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It's About Time!

> ## "Remember, time is money."
>
> ### — Benjamin Franklin

Don't you just love finding an unexpected $20 bill in your coat or pants pocket? One minute, you're broke; the next, you are sitting pretty. That newfound Andrew Jackson can seem like a million bucks.

Well, 2008 — and this month especially — offers you something similar to that $20 bill. It is something you only get every four years, something most people never really plan for. It is time!

2008 is a leap year. That means we get one more day this year. You often hear people say there aren't enough hours in the day to get their work done. Well, this month we get an extra 24 hours on February 29.

Time is such a valuable commodity for everyone. In fact, Benjamin Franklin once said, "Remember, time is money." Maybe we should treat time like money; it seems like they're the two things that people never have enough of!

Now that you have this extra day, what will you do with it? You should invest that extra time in your spring planning and ensure that your time is "spent" wisely.

Leaping to Conclusions

Do you know why leap year occurs every four years? Do you know what its purpose is? It is not just there so the calendar companies can charge a little more for printing that extra day. No, leap year and the ensuing leap day were created to make sure the Gregorian calendar that we have been using since the 16th century is properly synchronized with the solar year. A solar year is 365¼ long, versus the Gregorian calendar's year of 365 days. To make sure they are in sync with each other, a day needs to be added to the calendar every four years.

And here's some more leap year trivia for you: Did you know that we actually skip leap year three times every 400 years? Because a solar year is about 11 minutes less than 365¼ days long, leap year must itself be "leaped" three times every four centuries to overcome the difference.

Do you know someone who was born on Feb. 29? Currently, there are approximately 187,000 people in the United States (and 4 million worldwide) that were born on a leap day. When are these "leaplings" supposed to celebrate their birthday? Every four years? February 28? Or March 1?

As we get older, celebrating that birthday every four years doesn't sound like such a bad idea. But for those youngsters who can't wait for their birthday presents, I'm sure every February 28 or March 1 can't come fast enough.

Plan Your Time Wisely

So 2008 will be one day longer than 2007 was. Will February 29, 2008, feel any different than February 28 or March 1 did in 2007? I kind of doubt it. But it is nice to think we actually have a real surplus of time this month.

For most people, I would guess that February 29 is just another day in the office or greenhouse. But what a leap year does do is provide us with the opportunity to reflect on how valuable our time really is and how vital our time-management skills are.

Spring is almost here, and before you know it there will not be enough time to get anything done. So why not use leap day to your advantage? If you take the time now to make the time, maybe then your spring season won't seem so crazy.

Use this extra day to make sure you haven't forgotten anything for 2008. Use February 29 as your day to evaluate all of your spring plans. Clean out all of those old e-mails or the cluttered inbox on your desk. Talk to your accountant and make sure all of your 2008 financial plans are in order. Or take the time to review your 2007 records to remind yourself what worked last year and what didn't. Then, make the appropriate plans to help ensure a successful 2008.

If you invest your "spare" time on February 29 in preplanning, I am sure it will pay dividends. **GPN**