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## Investment Writing Update

*Ask a financial design professional on SusanCFA blog*

June 2007

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### **You can ask questions of an experienced financial design professional**

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The next guest on my SusanCFA blog is for you, if you've ever struggled with designing or producing new marketing materials for your investment or wealth management firm.

Over the next four weeks, Margaret Patterson will make blog posts and answer your questions on my blog. Margaret Patterson Company is a Boston-based resource for financial services firms. She has created sales support tools and provided production management expertise to numerous institutional asset managers and consultants, mutual fund companies, bank corporations and wealth management advisors for 25 years.

I haven't yet had the pleasure of working with Margaret. However, Wagonhound Investments' Jen Dunning, Margaret's client for 15 years, tells me "Margaret Patterson provides an unusual combination of sophisticated design, industry knowledge and attention to all the details to ensure that clients are delighted. She follows each project quite effectively from initial design through product delivery with patience and persistence. Working with Margaret is always a pleasure."

You can post your questions for Margaret as comments to her blog posts. Her first post on "[Creating Pitch Books Without Losing Your Mind: Design & Content Management Tips](#)" is already up on my blog. You can read more about [Margaret and her company](#).

### **Be careful when you order reprints**

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It's exciting when an article you've written is published under your name. One of your first instincts may be to order glossy reprints for use with clients and prospects. That's a great idea. But be prepared to do more than simply give the company your credit card number.

No matter what industry or profession you work in, you should proofread and check the layout of the reprint before you approve it. I've seen some terribly botched jobs, where the text was not laid out evenly across the page or sentences were broken in odd places.

If you're in a regulated industry, like investment management, be sure to check with your compliance professional to see what kind of additional disclosures might be required. I've run into cases where glowing articles about mutual funds could not be

published due to compliance concerns. It's disappointing, but it's better than having the SEC breathe down your neck.

### **Fidelity exec allocates 70% to non-U.S. equities**

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Bruce Johnstone, a managing director at Fidelity, has allocated 70% of his personal retirement portfolio to non-U.S. equities. That's not an allocation he expects many people to copy. After all, non-U.S. stocks can be volatile. However, he feels strongly that, over the long term, international stocks are the place to be. Johnstone made these comments as part of a presentation on "Worried about Market Volatility, Iran, Iraq, Threats to a Goldilocks Economy and a Determined Fed? Even More Reason to Diversify Your Portfolio," delivered to the Boston Security Analysts Society on June 4.

It's not that Johnstone is pessimistic about the U.S. stock market. As he sees it, the U.S. market has thrived on three pillars:

- Rising corporate earnings
- Benign inflation and interest rates
- Reasonable valuations

Only the first pillar has serious cracks -- especially the fact that "residential real estate is done," says Johnstone. The other pillars face challenges, but of much lesser magnitude. "I'm not bearish on the U.S." However, "The relative outperformance of the U.S. is history."

The real impetus behind Johnstone's overweighting (he'd consider 58% non-U.S. as neutral) of non-U.S. stocks is the relative strength of those markets including factors such as better profit potential, economic growth, balance sheets, currencies and stock valuations. Non-U.S. stocks are also less efficiently priced than their U.S. counterparts. That's not to say that international markets couldn't experience short-term setbacks. "My optimism is long-term." Indeed, [he had a 70% non-U.S. allocation back in 2003](#).

### **Ten big mistakes case study marketers make**

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"[Ten big mistakes case study marketers make](#)" caught my attention because I've got some case study writing on my docket. I agree with him that you should show the **benefits** to the client of a solution. The solution alone is not enough.

Author Martin Middlewood recommends that case studies run no more than three to four pages long (1500-1700 words). Mine are usually a good deal shorter than that.

### **Tips from Coach Andrea**

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Executive coach Andrea Novakowski publishes a [weekly coaching tip](#) addressing topics such as "The Power in Praising People," "Letting Go of 'Stuff'," and "Cultivating Your Genius." You can [subscribe for free](#). Andrea has twice been named a "Top Ten Executive Coach" on BostonHerald.com.

My May newsletter article on mind mapping was reprinted in a recent issue of Andrea's "Tip of the Week."

### **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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