## At The Market: working an order

by Rod Blake

Say you are reviewing your list of securities purchase candidates and you find that one of them is halted – 'Pending News.' What do you do? First, review the latest trend in the stock price and latest project updates to determine if the news coming may be good or bad. An upward trending chart and positive updates such as "drilling has begun" may be a signal that better than expected drill results will be announced, and if so, you will want to establish your position in this stock.

Second, determine how much of this issue you want to purchase, say \$10,000, and then cut this in half to \$5,000 to purchase an initial position after the halt. This is, of course, that the news is as good as you and the market expected. The idea here is that you want to get an initial position as you feel the project is now showing some underlying value,

so you will take an initial position either at or near the opening price. Most of the time, however, a stock will surge after coming off the halt and then pull back as the wave of buying passes and the sellers who missed the first wave jump in front of each other in their zeal to take profits. This is where your second \$5,000 comes in. If the stock keeps on trading higher after you have your position, then at least you own a piece of a winner, and you still have some cash to buy more if you think it warrants the extra investment, or, perhaps pick up some stock in a company in the same play, or in an other issue altogether. But, if, as usual, the market pulls back after the news, you still have the funds needed to add to your position at a lesser price when the market calms down or the sellers stampede to the exits. Usually, this is the case, but you don't really want to wait to complete your whole order on the pullback, as sometimes they don't pull back. Then you are left watching or chasing a winner.

Now, how do you work the order? This

is where your investment advisor comes in. Give him (her) a call and go over your intentions. If he has been following the stock, he will probably have a good idea of where you may get filled on your opening purchase. I usually use a range of limits, not a market order, as in this computer age the market can change dramatically and a market order can be pulled up significantly in the rush to get in. Within limits, at least you get a chance to pause and reassess the market's enthusiasm. Then, once you've got your original \$5,000 filled, just sit back and watch the issue trade for awhile to see if it spikes and then turtles, or holds the higher levels for the longer term. Either way, this gives you time to reassure yourself or reevaluate the position going forward.

So, the next time you feel the need to pull the trigger, try 'Working An Order' with your broker. I'm sure you will find it more satisfying.

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