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Susan B. Weiner  
**Investment Writing**

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In this issue

- Do you use "pride capitals"?
- A quant's guide to detecting a future "Madoff"
- Guest post: "What is a Visual Brand Standards Guide?"
- Last month's reader poll about newsletter strategies
- Career corner
- Bostonians, where will you be on November 10?
- Why I write for you

Do you use "pride capitals"?

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If you're in business, you probably use capital letters more than grammar geeks recommend.

I confess. I was guilty of overcapitalizing titles until Prof. Albert Craig, my Ph.D. thesis advisor, drummed the rules into me.

Continue reading "[Do you use 'pride capitals'?](#)" Also, **please answer the poll** in the **right-hand column** of [my InvestmentWriting blog](#).

By the way, if you have ideas for future polls, please email me or leave a comment on my blog. Some readers have told me that polls are their favorite part of this newsletter.

**More posts about communications and marketing**

- [Top 5 tips for investment performance advertising](#)
- [Proper usage of periods: One space or two?](#)
- [Leverage third-party endorsements](#)
- [It's not ONLY about your audience](#)
- [RFP dilemma: What should my colleague do?](#)

## **A quant's guide to detecting a future "Madoff"**

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Worried about getting taken in by an investment management Ponzi scheme?

The CFA Institute's GIPS conference introduced me to a quantitative method for detecting fraud in "The Importance of Risk and Attribution in the Post-Madoff Era" by Dan diBartolomeo, president and founder of Northfield Information Services.

Continue reading "[A quant's guide to detecting a future 'Madoff'](#)"

Guest post: "What is a Visual Brand Standards Guide?"

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*I'm a big fan of companies using style guides to ensure consistency of punctuation, grammar, and other aspects of writing style. So you probably won't be surprised that I also believe in visual consistency. This week's guest post discusses your visual brand standards guide. Annie Smidt, its author, is lead designer and strategist for Seltzer.*

Investment and wealth management businesses with strong branding and well-crafted, targeted messaging are connecting with current and potential clients -- from Fidelity and Schwab with their high-profile "green line" and "Talk to Chuck" rebrands/campaigns to small firms who have finally taken the plunge with a professional design firm.

Once you and your designers have gone through all the work of developing a visual identity for your company, and they've built you some great tools, such as business cards, letterhead and a website, and maybe some ads or brochures, then what?

Continue reading "[Guest Post: What is a Visual Brand Standards Guide?](#)"

## **Last month's reader poll about newsletter strategies**

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Last month my reader poll asked "Which newsletter strategies make sense for investment and wealth managers?"

Poll results

(Results may sum to more than 100% because multiple answers were allowed.)

Print vs. email

33% Print newsletter

83% E-newsletter

Frequency

33% Quarterly

58% Monthly

0% Weekly

Topic

50% Market commentary

41% Non-market articles

Articles written by:

25% The firm

41% Writer hired by the firm

8% Outside firm & that may be used by many competitors

Print vs. email

The dominance of email newsletter over print surprised me and marketing consultant Jen Dunning. Jen figured--and I agreed--that institutional managers would favor e-newsletters, while high net worth managers would favor print. I'm sure that I've got more HNW than institutional readers. However, my readers are mostly Internet-savvy managers who read my e-newsletter or follow me on Twitter. An above-average number of my readers use social marketing, so they've got clients and prospects who'll read e-newsletters.

Plenty of high-end investment and wealth managers would never dream of giving up their print newsletter. Jonathan Smith of Jonathan Smith & Co. is among them. "E-newsletters have no shelf life among our readers, some of whom save past issues [of our printed newsletters] to pass along to friends and family members." You can read [back issues of his newsletter on his website](#).

Some poll respondents may favor a mix of print and electronic communications. The poll allowed multiple answers.

Frequency/topic

Almost twice as many respondents picked monthly newsletters compared to quarterly newsletters. No one voted for weekly newsletters, though I know at least one advisor who offers a weekly e-publication. I think that most printed

client newsletters are quarterly--probably because of the time and expense of their production. Electronic communications make monthly newsletters more practical.

Market and non-market topics got roughly equal weighting from respondents. I'm a big believer in newsletters going beyond a mere recap of the past quarter's market events.

Newsletter authors

"Writer hired by the firm" got the highest number of responses, perhaps because people appreciate the time that writers can save for company managers--or the higher quality of writing they can deliver. Some investment and wealth managers simply don't have the staffing to allow them to write their own articles, which was the #2 answer. Using articles written by outside firms was the least popular option, though I may have skewed responses by pointing out that such articles "may be used by many competitors."

I think that all three article sources can work. If you use mass-produced articles, I suggest that you add a personal comment on the articles to relate them to your firm's clients.

More posts on newsletters:

- [Three tips for how often to publish your newsletter](#)
- [Should you drop subscribers who don't open your e-newsletters?](#)

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### **Career corner: Volunteering your way to work and personal satisfaction**

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If you're looking for new clients, referrals, or a new job, you may find that volunteering pays off. When I was unemployed, I got a boost from helping the Massachusetts Initiative for International Studies to promote international education in Massachusetts schools.

I also took advantage of enrolling in TDC's marketing and communications classes at the organization's reasonable rates for volunteers. [TDC's extensive curriculum](#) includes classes that help nonprofits with

- * Financial management
- * Governance and planning
- * Human resources

- * Marketing and communications
 - * Resource development
- Classes are mostly offered in downtown Boston.

More career-related posts

- [My personal top tips for raising your profile using LinkedIn](#) -- This was a popular link in my August newsletter
- [Six ways to stop sending emails with errors](#)

Bostonians, where will you be on November 10?

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Could your writing skills use a tune-up? If you work with investments, you'll get relevant tips from my November 10 mid-day presentation to Boston Women in Finance (BWF) on **"How to Write What People Will Read About Investments."**

The program sold out the first time I presented it. Details will be available later this year on the [BWF website](#). It would be great to meet you at this program. Please introduce yourself as one of my readers.

By the way, BWF will present "Booms, Busts and Bernie Madoff: Understanding Ponzi Schemes and other types of Investment and Securities Fraud" on October 21. The speakers will be Judy Roberts and John Hanson of [Huron Consulting Group](#).

**Why I write for you**

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You can reach more clients and prospects when you put your useful ideas into writing. However, many investment and wealth managers lack the time--or maybe the skill--to put ideas into writing persuasively. That means your audience loses an opportunity to benefit from your expertise.

I feel pain when I see great ideas hidden behind weak writing. That's especially true because I know a good editor or writer with industry knowledge could shape your ideas into compelling prose.



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Continue reading "[Why I write for you](#)"

**If you think "Why I write for you" would make a good addition to my website, please let me know. Thank you!**

Please help me spread the word about this newsletter. Use the "Send to a Colleague" button to forward this newsletter with your personal note to your colleagues whom it would interest.

Your colleagues' information will remain private. I have no way to learn their name or email address.

Thank you!

## Having trouble with this newsletter's links?

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Are you having trouble when you click on this newsletter's links? The solution might be to re-subscribe using your personal email address.

Many of the links in this newsletter go to my Investment Writing blog. Some companies block employee access to blogs, even if the content is work-

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