

BUSINESS

Plan, think, diversify to avoid bull market's rampage

By Fred T. Snyder
Special to Sentinel-Voice

To say the current bull market has pleased many investors is probably an understatement. But has it lulled investors into a trance?

With leading stock market indexes showing double-digit returns for the last several years, some investors may be mistaking the bull market for investment brilliance.

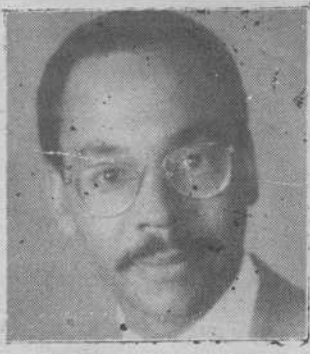
During good times, we often get complacent and forget to pay attention to changes in the underlying quality of our stocks. Other investors ignore risk and begin trying to time market moves to react to today's headlines.

A bull market can make investing appear easy, but it often conceals problems with poor investment strategies. Investors are often caught off-guard when the market turns downward and stock selection becomes more difficult. With that in mind, here are five warning signs you can use to avoid getting trampled by the bull market.

- **Panicking on market pandemonium.** Although issues such as the Asian economic crisis can cause concern, long-term investors know not to react to the latest headlines or market moves. Instead, they remain focused on the quality of their individual investments and monitor any changes in a company's

Financial Report

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performance.

- **Having unrealistic expectations.** With such attractive stock market returns during the last several years, many investors are beginning to think these golden gains will continue indefinitely. Unrealistic expectations can derail your long-term financial goals. You should temper your performance expectations and develop a proper mix of investments to prepare yourself for inevitable market fluctuations.

- **Ignoring risk.** During a bull market, investors may not assess the risk factors of investment decisions as seriously as

they should. Yet, the first step to developing a portfolio is to determine how much risk you can afford both financially and emotionally. You may be able to emotionally handle owning a high-risk stock, but can you financially afford the consequences if the worst happens? Remember, risk is always present, even in good markets.

- **Following the herd.** Herds stampede. They do not slow down for fundamental analysis or rational advice. Investors following the herd can become intoxicated with the sizzle and overlook the substance. Just because you hear about a hot stock doesn't mean it's a good idea for you.

- **Keeping all your eggs in one basket.** Diversifying your portfolio is one of the best defenses against surprising industry-specific developments that can occur.

Even the good companies that fail to meet earnings forecasts — some by just a few cents — are unfairly punished by the market. The list of companies affected by this "shoot first, ask questions later" mentality is long and distinguished.

Today's good market may be hiding bad investing habits. Take time to review your investments and make sure they're still in track to ride out the bull.

This article was provided by A. G. Edwards & Sons, Inc., member SIPC, Fred T. Snyder investment broker.

Reaching target market, proper marketing spark success

Special to Sentinel-Voice

Q. Dear Regina: We are launching a 1999 calendar targeting African-American parents. While we do not wish



Regina's Q & A

By Regina Lynch-Hudson

Don't rule out exposure in trade industry gift publications that specifically sale buyers. Bulk sells are what will make your calendar a

We live in an age where a mediocre product that is well marketed will surpass a superior product that is poorly publicized.

Many franchises have stipulations and guidelines that franchisees must follow. For more general information on franchises, the International Franchise Association introduced a video for minority entrepreneurs interested in acquiring their own franchise. The tape is being distributed to regional minority business development offices and professional

organizations, as well as franchise operations who are interested in enhancing their minority programs.

The innovative video is created and produced by IFA's Minorities in Franchising Committee Chairman George Shanklin, who owns several Church's restaurants in the Columbus, Ohio area.

For more information on the video call the IFA at (202) 628-8000 or visit its website at www.franchise.org.

to divulge the exact theme of the calendar, we'd like to know how to publicize it, in terms of media buys. Initially, we are printing 25,000 calendars. Specifically, how do we make this calendar sell?

A: Many people begin buying calendars for the coming year in October or November. Begin print advertising as early as October.

The best way to achieve maximum efficiency with your advertising dollar is to avoid waste circulation. Waste circulation is any advertising that reaches people who are not your target audience.

Specialty publications such as Atlanta-based "Black Child" magazine are excellent vehicles, and of course, your leading African-American newsmagazines are prime outlets.

success. Plan to showcase the calendar at gift shows nationwide. Employ a commissioned sales representative who is already successful at selling other gift and specialty items to stores and shops that cater to your target audience. To obtain information on publications and gift shows to target, contact a public relations representative.

Q. Dear Regina: My wife and I are using recently acquired funds to open a new business. From an advertising and public relations standpoint is it easier to publicize a start-up company or a franchise that already comes with a recognized name? If we offer a superior product is a recognized name really all that important?

A: To build a better mouse trap one has to do more than offer a finer quality of cheese.

Blacks must stand up or risk being beaten

By John William Templeton
Special to Sentinel-Voice

A Black couple took a leisurely stroll June 8 with their 10-month-old child and two friends through the Haight-Ashbury district of San Francisco, a once-predominately Black area that became famous when hippies moved in during the 1960s.

Suddenly, two dozen young Whites waving chains and skateboards jumped upon them, shouting slurs and knocking the baby from their arms. Both the baby and the father had to be treated for their injuries.

At the same time, Texas sheriffs arrested three White ex-cons for killing an African-American man by dragging him behind a pickup truck.

Although thousands of

Getting down to business

miles apart, both incidents are further evidence that the chickens are coming home to roost from years of conservative race-baiting and, more pervasively, a hidden White attitude that Blacks have come too far.

This is why I was especially proud of Henry Hutchins, president of the Bay Area chapter of the Black MBA's Association, for calling a meeting to respond to a recent newspaper series on the "digital divide."

The series pointed out that every major Silicon Valley company had been cited by federal regulators for not



complying with equal opportunity regulations and that most had far fewer African-American and Latino applicants, employees and executives than were present in the labor force.

Hutchins also correctly perceived that executives of some of those same companies were major contributors to such anti-minority group campaigns as Proposition 187, Proposition 209 and Proposition 227.

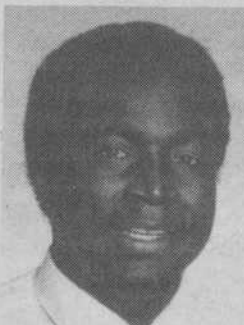
The first targeted Latinos by denying services to immigrants, the second banned affirmative action and created a sharp drop in Black, Latino and Native American admissions to college, and the third requires English-only instruction in California schools.

(See Risk, Page 9)

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