

Below are two versions of James Brandolino's professional biography for your convenience. Feel free to use either version verbatim in your event marketing materials, promotional documents, website, social media posts, or press releases. The short bio provides a concise overview ideal for event programs and introductions, while the long bio offers a comprehensive background for speaker kits and detailed promotional content. Select whichever best fits your needs—no attribution or permission required.

#### **SHORT BIO: Investment Fraud Prevention Expert**

James Brandolino brings a perspective few fraud prevention experts can offer: he operated an 8-year Ponzi scheme as a member of the Chicago Board of Trade before voluntarily confessing to federal authorities—despite never being caught, investigated, or suspected.

James built a promising career managing trading desks and operations at major brokerage firms. In 2003, he launched a proprietary futures fund. When the fund experienced early losses, he made a decision that would define the next eight years: he falsified investor statements to "buy time." That single decision spiraled into \$3.8 million in fraud.

In January 2011, James walked into the FBI's Chicago office and voluntarily confessed. He served six and a half years in federal prison, where he studied forensic accounting, analyzed hundreds of fraud cases, and interviewed fellow fraudsters to understand their tactics.

Today, James is the founder of Investment Fraud Solutions and a professional speaker who helps organizations and investors identify red flags, strengthen due diligence practices, and protect assets from predators. For financial professionals, he provides ethics training that addresses the pressures, rationalizations, and blind spots that lead to career-ending decisions.

His mission: use his experience on both sides of fraud to protect investors and guide professionals away from career-ending decisions.

## **LONG BIO: From Investment Fraudster to Fraud Prevention Expert**

James Brandolino operated an 8-year Ponzi scheme, falsified investor statements, and voluntarily confessed to federal authorities despite never being caught, investigated, or under suspicion. Today, he transforms that rare insider perspective into powerful fraud prevention education for organizations, investors, and financial professionals.

### **The Beginning**

After earning a degree in Finance from the University of Illinois at Chicago, James built a promising career in financial services—progressing from securities broker at Charles Schwab to operations and trade desk manager at then major derivatives firm MF Global. In 2003, driven by a three-year profitable trading record, he became a member of the Chicago Board of Trade and launched a proprietary futures fund to manage investor assets.

### **The Fall**

The fund lost 3% in its first month. Faced with the disappointment of friends, family, and loyal clients, James made a decision that changed everything: he falsified monthly statements to "buy time" and recover his losses. That single act of deception spiraled into a full-scale Ponzi scheme. Over the next eight years, James subsidized trading losses with his personal funds—cashing out his 401(k), liquidating life insurance policies, and borrowing against his home. Despite hiring quantitative analysts and working with a trading psychiatrist, he couldn't recover nearly \$4 million in investor money.

### **The Confession**

On January 6, 2011, James walked into the Dirksen Federal Building in Chicago with his attorney. He sat across from Assistant U.S. Attorney Samuel Cole and FBI Special Agent Brent Potter—two men who had no idea why he was there. No investigation. No whistleblower. No audit. James voluntarily confessed to \$3.8 million in investment fraud. He pled guilty to one count of mail fraud and was sentenced to 6.5 years in federal prison.

### **The Transformation**

James turned his prison sentence into an education. He studied forensic accounting, analyzed hundreds of federal and state fraud cases, and interviewed dozens of fellow fraudsters to understand their tactics and psychology. He developed a comprehensive risk model identifying over 100 direct and indirect red flags that consistently lead to investment fraud.

### **Today**

James is the founder of Investment Fraud Solutions and a professional speaker dedicated to protecting high-net-worth individuals, professional athletes, and organizations from financial predators. He holds graduate certificates in Forensic Accounting and Financial Fraud Examination from Saint Xavier University. Through dynamic presentations, workshops, and consulting services, James educates investors and financial professionals on fraud awareness, due diligence, and ethical decision-making.

His mission: use his experience to stop investment fraud on both sides—protecting potential victims and preventing future perpetrators.