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**Randy Johnston** • Feb. 05, 2021



*From the February 2021 Issue.*

Lately, I have had plenty of time to think, plan, and prepare for new growth. The past year has provided a unique opportunity to study, learn, and discover new products, concepts, and ways to serve others better. I cannot think of a time I have learned more except for my best college year. Besides the intense client service provided during the pandemic, delivering hundreds of CPE courses virtually, and designing new products, I was able to spend more time reviewing products and providing guidance than I had in 20 years.

When Editor [Gail Perry](#) asked if I would consider producing product summaries and

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have supported my positive view of life. At the same time, growing the pie results in a bigger pie with enough for all. To me, a bigger pie has meant it is easy to help people, although I must quietly smile when they grab more for themselves without paying it forward. Those of you who know me already understand that I am not a fan of power or greed, and I am a fan of always doing the right thing. Self-interest is too inward-looking, whereas helping others has provided great rewards. As we continue the third decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century of the third millennium, you must be asking “why this philosophy” in a technical column.

Although none of us know the future, I believe we now have the opportunity to create it, as I noted in my [November 2020 column](#). While 2020 provided an intense period of retrospect and learning for me, I am now ready to share what I have learned and how you can use the knowledge to help yourself and to help your clients. I realized that I enjoy attending conferences to meet new people, renew and maintain old relationships, and learn new ideas that I can apply in everyday life. That's why I like shows like the [Consumer Electronics Show](#) (CES), [AICPA Engage](#), [Scaling New Heights](#), software publisher conferences (too many to name!), or producing our [K2 conferences](#) throughout the U.S. and Canada. Unfortunately, it may be a little while longer before face to face meetings become routine again.

## Navigate a New World

This year is the 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Magellan's [circumnavigation journey](#). We need to navigate the new world by leveraging collaboration and creating an outstanding client experience. I only recently recognized that all the technology I have been developing or assisting developers create uses technology to do things most easily and effectively. It is time for your own discovery journey in both columns and podcasts this year and beyond.

We plan to initially cover products in the following categories:

- 1099, W2, & Misc.

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#### Productivity Solutions

- Tax Document Automation
- Tax News Products
- Tax Planning
- Tax Research Products
- Tax Software Products
- Time and Billing Products
- Workflow
- Write-Up Solutions

We will use a framework that includes all of these and more.

- **Advisory First** – Planning, Core, Tertiary (Concierge/Referral) Services
- **CAS** – Repeatable deliverables
- **Compliance** – So we do not forget the fundamentals and where we came from
- **Innovation** – Emerging Technologies, new releases, and breakthroughs
- **Fundamentals** – so we can do things the easiest and best way
- **Philosophy** – so we are choosing the right things

#### And What Are the Rules? Experience Matters!

The main rules are that we must always provide an outstanding client experience, an interesting and motivational team member experience, and an optimal partner experience, including time and profit. We will look at how to use technology to support niches and vertical markets. And like the best of the tour guides, we will show you the best spots to see, enjoying the greatest of smorgasbords, while keeping you out of danger. Throughout the process, you will realize that we will be striving to “keep it simple.” But we cannot set out and do this alone. Innovating and learning is a collaborative effort. Please ask for guidance, help, and assistance. While our role is as a guide and Sherpa, we want you to enjoy the experience of continuous learning



and insights that you did not think were possible. So now, it is time to create the

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- **Fujitsu Scanners** – The Fujitsu fi-800R scanner is joined by two new ScanSnap models – the iX1600 and iX1400
- **Metamaterial**
  - The [world's most transparent and 5G ready antenna](#) for next gen smartphones and automotive applications
  - A full color, holographic transparent display for [automotive](#) and [wearable](#) applications
  - A metal-mesh ([NanoWeb – product line](#)) active defogging application on diving masks
- **A new electric vehicle platform** for vehicles of all kinds from GM shows us that we shouldn't write off Detroit as electric vehicles become more mainstream
- **Caterpillar** shows us that the car companies don't have anything on them when it comes to operating autonomously

## Personal

**ColdSnap** – Fresh frozen treats from a rapid freezing appliance, which produces single servings of frozen confections on demand and with no mess. The company goal was to goal to create a Nespresso-style machine that generates ice cream on demand without requiring cleanup.

**GoSun** Solar products – including a solar French Press (Brew), water filtration system (Flow), solar stoves (Fusion, Sport, and Go) and more

As a reminder, many of these products never make it to market, but they are a foreshadowing of the things to come.

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