

5 Apps to Help You Make Smarter Investment Choices

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Investing is generally seen as the domain of the rich and wealthy and a big part of any strategy to become financially independent is a sound investment strategy. In today's connected world, we find ourselves in constant pursuit of the fastest gadget, the most up-to-date data, the most reliable information source. You don't learn about investing by staring at a crystal ball but you might get some tips staring into your smartphone screen.

The more you know the better decisions you make and these apps have a vast array of resources to help by putting the ability to invest in the hands of just about anyone. It is getting easier to track, buy and sell mutual funds on the go as fund companies and brokerages roll out smartphone applications.

Mobile services and apps grew rapidly in much of the financial world, but mutual funds and stock trading were long left out of the mix because they were not viewed as an on-the-go necessity. After all, orders are executed based on end-of-day price calculations of the per-share value of the fund's holdings. Now, there are plenty of apps which enable users to make small investments on the go or monitor their larger investments before speaking with their broker(s).

5 Apps to Maximize Your Investments

Whether you check your portfolio more than once a day or you just do quarterly adjustments, load one of these five stock market apps on your smartphone or tablet and you'll always know how your

investments are doing. Gone are the days of dull charts and line graphs in these apps. These apps are colorful and offer real time market tickers, economic news and analysis tools.

1 – Morningstar

Morningstar was named one of the best investing apps by Money Magazine. Users can research and view performance charts for mutual funds, ETFs, CEFs and stocks (securities data is also available).

Other features include: Comparative tracking of the stock gainers, losers, and most active trades in U.S. Indexes. Premium analyst research. The ability to create or edit watch lists and ratings. And of course, the ability to follow global indexes and more.

2 – Stock Tweets

Stock Tweets offers users a stream of Twitter comments about stock trading and investments. This is an excellent way to follow the fast moving trends and hot tips around day trading stocks and other financial products. Rather than having to follow lots of different individuals to get a good sense of the other investors are thinking about the market and what companies you might want to look into, you can leverage the Stock Tweets app to scan current tweets.

See what other articles people are reading to understand new stocks or companies that are currently recovering and poised for growth, track hot picks or dump losers, or use these tweets to predict seasonal affects you may want to avoid.

3 – Fidelity Investments or Bloomberg iPhone App

The Fidelity Investments App for Android and the Bloomberg Stock Market Investment App for iPhone are new mobile solutions with real-time analysis. Users can access data on research, company portfolios, brokerage and savings accounts and trading tools. Keep up to date with the trade of your brokerage firm so you can be an active participant in managing your personal investment portfolio.

4 – USA TODAY Portfolio Tracker

Portfolio Tracker is a stock market app that works with over 60 U.S. brokerages so you can track your entire portfolio in real time on your smartphone or tablet. Track stocks, mutual funds, ETFs 401ks, and IRAs. All investments appear on a combined feed so you get a good overview and live charts show performance, allocation, risk and other information.

This app is secured with bank level encryption, you need to enter a PIN to use it, no account numbers are revealed on the screen and while you can monitor all your investments, no trades or withdrawals can be made from accounts through the app. USA TODAY Portfolio Tracker even gives you a little investment advice for tuning up your portfolio.

5 – Stock Alerts

Are you interested in buying a stock but do not have time to check your smartphone all day while working? This app will keep track of the stocks on your interest list. It will alert you whenever a stock reaches a certain price that you have set- through the convenience of your iPhone. You can use this app to alert you whenever a stock's price reaches your buy or sell price, without getting yourself glued to a stock or portfolio monitor all the time.

While mobile is still a fraction of how financial firms communicate with clients, it is become a central focus more and more each day. Keep up with the fast-paced markets with these powerful apps. They can really help you make accurate investment decisions faster and easier. Work closely with your financial advisor to choose investment apps which work best with your brokerage firm(s) or mutual fund managers, and consult them to ensure your choices are on target for success. Good luck and happy investing!