



Acorn Financial Services

**Celebrating 25 Years in the Industry | From the Desk of Peter Grose, CFP®
December 2016**



After a long election season, the holidays are officially here. This time of year is always a reminder of what matters most in life: gratitude and family and friends. It is also a time to reflect.

This year I celebrated an exciting and significant milestone – 25 years in the Financial Services Industry. Over the past 25 years, the role of an adviser has evolved from a simple stock broker to a full-service financial planning professional. Products, tools, and planning techniques have proliferated – providing an extraordinary opportunity to service our clients

and their families.

I have also seen a significant shift in attitudes towards investments. Stock picking and chasing returns may soon be out of fashion, according to this [Wall Street Journal article](#). Committing to staying invested and focusing on long-term goals seem to be the new trends. This is good news, since you don't want to rely on things like the Boston Snow Indicator, or polling by cable news networks as we saw recently, to predict the direction of the markets. My advice? Better to believe in Santa than unreliable prognostications such as these [Horrible Holiday Investing Myths](#). Ignore the ghosts of Christmas past and instead, follow your well-thought-out investment plan for the future!

This is also the time to review what went on in the markets over the past year. While small and value company returns have trailed large neutral companies during the last few years, 2016 has seen a sharp reversal of that trend. As of December 5, 2016, small companies on average returned 19.5%, nearly double that of large companies at 10.4%. Large value significantly outperformed large growth, returning 15.3% and 5.6% respectively. We continue to remind investors that factor premiums can vary largely from year to year, and in order to capture those long-term premiums you must stay invested over the long haul.

U.S. Stocks 2016 Year-to-Date (to Dec 5)

	Value	Core	Growth
Large	15.3%	10.3%	5.6%
Mid	19.0%	13.1%	7.0%
Small	28.8%	19.4%	10.4%

I hope you are enjoying festive cheer and not worrying about organizing your tax information for this year. But just in case, [this year-end guide](#) offers strategic ways to maximize your deductions, retirement contributions and income deferrals. As an additional reminder, the deadline to take your Required Minimum Distributions is December 31st, but please leave time to process as well. The year end is also a great time to review your beneficiary designations and make sure they are up to date. Finally, for clients looking to make gifts to their children or grandchildren, please note that the annual exclusion for 2015 is \$14,000, or a collective \$28,000 as husband and wife, and applies to each beneficiary. If you would like to make any changes in the next few weeks, any of the Acorn Advisers would welcome the opportunity to sit down with you or hold a brief phone call to discuss these further. If you don't want to think about taxes just yet, [here's a great way](#) to share good cheer and good will with your children or grandchildren this season.

I am proud of the important role the Acorn Team has played in my journey in the Financial Services Industry. Our core priority – to help create, manage and preserve the wealth of our clients – allows us to operate a thriving, sustainable business well into the future. I look forward to continuing to support our clients financial goals and helping you realize your dreams for years to come.

I wish you and your loved ones a happy and joyous holiday season!

Until Next Time,
Peter Grose & Your Acorn Team

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