



# Most Interesting ETF Launches This Year

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As far as ETF launches go, this year has been pretty active so far. Through the end of April, ETF issuers unveiled 62 new products—slightly less than the 69 ETFs that had launched at this time last year.

Odds are that 2017 won't end up as a record year when it comes to the number of launches (that title currently belongs to 2011, with its 308 launches), but there are more than enough products coming out that at least a few are bound to catch an investor's eye.

Within this year's new ETFs, there have been plenty of solid offerings. From cheaper versions of existing funds to socially responsible funds of all stripes to fresh smart-beta funds, investors have a lot of new ETFs they can consider. But among those, only a handful has been novel and compelling enough to really spark my interest.

Fully conceding that "interesting" is a subjective term, here are the four ETF launches that have stood out the most to me:

## Active Alts Contrarian ETF (SQZZ)

The actively managed Active Alts Contrarian ETF (SQZZ) was slow out of the gate. It had a huge pile of cash and not enough exposure to the highly shorted stocks that it's supposed to buy. That's changed in the last several weeks.

SQZZ still has a big chunk of cash, but it's added sizable positions to stocks with large short positions, such as Iridium Communications, Chesapeake Energy, Cheesecake Factory and Titan Machinery. The hope is that some of these highly shorted stocks will get a nice pop from a "short squeeze" fueled by a positive catalyst.

It's a cool concept, but ultimately depends on the ETF manager's ability to execute the strategy with timely buys and sells.

The fund launched March 21, has a 1.95% expense ratio and \$1.3 million in assets.

**This article has been changed for regulator purposes.**