology space – working in conjunction with our deep and talented internal technology leadership team. This new ecosystem is a key ingredient on the road to positioning Cetera to be the industry leader that is fully prepared to answer the most important question in our space today: 'What does it truly mean to deliver financial advice – beyond just DOL preparedness – for the future?'"

Key features of Cetera's new technology ecosystem include the following:

- The new relationship with PIEtech is the first of a series of strategic alliances Cetera is building with top technology providers across the industry.
- Through these new strategic technology alliances, Cetera will adopt a wide array of industry-leading technology solutions that will be fully integrated with one another in a consolidated technology platform for use by financial advisors and financial institutions across all of Cetera's member broker-dealers.
- Beyond DOL discovery and evaluation tools, Cetera's new technology ecosystem approach will encompass unprecedented data integration at every stage of the client's relationship with the advisor, revolutionary tools to help assess how clients' emotions should factor into advisors' financial advice and digital financial planning platforms that are both advisor-directed as well as client-directed.
- The new PIEtech tools, together with other technology solutions and services in this new platform, will be rolled out starting in early 2017, and throughout the first half of next year.

Mr. Moore went on to say, "The unprecedented investment that we have seen in financial technology over the last few years, we believe, provides a unique opportunity for Cetera to rework the entire technology platform so we can provide solutions to a full spectrum of the challenges our industry is currently facing and capture significant growth potential, as well. We are confident that the firms best positioned for success will replace the traditional 'business-to-business-to-consumer' linear approach within the IBD space with an ecosystem in which the financial advisor, the broker-dealer and the retail investor client have a true partnership with one another, characterized by a closer alignment of interests and a greater degree of transparency than ever before."

David Ballard, Chief Operating Officer of Cetera Financial Group, noted, "The significant increase in investment and innovation in the financial technology sector over the last several years has led to a wide range of exciting enhancements to tools and services that are specifically targeted toward our industry. This is a significant advantage to Cetera, because we can combine our willingness to rethink our entire technology architecture with the scale and resources necessary to bring on board the highest quality solutions, together with the in-house expertise needed to seamlessly integrate these solutions in one holistic platform that delivers an exceptional experience to financial advisors and their clients."

Mr. Ballard concluded, "We are particularly pleased to announce our collaboration with PIEtech, whose MoneyGuidePro®, myMoneyGuide® and Best Interest Scout<sup>SM</sup> discovery and evaluation tools are among the best available in the industry today to help advisors address DOL requirements. These will be a vital component of our new technology ecosystem and we look forward to unveiling significant new additions to our platform in the weeks and months ahead."

Kevin Knull, CFP®, President of PIEtech, Inc., said, "The key to success in the new regulatory environment will be the ability to obtain more and better client data on a scalable basis, and to deeply evaluate it to provide a higher quality of advice that also conforms to a more rigorous standard of client engagement. PIEtech's tools will enable Cetera advisors to accomplish extremely efficiently what previously would have taken days and weeks to perform, thereby liberating them to spend more time providing meaningful personal client interaction. We are very excited to enter this strategic relationship with Cetera Financial Group to help build what we believe will be one of the industry's boldest and most innovative new technology platforms."

Mr. Moore concluded, "For the advisors and institutions we serve, we have one key message: You should not be afraid of the future. There hasn't been a more critical time in recent history for the retail financial advice industry to make a positive and profound difference in the lives of millions of households across our country. Cetera is committed to be a lead architect for the future of our industry, and in the process, enable our advisors and institutions to dream bigger, think bolder and deliver the best solutions possible to their clients."

### **About Cetera Financial Group**

Cetera Financial Group® ("Cetera") is a leading network of independent retail broker-dealers empowering the delivery of objective financial advice to individuals, families and company retirement plans across the country through trusted financial advisors and financial institutions. Cetera is the second-largest independent financial advisor network in the nation by number of advisors, as well as a leading provider of retail services to the investment programs of banks and credit unions.

Through its multiple distinct firms, Cetera offers independent and institutions-based advisors the benefits of a large, established broker-dealer and registered investment adviser, while serving advisors and institutions in a way that is customized to their needs and aspirations. Advisor support resources offered through Cetera include award-winning wealth management and advisory platforms, comprehensive broker-dealer and registered investment adviser services, practice management support and innovative technology. For more information, visit [www.ceterafinancialgroup.com](http://www.ceterafinancialgroup.com).

\* "Cetera Financial Group" refers to the network of retail independent broker-dealers encompassing, among others, Cetera Advisors, Cetera Advisor Networks, Cetera Financial Institutions, Cetera Financial Specialists, First Allied Securities, Girard Securities, The Legend Group and Summit Brokerage Services.

### **About PIEtech<sup>SM</sup>, Inc.**

PIEtech<sup>SM</sup>, Inc.'s vision is that everyone needs and deserves a quality financial plan. PIEtech<sup>SM</sup> is the creator of MoneyGuidePro®, the industry's leading financial planning software; myMoneyGuide®, an online guided planning solution that allows firms to broadly offer financial planning; and Best Interest Scout<sup>SM</sup>, a standalone, scalable discovery solution to help firms of all types obtain necessary client information. For more information on PIEtech<sup>SM</sup>'s powerful financial planning solutions, please visit <http://www.moneyguidepro.com>.

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