

AAII'S BEST OF THE NET

16th Annual Edition

2012

Article Highlights

- A comprehensive listing of the Internet's best investment-related resources.
- This year's guide includes expanded coverage of the best apps for the iPad and Android.
- AAI staff list their personal favorite online resources.

Our simple measure for evaluating websites is: Does it provide value? With the ongoing proliferation of smartphones, tablet computers and social networking, good content still matters more than anything else. All the sparkle and flash in the world is not worth much if what you really need is useful information.

In putting together our 16th annual Best of the Net guide, we sought out websites to help you invest better. We wanted websites that are easy to navigate, provide accurate information and are focused on conveying good content. In most cases, the websites we have featured in past years made the cut again this year. This was not universally the case, however, as we replaced some of the websites we previously featured with new ones. For every category, we looked at many websites to ensure we included only the best ones.

Many websites automatically adapt to the device you are accessing it on, whether it is a PC, an iPad or a smartphone. Some websites also offer apps for Apple's iOS and Google's Android operating systems. But the quality of these apps varies widely. For instance, The Wall Street Journal iPad app gives you access to the entire news-

paper, while Yahoo! Finance's iPad app merely gives you quotes and news. Some apps are worth downloading, however, and we've expanded our coverage of apps in this year's guide. (See CI in the Journal on page 27.)

We also list the Internet resources we personally use. Throughout the guide you will see boxes that list the favorite websites of AAI staff, along with site addresses and a brief explanation of why we like them. These are not all "Best of the Web" resources, but they are ones we personally like.

You can find information about Twitter as well. The social networking service continues to evolve and there is much useful information for investors. Rather than suggesting Twitter streams of individual personalities, we direct you to those that provide updated news and financial information.

Finally, we list our favorite features of AAI.com. With so much great content and tools on our website, it's hard to narrow it down to just a few key features, but we think you will enjoy the sections we highlight.

The first section of the guide presents

a categorical listing of our picks for Best of the Net. The second section provides an alphabetical listing of individual websites, with information about the features we find particularly useful and how to find the content and tools within each site. The online version of this guide includes hyperlinks to all of the top sites.

The Best of the Net Ratings

AAII awards a Best of the Net rating to sites that provide investment information or service that, in our view, is both useful and substantial to individual investors and available either for free or for a reasonable price.

Most sites provide the information or service that we are reviewing free of charge. Some offer basic information for free and charge various rates for more in-depth data or expanded services. In the alphabetical listings, we show the lowest and highest rates to give you an idea of the range; visit the sites for complete details on pricing.

Some types of sites not included
(continued on page 29)

Research for this article was contributed by AAI editors Joe Lan, Charles Rotblut and Wayne Thorp.

AAll's Best of the Net: Our Top Picks

Presented below are our top picks—the websites we think provide the best coverage for each major subject area. The individual sites are described in more detail in our alphabetical listing, which starts on page 12.

Comprehensive

Comprehensive websites offer a full range of investment information, including financial news, fundamental data and analytical tools. Expect to find market, industry, and economic data and trends; fundamental and technical analysis tools including screeners; stock, mutual fund and ETF research; portfolio trackers; and quotes, charts and news.

These top sites offer in-depth investment data as well as sophisticated tools and are great references for keeping up to date.

★★★★ [Morningstar.com](#)

★★★★ [SmartMoney.com](#)

★★★★ [Yahoo! Finance](#)

The stock price can rise or fall significantly if earnings come in above or below analyst consensus estimates. This information can be found for free on a majority of financial websites. Typically, financial sites will provide high, low and consensus or average estimates for earnings and revenues. The top sites offer earnings and revenue estimates not only for the current year, but also for the next few years. Furthermore, superior websites report analyst buy, hold and sell ratings and track these ratings over time, allowing users to easily see trends.

★★★★ [CNBC.com](#)

★★★★ [DailyFinance](#)

★★★★ [Reuters](#)

★★★★ [Zacks.com](#)

STOCKS

IPOs

An initial public offering (IPO) is the first sale of stock by a company to the general public, effectively making a once privately held firm a publicly traded firm. Information on IPOs is sought after because of the possibility of generating above-market returns and because an IPO represents the first time most individual investors can buy shares of a certain company. Several sites provide IPO news and data, including SEC registration statements and calendars of upcoming IPOs. Our top sites provide comprehensive IPO information such as follow-up data, actual offering information and secondary offering data.

★★★★ [123Jump.com IPO Center](#)

★★★★ [EDGAR Online IPO](#)

★★★★ [Hoover's Online IPO Central](#)

Stock Screening

A popular approach to stock research is using stock screens. This method involves running quantitative filters through a universe of stocks to find candidates that are promising and warrant further analysis. The stocks that pass a screen will meet the criteria used to create the screen. Investors seek various characteristics in stocks, but the quintessential qualities of high growth and low valuation are popular criteria. Using stock screens, you are able to focus on a small selection of stocks that meet your preferred characteristics. The top stock screening sites provide an abundance of data fields. Superior sites provide filters for stock sector, stock type, performance, growth and valuation and cover an exhaustive universe. However, you should be prepared to pay for the top screening services.

★★★★ [CNBC.com](#)

★★★★ [Morningstar.com](#)

★★★★ [SmartMoney.com](#) (fee-based)

★★★★ [Zacks.com](#)

Stock Data

Fundamental stock data is accessed by entering a stock's ticker symbol on the site's home page. Stock data sites usually report current price quotes, company profiles, and financial data, including ratios and financial statements. The depth and range of data offered distinguish the superior sites. Features such as industry and competitor comparisons, historical price quotes and stock valuation techniques are prized. The top sites provide financial statement data for a number of historical periods.

★★★★ [MarketWatch.com](#)

★★★★ [Morningstar.com](#)

★★★★ [SmartMoney.com](#)

Stock Charting & Technical Analysis

Technical analysis involves studying the market based on volume and pricing trends. Market technicians typically use charts and technical indicators to decide on the future movement of stock and index prices. There are numerous technical analysis websites and programs on the Internet, but superior sites offer a wide range of charts and options. Most allow the user to create price charts of securities and indexes as well as to overlay technical indicators for a number of years. Top sites offer technical screening that can filter a universe of stocks based on technical indicators or chart patterns. Usually, these sites will also offer educational material on technical analysis.

★★★★ [BigCharts](#)

★★★★ [FreeStockCharts.com](#)

★★★★ [StockCharts.com](#)

Analyst Estimates, Ratings & Recommendations

Analyst estimates and ratings are frequently used by investors to help make a judgment about the future prospects of a stock.

Stock Valuation & Ratings

While it is easy to find the current price of a stock, deciding whether the market is undervaluing or overvaluing the stock is a challenge. Stock valuation and ratings websites will typically offer an intrinsic value estimate based on future cash flows, growth rates, market conditions or a combination of several fundamental and risk factors. Keep in mind that the valuations are simply estimates and should be used in conjunction with other stock analysis techniques. Also, these estimates are based partially on subjective factors. In addition to a value estimate, certain sites will also include ratings on the stock. The top valuation sites allow the user to specify underlying fundamental assumptions based on their own research.

- ★★★★ Moneychimp
- ★★★★ MSN Money
- ★★★★ ValuEngine.com (fee-based)

Company Conference Calls

Conference calls are usually held between a company's executives and the analysts who follow the stock each quarter when earnings are released. Calls often contain information not given in press releases and, at times, analysts can ask questions. Companies may also hold conference calls to announce major corporate events. Some sites make a live stream of the audio available and others provide a complete transcript of the call. These sites also provide archives of recent conference calls.

- ★★★★ Earnings.com
- ★★★★ Morningstar.com
- ★★★★ Seeking Alpha

Market Index Statistics

Market indexes keep investors abreast of the performance of various industries and sectors. They are also commonly used as benchmarks with which to compare the performance of securities, portfolios or funds. Indexes also provide an idea as to the volatility of specific industries and sectors. The top sites provide comprehensive data on well-known indexes, including current and historical performance, composition and fundamental characteristics.

- ★★★★ Dow Jones Indexes
- ★★★★ MSCI
- ★★★★ Russell
- ★★★★ S&P Dow Jones Indices
- ★★★★ Wilshire

FUNDS

Mutual Fund Data

The top sites for mutual fund data are distinguished by the universe of funds covered and the breadth of data provided. Fund data is usually divided into performance, ratings, management and analysis; sites may also have separate sections for expenses and risk factors. Superior sites will provide all the necessary information for investors to make an educated

decision as to the quality of a fund and its management. The best sites also provide proprietary mutual fund research.

- ★★★★ MarketWatch.com
- ★★★★ Morningstar.com
- ★★★★ SmartMoney.com
- ★★★★ Yahoo! Finance

Mutual Fund Screening

Similar to stock screening, mutual fund screening sites offer filters to reduce a universe of mutual funds to a more manageable number based on the user's fundamental preferences. The top sites offer a large universe of funds, frequently updated data and a large number of variables for customizing screens. Special importance should be placed on management and fee data fields. Be prepared to pay for the top fund screeners.

- ★★★★ Morningstar.com (fee-based)
- ★★★★ SmartMoney.com (fee-based)

Exchange-Traded Funds

Exchange-traded funds (ETFs), portfolios of securities that trade like stocks, have become increasingly popular over the past few years due to their diversification effects and low operating costs. They have become an established alternative to open-ended mutual funds and are especially useful for filling out portfolios. The top sites offer performance, risk and expenses.

- ★★★★ ETF Database
- ★★★★ Morningstar.com
- ★★★★ XTF.com

Closed-End Funds

Closed-end funds (CEFs) differ from mutual funds in that once the fund issues shares, those shares are bought and sold in the open market; unlike a mutual fund, the closed-end fund does not itself stand ready to redeem shares from investors wishing to sell their shares. Shares of closed-end funds trade on the open market and are priced by demand; they sometimes trade at discounts or premiums to their net asset value. Top sites provide fundamental data and performance statistics. Look also for fund screeners and solid educational information.

- ★★★★ CEF Connect
- ★★★★ Closed-End Fund Association
- ★★★★ Closed-End Funds from Capital Link

OTHER INVESTMENTS

International

One of the ways to increase diversification is to invest internationally. However, since the needs of the investor seeking international investments are broad, the top sites listed here provide a range of features or links to additional resources that may more closely match your interests.

- ★★★★ ADR.com
- ★★★★ BNY Mellon Depositary Receipts
- ★★★★ CIA World Factbook

Bonds

Researching bonds is not as easy as researching stocks because a single company or government entity can have multiple debentures, each with different maturity dates and interest rates. This is why you may need to consult more than one source. Several sites have extensive bond listings with current quotes, and some sites offer educational content. In addition, the U.S. government's TreasuryDirect system allows investors to easily buy newly issued Treasuries and savings bonds directly from the U.S. Treasury without paying a commission.

- ★★★★ **EMMA (Electronic Municipal Market Access)**
- ★★★★ **FINRA Bond Market Data**
- ★★★★ **TreasuryDirect**

REITs

Real estate investments can provide an added level of diversification for a stock and bond portfolio. Real estate investment trusts (REITs) offer investors a way to invest in real estate without having to actually purchase property or take on mortgages. Numerous REITs trade on stock exchanges, so data for REITs can be found on sites that offer fundamental stock data. The Morningstar.com custom stock screener allows you to filter for REITs. The top REIT sites feature educational articles on REITs and provide analysis and ratings of individual REITs.

- ★★★★ **Forbes.com**
- ★★★★ **REIT.com**

Options/Futures

The top sites provide comprehensive information and statistics on options and futures. Typically, websites will include an education section with seminars, online courses, webcasts and other tools to help novice investors familiarize themselves with these derivatives. Many sites offer instructional articles on basic strategies and instruments used for options and futures. Derivatives have a different risk profile, so make sure to educate yourself on the various risks before buying them for your portfolio.

- ★★★★ **Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE)**
- ★★★★ **Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC)**
- ★★★★ **Options Industry Council**

FINANCIAL PLANNING

Personal Finance

Personal finance encompasses the broad array of financial concerns that most individuals must deal with throughout their lifetimes, including banking, insurance, savings, taxes, health care issues and all kinds of financial planning. Many websites cover at least one aspect of personal finance, but the sites we have listed below offer extensive coverage of a range of personal finance issues, such as mortgages, auto loans, credit cards, CDs, money market accounts and insurance. Plus, most also have numerous calculators, planning tools and educational materials that can help you with budgeting, asset allocation,

college planning, health care decisions, tax planning, estate planning and retirement planning.

- ★★★★ **Bankrate.com**
- ★★★★ **MyMoney.gov**
- ★★★★ **SmartMoney.com**
- ★★★★ **Yahoo! Finance**

Retirement Planning

Retirement planning sites focus on helping you determine how much you need to save for retirement and how much you can safely spend during retirement. Most comprehensive personal finance sites include retirement planning tools for individuals who need to determine how much to save; far fewer websites include low-cost calculators for investors looking for tools to determine how much they can safely spend during retirement. The list below focuses on the sites with the best retirement tools and commentary.

- ★★★★ **Kiplinger**
- ★★★★ **SmartMoney.com**
- ★★★★ **Yahoo! Finance**

Estate Planning

While many comprehensive financial planning websites have a few generalized estate planning articles, the sites listed below are much more specialized; they can help you determine your estate planning needs, as well as who and where to turn to for more help. These sites provide in-depth articles on estate planning, with little or no graphics, and not much interactivity. However, their content is solid and accessible at no charge.

- ★★★★ **Estate Planning Answers**
- ★★★★ **Financial Planning Toolkit (fee-based)**
- ★★★★ **Nolo**

Tax Information

Though the IRS encourages electronic filing and more taxpayers complete their taxes online, the complexity of tax law has not changed. This is why it is important to get both thorough and clear information. The sites we list below typically offer explanations of general tax issues, tips on cutting taxes, tax planning tools and estimators, and overviews of recent tax law changes. (Tax preparation software and services are not covered. If a clear answer is not found or if your tax situation is complex, a consultation with a tax professional may be prudent.)

- ★★★★ **Financial Planning Toolkit (fee-based)**
- ★★★★ **H&R Block**
- ★★★★ **Internal Revenue Service**
- ★★★★ **Yahoo! Finance**

Portfolio Tracking

Portfolio tracking services allow the user to monitor a portfolio. Typically, these websites will send email alerts as portfolio holdings or holdings in a watchlist fluctuate in value or as relevant news becomes available. The top sites track a large number and wide range of securities and holdings, update their

data frequently and send timely alerts. Certain sites provide the ability to sync with your brokerage accounts, making it unnecessary to manually update transactions.

- ★★★★ [Morningstar.com](#)
- ★★★★ [SmartMoney.com](#)
- ★★★★ [wkinvest](#)

INSURANCE PRODUCTS

Immediate Annuities

An immediate annuity, or income annuity, is an insurance product that provides guaranteed payments to an investor over a specified period of time, funded through a lump-sum payment. They offer a useful fixed-income alternative for retirees. However, they are complex investments with tax structures and fee schedules that must be understood before a purchasing decision can be made. The sites listed below provide the most extensive educational information, as well as policy quotes.

- ★★★★ [BRKdirect.com](#)
- ★★★★ [Fidelity.com](#)
- ★★★★ [ImmediateAnnuities.com](#)

Insurance

Insurance sites provide educational information or quote comparisons for life insurance products; some also provide information on long-term care insurance. Look for interactive calculators to help you determine your insurance needs. Some sites offer helpful checklists that you can use when comparing policies or allow you to check out an insurance company for past complaints. The top sites provide education on the different types of life and long-term care insurance. You can check out a company or report suspected fraud at the NAIC site (www.naic.org).

- ★★★★ [Insure U](#)
- ★★★★ [Katt & Company](#)
- ★★★★ [LIFE \(Life and Health Insurance Foundation for Education\)](#)
- ★★★★ [LifeInsure.com](#)
- ★★★★ [National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information](#)

Medicare

Medicare currently provides health insurance coverage to those who are 65 or older, as well as certain individuals with disabilities. The Web offers extensive information on Medicare, but the sites listed here offer the best information relating to basic coverage issues, benefits offered, how to enroll and how to choose your options. Medicare's website, listed below, even allows you to search for and compare plans.

- ★★★★ [American Association of Retired Persons \(AARP\)](#)
- ★★★★ [MedicareInteractive.org](#)
- ★★★★ [Medicare.gov](#)

MISCELLANEOUS

Financial News & Analysis

These websites provide current news and updated analysis on world markets, the economy, individual companies and funds. Typically, sites will provide links to top news items and separate sections for market highlights and data, personal finance, politics, companies, technology and the economy. Many of these sites offer quotes for stocks, mutual funds and ETFs, along with summaries for each. Registering at these sites will allow you to personalize the website by choosing sectors, regions or holdings that are of the most interest. The top sites provide up-to-the-minute world news, articles from various sources and a wide array of news information.

- ★★★★ [Bloomberg.com](#)
- ★★★★ [CNN Money](#)
- ★★★★ [Reuters](#)
- ★★★★ [WSJ.com](#)

Economic Data

Access to economic data and analyses can be especially useful to individual investors who want to assess the economic climate on their own. The list below includes government as well as private sites, most of which provide both data and analyses; some even allow users to download economic statistics.

- ★★★★ [Econoday](#)
- ★★★★ [EconStats](#)
- ★★★★ [Federal Reserve](#)
- ★★★★ [FRED \(Federal Reserve Economic Data\)](#)

Investing Videos

Investing videos are popular among investors wanting to stream financial news. Websites have responded to this demand by combining videos with traditional printed news. The top sites provide a wealth of videos covering a broad range of topics. Oftentimes, financial news can be streamed directly. Further, superior sites present interviews with industry experts and offer easy navigation with exceptional organization.

- ★★★★ [CNBC.com](#)
- ★★★★ [MarketWatch.com](#)
- ★★★★ [Yahoo! Finance](#)

Social Media & Networking

Social media and networking sites are based on user participation and user-generated content. These sites allow users to exchange opinions, insights, experiences and perspectives with each other about individual securities, investment practices, etc. Social media can take many different forms, including Internet forums or message boards, weblogs (blogs), wikis (user-driven information centers) and podcasts.

- ★★★★ [Motley Fool CAPS](#)
- ★★★★ [wkinvest](#)
- ★★★★ [Yahoo! Finance](#)

Turn to the next page for descriptions of what each website listed here offers.

AAll's Best of the Net: The Sites

123Jump.com IPO Center

www.123jump.com/ipo
FREE

Category: IPOs

Offers recent IPO news stories and an IPO calendar and reports the upcoming week's offerings with a price range, the size and a "hot tamale" sentiment rating that takes into account investor interest and future prospects. The latest IPO prices, withdrawals and reports are all available on the main page. Provides financial data and a business summary for all IPOs. Includes IPO performance data and monthly and annual historical prices for companies dating back to 2000. Search IPOs by industry, ticker symbol or state. Lockup and quiet periods are not reported.

ADR.com

www.adr.com
FREE

Category: International

🔍 **Where to Find:** Search for an ADR by ticker in the DR Search bar at the top right.

Great resource for screening and researching American depositary receipts (ADRs), foreign securities traded on U.S. exchanges. Search for ADRs by name, ticker, exchange, country, industry and more. The search results are displayed in a table and include country of origin, dividend payments and corporate actions. Provides links to charts, financials and earnings estimates. Consensus recommendations are given when available, and upward and downward revisions are reported for a number of ADRs. Offers an education and guidance section on depositary receipts. Site allows users who have an account to create a watchlist.

American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)

www.aarp.org
FREE

Category: Medicare

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Health

in the upper menu (just below the AARP logo), then click on Medicare & Medicaid.

This area of the AARP site features current news on health care reform issues and Medicare developments. The Medicare Starter Kit gives guidance on how to get started with the program. A "doughnut-hole" calculator determines your annual out-of-pocket costs for prescription drugs and suggests alternative medications that may be cheaper. Questions on Medicare can be sent to the site and answers are posted online. Ads for other AARP services are prevalent, but not obtrusive.

Bankrate.com

www.bankrate.com
FREE

Category: Personal Finance

If you want interest rate data and other information to help in the selection of bank CDs, checking and savings accounts, money market accounts, credit cards, mortgages, car loans, home equity loans and other personal loans, this is the site to visit. There are also numerous personal finance calculators (whether mortgage refinancing makes sense, how much to save for a child's education, etc.), several tax calculators, and information on debt management, as well as educational articles on personal finance. Though the information is good, the large number of ads makes the website look cluttered.

BigCharts

bigcharts.marketwatch.com
FREE

Category: Stock Charting & Technical Analysis

Operated by MarketWatch, BigCharts provides free charts, a comprehensive library of technical indicators, market and company news, historical quotes and industry analysis. Offers three charting options: quick charts present a chart when you enter a symbol and select a

time frame; advanced charts allow you to specify a custom time period as well as add technical indicators; and interactive charts allow you to plot various predefined time frames and draw your own trendlines. Choose from eight chart types including open/high/low/close, high/low/close, candlesticks and bar charts. Historical data can be viewed by specifying a ticker and a date. Site also delivers custom charts to users via email on a daily or weekly basis. You are able to plot an unlimited number of securities per chart, a great feature.

Bloomberg.com

www.bloomberg.com
FREE

Category: Financial News & Analysis

One of the most trusted financial websites for global market news. Coverage is comprehensive and includes a variety of asset classes including bonds, energy, currencies and commodities. News articles are separated by region and country, markets and industries. The site offers minimal coverage on municipal bonds and hedge funds. Special sections are available for current events. Bloomberg TV and Bloomberg Radio are both streamed live, and podcasts are available for download.

BNY Mellon Depositary Receipts

www.adrbnymellon.com
FREE

Category: International

🔍 **Where to Find:** Search for depositary receipts (DR) by name, symbol or CUSIP at the top right of the home page.

Offers extensive list of sponsored and unsponsored ADRs and holding company depositary receipts (HOLDERS). Search for ADRs by region, country, industry, DR exchange and depositary. Summary table lists issue, symbol, CUSIP, exchange, conversion ratio,

country of origin, industry, depository, sponsorship and date of last update. Links are provided for further research on individual listings. The site provides extensive DR educational resources housed in DR University, which provides both basic and in-depth education. A free interactive charting tool is available.

BRKdirect.com

www.brkdirect.com

FREE

Category: Immediate Annuities

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Single Premium Immediate Annuity.

The site provides a quote, description and sample policy for Berkshire Hathaway's immediate annuity insurance. Educational information includes an explanation of the single-premium immediate annuity, with its benefits and tax rules; who should consider this type of policy; issues concerning cash value and termination; definitions of policy ratings; and a glossary of annuity terms.

CEF Connect

www.cefconnect.com

FREE

Category: Closed-End Funds

Provides share prices and ranges for closed-end funds, along with interactive charts and fund basics such as net assets, shares outstanding, category and daily volume. Presents distributions, pricing history, performance and portfolio characteristics of each fund. Offers a screener that works much the same way as mutual fund screeners. The fund sorter allows you to sort by discount, premium, distribution rate, total assets and year-to-date return. An education center provides articles on closed-end fund basics, types and strategies, along with advanced topics.

Chicago Board Options Exchange (CBOE)

www.cboe.com

FREE

Category: Options/Futures

🔍 **Where to Find:** Educational areas and tools are accessed through tabs running across top of home page. The world's largest options exchange;

Charles' Favorite Web Resources

When researching a stock, I use these free websites to seek out information that cannot be found by merely analyzing financial statements.

SEC EDGAR

www.sec.gov/edgar/searchedgar/webusers.htm

The Securities and Exchange Commission (SEC) publishes filings for publicly traded companies in its EDGAR system. I pay particular attention to Form 10-K, which is a company's annual report and is a goldmine of information.

Seeking Alpha

www.seekingalpha.com

Seeking Alpha publishes quarterly conference call transcripts for many companies. These transcripts can offer a lot of insight into how a company performed over the past quarter and what management thinks may happen in the future. (To find transcripts, click on Earnings & Transcripts under Where to Go Next at the bottom of the home page.) I mostly ignore the articles submitted by contributing authors and posted on Seeking Alpha, however, since their quality varies widely.

FreeStockCharts.com

www.freestockcharts.com

Even though I am a value investor, I always look at a stock's price chart to make sure I have not missed anything with my analysis. The customizable charts on this website are easy to use, but offer enough tools to satisfy someone who wants to conduct detailed technical analysis.

MarketWatch.com

www.marketwatch.com

Many websites do a good job of providing updated news and commentary on individual stocks, so this is merely my personal preference. I like the way the site separates news articles and press releases on the quote page for individual stocks.

Investor Relations Websites

To locate, type the company's name plus "investor relations" in a search engine such as Google.

Often overlooked, the investor relations sections of a company's website can offer a large amount of information. Though each website is different, it is not uncommon to find presentations, annual reports, dividend history, historical press releases and a calendar of upcoming events.

—Charles Rotblut, CFA, vice president at AAIL and AAIL Journal editor

their site is one of the most comprehensive. Delayed quotes are provided free. Useful tools include paperTRADE, which allows you to track a paper-money options portfolio, and margin and volatility calculators. A new tool has been added called TradeBuilder with Trade Analyzer, which helps you rank different option strategies by their expected

profit/loss or probability of making any profit, and graphs their risk-return opportunity under various market scenarios. Also offers sections for trading resources and strategies that investors can use to familiarize themselves with options and futures investing. Extensive education section provides seminars, online courses, webcasts, market com-

mentary, educational tools, online tutorials and quick facts. Numerous tools are available for individual investors. Some areas require site registration.

CIA World Factbook

<https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook>

FREE

Category: International

🔍 **Where to Find:** Select a country or location from the dropdown menu.

Not a financial website, but provides extensive data on every government, country and territory in the world, offering information on history, people, government, economy, geography, communications, transportation, military and transnational issues. The Economy Overview should be your main focus; it touches on GDP, market forces, infrastructure and long-term obstacles. A great website to use for background information on unfamiliar countries.

Closed-End Fund Association

www.cefa.com

FREE

Category: Closed-End Funds

Provides useful information on various categories of closed-end funds. Offers daily fund leaders with the highest one-day net asset value appreciation. CEFs are now separated by asset classes, and leverage funds have their own section. The site presents the Lipper market averages and the number of funds within each Lipper category, providing a simple method of comparing individual closed-end funds with the market average for their asset class. Also provides a weekly average premium/discount scorecard for equity and bond CEFs. Provides links to current and archived news relating to closed-end funds and includes an audio section. There is also a section on upcoming offerings.

Closed-End Funds from Capital Link

cef.capitallink.com

FREE

Category: Closed-End Funds

Offers closed-end fund profiles, return performance and other fundamental

data. Presents historical data and charts for one-week to five-year returns, which are useful. Lets you personalize a screen of closed-end funds that are of interest. Fund Filter allows for the sorting of CEFs based on various criteria. Click on the reports section to open a listing of S&P reports for various closed-end funds. A listing of funds is offered (click on Funds at top to show).

CNBC.com

www.cnbc.com

FREE—\$299.99/year

Category: Analyst Estimates, Ratings & Recommendations

🔍 **Where to Find:** Enter a stock's ticker at the top of the page in the Real-Time Quotes box. At the company page, click on the Earnings tab.

Reports the company's historical earnings and consensus earnings estimates on a quarterly and annual basis for the next fiscal year. Shows growth forecasts for the firm, with comparisons to its sector and industry and to the market. In addition, provides current and historical consensus recommendations along with a trendline. The earnings momentum table shows the mean estimate and the number of estimate revisions upward and downward for the previous week, month, quarter and six-month periods. The Peer Earnings section presents the company's consensus recommendation and key earnings metrics compared to those of its main competitors. The information is offered as a bar chart and in a tabular format.

Category: Investing Videos

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on CNBC TV at the top of the home page.

Provides an extensive video section, with shows streamed directly online. CNBC is home to numerous famous investing shows on TV such as Mad Money, Fast Money and the Kublow Report. Full episodes of these shows are available online, as well as show recaps with video segments. The site also has separate channels for CNBC U.S., Asia Pacific, Europe and World. A paid subscription to CNBC Pro includes live streaming of CNBC TV.

Category: Stock Screening

🔍 **Where to Find:** Hover your mouse over the Investing tab and click on Stock Screener.

One of best free stock screeners. Offers filters for nine data categories, including company overview, performance, growth trends, valuation, management efficiency and dividends, with over 12,000 companies provided in the universe. Additional variables are offered within each category. After selecting data fields and entering appropriate values, the stock screener shows the number of company matches so that you can change the field values in order to allow for more or fewer companies to pass the screen. Three views are presented for passing companies: overview, performance and earnings. Clicking on a passing company links you to a page illustrating relevant fundamental stock data. Five predefined screens are provided, and custom screens can be saved.

CNN Money

money.cnn.com

FREE

Category: Financial News & Analysis

The Internet home of Fortune, Money and CNN offers current and archived magazine stories as well as daily CNN videos. Separate areas for business news, markets, economy and technology are provided. Data is given on stocks, U.S. and world markets, bonds, commodities, ADRs and currencies. A section is now provided for international business news. Registered users can create a profile and add alerts for companies, markets, mutual funds, ETFs and keywords. Site allows users to create a watchlist and offers RSS data feeds. Videos and podcasts are available. At the bottom of the page, popular articles from Fortune, Money, CNN and DailyFinance are linked.

Commodity Futures Trading Commission (CFTC)

www.cftc.gov

FREE

Category: Options/Futures

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Consumer Protection for fraud and education

sections.

Government-commissioned organization aimed at ensuring the integrity of the futures and options market. Site offers market reports including financial data, economic analysis and a monthly summary of the futures market. It is a source of education, with a section providing fraud awareness and prevention. The website allows you to file complaints and report suspicious activities, while providing case status reports, disciplinary history and an education center. Also presents information on industry oversight, laws and regulations. Recent press releases are linked on the main page, as is a listing of recent events.

DailyFinance

www.dailyfinance.com

FREE

Category: Analyst Estimates, Ratings & Recommendations

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type in stock's ticker in the search box at the top of the page. Click on Analyst Ratings on the left-hand side of the page.

Analyst Ratings section provides a bar graph of analyst ratings along with a mean recommendation. Ratings are broken down from strong buy to strong sell. Tables of analyst ratings going back monthly for three months as well as the latest analyst upgrades and downgrades are also provided. The upgrades and downgrades table presents the previous rating and target price and the new rating and target price and show the total number of analysts providing expectations. The Earnings and Growth Rates section provides the average, high, low and prior year estimates for the current and next fiscal quarter and current and next fiscal year. Revenue, earnings and dividend growth rates for the last one-, three- and five-year periods are also provided.

Dow Jones Indexes

www.djindexes.com

FREE

Category: Market Index Statistics

Dow Jones Indexes are now under the S&P Dow Jones Indices umbrella. Provides historical performance overviews

of major domestic and international indexes used for benchmarking and market or sector analysis. At the main page, hover over indexes to see a listing broken down into equity, strategy and thematic, alternative asset class, fixed-income and total portfolio indexes. PDF files of the fact sheet and the methodology are offered. The fact sheet highlights performance, fundamentals, sector allocation and top holdings. Methodology offers a brief description of the index and a detailed account of stock selection. Real-time values and performance charts are presented. Users must create an account to see the components for each index. Also provides a list of index-linked investment products.

Earnings.com

www.earnings.com

FREE-\$49/transcript

Category: Company Conference Calls

Site is powered by Thomson Reuters. Events Calendar lists webcasts, earnings releases, stock splits, IPOs, dividends and economic events for a given date. You can search the site by date, event type or company name. Each list is in alphabetical order by company name with related data displayed. Webcasts of earnings conference calls are provided for free and play directly through the site. Transcripts and briefs are available, but the website now requires payment for each.

Econoday

www.econoday.com

FREE

Category: Economic Data

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on View Full Calendar.

A calendar listing all upcoming economic reports is provided. Consensus forecasts are listed for the major upcoming releases. Charts of past data for certain indicators and a thorough description of what the report measures are provided. A special "Why Investors Care" section for major releases explains how the report may impact market direction. A full-year release schedule for the data is published. Free weekly emails covering U.S. and global economic data are available.

EconStats

www.econstats.com

FREE

Category: Economic Data

A wide array of economic data includes U.S. indicators, interest rates (U.S. and LIBOR), oil inventories, global equity returns and select international reports. Data is presented in large tables, which are functional but not visually appealing. The statistics can be downloaded into Microsoft Excel for further analysis. This is a good site for raw data, but not for finding actual analysis.

EDGAR Online IPO

ipoportal.edgar-online.com

FREE

Category: IPOs

Provides a summary of recent IPO filings, IPO pricings and withdrawn IPOs on the main page. For each offering, the deal data and filings are presented on separate pages. Companies in the quiet period and lockup period are also shown. Information on secondary and global offerings is presented. The calendar lists company names, their expected IPO date, number of shares and the expected share price range. Company financials and more detailed offering data, including the advisers, are available only at the subscriber rate, which is priced for professionals.

EMMA (Electronic Municipal Market Access)

emma.msrb.org

FREE

Category: Bonds

A municipal bond database operated by the MSRB (Municipal Securities Rulemaking Board). Contains municipal disclosures, market transparency data and educational materials about muni bonds. Quote information includes real-time pricing, interest rates and historical information for trades occurring on or after January 31, 2005. Bond information includes size, source of refunding and maturity. Educational content ranges from descriptions of various types of bonds to an overview of the various types of official statements and refunding documents.

Also provides information about 529

College Savings Plans on a state-by-state basis.

Estate Planning Answers

www.estateplanninganswers.org
FREE

Category: Estate Planning

Operated by the National Association of Estate Planners & Councils, this site gives information on a wide range of estate-planning topics. Subjects range from long-term care planning to durable power of attorney to tax planning. The site also offers information on subjects not often covered, including spendthrift heirs and non-traditional families. Several articles direct readers to third-party websites for more information.

ETF Database

www.etfdb.com
FREE—\$199/year (free 7-day trial)

Category: Exchange-Traded Funds

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type ETF ticker in search box.

Offers an expanded and improved website covering over 1,400 exchange-traded funds. Daily news and ETF analysis is provided free of charge. ETF investment guides and a screener also provided to nonpaying members. Pro subscribers have access to over 40 ETF portfolios and can export ETF data from the screener. Weekly trading ideas, newsletter, category reports, comparison tools and real-time ratings are all available, but only to pro subscribers.

Federal Reserve

www.federalreserve.gov
FREE

Category: Economic Data

The Federal Reserve provides a compilation of speeches and testimony from Fed officials, both in written and video format. Policy statements and press releases for certain economic data are published, including the statement and minutes from the periodic Federal Open Market Committee meetings. The About the Fed section includes links to the websites of the 12 Federal Reserve district banks, each of which provides their own collections of data, articles and analyses.

Fidelity.com

www.fidelity.com
FREE

Category: Immediate Annuities

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Investment Products, then select Annuities from the list that pops up underneath. To go to the Immediate Annuities page, click on Immediate Fixed Income Annuities underneath the Retirement Income heading.

Information and guidance on annuities is given, including a short video and small pop-up boxes that explain various aspects of immediate annuities. Annuities page offers an interactive questionnaire to help you narrow down the range of retirement income products to the ones that may suit your needs (free registration is required). Details on the providers of immediate annuities that Fidelity offers access to are given in a comparison box. A guaranteed-income estimator helps you decide which type of annuity offers the payment and features you need.

Financial Planning Toolkit

finance.toolkit.com
\$24.99/yr.

Category: Estate Planning (fee-based)

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Estate Planning. Provides a very detailed discussion of all aspects of estate planning, including information on various types of trusts and other techniques to reduce estate tax exposure. However, the discussions are technical and complex, with few graphics or illustrations. Website sponsor CCH Inc. is a major provider of up-to-date business, legal and tax information and software for professionals, including estate planning attorneys.

Category: Tax Information (fee-based)

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Tax Planning.

Provides extensive information on taxes and tax planning. Sponsor CCH Inc. is a major provider of up-to-date tax information and software for professionals. (We contact CCH when we need assistance with tax-related questions

for *AII Journal* articles.) Note that the site does not provide an extensive table of contents, but a search box is on the top of every page. The information is presented as straight text, with very few graphics or illustrations.

FINRA Bond Market Data

www.finra.org/marketdata
FREE

Category: Bonds

FINRA is an independent regulator for the securities industry. In the bonds section of the Market Data Center, you can get general bond market information, as well as price information with intraday transaction prices (delayed 15 minutes) for corporate bonds, municipal bonds, U.S. Treasury and government agency bonds. Pricing information includes execution date and time, quantity, price, yield and several years of trade history, where applicable; basic description information and credit ratings are also indicated. A bond screen lets you search by issuer name, CUSIP, type, maturity, yield, coupon type, trade activity and other criteria. A watchlist allows you to track up to 100 issues at a time.

Educational material on bonds, bond investing and bond trading is also provided at this site.

Forbes.com

www.forbes.com/reits
FREE

Category: REITs

Forbes.com regularly posts articles analyzing the REIT segment of the market. The REIT Report Card grades REITs using information obtained from Green Street Advisors. Criteria for selecting the appropriate grade are revealed. The site reports on property type, net asset value growth and leverage ratio, and provides a performance and value grade. The list provides links for each REIT to a summary page that offers data such as price, earnings, yield and 52-week price range. You are able to sort the REITs by each of the table columns. Also, technical charts, ratios and returns, financial statements and recent news are provided. Latest SEC filings, insider transactions and insider

roster are all presented.

FRED (Federal Reserve Economic Data)

research.stlouisfed.org

FREE

Category: Economic Data

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on FRED Economic Data.

A comprehensive database featuring more than 20,000 economic time series. Data is presented in a chart, and links are provided to view or download the actual economic data. Navigation is straightforward with broad categories and subindexes of specific data sets. Narrative is limited to working papers and regional publications from the St. Louis Federal Reserve Bank. A FRED iPad app is now available.

FreeStockCharts.com

www.freestockcharts.com

FREE

Category: Stock Charting & Technical Analysis

Provides free real-time charts of indexes, stocks and ETFs, without exchange fees. However, the real-time data may differ from that seen elsewhere for stocks that are not actively traded. The site offers seven different charting types—including line, bar and candlestick charts—that can be plotted on an intraday, daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly and annual basis. Boasts over 80 indicators and allows the user to draw their own trendlines. Registered users can create chart layouts and save them for future use. The site also offers built-in watchlists covering indexes, industries and ETFs. Only one security may be plotted per chart. Professional level of service offered through Worden's TC2000, but price is too high for most individual investors.

H&R Block

www.hrblock.com

FREE

Category: Tax Information

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Tax Calculators and Tips.

Site may seem underwhelming at first glance, but articles covering a wide

John's Favorite Web Resources

The Internet offers so many great investment resources that my favorites focus on the tools that I use to control the flow of information.

Google Reader

www.google.com/reader

Most investment sites offer an RSS (Really Simple Syndication) feed that alerts readers when information has been updated or newly published. By subscribing to an RSS feed, I am able to centrally follow news headlines and stories from a wide range of sites in an organized fashion. I like to use Google Reader to manage my RSS feeds. I can read the feeds on Google, but generally I use the NewsRack application (www.omz-software.de/newsstand) on my iPhone and iPad to scroll through my headlines, read interesting stories, save stories, and share stories with colleagues. I am currently following the feeds of AII.com, CNNMoney.com, ChicagoBusiness.com, Lifehacker.com, Morningstar.com and The Wall Street Journal (WSJ.com).

Market Pulse – WSJ.com

wsj.com/marketpulse

I have a digital subscription to The Wall Street Journal and have complete access to the full content on the Web and through their apps that work on well on the iPad and Kindle Fire. This past year, they added the Market Pulse, which provides streaming coverage of the news impacting the markets. Major market indexes and an overview of issues moving the markets are presented on one side of the page, while headlines from the wide array of sections covered by The Wall Street Journal are posted to the other side of the page. New stories are added to the top of the list and time-stamped. It is easy to expand upon a given headline and read the full story without leaving the Web page. The Market Pulse also works on tablets and smartphones.

CNBC Pro

www.cnbc.com

The CNBC website allows me to watch CNBC TV on my computer or iPad and provides real-time data and alerts. Their great mobile app, CNBC Pro, alerts me to breaking news and allows me to track my portfolio (pro.cnbc.com). It is the primary app I use to track the stocks in my portfolio and keep abreast of breaking news impacting my portfolio.

Email Subscriptions

Many websites also offer helpful emails that push information to my inbox. For example, I get a daily email from Seeking Alpha that lists the daily price action and news headlines for each of my holdings from my portfolios.

Discount Brokerage Research

I have accounts at two discount brokers that offer a helpful collection of third-party research on stocks and mutual funds. I generally find it useful to get a second opinion on a stock before I buy or sell the security. While the research offerings differ from broker to broker, most top discount brokers give their customers free access to research reports from companies such as Morningstar, Thomson Reuters and Standard & Poor's.

—John Bajkowski, AII president

Using Twitter for Investing News and Ideas

Twitter is a useful resource for investors, despite its origins as a social networking service. It provides news in real time, and many posts contain links to full-length articles. The 140-character limit of a single post, called a “tweet,” forces writers to be pithy, which not only makes the posts interesting to read, but also easy to scan. Most importantly, since Twitter connects so many people, we are often alerted to insightful commentary that we would have otherwise missed.

Twitter is very simple to use. You do not have to write a single tweet if you don’t want to. In fact, you can read all of a person’s or company’s tweets simply by going directly to their Twitter page. For example, www.twitter.com/BloombergNow displays all of the headlines posted by Bloomberg News.

However, there are advantages to signing up for your own Twitter account. The biggest one is that you can create a list of the people and companies that you want to follow. This turns your Twitter page into your own personal news feed, which is simpler than visiting multiple Web pages to get the same information. You can also post questions and interact with other Twitter users. Finally, if you are so inclined, you can write your own tweets. Twitter is completely free.

In terms of investing, who you should follow depends on your interests. Investment-related tweets cover everything from a broad view of the market and the economy to specific information about an individual’s trades. To help you get started, here are some of the favorite twitter feeds among AAIL staff.

Comprehensive CBS MoneyWatch

twitter.com/cbsmoneywatch

CNN Money

twitter.com/CNNMoney

Investopedia

twitter.com/Investopedia

Marketplace

twitter.com/MarketplaceAPM

Kiplinger

twitter.com/Kiplinger

StockTwits

twitter.com/stocktwits

Yahoo! Finance

twitter.com/YahooFinance

Financial News/Market Commentary

Bloomberg News

twitter.com/BloombergNow

Financial Times Alphaville

twitter.com/FTAlphaville

New York Times Business

twitter.com/nytimesbusiness

Reuters

twitter.com/Reuters

Wall Street Journal

twitter.com/WSJ

Economics and Bonds

Calculated Risk

twitter.com/calculatedrisk

The Dismal Scientist

twitter.com/dismalscientist

WSJ Real Time Economics

twitter.com/WSJecon

AAIL Twitter Accounts

Among the AAIL staff, Wayne and Charles maintain Twitter pages. You can see a complete list of who they follow by going to their personal twitter pages and clicking on the “following” link on the right-hand side of the page.

Wayne A. Thorp

twitter.com/AAIL_CI

Charles Rotblut

twitter.com/charlesrotblut

We also offer Twitter feeds with AAIL content and other useful information.

AAIL Invest Ed

twitter.com/AAIL_Invest_Ed

AAIL Stock Investor Pro

twitter.com/AAIL_SIPro

variety of tax subjects, useful calculators (including one for 2014 health insurance tax credit eligibility) and other related tools are easily accessible. The articles are concise, but provide plenty of information, often with accompanying tables. A tax blog that also covers personal finance topics is updated throughout the year.

The Tax Estimator tool is surprisingly thorough for an online tool, though it cannot be used to file. Reminders for the company’s premium services are noticeable, but not obtrusive.

Hoover’s Online IPO Central

www.hoovers.com/global/ipoc

FREE

Category: IPOs

Lists the proposed IPO offerings for the week, latest IPO filings and latest pricing information. Each company name in the charts links to a quick overview of the firm. Hoover’s also provides a calendar, and its IPO filings

section organizes filings by quarter. The IPO performance page presents shares offered, offer amount and price, along with first day opening and closing prices. A "IPO scorecard" offers data on best and worst returns, biggest first days, and winners and losers; it also provides a breakdown of IPO pricing by industry for the last quarter.

ImmediateAnnuities.com

www.immediateannuities.com
FREE

Category: Immediate Annuities

The website looks dated, but it does provide annuity quotes when you enter your state, age, gender and either the lump sum you have to invest or the monthly dollar amount you'd like to receive. However, to get the full nine-page report on any policy, you must submit your name and contact information. Site also provides articles on immediate annuities and a list of the 20 insurance companies that participate, along with their asset size and ratings from the major agencies. A free monthly e-newsletter gives a comparative annuity report.

Insure U

www.insureuonline.org
FREE

Category: Insurance

Operated by the National Association of Insurance Commissioners (NAIC), this site provides educational information. Guides cover auto, home, life, cancer and earthquake insurance; they can be downloaded from the site or ordered by mail. The States and Jurisdiction Map links to each state's insurance regulator's website, allowing individuals to find information specific to their state. Online "courses" discuss special considerations related to various stages of life.

Internal Revenue Service

www.irs.gov
FREE

Category: Tax Information

The official IRS website provides numerous explanations of almost every tax issue in the tax code. The downloadable publications, tax forms and instructions are valuable, particularly for less com-

mon tax issues. The official publications and rules for current-year tax filings usually start to appear on the site in late October (though they may appear later this year). You can search for articles or publications by specific tax topics, and you can search among various IRS resources including FAQs, forms and publications, and how to e-file. Once you have filed, you can check on the status of any refund owed by going to "Where's My Refund?"

Katt & Company

www.peterkatt.com
FREE

Category: Insurance

Robust library of in-depth articles written for consumers and planners. Life Insurance Perspectives newsletter covers specific policies and policy trends for estate planning professionals, but can also be instructive for consumers. Recent case profiles illustrate solutions for real-life situations.

Kiplinger

www.kiplinger.com
FREE

Category: Retirement Planning

 **Where to Find:** Click on Retirement from the menu just below the logo.

A unique combination of tools for determining the impact of retirement-related issues. The Medicare Part D Doughnut Hole calculator shows how much prescription drugs will cost out of pocket. The Retiree Tax Map (in the Baby-Boomer Retirement Guide) lists income, sales, property and estate taxes on a state-by-state basis. Kiplinger also regularly publishes new commentary on retirement-related subjects and offers tools similar to those found on other websites such as a required minimum distributions (RMD) calculator.

LIFE (Life and Health Insurance Foundation for Education)

www.lifehappens.org
FREE

Category: Insurance

Provides straightforward basics on life, disability, long-term care and health

insurance. Online tool allows you to search for agents by name, ZIP code or city and state. Articles, videos and consumer guides explain the difference between various types of insurance and the types of policies offered. An updated blog discusses current insurance issues of interest and allows visitors to post comments.

LifeInsure.com

www.lifeinsure.com
FREE

Category: Insurance

Quote search engine doesn't require personal contact information. The list shows the A.M. Best rating and premium amount for each resulting company; click on company name for more ratings and a company summary. Well-written materials explain the basic types of insurance, plus how rates are calculated. Articles include information on recent developments. Video alternative is available for some articles. Site also shows how to calculate how much life insurance you need. Blog discusses life insurance news.

MarketWatch.com

www.marketwatch.com
FREE

Category: Investing Videos

 **Where to Find:** Click on Videos in the row of choices underneath the main tabs.

Presents a wide range of videos separated by the categories top news, programs, markets, featured and partner channel. Subcategories are provided for each. The videos are presented by WSJ Live. A description of each video is provided.

Category: Mutual Fund Data

 **Where to Find:** Type the mutual fund ticker in the quote box at the top of the page.

Fundamental data is provided on the main mutual fund page and includes fees and expenses, distributions and risk measures. Lipper ratings for total return, consistent return, preservation, tax efficiency and expenses are provided, along with the year-to-date Lipper ranking. Users can calculate the growth

of \$10,000 from a user-specified year. Fund compare enables the comparison of up to five funds. The Holdings tab presents the holdings and a breakdown by sector and asset allocation. Charts are also provided.

Category: Stock Data

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type a stock's ticker in the quote search box.

Provides common fundamental stock data including the current price, volume and 52-week price range. Financial statement data is provided for the past five periods annually and quarterly, along with a graphic trend chart. Accessing historical quotes requires users to enter a specific date instead of a range. Stock profile includes price chart with insider action depicted. Options data is provided. Links to SEC filings include 8-K, 10-Q and 10-K.

Hulbert report shows the consensus recommendations among investment newsletters, including AAI's *Stock Superstars Report*, for the stock. Insiders section offers insider buys and sells within the last 12 months.

Medicare Interactive.org

www.medicareinteractive.org
FREE—\$125/year

Category: Medicare

This website provides comprehensive information on Medicare. The information is neatly organized into topics and subtopics, with related links pointing to detailed information. A free newsletter covering Medicare issues is offered. Medicare Rights University gives advice on how to enroll, file appeals and access nursing care (a subscription is required for this part, however).

Medicare.gov

www.medicare.gov
FREE

Category: Medicare

This government website offers an extensive collection of resources. The home page reports news affecting Medicare and includes commonly accessed resources and an especially useful collection of search tools that allow you to locate and compare Medicare prescrip-

tion drug plans, Medigap (Medicare supplement insurance) and health plan policies, hospitals, nursing homes, home health agencies and dialysis facilities. My Medicare (www.mymedicare.gov) is the official government secure online service for accessing your personal Medicare information. In order to use the service, you must be a registered user (requires a Medicare number).

Moneychimp

www.moneychimp.com
FREE

Category: Stock Valuation & Ratings

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on How Much are Stocks Worth?

A box on the upper right side of the page provides navigation choices. There are two educational articles written to teach the basics of stock valuation. The valuation methods are based on discounted cash flow (DCF), price-earnings ratio, price-to-sales ratio, PEG ratio, Graham's formula, dividend discount model, Buffett's formula and capital asset pricing model (CAPM). Each valuation technique allows the user to enter relevant information on the stock in question and generate a value such as share price, fair price-earnings ratio and fair price-to-sales ratio. The website is highly beneficial to investors looking for simple, fundamental stock analysis because it provides a variety of fundamental calculators while allowing the user to control most of the inputs.

Morningstar.com

www.morningstar.com
FREE—\$189/yr. (free 14-day trial)

Category: Company Conference Calls

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Stocks, and then click Call Transcripts on the left.

Offers complete transcripts of company earnings conference calls. Includes the company presentation, the question-and-answer session, and a list of the executives and analysts participating in the call. The site lists the most recent and most popular transcripts, and also allows the user to search the database. Transcripts are broken down by sector, analyst and date. Transcripts are only

available back to the beginning of 2010. There is also no audio playback, but the transcripts are provided free of charge.

Category: Comprehensive

One of the best overall sites. Provides financial news stories and videos on a variety of investment topics. Simple to navigate and provides easy-to-locate individual sections for markets, personal finance and user forums. Comprehensive fundamental data is available on more than 385,000 investment offerings. Stock and mutual fund screeners are available, as well as a portfolio manager. Premium subscribers have access to Morningstar's proprietary research reports, premium stock and mutual fund screeners and additional portfolio monitoring tools. A new bonds section provides ratings for corporate bonds.

Category: Exchange-Traded Funds

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on ETFs.

Provides a free ETF screener that covers over 1,400 ETFs. Analyst reports are also provided free of charge. A performance table can be ranked according to the ETF performance for various time frames. ETF data provided is comparable to mutual fund data. Analyst picks and an ETF valuation quickrank are available to Premium members. The Cost Analyzer, another Premium feature, enables users to ascertain which funds are the cheapest based on initial investment, monthly investment, return expectations and time horizon.

Category: Mutual Fund Data

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type the mutual fund ticker in the quote box at the top of the page.

Provides over 150 fund statistics, including index and category comparisons, for free. Premium subscribers have access to analyst fund reports similar to premium stock reports. Fund Compare allows for quick comparisons of multiple funds. Access to fund family reports is for Premium subscribers, but a snapshot of basic fund family data is free. Provides a section detailing management, and the expense area is useful in assessing the cost of a fund compared to

the average and median. Morningstar's proprietary ratings for return and risk, as well as several volatility measures, are presented in the ratings and risk section. Morningstar.com also presents a star rating (out of five) for all widely used mutual funds. The rating is based on the the proprietary report available to Premium subscribers. Morningstar is generally acknowledged as the leader in mutual fund research and analysis.

Category: Mutual Fund Screening (fee-based)

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Funds, then click on Screeners and choose Premium Fund Screener.

Premium Fund Screener includes data for almost 26,000 mutual funds. Screening criteria is broken down by category and a comprehensive definition dictionary is available. Provides data field quartile ranges to assist users in picking values. Offers 10 preloaded screens that help you get started. After entering your criteria, the screener will show how many funds meet your requirements, making it easy to tighten or loosen the standards if needed. Users can search for data points of interest. Screens can be saved for later use. For each screen, you are able to rank the passing companies according to your preference for each data point used in the screen. Free mutual fund screener is offered, but only has 18 data points; the criteria are not customizable and results cannot be saved.

Category: Portfolio Tracking

🔍 **Where to Find:** Choose Portfolio.

Morningstar allows you to import portfolios using Quicken, Excel and websites such as MSN Money and Yahoo! Finance. Tracks the current price, price change, shares held, market value, percentage weight and Morningstar rating in the summary page. Also provides news and opinions, gain/loss tables, fundamentals and insights. Four different views with 75 data points are available, along with a section that charts performance. The X-Ray function, a Premium feature, reports your portfolio's weaknesses in asset allocation, and the Stock Intersection Analyzer lists

Joe's Favorite Web Resources

CNN Money

money.cnn.com

This remains my go-to website for financial news. On the right-hand side of the website, the last five viewed quotes and my watchlist are easily accessible, along with the most popular articles.

Yahoo! Finance

finance.yahoo.com

Yahoo! Finance lists the most recently searched quotes along with my portfolio on the right-hand side. Clicking on More Top Stories from the home page gives me the archived top stories on the economy, stocks, bonds and earnings. I find this section useful when scanning for major events related to a big swing in the markets.

Wikinvest

www.wikinvest.com

I like wikinvest as an online portfolio manager. The website automatically connects to my brokerage and retirement accounts and updates my holdings. The performances of my various accounts are available on the home page, and performance is broken down in the performance tab.

The Economist

www.economist.com

The Economist provides a great "change-of-pace" from the normal financial websites; it mixes world politics with business and economics. The website also features science and technology news and provides a section dedicated to global culture.

— Z. Joe Lan, CFA, assistant financial analyst with AAIL

any stock overlap in your mutual funds. The Risk Analyzer evaluates how your securities interact and measures overall portfolio risk. A nightly email is tailored to your alert settings, such as changes in ratings, estimates and financials; news; actions such as splits and dividends; performance; and price movements. Portfolio views are printable. A comprehensive help section that includes data definitions is now available. A comprehensive report can be printed on your portfolio as a whole that incorporates several Premium features (only available to Premium subscribers).

Category: Stock Data

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type a stock's ticker in the quote box at the top of the page.

Financial statement data is provided for the last five fiscal quarters and fis-

cal years (premium subscribers have access to 10 years and 10 quarters). Performance history given on an annual basis, along with trailing returns going back 15 years. Valuation section offers multiples for the selected company, as well as multiples for its five-year average, the industry average and the S&P 500 for comparison. Trends in multiples are also presented. Ownership data is listed and premium subscribers have access to ownership history, allowing users to see trends. Key ratios are reported for the current fiscal year as well as going back 10 years. Bond data and options pricing are presented. Premium subscribers have access to Morningstar's analyst reports, which are available on approximately 1,700 investments. Reports form the basis of Morningstar's famous "star" ratings.

Category: Stock Screening

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Stocks at the top of the page, and then click Stock Screener at the bottom left under Tools.

The free stock screener allows you to filter by stock basics, Morningstar stock grades, company performance, stock performance and valuation. Stock basics include sector (such as health care and telecom), type (such as aggressive growth and cyclical), equity style box (such as large-cap growth and small-cap value) and market capitalization size. Morningstar stock grades provide a growth grade, profitability grade and financial health grade. Stock performance allows you to choose year-to-date, one-month, three-month, one-year and five-year performance periods, and valuation allows you to choose trailing price-earnings ratio, price-earnings-to-earnings-growth (PEG) ratio and dividend yield values. The screener allows you to “score” the results based on the importance of criteria. For instance, users can choose a high growth rate as the most important characteristic, and Morningstar will rank the passing companies accordingly. The fee-based Premium screener has 440 data fields for screening and allows you to run more thorough screens. The Premium stock screener also offers nine built-in screens. The premium screener is a better choice for those who use stock screens often for investment research; the free screener simply does not offer enough data fields.

Motley Fool CAPS

caps.fool.com
FREE

Category: Social Media & Networking

Registered users can post predictions of stock performance relative to the S&P 500 over a specified time period. As stock prices change, the site evaluates player predictions. Over time, players receive an accuracy percentage based on how often they make correct predictions. In addition, based on the performance of their picks, players receive a percentile rating indicating the percentage of players they are outperforming. Stocks also receive ratings, which are aggregations

of every player prediction for that stock, indicating whether or not players think the stock will outperform the S&P 500. Players with higher ratings have more influence on stock ratings. CAPS screener allows users to screen for stocks with varying CAPS ratings as well as on financial data elements. Though there are competitive websites, CAPS remains the most popular of its kind.

MSCI

www.msci.com
FREE

Category: Market Index Statistics

🔗 **Where to Find:** Hover over Indices for a listing of indexes.

Home to equity, REIT and hedge fund indexes. Outlines what the indexes are meant to represent and how they are most widely used. For each index, MSCI provides performance, methodology, announcements and index definitions. Current and historical performance numbers in tabular and chart formats are offered. The site reports performance data for international indexes in both U.S. dollars and the local currency. The methodology link provides details on how the index is built, maintained and rebalanced, while the index review presents the monthly changes made to the index. Provides indexes of common hedge fund strategies such as long-short and leveraged equity.

MSN Money

money.msn.com
FREE

Category: Stock Valuation & Ratings

🔗 **Where to Find:** Type the stock ticker in the quote box at the top left of the page. Click on StockScouter Report under Ratings/Analysis on the left of company page.

Provides an overall rating between one and 10 based on company summary, fundamentals, ownership, valuation and technical trends. The summary offers a description of the company, its short-term outlook and its pros and cons. The rest of the page gives a letter grade for each of the following areas: fundamental, ownership, valuation and technical, explaining the factors that

went into the grade. The downside is that no true valuation is given, and there are no user inputs. The ratings, however, are fairly in-depth. Each individual section provides two or three factors incorporated in the letter grade provided. Each factor is rated from very negative to very positive.

MyMoney.gov

www.mymoney.gov
FREE

Category: Personal Finance

This site provides links to specific content on the websites of the 21 federal entities that compose the Financial Literacy and Education Commission. Nearly all aspects of personal finance are covered, including saving, spending and borrowing. The content covers all age ranges as well, from a spending guide written for young adults to instructions for notifying the Social Security Administration when a family member passes. Many tools are linked to, including a life expectancy calculator, a daily spending worksheet and a checklist for protecting your checking account.

National Clearinghouse for Long-Term Care Information

www.longtermcare.gov
FREE

Category: Insurance

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Paying for LTC, then LTC Insurance under the Private Financing heading.

Offers good explanations of benefit choices, what long-term care policies cover, plan costs, designing coverage to meet your needs and where to buy. Includes useful Links and Resources areas.

Nolo

www.nolo.com
FREE

Category: Estate Planning

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Get Informed, then Select Wills, Trusts and Estates.

Nolo is a publishing company that specializes in explaining legal matters to laymen. Though the website's home page promotes the company's books, forms and software, there is also a large

amount of helpful commentary. In its Wills & Estates section, Nolo includes articles and Q&As on estate-planning basics, wills, probate, living trusts, estate and gift taxes and more. Some of the premium products are promoted in the articles, but the articles also contain links to useful external websites as well.

Options Industry Council

www.optionseducation.org

FREE

Category: Options/Futures

🔗 **Where to Find:** Use tabs running across top of page to access major areas. The OIC Education tab takes you to the directed learning center.

New URL, but site remains the same. Provides online classes, webcasts, a virtual trading system, seminars and audio and video podcasts designed to educate investors on options and futures. Presents basic and advanced information, from explaining what options are to breaking down the Black-Scholes model. Education resources are comprehensive and include webcasts and podcasts for numerous educational topics. Also offers information on various options and futures trading strategies. Provides a bevy of tools such as options, collar and covered call calculators. Delayed quotes are accessed by entering the appropriate symbol. Extensive market data and free email alerts are available. Also offers free DVD and brochures and literature.

REIT.com

www.reit.com

FREE

Category: REITs

Site combines functions for industry professionals with educational services for individual investors. Educational offerings include articles, videos and interviews with industry experts. Offers an extensive informational section on the basics of REITs including benefits, a glossary and a guide to getting started. The Data and Research tab provides index data, performance by investment sector and property sector and other research resources. The Investing tab offers a list of REIT funds and provides a portfolio optimizer that enables users to compare

returns, volatility and Sharpe ratio for different REIT portfolios. Numerous REIT publications are archived online and available for free. The Policy Issues tab provides REIT federal tax legislation and federal and state tax issues.

Reuters

www.reuters.com

FREE

Category: Analyst Estimates, Ratings & Recommendations

🔗 **Where to Find:** Type a stock's ticker in the quote search box, then choose the Analysts tab.

Provides analyst estimates and recommendations in a tabular format, all on one page. Presents the consensus recommendation and next earnings estimate. Offers recent analyst recommendations and revisions; mean, high and low sales and earnings estimates; historical sales and earnings surprises; sales and earnings estimate trends; and revenue and earnings revisions. Each estimate is further broken down by quarter and year for multiple time periods. Lists the number of analysts rating the stock buy, outperform, hold, underperform and sell along with ratings from one-, two- and three-months ago.

Category: Financial News & Analysis

Reuters provides more of an international focus than other news sites. World news is provided for developed, emerging and frontier markets. Separate sections for U.S., European, Asian and global markets are offered. Economic and political news affecting the markets are all covered as is tech and business news. Several well-known economists and investors, such as Lawrence Summers, provide opinions for Reuters that are posted on its site. A new video section is also offered.

Russell

www.russell.com

FREE

Category: Market Index Statistics

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Russell Indexes.

A long list of indexes, including Global, Japanese, frontier market and

domestic, are offered. Hover over Indexes at the top right to see a listing of index categories. Indexes are broken down by both region and sector. Index returns, values, construction and composition, news and commentary are presented. Fundamental data characteristics are also provided. Daily and annualized total returns are provided and are downloadable into a PDF file. Exchange-traded funds based on the various U.S. indexes are presented. Historical performance cycles and index definitions are also offered.

S&P Dow Jones Indices

us.spindices.com

FREE

Category: Market Index Statistics

Standard & Poor's indexes are now under the S&P Dow Jones Indices umbrella. Reports domestic and foreign S&P index data. Indexes are categorized by type and country. Factsheets, index methodology and FAQs are provided for each index. Performance data is updated daily and one-day, month-to-date, quarter-to-date, year-to-date figures, plus three- and five-year performance figures, are provided. Comprehensive fixed-income indexes, including municipals and global, are available. Factsheets and index methodology can be downloaded as a PDF file. Update to site has improved navigation dramatically. Click on Index Family at the top to select an index type.

Seeking Alpha

www.seekingalpha.com

FREE

Category: Company Conference Calls

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Earnings & Transcripts under Where to Go Next at the bottom of the home page.

Provides an extensive section devoted to transcripts of quarterly earnings conference calls. Includes the company presentation, the question-and-answer session, and a list of the executives and analysts participating in the call. Presents the latest and most popular transcripts and separates them by broad industry. You can search by company, product or theme. A calendar shows upcoming earnings calls and events. Earnings Cur-

rents on the left-hand side of the page presents up-to-the-minute earnings news and expectations. You may also sign up for email alerts for upcoming earnings releases.

SmartMoney.com

www.smartmoney.com
FREE–\$58/yr. (free 14-day trial)

Category: Comprehensive

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Invest.

SmartMoney provides news items on stocks, bonds, funds, markets and investing strategies. Comprehensive planning and retirement sections are also available. Fundamental data along with limited charting capabilities are offered. Financial statements are provided for the last 15 quarters and 10 years. SmartMoney provides power javascript-based tools, including ETF Compare, Fund Compare and Stock Compare, but the best tools require a SmartMoney Select subscription. A portfolio tracker is also provided, but you must register for an account. Fee-based services include real-time quotes, historical data, stock and fund screening, interactive charting and access to expert advice and analysis.

Category: Mutual Fund Data

🔗 **Where to Find:** Type the mutual fund ticker in the quote box at the top right of the page.

Lipper ratings, key ratios, total returns and fund stats are all provided on the main mutual fund page. Users are able to compare performance to that of other funds and indexes for a customizable time period. Annual returns for each year date back to 2001, and cumulative returns are given for various periods up to 10 years. The risk page offers standard deviation, R-squared, alpha and beta. Key fundamental figures are provided against those of the class average. Lists 25 best- and worst-performing funds over the past day, week, month, quarter and year. A separate news section is available. Most of the advanced analysis tools are for premium subscribers only.

Category: Mutual Fund Screening (fee-based)

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Tools,

then click on Mutual Funds and choose Fund Screener from the list that appears.

Over 23,000 mutual funds are available for screening on 50 separate criteria. Descriptions of the screening criteria include average values for the various mutual fund classes. After entering your selection criteria, the screener shows how many mutual funds pass, which makes tightening and loosening your requirements simple. The screener is easy to use and allows the user to save screens for future use. The application also comes with nine pre-loaded screens based on different investment styles. Allows users to construct a report for all passing mutual funds with customizable columns for data points. Provides capability to export the data listed in the report. Screener requires Java to be installed to work properly.

Category: Personal Finance

Covers all of the personal finance basics including banking, loans, insurance and tax and estate planning, along with coverage of related issues such as health care, small business and elder care. Good selection of in-depth articles within each personal finance section, and well-thought-out navigation tools. Emphasis tends toward “newsy” topics rather than the basics. Clicking on the Tools section of the website provides access to a wide selection of worksheets, calculators and other planning tools.

Personal finance topics are spread throughout the website, as opposed to being under a dedicated “personal finance” section. Visitors can click on a specific subject, such as “spend” or “borrow,” from the top of any page.

Category: Portfolio Tracking

🔗 **Where to Find:** Click on Tools and then click on Portfolio.

Track total portfolio value and the day's gain/loss, along with a breakdown showing the cost, price, current value and gain/loss of each holding. Transactions page lists the commissions, total shares, average cost and total amount of each holding. Also tracks buys, sells and dividends. Portfolio transactions

can be imported from Quicken and Microsoft Money and exported as a CSV or Excel file. Offers several analysis tools including performance chart and map, allocation chart and benchmark comparison. Email alerts can be sent as a daily summary or more frequently with intraday price movements. Current view can be customized and printed. At the bottom of your portfolio, relevant news items and press releases are listed.

Category: Retirement Planning

🔗 **Where to Find:** Go to Tools, click on Retirement and then select from the list of tools.

Offers several planning worksheets, including an asset allocation tool for those in retirement, a 401(k) planner for those who have yet to retire, and a bond allocation worksheet. The free Retirement Planning Worksheet allows you to enter personal financial information, including your salary, current and planned savings, expenses during retirement, other income sources (e.g., annuities) and retirement goals; the worksheet determines how much you will need to accumulate by retirement, whether your current savings plan will reach that amount, and how much more you may need to save to meet your goal.

Category: Stock Data

🔗 **Where to Find:** Type a stock ticker in the quote box at the top right of the page.

One of the top sites for fundamental data comparison. The Competitive Analysis section (click on Compare) allows users to compare a searched company to five of its industry peers based on selected financial statement items, financial multiples and ratios, growth rates, share statistics and consensus analyst recommendations. The Dynamic Compare module (found in box on right side of stock page) allows users to select up to five companies for comparison and offers 16 data tables for viewing.

Financial statement data provided covers the last 15 fiscal quarters and the last 10 fiscal years and is available in printer-friendly format. Offers a price chart with

insider buy and sell transactions, as well as insider gain/loss data and an insider timing grade. Consensus earnings estimates for the current quarter and year and the next fiscal quarter and year are given. Offers the ability to create custom stock reports for printing. Ratings section gives analyst recommendations and recent trends.

Does not provide historical price quotes or comparative industry data.

Category: Stock Screening (fee-based)

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Tools, and then choose click Stock Screener (subscription required).

Java-based screener provides a universe of over 4,500 stocks (down from over 7,700 last year). After logging in, a drop-down menu lists the variables. Screener allows you to choose conditions and values, such as greater than, less than, top % in sector and between numbers that you specify. For each screening criterion, the site provides averages and a description. Screens can be saved so you can track them over a period of time. Twenty-four built-in stock screens are available. The screener offers 140 variable choices and users can also create their own screening variables. Results can be exported into a spreadsheet. The only downside is that the company reports are not as detailed as those at other websites.

StockCharts.com

www.stockcharts.com

FREE—\$49.95/mo. (free 10-day trial)

Category: Stock Charting & Technical Analysis

Offers one of the best collections of charts available on the Internet. Features line, bar, equivolume and candlestick charting, as well as three options for point & figure charting. For point & figure charts, the site automatically displays pattern alerts on all of the charts. Non-subscribers can plot up to three of the 40 technical indicators available on one chart, while paid memberships allow for up to 25 overlays and indicators. Stock Scans allows users to apply technical formulas to a stock universe to receive a listing of stocks that meet those criteria and includes over 130 technical

Wayne's Favorite Web Resources

Investopedia

www.investopedia.com

I find this an excellent source for definitions of financial terms. In addition, the site has tutorials and articles broken down by investment level and style, such as Beginners, Active Traders and Retirement. The coverage is comprehensive.

StockCharts.com

www.stockcharts.com

Arguably the best charting website available and an excellent resource for free point & figure charts; it's my favorite chart analysis tool. In addition, the site's Chart School is an excellent starting point for those wishing to learn more about charting and technical analysis.

Twitter

www.twitter.com

By following a variety of investment professionals and hobbyists, I am exposed to numerous investment articles that I otherwise would not find on my own.

MarketWatch.com

www.marketwatch.com

This is my go-to site for company news. I like how the site breaks things down by "premium" outlets, including WSJ.com, Barron's, TheStreet.com, and Seeking Alpha, as well as by company press releases. That way I can get "unfiltered" news about a company as well as that with an analytical slant.

—Wayne A. Thorp, CFA, AII senior financial analyst and Computerized Investing editor

data fields. Real-time data and technical alerts are available to paid members. The ChartSchool is one of the most extensive educational sections on the Web. Pro subscribers get data going back to 1970 and have no limitations for charting.

TreasuryDirect

www.treasurydirect.gov

FREE

Category: Bonds

Allows individuals to buy Treasury securities online from the government commission-free, including: U.S. Treasury bills, notes and bonds; TIPS (Treasury Inflation-Protected Securities); and U.S. government Series EE and inflation-linked I savings bonds. Also provides certain online services to holders of H/HH bonds (which are no longer issued).

Individuals can use one TreasuryDirect account for all Treasury products. The account allows you to reinvest interest

payments and maturing securities and to sell Treasuries before maturity.

Provides comprehensive information on all Treasury securities and U.S. savings bonds. An easy-to-use interface allows you to manage your savings bond inventory and determine current redemption value.

ValuEngine.com

www.valuengine.com

\$199.95/yr. (free 30-day trial)

Category: Stock Valuation & Ratings (fee-based)

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type a stock's ticker in the quotes search box after logging in (subscription required).

Provides fair values for individual stocks that are derived from a proprietary model employing three fundamental models: trailing 12-month earnings per share, consensus forecasted earnings per share for the next 12 months and the current 30-year Treasury yield (all of

Staff Picks: Favorite Areas of AAll.com

AAll Investor Classroom

www.aall.com/classroom

This is a great “how-to” resource, and I constantly refer members to it. The various lessons cover everything from managing risk and return expectations to evaluating dividend stocks. Best of all, it is very easy to find guidance on a specific investing topic.

—Charles Rotblut, CFA

Stock Investor Wiki & Videos

www.aall.com/siprowiki/index.cfm

www.aall.com/stock-investor-pro/videotutorials

Stock Investor Pro can be daunting without proper guidance, and our wiki and videos are great resources. Specifically written to help users familiarize themselves with the program, the wiki covers all the main sections of *SI Pro* and highlights their key functions and capabilities. Best of all, the wiki is collaborative: Users can submit their own input and suggestions. New *SI Pro* videos are posted monthly as a complement to the *SI News* email.

—Joe Lan, CFA

AAll Discussion Boards

www.aall.com/boards

This is an excellent way for AAll members to interact with one another without having to leave their homes! Pose questions to other members on a variety of topics or offer your insights on member questions or comments.

—Wayne A. Thorp, CFA

AAll Stock Screens

www.aall.com/stock-screens

The stock screens area offers both education and investment ideas for members looking to construct and manage a stock portfolio. The area profiles over 60 strategies grouped by investment style. Members can read about factors that make each approach unique, see how a hypothetical portfolio following each approach has performed during various market environments, and even get a listing of stocks passing each screen.

—John Bajkowski

AAll Blog

www.aall.com/investment-education

This new section is an easy way to keep up to date with everything that is happening at AAll. Daily posts let you know when new articles or analysis have been added to AAll.com and which local chapter meetings are taking place.

—Jean Henrich

which are updated throughout the day). Model also makes use of firm-specific parameters such as long-term earnings growth rate, volatility of earnings growth rate, systematic risk of the firm and dividend payout ratio. Unfortunately, little information is made available regarding the actual process.

ValuEngine rates companies from one (strong sell) to five (strong buy). Individual investor membership includes market overview and delayed quotes, portfolio management functions, a stock screening tool and ValuEngine rating on over 4,000 stocks. Analyst research is also provided. ValuEngine is a top website

for stock valuation but no services are provided free of charge.

wikinvest

www.wikinvest.com

FREE

Category: Portfolio Tracking

Portfolio tracker can synchronize with all major brokerages such as Vanguard, Scottrade, Fidelity and TD Ameritrade. The tracker provides a real-time picture of your combined portfolio performance. The “dashboard” consists of news, summary, performance and fundamentals. You can customize each to display data of personal interest. Performance is represented as time-weighted returns in accordance with Global Investment Performance Standards, meaning cash deposits or withdrawals will not impact portfolio performance. The portfolio tracking tool also offers portfolio briefing emails and breaking news alerts. One of the top free websites available for portfolio tracking, but in order to sync it with your brokerage accounts, you must provide your login and password information. Make sure you are comfortable with providing this information to a third party before using this site.

Category: Social Media & Networking

Investment research site allows users to contribute articles and edit content. Covers a variety of investing topics, including individual company reports, which rival much of what can be found from more traditional investing websites. Reports typically offer a background of the company as well as trends that can hurt and benefit the company's financial performance. Charts are easily accessible for many financial metrics. Articles cover investing concepts, commodities, mutual funds and global markets.

Contributors must register with the site; as you post or make changes to the wiki, you earn contributor points. This allows users to gauge the usefulness and validity of your posts. Posts are monitored, but as is the case with any social website, the information should be verified via company reports and

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in the Journal

Computerized Investing is AAI's quarterly newsletter covering software and websites geared toward individual investors for investment analysis and tracking. To learn more about CI, visit us on the Web at www.computerizedinvesting.com.

The Top Financial Apps

These are some of the best financial apps for iOS and Android devices. More app reviews can be found in AAI's *Computerized Investing* newsletter (www.computerizedinvesting.com).

CNBC Real-Time for iOS

CNBC's iPad app gives users access to live, real-time stock quotes from both the New York Stock Exchange and NASDAQ Marketplace.

The app is divided into four main sections—markets, news, videos and “My Stocks.” The markets section contains the bulk of the data available with the app and is divided into eight subsections—indexes, pre-markets, movers, commodities, currencies, bonds, Dow impact and CNBC stocks.

The indexes tab offers current quotes and performance data for major U.S., European and Asian indexes, including five-day return, a thumbnail chart of the day's trading activity and a brief news headline. Tapping on an individual index will take you to a full-screen chart with multiple time frames. You can overlay an additional index chart for comparison and choose from over 10 fundamental and technical indicators.

The Dow Impact tab shows the current Dow Jones industrial average quote along with the change for the day and its performance, and then lists those Dow components that are having the biggest positive and negative impact on the average for the current trading day.

The “My Stocks” tab allows you to create custom lists of stocks you own or track, view their performance in real time and retrieve current news content. From this list, you can tap on individual indexes or stocks to view a full-screen chart or a collection of news items. You can save articles for offline viewing and share articles via email.

The CNBC app provides unlimited access to over 150 new videos each day from CNBC, CNBC Europe and CNBC Asia, plus content from shows such as Mad Money. I did find, however, that watching video can be a little frustrating, depending on your Internet connection.

The app is free from Apple iTunes.

Heat Map for iOS

Ivory Bull's Heat Map app offers a quick and easy way to scan for securities that are outperforming or underperforming their peers. The app's heat maps let you visualize the stocks or exchange-traded funds (ETFs) of a given category in order of percentage returns, with different colors and shadings representing the quality and degree of performance.

Heat Map currently has several different heat maps, and has

been increasing the number since its release. For stocks, there are maps that cover several indexes—the S&P 500 index, the Dow Jones industrial average, the NASDAQ-100 and the Russell 2000 index. The remaining maps cover exchange-traded funds (ETFs): WorldMap (country ETFs), CommodityMap, EnergyMap, SectorMap, MetalMap, Most Popular ETFs and Sector SPDRs.

After you choose the index or ETF category you wish to plot, you choose the type of heat map: current day's return, 52-week high or low, or 50- or 200-day moving average, current day's volume, average daily volume and current price.

You can then track your own custom portfolio or watchlist, build your own heat maps based on any combination of stocks you desire, and compare them against each other based on their returns, volume, price, technical formations against key moving averages and more.

The app costs \$9.99 and is available from the Apple iTunes.

Mint for Android and iOS

Mint is a personal finance website from Intuit that pulls all your financial accounts into one place to help you create budgets, track your financial goals and more. Mint has partnered with most of the top financial institutions, including Paypal, so you can sync with all the accounts you have money flowing into and out of. This unrivaled coverage means you always have an idea of your financial status.

Beyond giving a snapshot of your finances, the app offers budget planning and monitoring capabilities. Mint automatically organizes your spending across multiple categories, so you can identify areas where you can cut back. You can also set goals that help you control spending in order to reach your financial goals.

The initial overview screen of the Mint app gives you an instant snapshot of where your money is going as well as areas where you may need to scale back in order to stay on budget. This is presented as a pie chart that you can tap on to get detailed spending on a given category. The budget bar on the overview screen shows you how much you've already spent against your monthly budget. Tapping on this brings up budget bars for each individual spending category.

Lastly, the Mint app provides you with notices of upcoming bills, suspicious account activity, low balances and tips on how to save money.

The app is available for free from Apple iTunes and Google Play.

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Wikinvest Portfolio for Android, Blackberry and iOS

Wikinvest is a free website that allows users to post, read and discuss financial information. In addition, its portfolio tracking tool can download your financial information from brokers and banks. The Wikinvest Portfolio app brings these same features found online to your mobile device. With it you can see all of your accounts at over 60 brokerages, all in one screen. See the biggest movers in your portfolio, get the lat-

est quotes, and read company and market news. You can also read company analysis written by the community and study data fundamentals with comparisons to industry competitors.

The app is available for free from Apple iTunes, Google Play and Blackberry App World.

—Wayne A. Thorp, CFA, is senior financial analyst at AAIL and editor of Computerized Investing. Follow him on Twitter @AAIL_CI.

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third-party data sources.

Wilshire

www.wilshire.com

FREE

Category: Market Index Statistics

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Indexes at the top of the page.

Wilshire provides broad market, real estate and U.S. style indexes. The site presents current and historical performance and construction/methodology information such as index membership requirements, weighting and adjustment and maintenance. Characteristics page shows index fundamental data, while membership page lists securities in each index. The Index Return Calculator allows users to track performances of a combination of indexes. Users are also able to input an “as of date” into the calculator to obtain figures for various time frames.

WSJ.com

www.wsj.com

FREE—\$259.48/yr. for digital only (free 28-day trial)

Category: Financial News & Analysis

Current and archived content of The Wall Street Journal’s print publications are augmented with additional online content. Online content is updated throughout the day. Market Data Center offers a wealth of data and statistics for domestic and foreign markets. Provides a searchable archive. The home page can be customized to fit your personal interests. Email updates, RSS data feeds and podcasts are available. Added cost to search for older news stories. WSJ’s

world page is highly extensive, providing news from Asia, China, Japan, India, Europe, the U.K., Russia, the Middle East and Africa.

XTF.com

www.xtf.com

FREE—\$99/mo. (free 15-day trial)

Category: Exchange-Traded Funds

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type ETF ticker in search box.

Provides ratings on over 1,400 U.S.-listed ETFs, covering almost all of the exchange-traded marketplace. Main page for an ETF gives current quote data, investment philosophy, style and underlying index, along with yield, dividend, net asset value, discount or premium, top 10 holdings and news. Free section of research area offers an ETF screener, a compare tool and performance data that includes an XTF rating. Subscribers have access to performance “heatmaps,” performance analytics, fund flows and trend analysis tools, and exporting capability. The top subscription level allows users to print ETF data as a PDF or export it to Excel. An education center is offered to all users.

Yahoo! Finance

finance.yahoo.com

FREE—\$131.40/yr. (free 30-day trial)

Category: Comprehensive

Offers news and opinions on the markets and provides an in-depth personal finance section. Hover your mouse over each of the main sections and they expand to show a variety of categories that include market overview; investing ideas and expert advice; and budgeting, retirement planning and taxes. Data on mergers and acquisitions and IPOs are

offered in the News section. One of the few sites that offers historical quotes for stocks and indexes free of charge. Fee-based services include real-time quotes, stock tracking, streaming news, stock screening and real-time in-play market commentary.

Category: Investing Videos

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Video in the News tab.

Site separates videos into sections for market news, economy, personal finance, company news, international finance, tech & gadgets, and managing & leadership, among others. Each section displays the most recent videos along with a descriptive title. There are hundreds of videos in each section and the site allows you to search for videos of interest. Videos are now also listed by provider, including Reuters, ABC News and Bloomberg, making it a top site.

Category: Mutual Fund Data

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type the mutual fund ticker in the quote box at the top left of the page.

Provides current fund news, manager information, performance tables and graphs, risk measures and portfolio holdings. One of the few sites that provides daily historical prices. Comparisons to other funds or indexes can be overlaid on the charts. Risk page provides modern portfolio theory statistics for three, five and 10 years. Also shows number of years up and down, along with best and worst calendar-year performances. Top-performing funds are listed by style and sector. Interactive charting offers customization. Email price alerts are available. Research reports can be purchased.

Category: Personal Finance

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Personal Finance.

Numerous articles about all aspects of personal finance, including loans, insurance, real estate, saving and spending, and tax planning. Also provides useful "how-to" articles that cover the basics of each area. Content is well-organized, although there is little original content. Topic-specific calculators are linked to in most sections. A thorough dictionary of financial terms is available. Navigation is well-organized, and the site is easy to use.

Category: Retirement Planning

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Personal Finance, and then click on Retirement.

Offers articles giving advice on saving for retirement and retirement spending. Many of the articles are from other websites, however. Several retirement-related calculators are available, including ones that estimate Social Security income, project cash flow and future 401(k) balances, and determine whether or not it makes sense to convert to a Roth IRA.

Category: Social Media & Networking

🔍 **Where to Find:** Enter a stock's ticker in the quote search box at the top left of the page, then click on Message Boards under News & Info.

Investment message boards on stocks traded in the U.S., including over-the-

counter stocks, are broken down into investment type or sector. Users can rate individual posts and sort posts by rating. Be aware that boards are not monitored closely so spam is a bit of a problem, though offensive posts can be reported and specified posters can be ignored. This forum should be used primarily for discussing stocks with other investors, not for actual analysis.

Category: Tax Information

🔍 **Where to Find:** Click on Personal Finance, then go to Taxes.

Provides articles on tax-related topics, as well as tax calculators and how-to guides covering tax issues such as the alternative minimum tax, common tax credits and tax strategies for retirees. However, the emphasis is on popular news topics, with less information on tax basics.

Zacks.com

www.zacks.com

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Category: Analyst Estimates, Ratings & Recommendations

🔍 **Where to Find:** Type a stock's ticker in the quote box, then click on Estimates.

New version of site is currently in beta. Provides comprehensive estimates free of charge. Offers earnings growth estimates for the current quarter, next quarter, current year, next year and next five years. Also shows estimate revisions within the past seven and 30 days and

provides the estimate trend from seven, 30, 60 and 90 days ago. Earnings surprises are presented in a chart dating back a year.

What sets this site apart are the unique charts: The Price and Consensus chart shows the consensus estimate for each year along with the corresponding movement in the firm's stock price; the Price & EPS Surprise chart details each earnings surprise and the subsequent stock price response; the Broker Recommendations Chart plots the stock prices in relation to brokerage target prices. Zacks industry rank, target price and equity research reports are offered to premium subscribers.

Category: Stock Screening

🔍 **Where to Find:** At beta site, hover over Screening and click on Stock Screener.

Allows screening on almost 8,000 companies. Data points on which to screen are broken down into categories including size and share volume, price and price changes, broker ratings and changes, valuations, and income statement and balance sheet items, along with other categories. Subscribers to Zacks premium can screen based on Zacks Rank and Recommendations. Also allows screening based on earnings surprises and estimates, along with earnings revisions. One of the more powerful free stock screeners. ▲

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exchange-traded fund (ETF) sponsor sites appear in the annual Guide to Exchange-Traded Funds. You can access these special articles year-round in the Investor Guides area of AAIL.com.

Keep in mind that the Web is con-

stantly evolving. Sites can change drastically in a short period of time. Be sure to verify the source of information or provider of a service. And read the fine print on pricing before agreeing to pay for any data or investment service. ▲