



clearTREND®

## RIA App Provides Buy/Sell Recommendations

“We wanted to put our own mark on the research and to become better educators to our prospects and clients... We believe clearTREND® represents a game changer for investment professionals and individual investors.”

—Mark Scheffler  
Founder and Senior Portfolio Manager  
The Appleton Group, LLC

### Overview

Success in investing is predicated on many factors, but the primary differentiator between financial gain and loss in the markets is inevitably tied to that of obtaining relevant market intelligence. The investor possessing good, timely information is the one most likely to make sound, informed decisions enabling them to leverage opportunities, manage risk and maximize gain.

Unfortunately, much of the research available to all but the most well-funded institutions is “black box” in nature, utilizing cloaked methodologies that force the user to simply trust what’s provided. Commercially available research often comes seeded with “conflicted interest” issues and is largely canned, measuring each financial instrument in the exact same manner and focused almost exclusively on simple, fundamental valuation metrics—information already widely disseminated in the market and discounted into the price of the security.

Moreover, there’s limited consideration of real-time price action or that of measuring optimal price trends to provide strategic guidance relevant to timing and the ongoing management of existing positions. Most available research simply fails to deliver the actionable intelligence necessary to provide an investment edge to individuals, advisors and investment professionals.

This was the experience of The Appleton Group, LLC, an independent Registered Investment Advisor based in Appleton, Wis. The firm offers a suite of risk-managed growth portfolios, a complete suite of risk-managed asset allocation portfolios, cutting-edge research, expert corporate retirement plan services, private-client financial planning services, and an active personal retirement plan management program.

Appleton utilized paid research to guide investment decisions for the first nine years of operations, but found much of the available research costly, untimely and offering little in the way of customization.

## Challenge

To address those issues and help keep investors on the right side of the market, the company developed clearTREND®, a cutting-edge desktop and mobile research app providing price-focused research critical for today’s dynamic investment climate. “We wanted to put our own mark on the research and to become better educators to our prospects and clients, making our methodologies more transparent while offering a real set of tools our clients could utilize directly on their own desktop to do some of their own research,” says Mark Scheffler, founder and senior portfolio manager of Appleton. “We believe clearTREND® represents a game changer for investment professionals and individual investors.”

Appleton faced several key challenges in creating the clearTREND® app, key among which was building a system robust enough to manage data for a large number of securities.

Another issue was the recognition that each security type behaves differently—they wanted to avoid the one-size-fits-all approach inherent in most commercially available research. They determined that a key capability of their system would be that of conducting research independently for each security type analyzed.

Additionally, they wanted the solution to be flexible enough to allow users to add any security ticker and easily build their own personal research portfolios.

## Solution

Appleton’s development team elected to build clearTREND® on the Windows Azure cloud platform so that they could easily host the app in the cloud and quickly get it to market. Given the unique challenges presented, the team determined they would need to work with a financial data provider that offered flexibility and 24-hour access. They needed the ability to tap into the data service at any time utilizing XML queries to add securities independently and on-the-fly—waiting until the next day (or later) for a data provider to begin delivering price files was not an option.

After conducting their own due diligence, the company determined that Xignite was the only market data provider capable of meeting their unique requirements. “We came across Xignite because they were listed in the Windows Azure Marketplace as a vendor, as are we. The flexibility of adding securities on-the-fly was the real impetus for Appleton choosing Xignite. They were the only service that we could find that allowed us to do so,” offers Scheffler. “Although the lower cost was a consideration, along with the ease of setup and integration, by far the biggest factor in our decision was that of having a reliable data feed available in an XML format.”

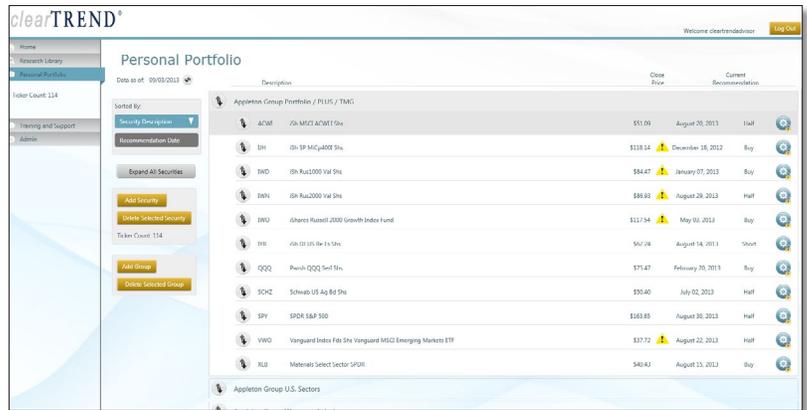
“The flexibility of adding securities on-the-fly was the real impetus for Appleton choosing Xignite. They were the only service that we could find that allowed us to do so.”

—Mark Scheffler  
 Founder and Senior Portfolio Manager  
 The Appleton Group, LLC



Powered by Xignite market data, Appleton’s clearTREND® research app provides a suite of tools users can utilize directly from their own desktop or mobile devices.

The clearTREND® research app, available for Windows and IOS desktop systems and as a mobile app for the Windows Azure and Windows 8 platforms, is powered by Xignite Application Programming Interfaces (APIs) that were easily integrated into the system in a matter of days. The system utilizes the [XigniteGlobalHistorical](#), [XigniteGlobalIndices](#), [XigniteFunds](#) and [XigniteFundFundamentals](#) CloudAPIs to obtain daily closing prices on more than 60,000 individual securities, mutual funds, ETFs and market indexes. The clearTREND® research app utilizes that data to measure price trends and provide buy/sell recommendations to users when those price trends are turning.



clearTREND® users can track the recommendations and returns of a fully customizable personal portfolio of individual securities, mutual funds, ETFs and market indexes.

## Results

Since launching the clearTREND® research app, powered by Xignite’s market data APIs, The Appleton Group, LLC has grown from \$132 million AUM to nearly \$148 million AUM. The positive publicity generated by the research app, combined with the company’s primary web-based prospecting strategies involving Twitter and StockTwits campaigns, has served to increase Appleton’s prospect-to-client conversion rate to 75 percent while their overall client retention rate has remained outstanding.

Appleton’s clients are now the beneficiaries of proprietary real-time trend analysis on a universe of approximately 60,000 unique tickers. They also have the use of a continuous optimization feature that searches for best growth solutions, as well as easy-to-use charting and analysis tools, and email notifications of change recommendations when they occur.

The company and its clients have also benefited through the expansion of portfolio offerings to include the Asian, European and Americas’ markets, as well as new coverage of commodities and Exchange Traded Notes.

Looking ahead, the company hopes to open new revenue streams through the sale of its research to investment professionals. Partnered with Xignite, Appleton has developed clearTREND Enterprise® for use by individual advisors and investment firms, enabling them to provide their clients the benefit of timely and objective portfolio adjustments, full-time investment risk management and cutting-edge market intelligence. They also plan to distribute select clearTREND® research recommendations via print media and TV newscasts.



## About Xignite

Named one of the ten coolest brands in banking, Xignite, Inc. empowers innovation across financial services. Xignite provides cloud-based real-time and reference market data to financial services and fintech companies for easy integration with websites, apps, and software. The Xignite Market Data Cloud platform, hosted by AWS, allows companies to simplify infrastructure, scale quickly, and innovate faster. Xignite's clients include more than 1,000 financial services, media and software companies including BMO, BlackRock, Charles Schwab, and TIAA, as well as leading fintech disruptors such as Betterment, FutureAdvisor, Motif Investing, Personal Capital, Robinhood, SoFi, StockTwits, Wealthfront and Yodlee. Visit [xignite.com](http://xignite.com) or follow on Twitter @xignite.

### Silicon Valley

1825 South Grant Street, Suite 100  
San Mateo, CA 94402 USA

### Wall Street

26 Broadway, 8th Floor  
New York, NY 10004 USA

888.965.7627 | [xignite.com](http://xignite.com)

