

IRVINE, DALLAS, NEW YORK, ORLANDO, DUBAI, AND NOW TORONTO – PICK YOUR FAVORITE TRAINING SPOT.

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If you've got two days, you can attend an Online Trading Academy top level course, Online Trading Academy will call you a member of the academy, and you'll join 78,000 other members, around the world.

Online Trading Academy teachers will welcome you, for free, at what the organization calls a half-day Power Trading Workshop.

"Either way, we take training people to be online traders very seriously," said Mr. O'Donnell, Online trading academy Chief knowledge officer.



John O'Donnell, co-founder of the Online Trading Academy, opens his first Canadian training facility in Toronto

A co-founder of the Online Trading Academy in California in 1997, he's given the education process a great deal of thought, and offered some advice, and a couple of good stories, to Online Trading.

We talked to him in Toronto where he was speaking to online traders and meeting with officials from Questrade, the affiliated broker for Online Trading Academy's first Canadian training facility. It opens this winter in the North American building at 5650 Yonge Street, at Finch, in North York, joining another dozen Online Trading Academy locations throughout the USA, in London and in Dubai.

He's a showman, but when he described the Online Trading Academy as "the leading trading school in the world," and was challenged on "leading" he pointed out the number of locations, the number of

classes, the number of countries, the expertise levels of the teachers, and, very proudly, the 78,000 members. Online Trading Academy, he adds, has the most of what he calls “learning labs” and the most classrooms – two per lab – with, usually 20 computers in each classroom.

And, he pointed out, at Online Trading Academy the training takes place in a live environment, using Online Trading Academy’s real money. “We keep the trades small,” he said, “but by using real money we put everyone in a better psychological space. Trading small shares sizes help us manage the risk

He explains to students that “when you start trading for yourself, this is your money we are talking about,” and goes on to tell them, “online trading is not a game, it is a skill.”

“And the skill comes from immersion in the world of trading, not from theory,” he continued.

John O'Donnell in front of Toronto's Financial District towers.

Even with his travels around the world and his experiences with so many students, he’s been, he says, “caught by surprise at the pace of change in online trading. In the early days, we had a trading arcade with 180 day traders working from our facilities. because we had the high speed connections. Now the day traders are gone from Online Trading Academy because it is so easy to have high speed internet connections anywhere.”

Asked about security of online transactions, he said, “I traded some foreign exchange from the hotel last night. No problems.” Was he successful? “I paid for the hotel room,.” he said.

The Online Trading Academy students are split about 80 percent male and 20 percent female. Most are between 45 and 65 years old. “They’ve accumulated a little bit of money,” Mr. O'Donnell says, “and with their families growing up, they have some time.”

About 80 percent already have an online trading account, and, common to everyone, “They have a passion to be involved, to make their own decisions. They are part of a megatrend,” he says, “where more and more people want to be self-directed, to make their own decisions.”

He looks at online trading as a worldwide phenomenon he calls Globalization 3.0. His expansion plans for Online Trading Academy include having 100 centers in 100 markets around the world. “Money and charts are international” Mr. O'Donnell says, adding that Online Trading Academy courses are currently taught in English, Arabic, Korean and Chinese.”



His students, or as he prefers, members, can have their accounts with any online broker but, he points out, "Questrade, our affiliated broker in Toronto, provides excellent service, good rates, and offers tuition refunds against commissions."

And, once you've spent your initial tuition, he points out, you are welcome to retake the courses, free of charge, any time you want, at any Online Trading Academy facility in the world, to keep yourself up to speed.



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