



Dwight L. Hulse, MBA, CPA/CITP, CGMA, CA (BZ)

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# The CFO Advisor

## Guidance for Small Business Success™

Welcome to the March 2022 edition of “The CFO Advisor” Newsletter.

We are now in the throes of tax season and boy is this year proving to be a challenge like the last two years. But March is the time when the weather warms up and starts turning beautiful.

In this issue, we talk about Taking your Email Marketing to the Next Level, how the crooks stole Over \$100 Billion in Pandemic Relief Funds, and the recently launched James Webb Telescope. We hope you enjoy this issue.

Until next month, enjoy the weather!

Dwight L. Hulse, CPA/CITP, CGMA



## Taking Your Email Marketing To The Next Level

Did you know over 300 billion emails are sent each day? Yet while emails are ubiquitous, not all messages are created equal.

Fortunately, by following some basic guidelines and being mindful of certain facts, you can improve results. Read an article on email marketing and the author almost always opens with something along the lines of “you might think that email marketing is dead ...” and then goes on to explain how it, in fact, remains one of the best marketing channels around. We’ll assume that you already know that email is alive and kicking. Still, recognizing the potential for email marketing doesn’t mean that you’ll fully tap into its value.

It’s smart to start your message by stating facts or truths. You might simply note the date or you could cite some interesting tidbit of information. Either way, by starting with a truth, you can build trust.



Every message should also ask the reader to do something. That might mean clicking on a link, writing a reply, or buying a product.

You don’t want to ask too many things, however, as this can lead to indecision. So if you’re selling a product, don’t also ask them to click on your blog.

Subject lines can make or break an email campaign. It’s wise to use the PAC formula, meaning that they’re Personal, satisfy Anticipation, and drive Curiosity. It’s also smart to use lowercase words or capitalize only the first word. Why? Because When Friends Email Friends They Don’t Use Title Case. And you want your emails to be friendly.

Also, make sure you only send marketing emails to folks who you have permission to contact. Sending unsolicited marketing messages may violate the law in the United States and other jurisdictions.

## Over \$100 Billion In Pandemic Relief Funds Stolen

Offer a dollar and some will steal a million. The Secret Service estimates that roughly \$100 billion in COVID-19 pandemic relief funds were stolen by unscrupulous individuals and organized crime rings. The Secret Service alone has over 900 investigations in progress, examining fraud and other potentially criminal activities.

Through the Coronavirus Aid, Relief and Economic Security Act and other measures, the American government pumped more than \$3.5 trillion dollars into the economy, providing relief for individuals and businesses alike. Unfortunately, some folks decided to steal or misuse some of the funds.

So far, more than \$2 billion in funds have been recovered and government authorities are optimistic that more will be clawed back. Over a hundred people thus far have been charged,



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## Email Marketing

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with more arrests expected. Some have already been handed multi-year prison sentences.



Interestingly enough, financial organizations, such as Green Dot and PayPal, have taken a lead in uncovering and reporting fraud. These organizations have proactively identified suspicious transactions, and

when appropriate, they've handed information over to authorities.

It's not just the federal government that has to watch out for scammers. The Federal Trade Commission (FTC) reported last March that scammers had bilked individuals out of nearly \$400 million, hawking fake cures and illegitimate vaccines, among other things. More recently, some scammers have set up fake COVID-19 testing sites, complete with signs, tents, hazmat suits, sample collection, and more.

The FTC advises folks to ignore robocalls and to not click on or engage with emails and texts you don't recognize. Before buying or donating, make sure you double-check that you're working with a reputable party.

## A Quick Look At The Out-Of-This-World James Webb Telescope

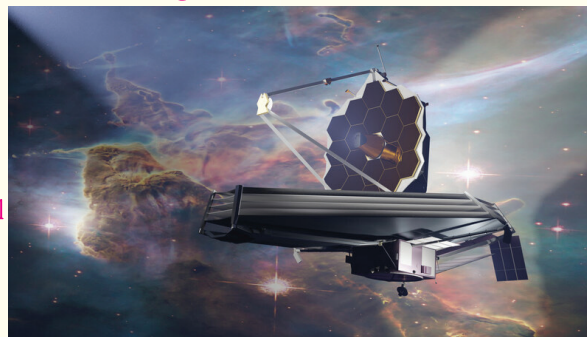
Move over Hubble -- a bigger, more advanced and arguably better telescope has entered the galaxy. Launched on Christmas Day, the James Webb Telescope is now NASA's most powerful telescope and will allow scientists to dig deep into the universe's past. Using images captured with the James Webb Telescope, scientists hope to catch a glimpse of the earliest moments of our universe and to study early planetary system formation, among other things.

So how can a telescope give us a peek into events that occurred a long, long time ago, in a galaxy far, far away? The universe is a vast place and it can take a long time for light to travel from one place to another. The sun's light, for example, takes over eight minutes to reach us.

The closest galaxy to our own, the

Andromeda Galaxy, is approximately 2.5 million light-years away. That means when we capture light from the Andromeda Galaxy, the light itself has been traveling for roughly 2.5 million years to reach us. Thus, using powerful telescopes, astronomers can collect this ancient light and take a peek into the past.

The more powerful the telescope, the further it can see into the past. The



Hubble telescope can collect light from roughly 400 million years after when scientists estimate the Big Bang occurred. The James Webb is expected to look back to just 250 million years after the Big Bang.

It took nearly a month for the James Webb Telescope to get to its Lagrange point, which is where the telescope can permanently rest in a stable orbit. The James Webb ultimately cost roughly \$10 billion -- a bargain price to help humanity unlock some of the mysteries of the universe.

## Helpful Tips

**KINDLE BOOKS** If you plan to read a book on your Kindle while traveling, be sure to download the book before you leave. Even with the right password, Amazon may not let you buy a book while you're in another country.

**DAY STAY** Hourly hotels have a cheeky reputation, but if you've ever been marooned at an airport for seven or eight hours, a day hotel sounds like heaven.



Well, cheers. There's a website for that. Dayuse.com lets you book legitimate high-end hotel rooms for the day. You don't even have to stay overnight.

And while there, waiting on the connecting flight from Hades itself, you may stretch out for a nap or enjoy the pool. Sadly, you'll have to go through security again when you return to the airport.

### Are You In Need of a Trusted Business Advisor?

If you are not my client and would like to explore whether we might be a good fit, please contact me. As an experienced business advisor, I have worked not only in private and public industries but also across many functional areas and can help you implement best practice solutions to improve profits.



### Do You Have A Tough Accounting / Finance Question You Want Answered?

I love hearing from my small business clients and friends who enjoy reading my monthly newsletter. I'm always looking to answer pressing questions you might have relating to small business.

If you have a question, tip or idea, please call me at 352-450-2880 or email me at [dwhistle@dlhulseconsulting.com](mailto:dwhistle@dlhulseconsulting.com). Perhaps I'll feature you in a future issue!







## Good Work Habits To Set You Up For Success

If you want to succeed in your job, good habits are essential. No one is perfect and not everything is

under our control, but a few healthy workplace habits can help you reduce stress, avoid unnecessary problems, and enjoy better productivity.

- \* **Be open to feedback.** Constructive criticism usually isn't personal, and often shows you how you can grow.
- \* **Avoid gossip.** Office gossip is usually a waste of time and source of unnecessary stress. Focus on your own work and let the gossip slide.
- \* **Always be kind.** Kindness to others helps foster a better work environment, and when you're having a bad day, your co-workers will be more likely to reciprocate.
- \* **Start your day right.** Show up on time, review your to-do list, and catch up on your emails.
- \* **Keep your workspace tidy.** A cluttered desk or office inhibits creativity and distracts from work.
- \* **Ask questions...** and admit when you don't know something. Bluffing your way through a task isn't helpful, but asking for more information or assistance is.
- \* **Be a good listener.** It's frustrating to not feel heard, particularly in a stressful work situation. Contribute to a culture of active listening in your workplace.
- \* **Be a problem-solver.** When problems arise, don't dwell on them -- focus on potential solutions. This helps minimize stress and makes you a more valuable employee.



## Teach Your Kids How To Love Reading

Reading is great for kids. Pediatricians, educators, child psychologists, and every other relevant expert agree on that. It exercises their brains, improves concentration, provides a window into the world around them, and develops their imaginations. Kids who read or are read to often display stronger language development and perform better in school. An old-fashioned paper book is also a great screen-free form of entertainment and stress relief; a way for kids to unplug and unwind from their busy lives. And with a little bit of care and effort, you can encourage your kids (or grandkids, or nieces and nephews, maybe even your godchildren) to develop a love of reading that will last a lifetime.



- \* **Model reading.** Kids imitate behavior that they see, negative and positive. Read in front of them and let them know that it's something you really enjoy.
- \* **Try audiobooks.** Swap out music for audiobooks during the school run or road trips. According to Parents, audiobooks are a great way for kids to hear text come alive.
- \* **Make cozy reading spots.** A nook with a few comfortable pillows and a reading light will do, or even a regular old blanket fort. Creating a special place for kids to read makes the experience even better.

\* **Stash books all over the house.** Don't put books up where kids can't reach them -- leave them around for them to find and pick up! Place a basket of books in the living room and rotate the titles every so often. Leave a few in the car or anywhere else your kids often go.

\* **Don't hesitate to reread to younger children.** Young children develop important pre-reading skills when they learn to recognize familiar stories, so when a toddler asks for Green Eggs & Ham for the ninth day in a row, give them some praise for reading and

dive in again.

\* **Give books as gifts.** They're always the right size and they never go out of style.



### Quotes:

*"Think about winning the day. Don't worry about a week from now or a month from now, just think about one day at a time. If you are worried about the mountain in the distance, you might trip over the molehill right in front of you. Win the day!"* — **Drew Brees**

*"The most valuable player is the one that makes the most players valuable."* — **Peyton Manning**

*"Gratitude makes sense of our past, brings peace for today, and creates a vision for tomorrow."* — **Melody Beattie**





## D.L. Hulse Consulting, LLC

I provide entrepreneurs with clarity and peace of mind for making better business decisions.

P.O. Box 357778, Gainesville, FL 32635-7778

www.dlhulseconsulting.com

Phone: (352) 450-2880

Email: dwight@dlhulseconsulting.com

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### Jokes

Does February march?

**No, but April May!**

What can you find in the middle of April and March but not at the beginning or end of either?

**The letter R!**

What is a flower's favorite kind of pickle?

**A daffo-dill.**

Spring Fever

Four high school boys suffering from spring fever skipped their morning classes. After lunch, they reported to the teacher that they'd had a flat tire. Much to their relief she smiled and said,

"Well, you missed a test today so take seats apart from one another and take out a piece

of paper." Still smiling, she waited for them to sit down. Then she said: "First question: **Which tire was flat?"**

**Retirement**

What did the gardener do after they retired?

**Not mulch.**

Do you realize that in about 40 years, we'll have millions of old ladies running around with tattoos?

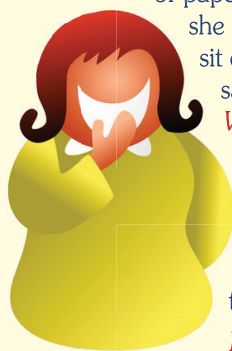
What do retirees call a long lunch?

**Normal.**

What do you call a person who is happy on Monday?

**Retired.**

A retired husband is often a wife's full-time job.



## Mardi Gras Festivities Celebrated Worldwide

Mardi Gras -- or Fat Tuesday -- is world-renowned as a rowdy, bawdy celebration, but the day is more than that.

Fat Tuesday has been traditionally the last hurrah for Christians before the austere penitential season of Lent. Fat Tuesday is followed by Ash Wednesday, the first day of the 40 days of austerity that precede Easter. In 2022, Mardi Gras is March 1.

Mardi Gras has no official standing on the calendar of the Catholic Church, but it has been celebrated for centuries by Christians and non-Christians alike. Mardi Gras, or Carnival, came to Louisiana in 1699 with French explorer Pierre Le Moyne d'Iberville, who had celebrated it in Paris.

Today, it is celebrated in hundreds of cities across the United States, including New Orleans, which virtually owns the Mardi Gras brand. Hundreds more celebrations occur in South America, especially Brazil, as well as in Europe and Asia. It still marks the beginning of Lent, but while not many people strictly observe Lent as 40 days of prayer, self-denial and penitence, people still like to celebrate Mardi Gras.

