



## Mark Linton – Bio (short)

Mark is a business technology specialist who began working professionally in 2009. After serving the United States Navy from 2005-2009, Mark attended The Ohio State University and Empire State College, ultimately earning his undergrad degree in Business and Economics with a Focus in Information Systems. He went on to earn his Master of Information Strategy, Systems and Technology degree from Muskingum University and he has earned several technology certifications over the past 10 years.

Mark spent 5 years in the banking industry working as an infrastructure support specialist. There he was responsible for the primary and disaster recovery storage systems for the \$7 billion dollar organization. He also worked closely with internal and external auditors to ensure systems were compliance with bank and SEC policies and regulations.

In 2018 Mark directed FinGarde to change their focus from serving anyone with an IT need to specifically working with Registered Investment Advisors to meet their specific technology and compliance needs.

## Mark Linton and Company – History (long)

Mark is a business technology specialist who began working professionally in 2009. After serving the United States Navy from 2005-2009, Mark attended The Ohio State University and Empire State College, ultimately earning his undergrad degree in Business and Economics with a Focus in Information Systems. He went on to earn his Master of Information Strategy, Systems and Technology degree from Muskingum University and he has earned several technology certifications over the past 10 years.

FinGarde was born out of a personal need to practice what he was learning while in his master's program. At the time, Mark was working as a technical engineer for a larger community bank. While the job was rewarding, challenging and enjoyable. The environment was completely focused on technology. Marks closest customers were other colleagues within the IT department. His desire to test his training and learn how to blend the roles of business and technology together lead him to start FinGarde as a training ground.

At that time, Mark with his Wife Jenna had two children, a full-time job and school that needed attention. Starting a company was not something that they had planned on. However, they were going through Dave



Ramsey's Financial Peace University at the time and the idea of having additional income to accelerate their baby steps was appealing.

Mark started FinGarde with \$0. Dedicated to keeping the small business from slowing down their financial goals, the business was required to keep itself running. Taking on small residential jobs helped the company gain some financial traction while giving Mark a better understanding of the general user base within his community. Looking back, Mark sees this as a critical time of learning. Although the company was just barely able to keep itself going at that time, he was starting to see how these small incremental changes in his understanding would later serve business customers.

It was during this early phase that Mark the IT Guy, started to become Mark the Business Owner. Mark soon realized that technology was the means of service. He was really serving people. In that regard he says, "it does not matter how large or small the firm is or that it's a firm at all – we are serving people".

As time went on, the company continued to grow, took on small businesses and eventually Mark left the bank. He went on to serve a local non-profit for 18 months, working part time he was able to continue developing the company. Then, July 1st, 2018 – Mark became the first full time employee of FinGarde, a major milestone in the company's development. By now, Mark and his wife had 4 children and a small family farm to care for and after just four years, the company was able to provide for their family and gain Mark's full-time attention.

Seeing the continual need for improvement, FinGarde is going through another transformation. Although the company has been successful up to a point, there are always things to improve. As Mark assessed the current Managed IT Services landscape, the current needs of his community in Central Ohio and his own training and experience – he realized that as a general IT company he was unable to service anyone really, well. As a result, FinGarde is now solely focused on serving Registered Investment Advisors. Mark's time in the banking industry taught him how to deploy and manage systems in an accountable way – one that is regulated by the Securities and Exchange commission. Having experience, training and a personal interest in finance made this choice easy and strait forward.

The office of FinGarde is located on their small family farm, The Linnville Homestead. Which they are working to transform into a functional, wholistic farm for others to visit and enjoy.

## Mark Linton - Education

Empire State College: Bachelors of Business Management and Economics with a Focus in Information Systems

Muskingum University (Masters): Master of Information Strategy, Systems and Technology