



# Orion Founder and CEO Honored as One of Industry's Most Innovative

We're excited to announce that Eric Clarke, Orion's founder and CEO, has been awarded the designation of an [InvestmentNews Innovator](#) for the publication's 2019 Innovation Awards.

Eric has led Orion through rapid growth and award-winning product launches, and has helped the firm maintain a steady presence amid an ever-changing technology landscape in the wealth management industry.

Today, Orion's platform houses over \$700 billion in assets under administration and has grown to serve 1,800 advisory firms, broker dealers, banks and other financial institutions. More than one-third of all the billion-dollar RIA firms in the country work with Orion.

## The Life of an Innovator

If you want to know what drives Eric, perhaps no better story illustrates his innovative personality than one that goes back to his early days of high school.

As a ninth grader, Eric and his brother started [selling swimming lessons](#) in the family pool. By the time he hit college, Eric's "small" start in entrepreneurship grew to serve 500 kids each summer, at \$60 per child.

Eric has always brought that same type of bootstrapped passion to Orion's history since its founding in 1999.

Based out of Omaha, Nebraska, Orion began as a solution for Orion's sister company, CLS Investments. At the time, Eric was the firm's Chief Operating Officer, and he went looking for technology that could power their next stage of growth—but he couldn't find anything on the market to satisfy his high standards.

As a result, Orion was created to serve the needs of CLS Investments. But not long after, Eric realized he had another opportunity just like he did in high school.

Instead of keeping the swimming pool all to himself, it was time to open it up to the neighborhood again. But this time, the neighbor kids were his fellow advisors, and the pool was Orion's portfolio accounting technology.

## **The Evolution of Orion's Solutions**

Initially, Orion provided best-in-class reporting, billing, and trading solutions to advisors so they could run an efficient and secure back office.

But the software didn't stay focused on the back-office for long.

Under Eric's leadership, the Orion platform grew rapidly to look beyond the immediate issues advisors faced to address far-ranging elements of the advisor and client experience that needed upgrading.

A few of the many forward-looking products that Eric spearheaded include:

### **[Eclipse trading](#)**

While trading and rebalancing was always a part of what Orion offered, Eclipse trading took the software's capabilities to new heights, making tax-efficient logic a foundational part of the system's core offering.

### **[ASTRO](#)**

As investing options became more and more commoditized, Eric saw that advisors needed a simpler way to differentiate their asset management expertise. ASTRO gives advisors a powerful but easy way to create customized SMA portfolios to accommodate legacy assets, ESG concerns, and tax savings.

### **[Compliance](#)**

If there's one thing advisors can never get enough of, it's support for the many legal requirements they're required to follow. By making compliance support an integrated part of the Orion platform, advisors can more easily maintain effective programs with consistent data.

### **Video Statements**

Orion has always pushed the client experience forward, even back to its initial client portal offering that was one of the first to allow advisors to custom-brand their portal. But with video statements, Eric helped usher in a new era of client reporting that could be engaging and personalized in ways paper statements could never achieve.

### **Event-Based Notifications**

As advisors place more emphasis on enhancing their client experience, Eric continues to lead the way. Orion's next major product release will help advisors automate important elements of their client communication, ensuring clients are always up-to-date with portfolio alerts and that a "happy birthday" message never gets missed.

We're proud to have Eric as our founder, and we're excited to see what the next twenty years under his innovative and passionate leadership will bring.

**Want to see how Orion can help your firm innovate? [Click here to schedule a demo.](#)**

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