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# Investment Writing Update

*Writing that's an investment in your success*

**March 2008**

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Maximize mileage from your email subject line

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Your email in-box is crowded. The same goes for recipients of your emails. So make life easier for everyone by writing an informative subject line.

For example, start your subject line with:

- "Please reply by MARCH 31" or the more abrupt "Due by 3/31," if you've got a deadline
- "OK?" if you're seeking approval
- "Can you attend? Meeting on March 30"
- "FYI," if no action is required of the recipient

Another trick for getting your addressees' attention: use their names in your subject line. For example, "Sarah, please edit by March 31." This tells Sarah she isn't merely one of many people cc'd on the message.

I also like EOM--short for "end of message"--when I communicate with colleagues who understand that abbreviation. When you convey your complete message in the subject line, EOM signals the recipient that they needn't open your email.

### **Asset allocation in a low return world**

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The rules of asset allocation have changed. Two of the new imperatives:

- Using tactical asset allocation (TAA)
- Investing in real assets

These are among the best strategies for individual investors in an environment in which U.S. stocks are expected to average annual returns of 6%-7%. This is what I took away from "Asset Allocation in A Low Return World," a March 13 presentation to the Boston Security Analysts Society, by Adrian Cronje, vice president and director of asset allocation, Wilmington Trust. Read more about [Cronje's take on TAA and real assets](#).

Why the dollar might rise vs. the euro in 2008

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Read [why the dollar might appreciate vs. the euro](#), according to HSBC Group economist Stephen King, who spoke last month to the Boston Security Analysts Society.

### **Hooked on Pandora radio**

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I gathered my tax files to a mix of the Gipsy Kings, Caetano Veloso and Weather Report music stations on [Pandora](#). Pandora is an Internet radio station that you can customize to your tastes. You can input the name of a favorite artist or song, and then Pandora will play comparable music. It'll also usually include some tunes by the artist you name.

Parking intelligence

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Need to find the most convenient or best priced parking garage for your next drive into town? You're in luck if you're visiting Boston, New York City, Philadelphia or Washington, D.C., because [Bestparking.com](http://Bestparking.com) can suggest options for you. You can also search using your WAP enabled phone at [mobile.bestparking.com](http://mobile.bestparking.com).

Still, it's best to call ahead to check on details. The website provides phone numbers. When I recently approached the best priced option near Boston's Colonnade Hotel, I couldn't find a price list. I wasn't even sure it was open to non-monthly parkers.

## **Wall Street Journal columnist slams readability statistics**

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I mention Microsoft Word's readability statistics in my presentations on writing investment commentary, so a [recent column by Carl Bialik, The Wall Street Journal's The Numbers Guy](#) interested me. He points out that readability statistics are not perfect because they simply reflect the number of words/sentence and syllables per word in the piece analyzed.

That's true. But readability statistics are better than nothing. In general, a piece that gets a tenth grade rating will be more readable than one with a twelfth grade rating.

For instructions on how to use Word's readability statistics, search for "readability statistics" in Word

"Will the U.S. Sub-Prime Crisis Be as Bad as History Suggests?"

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"If history is a good guide, the U.S. economy will stay in the doldrums much longer than we'd like-a minimum of two years. That's the scary implication of '[Is the 2007 U.S. Sub-Prime Financial Crisis So Different? An International Historical Comparison](#)' by Carmen M. Reinhart of the University of Maryland and the National Bureau of Economic Research (NBER) and Kenneth S. Rogoff, Harvard University and NBER."

Read more of [my article about Reinhart and Rogoff's research and what advisors say about its implications](#). This article appeared in the Feb. 26 issue of *Advisor Perspectives*.

**Speaking at Refining Wealth Management conference and more**

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I'm looking forward to attending (and speaking at) the [Refining Wealth Management conference](#) held by the Edmonton CFA Society in April. Marc Faber, editor and publisher of The Gloom, Boom and Doom Report, will be a keynote speaker. I'm also presenting to the [CFA Society of Naples](#).

I enjoyed speaking to CFA Victoria earlier this month. The audience, which included professionals from the British Columbia Investment Management Corporation (bcIMC), one of Canada's largest institutional investors, attacked their small-group editing exercise with gratifying enthusiasm.

Quick Links...

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- [Susan Weiner Investment Writing Website](#)
- [Investment blog by Susan](#)
- [Marketing and communications blog by Susan](#)

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