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Susan B. Weiner  
**Investment Writing**

**October 2013**

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Hello,

Welcome, new subscribers! I'm happy to have met some of you in person when I spoke to the Stamford CFA Society in mid-September.

If you'd like to meet me virtually, please mark your calendars for Dec. 12, when I'll speak on a webinar about using Twitter. I'll share more details later. In the meantime, I welcome your invitations to [connect on LinkedIn](#).

Best wishes,

Susan

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How I gained 5,000 Twitter followers in 4 years

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This is not a get-rich-quick or even a quick-success story, but you'll find some helpful Twitter tips in it.

After four years I hit 5,000 Twitter followers in April 2013. Five thousand—which grew to 6,000 by the time of this post—is not a lot compared to Justin Bieber's 44,055,359 fans or even The Motley Fool investing website's 436,638 fans, but it's not bad in the world of financial advisors, asset managers, and niche writers

where [@MichaelKitces](#) is a star with 9,305 followers (all stats as of September 3, 2013).

Looking back, I believe four things grew my Twitter numbers.

### **1. My goal is to engage, not to grow followers**

Plenty of hucksters will tell you how to boost your follower count quickly. However, those folks won't stick with you when you fail to deliver anything of value to them.

I've tried to deliver useful content with a dollop of promotion and plenty of interaction. If you've ever tweeted a legitimate question to me, I've done my best to reply.

I also ask questions of others and highlight their expertise. You may be following someone whom you discovered through one of my retweets.

### **2. I take initiative to follow members of my target audience**

In my early days on Twitter, I mainly followed people who traded tweets with me. However, as I noticed Twitter boosting my e-newsletter list, I began identifying more people to follow.

I used the following techniques:

- Reviewing the profiles of my new followers
- Looking at names suggested by Twitter in its "Who to follow" section
- Checking Twitter lists of people whom I respect—for example, occasionally I'll check [@RockTheBoatMKTG's list of asset managers](#) or [@lecreative's list of financial advisors](#).

### **3. I don't unfollow or block people unless they annoy me**

People sometimes tell me they're trimming the list of people they follow. I don't spend time on that unless people spam me or annoy me in some other way.

I believe there are two main reasons why other people unfollow. First, they're overwhelmed by the volume of tweets. However, I use HootSuite to filter tweets. This helps me focus on more valuable clients and deepening relationships with a small group of people. However, my "home feed" with all of my followers helps me find good content in unexpected places.

Second, people unfollow because they bump up against [Twitter's rules about how many people you can follow](#) if the number of people you follow is greater than the number of your followers. I don't recall being in that position except in my early days on Twitter.

## 4. I share...

Continue reading at "[How I gained 5,000 Twitter followers in 4 years.](#)"

### The "Be" test for writers

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"To be or not to be" is one of the most famous phrases in the English language, thanks to William Shakespeare's Hamlet. Despite that line's power, forms of "be" often indicate weak writing.

To raise the impact of your writing, go on a search-and-destroy mission for forms of "to be."

For example, change "Our firm is using an algorithm" to "Our firm uses an algorithm." As this example suggests, searching for "ing" will highlight text that will benefit from edits.

Expert sources

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#### [Keyword placement tips to boost your financial blog's search ranking](#)

Search traffic drives 50%-70% of website visits, said Fran Sales, a copy editor at TechTarget, during her presentation at the ASPBE Boston Boot Camp on Sept. 24, 2013. I share some of her best tips for how to drive traffic to your blog through savvy use of keywords.

#### [Looks matter: Pick your fonts wisely](#)

Even though I'm a word nerd, I believe that their visual appearance matters to how effectively words communicate. The section on [fonts](#) in [Improve Your Global Business English](#) by Fiona Talbot and Sudakshina Bhattacharjee reminded me of this.

### More articles

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Blogging

- [A top technique of advisors who blog successfully](#)

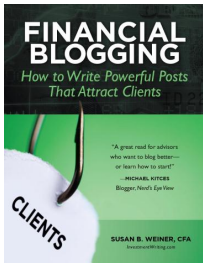
- [Help your guest blogger and your reputation as a comment-friendly blog](#)
- [Should you go bold?](#)

Writing

- [Projected: A word geek's nitpick](#)
- [Where's the typo?](#)

Testimonial

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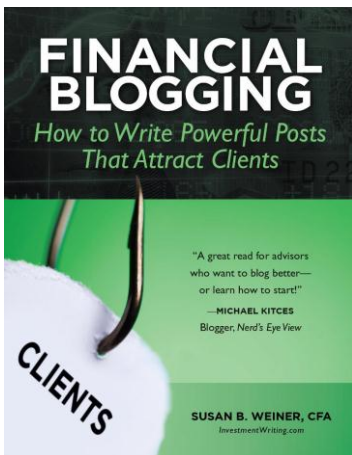


*"Financial Blogging* is written in the style that it espouses: short, crisp sentences that get right to the point with no wasted words. Don't under-estimate the power of the medium as the message: There's no better way to learn how to write a successful financial blog than by studying Susan's style as she swiftly leads readers through the steps of creating this highly effective marketing tool."

You can read [more testimonials on Amazon](#). I'm grateful to everyone who took the time to recommend my book there as well as on the [book's LinkedIn page](#) or [GoodReads](#).

## It's not too late!

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Financial Blogging: How to Write Powerful Posts That Attract Clients is still available for purchase as a [PDF](#) (\$39) or a [paperback](#) (\$49). The paperback is also available on [Amazon.com](#).



Note: The PDF and paperback are sold on different websites. You must click the correct link to obtain your preferred format.



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 names or email addresses.

Thank you!

Quick Links...

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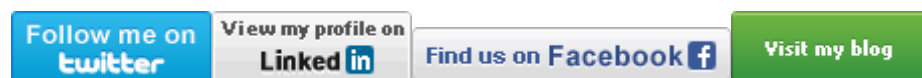
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["How do you ghostwrite my financial article?"](#)

[Financial Blogging: How to Write Powerful Posts That Attract Clients](#)



### Contact Information

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