

## Building Retirement Fortune Through Online Trading

There is a certain romance to trading on the stock market. Wall Street and all the drama of what goes on there seems exciting and a place where millionaires are made in a day. Fortunately, for most of us, Wall Street is a far away place and we would be too intimidated to actually try to trade in that complex environment. If you get a chance to visit and watch the frantic trading floor in action, that's plenty.

Baby boomers are notoriously self confident and have a generational attitude of, "If someone can do it, so can I." When this attitude is brought to investing, that can set up a dangerous situation for the baby boomer from a financial perspective. The explosion of the internet which has put virtually every kind of transaction at our fingertips has spawned this new phenomenon of "Online Trading." In theory, any baby boomer could sit down with their retirement money and with a few clicks on their favorite stock investment web site, make a fortune over night.

Well, at least that is the allure of online trading. There are some very good things about the movement that has been afoot in the last few years to put your financial world at your fingertips on the internet. Some of those advantages are...

. You can stay in touch with your bank balances and your investments on a daily or even hourly basis by having updates delivered right to your desktop. This is unprecedented access to your own money. It can be a blessing because it raises your awareness of your investments or a curse because it makes you less tolerant and willing to "ride out" market fulgurations.

. Online trading services have reduced broker's fees by putting the power to invest in the market right at your fingertips. But by taking the brokers out of the loop somewhat, you also lose their valuable expertise and advice to keep you from making disastrous mistakes.

. Online trading has made management of your financial picture part of your online entertainment. But it also could lead to becoming obsessed with investing rather than putting your money in a solid long-term plan and moving on with your life.

. The sudden interest in online trading has made more people knowledgeable about the stock market and what their money is doing. There is no downside to becoming educated about this important part of your financial planning.

But like anything else, particularly when it comes to the internet, using some

common sense is crucial to not letting yourself go crazy with online investing. Baby boomers, as they move into the retirement years, very often find themselves with some but not enough retirement funding. So it's easy to see online investing as a way of supplementing that income and retiring in luxury as we all dream to do.

If there was any mantra, we must have about investing, especially if we are using online tools, it is, "Be prudent and be informed." There is no substitute for getting some education and doing some reading into the mechanics of the stock market and into the strategies that are most likely to be a success for you. The stock market is no place for "get rich quick" schemes because they are more likely to result in "get poor quick" outcomes.

But for the smart baby boomer who does his or her homework and knows what they are doing and gets good advice from investment analysts that know the market, online investing can become a good addition to your financial planning arsenal and be a lot of fun for you as well.

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