



## Why Can't Regular Investors Buy Stocks Anywhere in the World?

### Description

Did you read the news on December 13 about Robinhood, the U.S. online broker that provides free stock trading to more than three million accounts in the U.S.?

The company is adding free options trading to its menu of services, believing there's a huge market for this kind of thing. I'm not much of an options trader, but when the word "free" is mentioned, it's hard not to take notice.

Naturally, something like this would never stand a chance here in Canada, where we're happy paying abnormally high fees for abysmally low service.

It's at this point that the apologists trot out the population dilemma to explain away the reality that regular investors in this country pay some of the highest fees in the world.

Anyway, the news got me thinking about the various investment industry shortcomings, both in Canada and elsewhere. There are too many to name in one sitting.

Another piece of news has me wondering a single thought:

### Why can't we buy stocks anywhere in the world?

Doesn't it seem odd that you can go to Australia, take an Uber, and pay for the ride with your phone, no questions asked, but what if you try to buy the stock of either **Westfield Corp.** (OTCMKTS:WFGPY) or **Unibail-Rodamco SE** (OTCMKTS:UNRDY), the two parties involved in one of the biggest corporate marriages in retail real estate in 2017?

Sure, you can buy an ADR on the pink sheets, but how many Foolish readers actually do? Not many, I'd guess.

I'm a big [fan](#) of **Brookfield Asset Management Inc.** (TSX:BAM.A)([NYSE:BAM](#)) and its many publicly-traded spin-offs. One of them, **Brookfield Property Partners LP** ([TSX:BPY.UN](#))(NYSE:BPY), is in the middle of trying to buy the [66%](#) of **GGP Inc.** (NYSE:GGP), America's second-largest mall owner, that it

doesn't already own.

Brookfield has offered to pay US\$23 a share, which GGP's rejected. Experts suggest the final price will be closer to US\$30.

Retail real estate, despite the doom and gloom, is still very attractive to investors, hence the move by Unibail-Rodamco to acquire Australia's largest mall owner and one of the biggest in the U.S.

With the back and forth between Brookfield and GGP ongoing, there's probably a Foolish reader or two who's thought about alternative ways to capture some of the action in an asset class that's starting to heat up.

So, it irritates me to no end that I can't just jump on the computer and buy Unibail-Rodamco stock with a couple of keystrokes. If globalization truly exists, shouldn't investors be able to do this?

Some people hope the Toronto Maple Leafs win the Stanley Cup in their lifetime; my great hope is that I'll be able to buy stocks anywhere in the world as easily as the Fool is able to transmit this article to readers everywhere.

### **There's hope from Down Under**

Third Party Trade is a New York-based FinTech started by Australian Michael Giles that allows his native countrymen and women to invest in companies around the world "from anywhere, on any device."

Its website states that it believes in the democratization of financial markets. It wants to make global investing for regular folk a seamless, effortless experience.

I hope Third Party Trade, or someone like it, is successful, because if so, we as investors here in Canada will benefit greatly.

That's my wish this Christmas.

### **CATEGORY**

1. Investing

### **POST TAG**

1. Editor's Choice

### **TICKERS GLOBAL**

1. NYSE:BN (Brookfield Corporation)
2. TSX:BN (Brookfield)
3. TSX:BPY.UN (Brookfield Property Partners)

### **PARTNER-FEEDS**

1. Msn
2. Newscred

3. Sharewise
4. Yahoo CA

### Category

1. Investing

### Tags

1. Editor's Choice

### Date

2025/08/01

### Date Created

2017/12/15

### Author

washworth

default watermark

default watermark