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Stocks, Futures, & Forex

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2015

TRADING OPTIONS

An Exclusive Interview

Lan H. Turner & Thomas Anderson

6 STEPS

To Cut Losers Short &
Ride Winning Stocks

Dr. Scott Brown

OFF THE WALL! Mini S&P 500

Wyatt

Editor in Chief:

Lan H. Turner

Website: PitNews.com

Managing Editor & Designer

Marlene Sampson
submit@pitnews.com

Email:

magazine@pitnews.com

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Lan H. Turner, , Owner of Gecko Software, Inc., Creator of: Track 'n Trade, Editor in Chief PitNews Magazine
Dr. Scott Brown, Trader, & Active Stocks, Futures & Forex Investor, University Professor Finance PhD
David Duty, Trader Educator

Trading Options



An Exclusive Interview

with Lan H. Turner & Thomas Anderson

Thomas: “You mean to tell me, that I have the right, but not the obligation, to purchase the underlying futures contract at my specific price, as long as I do it before a specific date? All I have to do is pay you a small down payment to maintain that right?”

Lan: “That’s right.”

Thomas: “What if I don’t exercise my right, do I get my money back?”

Lan: “Well, not if you wait until the specified date- but the cool thing is, the premium, or the amount of money that you gave me, (so you can maintain that right) will either increase in value or decrease in value; depending on the increase or decrease in value of the underlying futures contract.”

Thomas: “What? I don’t understand, what do you mean by that?”

Lan: “What I mean, is if you buy an option, which is what you’re doing, you have the right, but not the obligation to purchase the underlying futures contract at the specified price; as long as you do it prior to the expiration date. Not to mention the further out the expiration date is the more money you have to pay; giving you the ability to maintain your rights.

But the best part is, you don’t have to wait until the expiration date. You see, in the futures market, as well as the options market, we always quote prices based on expiration. So we say things like, “80% of all options expire worthless,” but that option might have changed hands a dozen times prior to expiring worthless. Many of the people who ‘touched or held’ that option

earlier on in its life, might have made a nice, tidy, little profit from it.”

Thomas: “Wait, I’m still confused, how do options traders make money, if it’s not from exercising their rights of purchasing the underlying futures contract?”

Lan: “Actually, we almost never actually exercise our rights, or “exercise our options,” we generally just buy or sell our option to someone else, and take the loss or gain of the overall increase in value or decrease in value of the options premium, or the money we paid for the option; as I mentioned before.”

Thomas: “So let me get this straight, when I’m trading options, I’m not actually trading the underlying futures contract- I’m really just making or losing money, based on the increase or decrease in value of the options premium, the money I paid for it?”

Lan: “That’s right!”

Thomas: “If I’m only going to be trading options, do I need to know how to trade futures?”

Lan: “Well, when you’re trading options, you are trading futures.”

Thomas: “Wait, now I’m confused again, if I only make or lose money, based on the increase or decrease of the option, not from the underlying futures contract, then how is that trading futures?”

Lan: “Well, think about it, the increase or decrease of the options premium or the value of the option, comes directly from the price of the underlying futures contract.”

Thomas: “Oh, I get it, so if the futures contract goes up, the value of my option goes up, and if the futures contract goes down, then the value of my option goes down.”

Lan: “Exactly! So, in essence, you are trading futures, since you need to be able to look at a chart, analyze it, use analytical tools such as indicators and calculators that help us determine market direction, and then make your option buying and selling decision based on the movement of the underlying futures contract.

Thomas: “Well that’s not so hard to understand.”

Lan: “No, once you understand a few simple rules, and a few simple uses of terminology, then trading options becomes very simple, and a lot of fun, since it gives us a lot more ‘options,’ or ways of investing in the market, no pun intended!”

Thomas: “So I have one more question.”

Lan: “Shoot!”

Thomas: “Let’s say I buy an on option, and I pay, oh, I don’t know, let’s say, \$250.00 for it, and the underlying market goes down, down, down, to let’s say to a difference of \$1,000.00, how much money do I lose?”

Lan: “Well, let’s make something very clear first. We have two kinds of options, we have Call options, and we have Put options.

If you expect the underlying market to rise in price, then you would purchase a Call option, then if the market does rise, the premium that you paid for the option, will most likely increase in value, providing you with a profit, or the difference between what you paid for the Call option today, and what you can then turn around and unload it to someone else for tomorrow.

On the other hand, if you think the market is going to go down, then you would purchase a Put option, where you would then profit if the market went down.

But, to answer your question, if you paid \$250.00 for a Call option, and the market went ‘down, down, down,’ \$1,000.00 as you stated, the maximum amount of money you could lose would be the \$250.00 you paid for your Call option.”

Thomas: “But how is that so, why don’t I lose the entire \$1,000.00?”

Lan: “You don’t lose the entire \$1,000.00, simply because you didn’t actually buy the underlying futures contract, you only purchased an option, that gave the right, but not the obligation to buy the underlying futures contract.



You see, if the market drops like you said, then you wouldn't want to 'exercise' your right to purchase the underlying market, because that would mean you would lose, or incur the entire \$1,000.00 loss, so instead, you just sit tight, and the maximum amount of money you can lose is the premium you paid for the option, which is the \$250.00.

"You see, when you purchase an option, your profit potential is unlimited, while your maximum loss is limited to the amount of money you paid for the option."

Thomas: "What? My loss is limited to the cost of the option, but my profit potential is unlimited?"

Options

HAVE TWO KINDS OF VALUE
BUILT INTO THE PREMIUM

Lan: "Yup!"

Thomas: "No way, that's awesome! Why would anyone ever trade any other way?"

Lan: "Well, there is a downside to purchasing options too."

Thomas: "Oh ya? What's the downside, I'm not seeing any downside here..."

Lan: "Something we call Extrinsic Value, or in other words, Time Value."

Thomas: "Okay, what's that? What's Extrinsic Value?"



Once you purchase your option, the clock starts ticking, and the 'Extrinsic (Time) Value' of your option begins to decay.

Lan: "Options have two kinds of value built into the premium, or the amount of money you have to pay for that option. So in essence, the value of an option comes from two different places. You have Extrinsic Value, which is the value given to the amount of time left in the option, or the amount of time before you have to dump your option, or let it expire.

Let's say you purchase an option with eight weeks of time before expiration, well, that's going to cost you, because there's a chance that option could become very valuable within the next eight weeks, so that's going to cost you more money than an option that only has four weeks of time left."

Thomas: "Oh, I see, well that makes sense."

Lan: "So, as you can see, once you purchase your option, the clock starts ticking, and the 'Extrinsic (Time) Value' of your option begins to decay. Which is why they call it a decaying, or deteriorating asset; the longer you hold onto your option, the less Extrinsic

Value will have.

Thomas: “Okay, I get that, then what’s this other value, ‘Intrinsic Value’ that you speak of?”

Lan: “Well, Intrinsic value is the built in value given to the option if you were to actually exercise your right to purchase the underlying option.

Let’s say for example that you purchase a Corn Call option, and the premium is currently \$250.00, which, again, gives you the right but not the obligation to purchase one underlying Corn futures contract, and let’s say you specified that you wanted the right to purchase Corn at a price of \$3.50 per bushel. Incidentally, that’s called the ‘Strike Price.’

Thomas: “What is?”

Lan: “The price that you specified that you want to be able to exercise your right at, the price that you want to purchase Corn at if you exercise your options rights to buy the actual underlying futures contract. That’ specified price is called the Strike Price.”

Thomas: “Ah, okay. The Strike Price, I can remember that.”

Lan: “So anyway, let’s say that you purchase a Corn Call option for \$250.00, with a strike price of \$3.50, or in other words, we want the right, but not the obligation to purchase Corn at \$3.50 per bushel, and we’re willing to pay \$250.00 for that right, and let’s also say that our Call option has eight weeks of time value before it expires, so in other words, we have to exercise our right within

that eight week window.

Now, let’s say that Corn is currently trading at \$3.00 per bushel...”

Thomas: “Wait! Wait just one minute now, why would I buy a Corn Call option at \$3.50, giving me the right to buy corn at a higher price than what it’s currently trading now for? That seems silly!”

Lan: “Well, because it costs a lot less money to purchase an option that is “out-of-the-money,” than one that is “At-The-Money,” or even one that is “In-The-Money.”

You see, if you think the price of Corn is going to rise, then the value of your Corn Call option will generally increase in value as the price of Corn increases, so in this case, if you purchase your option at a higher price,



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or what we call “Out-Of-The-Money,” you can still make a profit when corn prices rise, and you don’t have to generally pay as much for an option that is ‘Out-Of-The-Money’ as you do for one that is “At-The-Money,” which of course would be the option that is trading at the exact same price as the underlying Corn contract.”

Thomas: “Wait, let me see if I get this right. So I purchase an out-of-the-money Call option on Corn, I pay less for it, but if Corn rises in price, I can still make money, because the premium of my option will still increase in price?”

Lan: “Generally speaking, yes.”

Thomas: “Okay, now I have two more questions” First, why do you keep saying generally, when we talk about our option increasing in value? Second, you still haven’t told me what Intrinsic Value is. What is it?”



Intrinsic Value: Value the option has built in from the price different of the option strike and the underlying price of the option.

Extrinsic Value: Time value left in the option

Lan: “Okay, first, Intrinsic Value is the amount of money that your option is “In-The-Money.” For example, we said that we purchased our Corn Call option at a strike price of \$3.50 per bushel, right? We also said that Corn was currently trading at \$3.00 per bushel, therefore the \$250.00 that we paid for our Corn Call option is currently 100% all Extrinsic or (Time) Value.

Now let’s say that corn prices rise in price, in fact they go to \$4.00 a bushel within the first two weeks of us purchasing our Corn Call option.

Thomas: “Wonderful, keep talking!”

Well, we still have six weeks of ‘Extrinsic (Time) Value’ left in our Corn Call option, but we also now have .50 cents of ‘Intrinsic Value’ now built into our option as well. Does that make sense?”

Thomas: “Ah, I see, correct me if I’m wrong... The Intrinsic Value is the value the option has built in from the actual price difference of the option strike, and the underlying price of the option, and the Extrinsic Value is the time value left in the option.

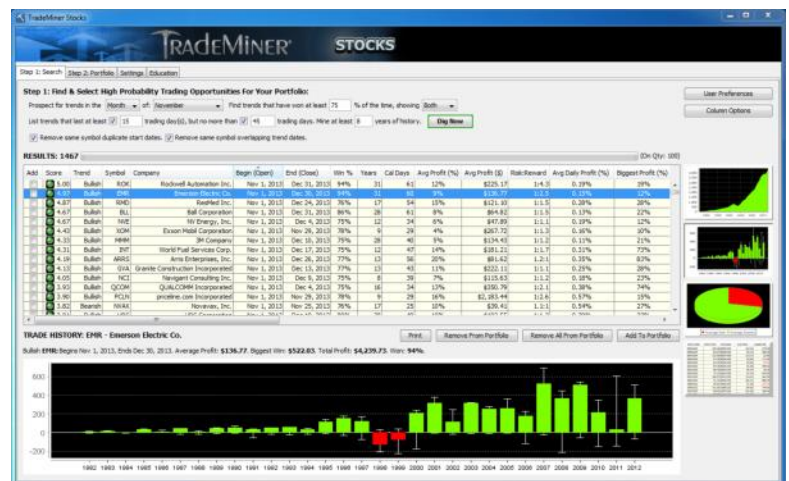
Lan: “Yes, that’s exactly right, so in other words, if you wanted to exercise your option, you would exercise it at \$3.50 per bushel, and since corn is now trading at \$4.00 a bushel, you have .50 cents of intrinsic value built into the premium of your option; therefore, your option is now considered to be ‘In-The-Money, and the premium of your option has now increased by approximately \$250.00; in essence, doubling your money!

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*Past performance is not necessarily indicative of futures results.

Thomas: “Ah, that’s so cool, I think I’m starting to get it!”

Lan: “Good, cause I’m hungry...let’s go get some chicken wings!”

Thomas: “Not so fast, you didn’t explain why you keep saying ‘generally speaking’ when I ask about the increase in value of my option?”

Lan: “Well, I say generally speaking, because what if the market was climbing very slowly? Theoretically speaking, a climbing market should be making your option increase in value, right?”

Extrinsic Value starts to lose value immediately, then the Intrinsic Value needs to accumulate faster than the the Extrinsic Value decays in value to show a profit!”

But what if it wasn’t climbing fast enough to outperform the Extrinsic Value decay, or the loss in Extrinsic Value.”

Thomas: “Ahh, I get it, so because Extrinsic Value starts to lose value immediately, then the Intrinsic Value needs to accumulate faster than the the Extrinsic Value decays in value to show a profit!”

Lan: “You got it! Now can we go get some beer and wings?”

Thomas: “But wait, what if I want to know more? What about Put Options? What about Iron Condors, and Iron Butterflies, and trading naked, how do I find out about covered Calls, not to mention credit spreads, Put option strategies, and all the rest?”

Lan, don’t leave me high and dry, won’t you please teach me the rest too? I love learning from you, I love the way you make it seem so simple!”

Lan: “Okay, okay, if you insist, go ahead and swing by my website, www.LanTurner.com and you’ll see a button that says, “Lan Turner’s Options Boot Camp!” Click that link, and you can join me for my upcoming advanced options trading, training class, where for the next four weeks, we’ll learn all about how to trade options, the Lan Turner way!

Thomas: “Awesome, thank you so much, I can’t wait, I’m going to go over there right now!”

Lan: “You better hurry, I only have a few seats left, and they’re going fast...”



by Dr. Scott Brown

STEPS

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It began...

as a grinding of two plates of rock so vast that the seam can be seen from outer space. The San Andreas fault created clefts between timber laden mountains close to, and far inland from the California coast.

Leviathan sized chunks of quartz laced with gold were gouged up from the earth's mantle. Over geologic millennia erosion of volcanic activity contributed to the formation of the planet's most pristine farmland.

While speculators of one form flocked to pull gold from the Comstock yet another group raped the forests of timber from the Tahoe Basin down. A third sort plundered the California American Indian of farmland.

Evolving like any animal pack, this one birthed from covered wagons and grubby 49ers working side by side, the society of California separated into two poles. Subservient migrants of one form or another clung to the lowest rungs of the social pyramid producing for silver spoon owned firms of the generally Republican landed wealthy.

The golden state's lucky sperm leisure class arose from the winners of stake claiming ranching, farming, mining and timber pioneers of the 1800s.

A Permanent Solution to a Temporary Problem

Everything worked fine as long as the economy was strong. Even the losers of the greed game felt like they had a shot, and for a while that shot was a booming stock market. Real estate was hot too. Lax lending standards led to debt inflation and over-subscribed equities.

What started as an ebb in 1927 turned into a rip current after 1929. Hardest hit were the 99% who in having been lulled into the American Dream had forgotten that they were born naked on the wrong side of the track.

Fast forward. The real estate bubble had burst a full eleven years before. The stock market crash was now 8 years past. There were few jobs for the uneducated born unlucky.

Myrtle had just been fired. It wasn't a lovely job. She was part of a team who slopped food into cafeteria trays in downtown Los Angeles. Everybody told her how lucky she was to have a job.. she felt far from blessed. She had fallen in love with a starry eyed

dreamer who played music at local bars for loose change.

Barefoot and pregnant at nineteen, Myrtle's now three year old daughter Jean held her hand. They sat unnoticed on a granite bench atop Pasadena's Colorado Street Bridge.

Like many pretty young women she had learned the hard way that love and sex are necessary, but not sufficient when forming a family. Neither will fix a man who is a poor provider.

The average weight of a three year old girl is thirty one pounds. What exactly entered Myrtle's mind when she stood up nobody has ever known. Screaming and kicking the child was flung over the side. 3.1 seconds later a pink cloud exploded upward. Myrtle's body burst asunder after hitting the ground at sixty six point nine miles per hour. The cries of the gore covered toddler guided two startled passerby down from the top. A tree branch had stopped Jean Ward's fall from Suicide Bridge.

Get Thoughtful or
Get Lost

The typical new subscriber to an investment newsletter just wants a tip sheet that says "buy this, sell that, set stops here." Relatively few subscribers are willing to think for themselves. The price is high.

Disregarding the danger of tolerating risk is the single most important cause of lackluster returns according to U.C. Berkeley professor Terrence O'Dean. His article

"Are Investors Reluctant to Realize Their Losses?"

rattled the ivory tower. It was published in 1998 in the most prestigious Journal of Finance. The high water line for risk in a stock trade is set by the stop loss. Some newsletter editors recommend stops of 15%. A 15% loss on a \$1,000 investment is \$150. The new account would drop to \$850. Recovery requires a hefty 17.56%.



\$150 divided by
\$850 = 0.1765.
Multiplying by 100
yields the above
mentioned return.

A few newsletter editors recommend stops of 50%. In this case a \$1,000 of skin in the game dwindles to just \$500. This requires a once in a blue moon 100% return to recover.

I have read newsletter recommendations suggesting future prospects so golden that subscribers should throw all inhibition to the wind trading stop-less. This was Myrtle Ward's strategy. It's easy to throw rocks at a newsletter editor. Reality is such that setting stops is neither cookie cutter nor mathematically precise.

Furthermore the editor is at a disadvantage in not knowing whether or when a specific subscriber will buy into a stock recommendation post announcement. Here is a better way to set stops.

Step 1

START WITH THE CHART

Carol Osler of the Brandeis University School of International Business is an associate professor who holds a Ph.D. from Princeton University. She has shown that support and resistance levels are predictive for trend reversals.

A great payoff awaits for those investors who seriously consider support and resistance rather than viewing either as technical voodoo. Elite stock traders have long known this fact. Nicolas Darvas used support and resistance to time entry and set initial stops.

His grubstake of just over \$36 thousand mushroomed into \$2.5 million in just over 6

years in the mid to late 1950s. Darvas set initial stops based on support and resistance levels to shed risk quickly when wrong.



See "Support for Resistance: Technical Analysis and Intraday Exchange Rates," Economic Policy Review 6, no. 2 (July 2000): 53-67.]

Support is nothing more than a level the stock price has recently hovered above. Resistance is a price level below which the stock price has languished. A price channel is a period over which the price oscillates within a band marked by support below and resistance above on a stock chart.

Here is sample recommendation of an unnamed newsletter and editor released June 30th, 2013. It advises:

"Buy NeuStar (NYSE: NSR) at market. Use a 20% stop from your entry price. Our projected exit date is December 1."

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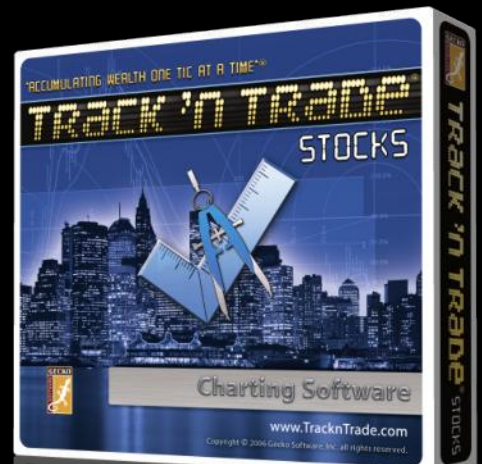
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Look at the chart below. Notice how the price channeled sideways from May 8th through May 24th.



The bottom of the channel is a support level at \$45.53, the top is resistance at \$48.05. The mid-point is at \$46.76. On announcement day subscribers would have been filled at some price over the range from \$48.12 to \$48.90.

Step 2

CHECK YOUR RISK

Imagine that you took this trade and were filled at the high of \$48.90. A 20% stop would be $\$48.90 \times (1.00 - 0.20) = \$48.90 \times 0.80 = \$39.12$. This would have set you up for a titanic loss of \$9.78 per share should the price of Nuestar (NYSE: NSR) have collapsed. A more thoughtful approach is to calculate three stop levels.

Channel Mid-Point Stop:

$$= (\$48.09 - \$46.76) \div \$48.09 = 2.14 \div \$48.09 = 0.044 \times 100 = 4.4\% \text{ Risk.}$$

Channel Resistance Stop:

$$= (\$48.09 - \$48.05) \div \$48.09 = 0.085 \div \$48.09 = 0.017 \times 100 = 1.7\% \text{ Risk.}$$

Channel Support Stop:

$$= (\$48.09 - \$45.53) \div \$48.09 = 3.37 \div \$48.09 = 0.069 \times 100 = 6.9\% \text{ Risk.}$$

Which is best? The book by Nicolas Darvas entitled, "How I Made \$2,000,000 in the Stock Market" is an anecdotal economic masterpiece. To my knowledge no other

such trade by trade documentation exists of an individual who grew a small amount of money into a fortune trading single stocks in such a short period of time.

Enroll in my free for PitNews subscriber Darvas lectures here:

investmenttrainingcourse.com

Testimonial 8/12/2013 "Don't get a big head but you have helped me learn to greatly cut losses and pick more winners. Thank you." - Harold Jones Nicolas was recognized for his trading ability in Time Magazine on May 25th, 1959.

Darvas documented every entry price and initial stop level. This allowed me to calculate his actual risk tolerance. Nicolas Darvas rarely set his initial stops at less than 5.0%, or more than 6.5% below his entry price. In this example the channel support stop of 6.9% is close enough even though it is slightly loose.

Step 3

SET THE STOP & SIT TIGHT

Stock trading runs counter to our social wiring. You have been trained to do something in return for a salary, commission, or cut of profit in your day job. Yet in the

stock market the real success is in doing nothing. Legendary trader Jesse Lauriston Livermore explains in the classic book:

Reminiscences of a Stock Operator

"I think it was a long step forward in my trading education when I realized at last that when old Mr. Partridge kept on telling the other customers, 'Well, you know this is a bull market!' he really meant to tell them that the big money was not in the individual fluctuations but in the main movements — that is, not in reading the tape but in sizing up the entire market and its trend.

And right here let me say one thing: After spending many years in Wall Street and after making and losing millions of dollars I want to tell you this: It never was my thinking that made the big money for me. It always was my sitting. Got that? My sitting tight! It is no trick at all to be right on the market. You always find lots of early bulls in bull markets and early bears in bear markets. I've known many men who were right at exactly the right time, and began buying or selling stocks when prices were at the very level which should show the greatest profit. And their experience invariably matched mine — that is, they made no real money out of it. Men who can both be right and sit tight are uncommon. I found it one of the hardest things to learn. But it is only after a stock operator has firmly grasped this that he can make big money. It is literally true that millions come easier to a trader after he knows how to trade than hundreds did in the days of his ignorance."

By setting stops thoughtfully you can move on with your life. If the stock price rises you can move up the stop. This is called "trailing" the stop. It is a brilliant way of paying yourself first. If the stock price drops the bad trade is a weed is pruned from your garden in absentia.

In the investment classic *Market Wizards* contemporary trader Michael Marcus emphasizes, "Perhaps the most important rule is to hold on to your winners and cut your losers. Both are equally important. If you don't stay with your winners, you are not going to be able to pay for the losers... I would advise to always use stops. I mean actually put them in, because that commits you to get out at a certain point."

Step 4

DOCUMENT EVERY TRADE

A key denominator between the trading techniques of Jesse Livermore and Nicolas Darvas was documentation. They both took extensive notes detailing each trade. They both found this to be a key to success. In psychological terms this is the most powerful way for you to create a double learning feedback loop that maximizes your learning and growth as a stock trader and investor. This allows you to build your independent thinking. Independent thinking is like a bucket of gold. It is rare among investors and traders.

Step 5

PERFORM A QUARTERLY REVIEW

Cook is a Farmer from Ohio. He finished second in the US Investing Championship in 1989 with triple digit returns. He didn't start a winner in stocks. He went broke first. Things didn't turn around for farmer Cook until he began to document and periodically review his trades.

“In marking down your thoughts you will be able to review and learn from past trades.”

I document and review via an Excel spreadsheet and annotated charts. Alpha-numeric fundamental factors are gleaned from a database accessed with a low cost subscription to Investors.com. This can be supplemented by journaling in a notebook as did Darvas and Livermore as well as Cook.

In marking down your thoughts you will be able to review and learn from past trades. This will enable you to critically review your mental models of the market. I have dramatically increased the profitability of my stock trading over the years using this approach. I use annotated charts for tracking stocks that (1) I am watching, (2) I am trading, and finally (3) those trades that I

have closed. Regardless of profit or loss I track everything!

Step 6

Manage Risk First to Make Millions Second

Second Newcomers to the stock market are shiny eyed hopefuls. They think mainly of millions and little of loss. Those newcomers who do not reverse their thinking perish. This is the key dividing line between the rich and the want-to-be-rich. Stock traders who survive to grow rich predominantly ponder risk rather than muse over unmade millions. In so doing they inevitably find the branch that breaks their fall,

By: Dr. Scott Brown
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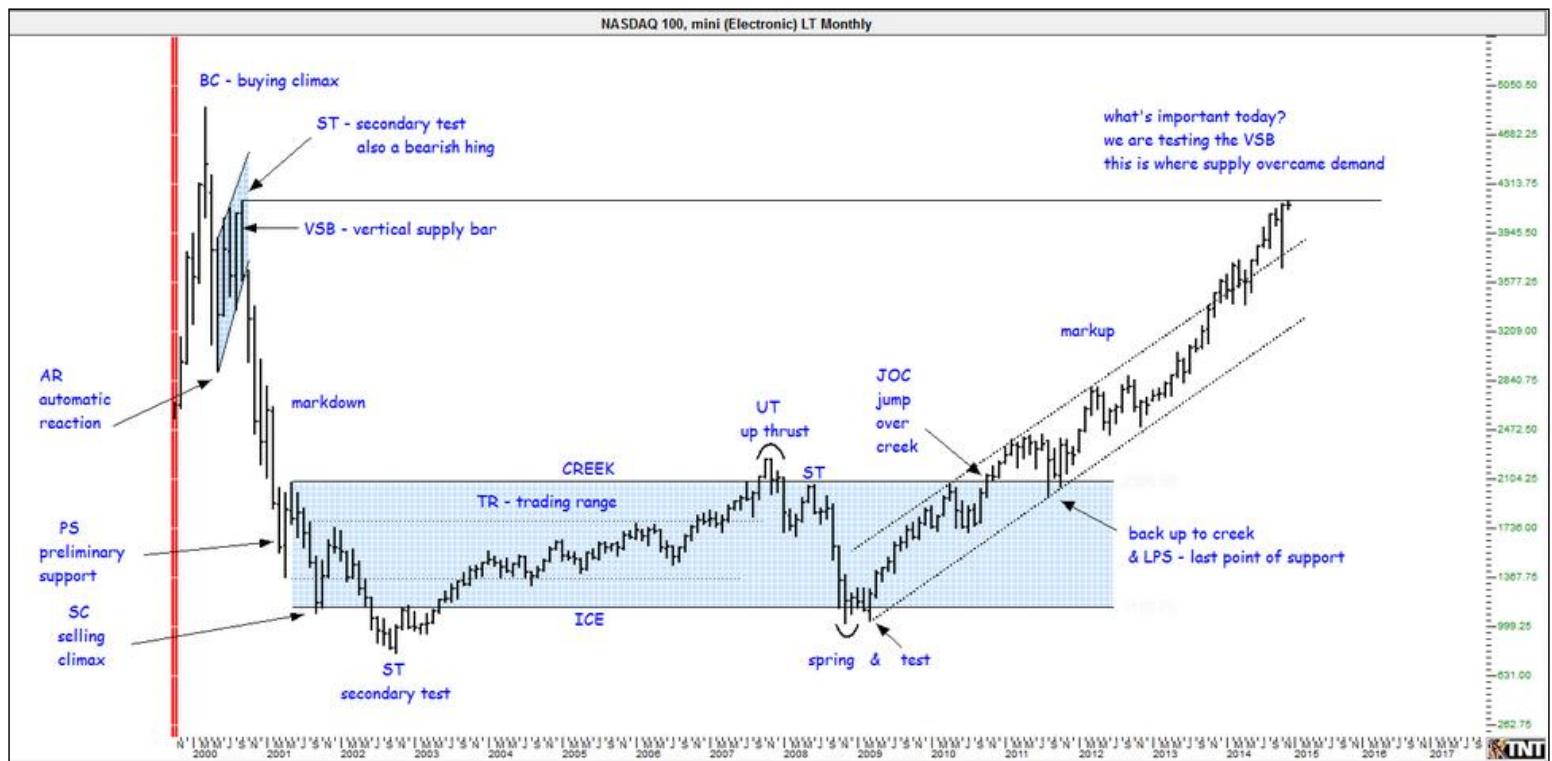
The Wall is PitNews.com's trading forum, found on the web at www.thewall.pitnews.com or from the tab link on the front page of PitNews.com.

Each month, we highlight a chart submitted by one of our users.

OFF THE WALL:

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This month's post comes from Wyatt:



Get into the action! Start posting on The Wall, and maybe you'll see your article or chart highlighted here in our next issue of PitNews.com Magazine!

Earlier, I posted my view of the Monthly mini - S&P 500 at the Fib extension 127% (a danger zone) for comparison - I thought I'd post a Monthly mini - NASDAQ 100.

NAS is now at a danger zone, last month, the chance for a sell-off occurred. The ability to recover, the position of the close indicates a complete reversal. This bars action speaks volumes, actually outstanding. However...

This week the nas/es spread turned negative and puts financials in a weak position overall. The spread leads the SnP 500 and the reason I watch it.

So we ask our self what can happen?

1. The spread remains negative and the markets correct, following the spread. (On lower time frames we identify absorption without any upward progress. This leaves open the chance for a sell-off).

I've labeled price action identifying the buying climax in 2000 (distribution phase) as well as the eleven year accumulation process that started in 2001 through LPS that lead to markup.

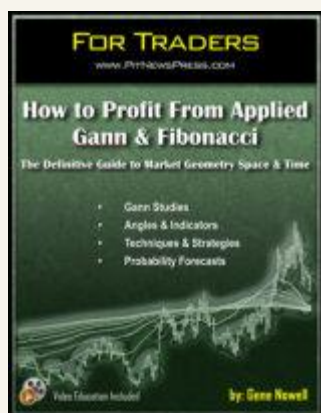
2. The spread corrects & prices accelerate higher. We then know, supply wasn't able to gain control. Please remember, supply MUST overcome demand for sell-off to happen. A lack of demand doesn't change trend, supply has to gain the upper hand.

I consider the odds for both scenarios at 50:50.

Happy trades to everyone
Wyatt

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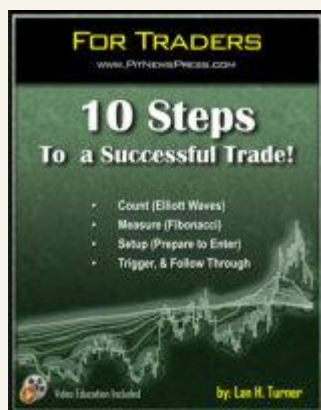
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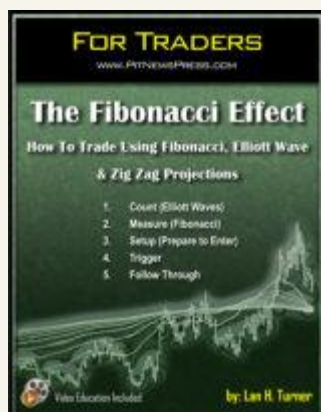
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