

“We have grown because our clients like the way we work with them — and more importantly, because they’re pleased with how we’ve helped them grow and protect their wealth.”

— Chris Sorce, Principal and Senior Financial Advisor, HBKS Wealth Advisors

What’s in a Name?

A venerable Erie firm goes national.

On December 9, veteran Erie financial executive Greg Sorce rose to welcome the revelers at the annual holiday party that has become something of a tradition in Erie. As the Sorce business has grown, so has the party and this year nearly 300 guests were there to drink in the holiday cheer. But this year they raised their glasses to more than the holidays; it was an announcement from the host that the firm, which was acquired in 2000 by the prestigious regional accounting firm, Hill, Barth & King, would no longer carry the family name.

“I wanted to take a minute to let you in on a new development for our firm — wanted you to be the first to hear about it,” Sorce addressed the group. “We are changing the name of the firm. Henceforth we will be known as HBKS Wealth Advisors.”

What’s in a name?

In Erie, the Sorce name has been associated with financial advice since 1950, when Greg’s and brother Chris’s father was counseling his Erie neighbors on how to grow and protect their wealth as an advisor with IDS Financial Services. Greg joined IDS in 1982; brother, Chris, started with the company in 1976. The two accompanied IDS in 1986 when American Express Financial Advisors acquired it. In 1994, the two purchased the historic 19th century mansion The Wright House and a year later formed The Sorce Financial Group.

The Sorce Financial Group was to differentiate its advisory business on two fronts. They would invest the time to gain a thorough understanding of the finances of their clients, and then create a detailed plan for that individual and family that accommodated their specific needs and goals. Further, they would closely monitor the plan making adjustments as needed over the months and years. In sum, they would develop intimate, long-term relationships with their clients in order to best protect and grow their wealth and help them achieve the objectives they have set for their wealth.

As well, the firm, now independent, would take a highly disciplined approach to investing their clients’ money. They would not promote proprietary products, but remain independent in their investment recommendations. “So that the only thing driving our advice is what is in our clients’ best interests,” Chris Sorce notes.

And they brought into the firm other highly respected Erie-based financial advisors. Dean Piccirillo, who had worked with the brothers at American Express Financial Advisors, came on initially as an advisor, and soon added the roles of chief operating

officer and chief compliance officer to his duties. As the business grew, Piccirillo returned to working full-time with his clients. Joseph Kloecker, a CPA, left his position as controller at PNC Bank to join the firm, bringing with him a host of long-term trusting client relationships.



Joseph J. Sorce with sons Chris (left) and Greg (right) in 1984. The senior Sorce began his wealth management career in 1950, retiring in 2000.



Top left to right:
 Chris Sorce, CFP®,
 Principal and Senior
 Financial Advisor;
 Greg Sorce, CFP®, MSFS,
 Principal and Senior
 Financial Advisor.

Lower left to right:
 Dean Piccirillo, CFP®,
 CRPS, AIFA, Principal and
 Senior Financial Advisor;
 Joseph Kloecker, MBA,
 CPA, Senior Financial
 Advisor.

In 2000, the success of the Sorce firm led them to look toward expanding their business. They were looking beyond Erie to other markets, but also to broaden the financial services they could offer their clients with other areas of expertise. That led to the firm’s merger with Hill, Barth & King (HBK), a prestigious regional accounting firm in business since 1949 with more than 10,000 clients across the United States. HBK, also with a reputation for long-term client relationships, was looking to expand its offering with a wealth advisory group. The resulting marriage became HBK Sorce Financial.

Since 2000, HBK Sorce Financial has expanded into Ohio and Florida as well as throughout Western Pennsylvania, and added licensed financial professionals in a wide range of financial disciplines. The original firm philosophy, that a caring, intimate relationship is the foundation for a financial plan that gives a person the best chance for success, has generated more business and increased assets under supervision from \$200 million to more than \$1.4 billion.

The change to HBKS Wealth Advisors reflects the firm’s growth in size and capability, but also its expansion into other cities and states. The name “Wealth Advisors” more accurately reflects the nature of the business.

“Of course we are very proud of having the Sorce name on the door of this firm for so many years,” Greg told his holiday audience. “But from a marketing standpoint, to compete effectively in these new markets we need a name that has more of



In 1995, The Sorce Financial Group was formed by Chris and Greg Sorce. It was headquartered in the historic 19th century mansion, The Wright House, today the home of HBKS Wealth Advisors.

a national than local feel to it. HBKS Wealth Advisors is just that — and it’s easier to pronounce and spell than Sorce.

“You know that our philosophy has always been rooted in our focus on doing what is best for our clients. The path we have chosen for our firm is consistent with that belief. Growth allows us to continue investing in technology and other resources, to continue innovating, to continue broadening our wealth advisory services, to continue attracting more talented financial professionals to our team.

“What the name change does *not* mean,” Chris Sorce added, “is a change in how we do business. We have grown because our clients like the way we work with them — and more importantly, because they’re pleased with how we’ve helped them grow and protect their wealth. We’re still their local firm, working one-on-one; we’re simply applying that same local philosophy in other locales.”



HBK Sorce became HBKS Wealth Advisors in January 2012. The name was changed to more accurately describe the breadth of services the company offers.