

# Power your investment decisions via app

May 3 2011, By Reid Kanaley

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If I knew how to pick stocks, which I don't, that information might stay under my hat. But I will tell you about a new smartphone application that, according to its creator, provides more than the usual stock charts for making investment decisions.

Chaikin Power Tools is a free iPhone app from Philadelphia-based Chaikin Stock Research LLC. The most striking thing about the app is the Chaikin Power Gauge - a screen of red-to-green bars that blares, at a glance, whether you should sell, hold, or buy a stock, as judged by the proprietary software behind the app.

That software combines company earnings, expert opinion, share price-to-volume activity, and other "metrics" to render its findings.

Other screens on the app provide charts, news, and Twitter chatter on the stock in question. If you choose, there's also a link for trading shares via the online brokerage OptionsXpress, which was acquired last month by Charles Schwab.

The Chaikin name belongs to Marc Chaikin, a Philadelphia resident and seasoned [investment](#) strategist who made his career advising [institutional investors](#). He hopes to make money as the app recruits business for OptionsXpress.

Chaikin, 67, told me he set his mind on smartphone applications when his son showed him an [iPhone](#) two years ago.

"I was blown away," said Chaikin, who was retired at the time. With this sort of technology in hand, he said, it was easy to see how "people no longer wanted to sit in front of a computer."

Chaikin put that thought with another: In the financial meltdown, hundreds of billions of investment dollars held by disillusioned individuals were leaving full-service brokerages for discount services. But those individuals still needed stock-market advice.

Stock-market-app space is crowded with hundreds of competitors, many of them cleverly titled, such as Holy Grail, Stock Spy, TweetyStock, StopLoss, Stock Picking Monkey USA and a game called "Financial Beatdown," in which you throw punches at your market nemeses.

But, Chaikin said, "I looked at every stock-market app I could find, and my thought was ... they're not decision-making tools."

Chaikin, a former director of investment research at Reuters.com, with several market-analysis models named after him - one is called the Chaikin Oscillator - now has a four-member tech team. His wife, Sandy Betner, directs marketing. They aim soon to turn out versions of Chaikin Power Tools for Android and other devices.

Investors, Chaikin said, shouldn't use his [app](#) by itself to judge stocks. It is "a lens, a prism, to filter your stock ideas through," he said. "It's not the only one."

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