

CLIENT PROFILE

Eric Swartz: *Reducing Risk*

He owns a niche merchant banking firm. He competes in Ironman events (that's the one that takes upwards of 12 hours to complete!). He is active in his church, community, and political party. A family man, he often takes his wife and child on business trips.

A GENEROUS HEART

A typical, driven 40-something male? Not exactly. Add to the above an extraordinary generosity, an insatiable curiosity, and a high tolerance for risk, and you have a snapshot of Eric Swartz.

Eric has given more than a tithe from his business and personally for many years. He believes in investing in the Kingdom. "There's no higher return on investment," he says, "than contributing to a cause that bears fruit for eternity. I especially like to see work done overseas in difficult-to-reach countries."

MANAGING RISK

He enjoys being on the cutting edge; and taking risks has paid off in business.



Swartz at his Alpharetta, GA office.

Eric has discovered that there are risks in ministry investments too. A man in his position has many comers: established ministries and entrepreneurial visionaries with an idea and a diagram on a napkin.

Perhaps it's not surprising that charlatans and hucksters should put a "ministry" face out front as their cover. It may seem easier to capitalize a "ministry" with donations than a business with investments. Driven by the best of intentions, Eric had seen a few scams.

So, when he planned to ramp up his giving to a Ukrainian evangelist, Slavic Radchuck, and the London-based Elam Ministries, he believed it would be wise to do additional due diligence. That's when he contacted Calvin Edwards & Company.

RESEARCH-BASED INFORMATION

We prepared a 10-page *Ministry Evaluation Memorandum* on each organization, based on our research. We checked public records, obtained annual reports and financial statements, interviewed the founder or president, talked to board members, discussed their mission and accomplishments with professionals in similar fields, analyzed overhead and fundraising costs, and pursued penetrating questions. We watched their videos and read their materials. We got immersed.

And it wasn't as simple as it may appear. We were looking at two foreign ministries that could be funded by any of four US-based organizations. We researched and analyzed the alternatives and recommended some important changes. Not all the options were equal.

We also talked with Slavic Radchuk and Sam Yeghnazar, founder of Elam, to ascertain their needs and dreams. Then we designed gifts to help them accomplish their goals and make a leveraged impact for the Kingdom.

WIN-WIN

Eric plans to support these organizations over the long haul, so the small up-front investment in research is well worth the effort. "The work Calvin Edwards & Company did modified the way I'm giving, focused my support on specific projects, and gave me enormous peace of mind. Now I know I'm a long-term investor; that's what I needed to ascertain," Swartz said.

In addition, we built in accountability measures to the *Gift Agreement Letters* so everyone is clear on what is expected. There's little doubt that Slavic and Elam will perform, but if anything happens, we'll know because we have the standard to measure against.

Calvin Edwards & Company helped create a win-win. Two vital foreign ministries are supported at a higher level and with a longer-term commitment. Eric has a better-structured giving strategy and sleeps well. That's something he needs before competing in an Ironman.

BENEFITS TO THE DONOR

- ✓ *In-depth knowledge of the two organizations he's supporting.*
- ✓ *Independent perspective based on research, interviews, and analysis.*
- ✓ *Recommendations on how to support the two ministries with accountability.*
- ✓ *Analysis of implications of supporting overseas ministries via different routes.*
- ✓ *Negotiated gift design to designate use of funds and reporting requirements.*
- ✓ *Written Gift Agreement Letter recording terms of gift.*
- ✓ *Reduced the risk associated with giving to an "unseen" entity overseas.*

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