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Finding the right online advice

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Madhavi Acharya-Tom Yew

The Internet sites belonging to the online brokerage arms of Canada's big banks are brimming with resources for do-it-yourself investors. They offer plenty of reading and hands-on tools to help you learn about investment products, how to save and invest, and how to build a long-term portfolio.

The following is a brief selection of independent Internet sites and investing blogs:

Independent Investor

<http://www.independentinvestor.info/>

Marc Ryan aims to provide independent information to do-it-yourself investors.

The site offers the basics on investing and members receive a weekly newsletter. Membership is free. "I'm not associated with any financial institution. I'm not selling any products. I don't manage anybody's portfolio. I'm doing it as a retirement project and to provide information," Ryan said.

"The first reason you come to my site is you want information on investing that is unbiased, independent, and for do-it-yourself investors, and that's not for everyone."

The Investors Aid Cooperative

<http://www.investors-aid.coop/>

The British Columbia-based Investors Aid Cooperative of Canada bills itself as Canada's first national co-op for members. It is independent and does not sell investments, management services, referrals or

It offers an independent view of investing, from basic products and concepts to portfolio allocation guidance and investment products.

"Investing is simple. What makes it complicated is an industry telling you, 'Hey you've got the wrong product' or 'the market is going up.' What we try to do is counteract that by simplifying things," said executive director

Canadian Capitalist



<http://www.canadiancapitalist.com/>

Ram Balakrishnan is in his mid-30s. He has a graduate degree in electrical engineering and works as a software engineer, a wife, an IT consultant, have twin 4-year-old boys and a baby girl.

He lost a lot of money when the technology bubble burst and resolved to learn more about finances and investing.

For about six years, he has been blogging on whatever he thinks may be useful to others interested in the market. He has a roundup of other reading material and links.

"The big challenge for people investing on their own is to not chase stocks that are going up and when they start to drop, to not panic sell," Balakrishnan said. "I know it's easy to say that, but it's very difficult to do."

Michael James on Money

<http://michaeljamesmoney.blogspot.com/>

Michael Wiener bills his site as "an amateur's clear explanations of personal finance and investing." By day, he runs his own consulting firm. For do-it-yourself investors he offers daily thoughts on personal finance and investing, along with links to other reading material.

"When it feels like all the fire alarms around you are going off because of the way stocks are dropping, it's important to stay calm. As an investor, you just have to know yourself. You have to make a plan and stick to it, and not get scared."