

WEEK IN IDEAS | August 10, 2012, 8:12 p.m. ET

Week in Ideas: Christopher Shea

Article Comments MORE IN BOOKS »

Email Print Save

f t + in

A A



E-Commerce

That's Some Expensive Spam

People pitching goods via illegal spam probably earn only about \$200 million annually, while some \$20 billion is spent fending off unwanted email. That 100-to-1 cost-benefit ratio far exceeds that for many other commercial crimes, say the authors of a new study.

Based on analyses of Yahoo Mail data and other sources, they estimate that 1.8% to 3% of the 50 billion pieces of spam sent out each day get through anti-spam defenses. They also assume that each piece takes five seconds to delete and that computer users' time is worth \$25 an hour. To the value of wasted time the authors added \$6 billion spent annually on anti-spam software.

The estimate about profit is based on, among other things, the known costs of renting the services of spammers and

Oliver Munday
People pitching goods via illegal spam probably earn only about \$200 million annually, while some \$20 billion is spent fending off unwanted email.

revenue data from computer scientists who have infiltrated spammers' operations.

"The Economics of Spam," Justin M. Rao and David H. Reiley, *Journal of Economic Perspectives* (Summer 2012)

Psychology



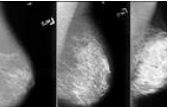
Guilt Trip to the Top

Behind the \$2,000 suit, that corporate eminence may feel like he's to blame for everything.

A tendency to feel guilt marks one as a leader, a study suggests, because it shows "a sense of responsibility for the welfare and socioeconomic needs of others." First, nearly 250 people examined the responses of others to potentially guilt-inducing scenarios (responses that were concocted by researchers). For example, how would they feel if they accidentally ran over an animal?

People with high "guilt proneness" said they intensely regretted that they hadn't been driving more safely. Study participants rated the (fictional) people who had expressed

Don't Miss... Powered by Taboola

		
Fans Create Parodies of Popular Songs Based on Minecraft 02:44	A Surprise Hit Spawns a Movie Deal 02:25	More States Ask, 'Are You Dense?' 02:14

Recent Week in Ideas >

- Week in Ideas: Christopher Shea
- Week in Ideas
- Glasses for Better Hindsight

More in Books

- Can Syria's Christians Survive?
- How to Be a Better Procrastinator
- In Praise of the Copycats
- The Best Film of All Time Is...
- Sought by Art Stars, Famed for Frames

Most Popular >

- Read
- Emailed
- Video
- Commented

high levels of guilt as better potential leaders than the others.

Then, in an exploration of real-world leadership, people took personality tests, including tests of a proclivity for guilt. Then they took part in group exercises—specifically, team-based planning about how to survive a plane crash that left them marooned in a desert. People who had scored high on guilt-proneness were rated by their peers as having played a greater role in the group's deliberations.

"Uneasy Lies the Head That Wears the Crown," Rebecca L. Schaumberg and Francis J. Flynn, Journal of Personality and Social Psychology (forthcoming)



Enlarge Image

Oliver Munday

Companies with women on their corporate boards perform better than companies lacking any female representation, according to a study.

Economics

Get on Board, Ladies

Companies with women on their corporate boards perform better than companies lacking any female representation, according to a study of 2,360 companies world-wide, from 2005 to 2011.

The researchers focused on stock returns but also explored other measures of performance, including return on equity, which produced similar findings. For

companies with a market capitalization higher than \$10 billion, for example, those with women on their boards outperformed those lacking them by 26% over the period studied.

The gains were concentrated after the 2008 financial crisis. The researchers were hesitant about offering sweeping causal explanations but suggested that companies with female board members tended to act in a more "defensive" manner, which served them well in lean times. (It may also be the case, to a degree, that well-run companies tend to appoint more women to their boards, the study said.)

"Gender Diversity and Corporate Performance," Credit Suisse Research Institute (August 2012)



Enlarge Image

i-stock

Researchers are at work creating what's been dubbed a 'human body on a chip.'

Human 'Organs' on a Chip

Hoping to speed up drug development and also make it safer and more cost-effective, researchers are at work creating what's been dubbed a "human body on a chip."

Current drug-testing protocols home in on certain human cells before proceeding to animal studies and, finally, to cautious testing in human subjects. Scientists at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology

plan to include various types of cells from as many as 10 human organ systems—including circulatory, gastrointestinal, immune, and respiratory—and link them on a plastic chip laden with sensors. After a drug is processed by multiple kinds of liver cells, for example, micro-pumps will circulate the byproducts into the other body tissue. By using the chip in the early stages of lab study, researchers will get early warnings of when drugs are likely to cause "off-target" effects (positive or negative), the MIT team says. The project involves collaboration with several private companies and will receive \$32 million in federal funds over the next five years.

A version of this article appeared August 11, 2012, on page C4 in the U.S. edition of The Wall Street Journal, with the headline: Week in Ideas: Christopher Shea/Human 'organs' on a chip.

1. [The Who, Queen Rock Olympics Closing Ceremonies](#)
2. [Police Fire 12 Shots, Fatally Killing Man](#)
3. [Ryan Pick Jolts Race](#)
4. [Control Your Heirs From the Grave](#)
5. [Opinion: Kimberley A. Strassel: Why Romney Chose Ryan](#)

Most Read Articles Feed

Latest Headlines

[Ryan Pick Jolts Race](#)

[Life Insurers Pressed on Lost Policies](#)

[Obama Takes Step to Help U.S. Farmers](#)

[Troubles Keep Cash Flowing to the U.S.](#)

[Timber Sales Cultivate Jobs](#)

[Campaign Over Soda Tax Bubbles Up](#)

[Honda Boosts North America Production](#)

[Judge Sides With Estate of Jackson](#)

[NCR Unit in Syria Accused Of Sanctions Lapse](#)

[Hard Times Spread for Cities](#)

[More Headlines](#)

SPONSORED LINKS

Mortgage Rates Hit 2.50%

If you owe under \$729k you may qualify for 2.90% APR Govt Refi Plans.

www.SeeRefinanceRates.com

Penny stocks soaring 900%

Come experience penny stock gains with our free & accurate newsletter

www.PennyStocksUniverse.com

Stock Trading Made Easy

Valuable Information On Online Trading. Be Successful Today!
sharetradingeducation.com

JOIN THE DISCUSSION
Be the first to comment »

MORE IN
Books »

Email Print Save Order Reprints



SPONSORED LINKS

QUAN Hot Investment

Stock's Recent Explosion Has Investors Flocking - Buy Now!
www.QuantumInnovators.com

Could this Stock Triple

Why investing in water can lead to massive profits
nycfinancialtimes.com/QWTR/

Yellow Cloudy Headlights?

Mothers® headlight restoration kit. Restores headlight clarity.
www.Mothers.com

President Lowers Mortgage

If you owe under \$729k you probably qualify for the Govt Refi Program.
www.MortgageRatesExperts.com

You Might Like

Worst. History Book. Ever.

What Men Should Wear to Work

People Who Feel Guilty Are Leaders

Kimberley A. Strassel: Why Romney Chose Ryan

How to Be a Better Procrastinator

From Around the Web

Content from Sponsors [What's this?](#)

A 43-year-old male dies during swimming portion of Ironman U.S. Championship (ESPN New York)

British Gold Medalist Jessica Ennis Hot Body Pictures (Zimbio)

Is It Really Necessary to Change the Oil Every 3,000 Miles? (Warranty Direct)

SR-71 Blackbird: Supersonic Spy Aircraft | The Most Amazing Flying Machines Ever (Space.com)

Why the Future of Gaming Looks Better than Your Wildest Dreams [ea](#) (Qualcomm Spark)

Add a Comment

JOURNAL COMMUNITY

[Community rules](#)

All comments will display your real name. Start typing your comments here...

Track replies to my comment

CLEAR

POST

Login with Facebook

OFFERS

Advertisement

WSJ *select*

Powered by GILT CITY



SummerScreen at McCarren Park

VIP Tickets to Outdoor Screenings Plus Dinner & Drinks from \$35

[VIEW OFFER »](#)



Lamb Dinner at Landmarc Tribeca

Tickets to Cocktail Reception & Three-Course Dinner for \$110

[VIEW OFFER »](#)



Edi & The Wolf

40% Off Supper for Two or Brunch for Four with Mimosas or Bellinis

[VIEW OFFER »](#)

New York

Other Cities: [Chicago](#) [LA](#) [More »](#)

WSJ Select is operated independently of The Wall Street Journal news department.

Editors' Picks



Africans Chase Away Almighty Dollar



Campaign Over Soda Tax Bubbles Up



Rory McIlroy Wins the PGA Championship



Wal-Mart to Offer Look at Consumers



Lovers of Minecraft Are Belting Out Odes to Digging and Smelting

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

[BACK TO TOP](#) ^

Customer Center:

- My Account
- My Subscriptions

Create an Account:

- Register for Limited Access
- Subscribe to WSJ.com
- Subscribe to WSJ Weekend - Print Edition

Help & Information Center:

- Help
- Customer Service
- Contact Us
- Global Support
- Print Subscriber Services

About:

- Content Partnerships
- Reprints
- Advertising
- Place a Classified Ad
- Classifieds
- Advertise Locally
- Conferences
- About Dow Jones
- Privacy Policy - UPDATED 10/18/2011
- Data Policy - NEW
- Your Ad Choices
- Subscriber Agreement & Terms of Use - NEW
- Copyright Policy
- Jobs at WSJ.com

WSJ.com:

- Site Map
- Home
- World
- U.S.
- New York
- Business
- Markets
- Market Data
- Tech
- Personal Finance
- Life & Culture
- Opinion
- Autos
- Careers
- Real Estate
- Small Business
- Student Journal
- Corrections
- SafeHouse - Send Us Information

Tools & Formats:

- Today's Paper
- Video Center
- Graphics
- Columns
- Blogs
- Topics
- Guides
- Alerts
- Newsletters
- Mobile
- WSJ Social
- Tablet Edition
- Podcasts
- RSS Feeds
- Journal Community
- WSJ on Twitter
- WSJ on Facebook
- WSJ on Foursquare
- WSJ on Google+
- WSJ on YouTube
- My Journal
- Portfolio
- E-books

THE WALL STREET JOURNAL.

Digital Network

- WSJ.com
- Marketwatch.com
- Barrons.com
- SmartMoney.com
- AllThingsD.com
- FINS: Finance, IT jobs, Sales jobs
- BigCharts.com
- Virtual Stock Exchange
- WSJ Radio
- Professor Journal
- WSJ U.S. Edition
- WSJ Asia Edition
- WSJ Europe Edition
- WSJ India Page

Foreign Language Editions:

- WSJ Chinese
- WSJ Japanese
- WSJ Portuguese
- WSJ Spanish
- WSJ Deutschland



Copyright ©2012 Dow Jones & Company, Inc. All Rights Reserved