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HOPE SCOTT | PORTFOLIO SAMPLES

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BEST WEB DESIGN SOFTWARE FOR 2020

ARTICLE FOR JOTFORM

Perennially evolving web design technology continues to revolutionize designers' work and level up website creation.

Most successful website designers have software tools that they turn to again and again. But with so many options available – and the suite of services changing all the time, how do you choose the best professional web design software for you? How do you assemble a toolkit of web design programs that fits your goals as a designer? And what is the best web design software, anyway?

The answer is, it depends.

In this post, we look at the web design programs that professional designers use. We study the software's purpose, who it's most appropriate for, cost, and more. Our list includes both the best website builders, like Wix and Weebly, which are great for beginner designers as well as the best offline website design software, like Sketch and Adobe Illustrator, which empower more seasoned designers with more robust vector graphics and prototyping features.

Webflow

Webflow is all-in-one online web design software to design, build, and launch websites. It works by translating designs into code, which means that it's ideal for designers who don't have the benefit of working with developers who can bring their visions to life. This web design software program requires a little more experience than other DIY sites, like Wix and Squarespace, but clear tutorials are found at Webflow University. Websites can be built in HTML5, CSS3 and JavaScript. Webflow offers both plenty of structural design and stylistic design features. All in all, successful web designers love it; though, the learning curve is a little sharper. The animations interface and e-commerce function are somewhat limited.

Price: Free until you launch. Then, for a basic plan $15 a month.

Wordpress.org

WordPress.org was originally offline open source content management system (CMS) software for blog creation, but now this website design program is also used to build for websites and apps thanks to a collection of nifty and easy-to-use templates and plug-ins that don't necessarily require coding know-how. To start you need a domain name and web hosting service, then download a WordPress theme and edit from there. This web design program is ideal for somewhat savvy beginners.

Price: The WordPress software is free, but you will have to have a domain and hosting provider.

Note: not to be confused with WordPress.com. The .com version is a streamlined site builder. The .org site allows for more creative control and customization.

Wix

Wix offers classic, prefabricated online website building that, like Webflow and WordPress, doesn't make coding a requirement. This option is incredibly popular, very easy to use; not to mention, it is an all-in-one solution, providing customers with a domain and host. Wix is perfect for beginners who need to create a professional introduction site or e-commerce shop. It's also ideal for professional portfolio websites, restaurants, or basic business sites. Last but not least, Wix offers a great choice (500+) of design templates

that are flexible and mobile ready. With Wix artificial design intelligence (ADI) and some cues from you, the site practically designs itself.

Price: Wix is available for free, unless you want your own domain. Personal plans with your own domain and no advertisements start at $13 a month.

Weebly

Weebly is a very popular, simple, easy-to-use website builder, with theme-based design options. It's all encompassing online builder software, like Wix, is great for small businesses, portfolios, personal introductory websites, event management companies, and online stores.

Price: A basic website is free. If you want a custom domain name you need to subscribe for $6 a month.

Squarespace

Squarespace is online design software to build websites that are known for their special look. It's not as easy to use as Weebly and not as intuitive as Wix; you'll put in a little more work with this builder software. But the

end result will be clean, professional, and good-looking - possibly even hip. Squarespace gets high marks for quality of design and your site will look good on mobile devices. It's great for small to medium business owners, artists, photographers, film editors, writers and consultants.

Price: Prices start with a $12 per month personal plan.

Photoshop

Adobe Photoshop's image editing software giant has been around for 30 years, and is still one of the best tools for graphic design. Photoshop was designed for image editing, but experienced designers use it to build websites. Photoshop is best used in building a website if you are doing heavy image editing or lots of customization. Younger web designers are turning to software like Figma and Sketch, instead of Photoshop. But often you have to jump into Photoshop anyway, so it can be efficient just to work in it from the start. Web designers who know their way around Photoshop find it offers the fastest solutions to challenging layout and mockup design tasks.

Price: Photoshop Creative Cloud is $10 month. Or you can subscribe to the full Adobe Creative Cloud Suite for $49.99 a month.

https://www.jotform.com/blog/3d-text-effects-ultimate-collection-photoshop-tutorials

https://www.jotform.com/blog/skys-the-limit-40-fresh-and-free-photoshop-text-effects-83319/

Sketch

Sketch is powerful offline website design software for digital designers. It is a modern work flow software program for digital designers working on websites, product design, and software design. It is an easy to use, easy to learn software where working on artboards is one of its key features. Sketch enables responsive web design, and offers many design tools in addition to artboards – grids, shapes, vectors, pencils, text, images, and basic shapes. It is a Mac OS app, has a customizable toolbar, and is also known for its exporting process features. Website designers say it's fun to use, very fast, and has seamless responsiveness for designing copies on mobile devices. Sketch has started to compete with Figma by offering collaborative versions.

https://www.jotform.com/blog/100-free-resources-for-sketch-app-89710/.

Price: The initial purchase of $99 offers all features and one year of updates. Sketch for Teams, the collaborative feature, is $8.25 per month, per editor.

Figma

This is website design software very similar to Sketch in functionality and features. It is for digital designers, from freelance web designers to large company design teams. Figma distinguishes itself with its collaboration capabilities. Cloud based, it operates like Google Docs where teams can simultaneously work on a single document. Figma works on any platform.

Price: You can start for free with a version for small teams. Plans start at $12 a month per editor for larger teams.

Adobe XD

Adobe's all-in-one XD (experience design) software for web design is known to be light and streamlined, with clean and intuitive interface. It gets great marks for its high fidelity prototyping. It is fully integrated with Adobe's vast resource network allowing you to import from Illustrator or Photoshop and other products. It has an auto animate feature for apps, but if you are just designing web pages it also functions well. For Mac and Windows users, it's ideal for user experience (UX) and user interface (UI) designers. It is easier to use than some of the other Adobe Creative Cloud apps and comes with Adobe's tutorial support. Compared to Sketch, XD's design graphics are more simplistic and limited. But If you already have a subscription to Adobe's Creative Cloud, XD is a natural choice for a good web design tool that is constantly evolving.

Price: XD has a free starter plan offering you the ability to publish one prototype, 2GB of cloud storage, and a font app from the Creative Cloud Libraries.

Adobe Illustrator

Adobe illustrator was named #1 for Best Graphic Design Software for 2020 by PC Magazine. What more is there to say?

https://www.pcmag.com/reviews/adobe-illustrator

This killer design graphic software is for serious designers, artists and graphic artists. Several beginner tutorials are supplied with this software, which is for both Windows and MacOs users.

https:www.jotform.com/blog/30-best-illustrator-tutorials-2016-97783/

Price: Following a 7 day trial period, the stand alone subscription cost is $19.99 a month for an annual subscription and $29.99 for a month to month.

Adobe InDesign

You can think of InDesign as a digital form print shop. Initially created by Adobe as a desktop publishing tool, the web design software has advanced typography and intuitive graphics for digital publishing. Graphic designers and marketing professionals use InDesign to create brochures, magazines, posters, business

cards, stickers and much more for print and digital media. With very robust typesetting features, the graphics will carry the same resolution quality whether on a post-it note or a billboard poster. For Mac and Windows.

Price: The price is the Adobe subscription model.

This is the best web design software and the ones that professional web designers continually cite as their favorites in their work practice. As you wonder what you should use for your next web design project, choose two or three that appeal to you, meet your project goals, and that also boost your own skillset, for example, in typography or animation, and get to know them. Very soon, you will have your own great toolkit.

FOR ARTERIOR'S ENTRY INTO THE INSTITUTE OF CLASSICAL ARCHITECTURE & ART, NEW ENGLAND, BULFINCH AWARDS

Arteriors designed and installed this mural series for the coffered panel ceiling of the Saunders Castle at Park Plaza, Boston. The building, finished in 1897 and designed by William Gibbons Preston, was an armory for the Massachusetts First Corps of Cadets.

Our architectural finish and decorative arts firm was inspired to enliven the post-Civil War building with a classical New England reference that would enhance the design conversation of the Castle through the 21st century. The renovation commission, through KDK Design, Boston, was for hand-painted 1200 square feet of the 18 panels, 20 feet in the air.

The writer Henry James described the New England quality of a family that moved in close by his in the lower Manhattan of James' boyhood. They had "a wild savour," he wrote. The family's "stronger and clearer note of New England" was "aridly romantic" with an "atmosphere of apples and nuts and cheese, of pies and jack-knives and 'squrruls'." Their New England stamp conveyed "a brave rusticity" and "the very essence of Indian summer".

We thought of those apple trees, and Indian summer afternoons and decided the freshness of clear New England skies was the note we wanted to strike. Our project speaks to the simplicity, balance and optimism of the classical tradition of our region. Blue Skies.

WHAT IS RESPONSIVE WEB DESIGN?

Words by Hope Scott

In 2020, web access by mobile devices is slightly over 50 percent worldwide.

Just a few years ago website access by mobile devices was at 10 percent (Statista.com).

The increasing trend of mobile usage to view websites is the result of critical mass smartphone usage, pocket size usability for on the move consumers, and ever evolving mobile device technology – smartphones, smart tvs, tablets, and smart watches.

A millennial filmmaker, who is working on her 27" Apple desktop monitor, might pick up her cellphone to order hiking boots for an upcoming camping trip.

A cousin who is visiting you in Philadelphia for the weekend joins you for coffee in the morning having just ordered six tickets to Independence Hall for you and your families on his iPad.
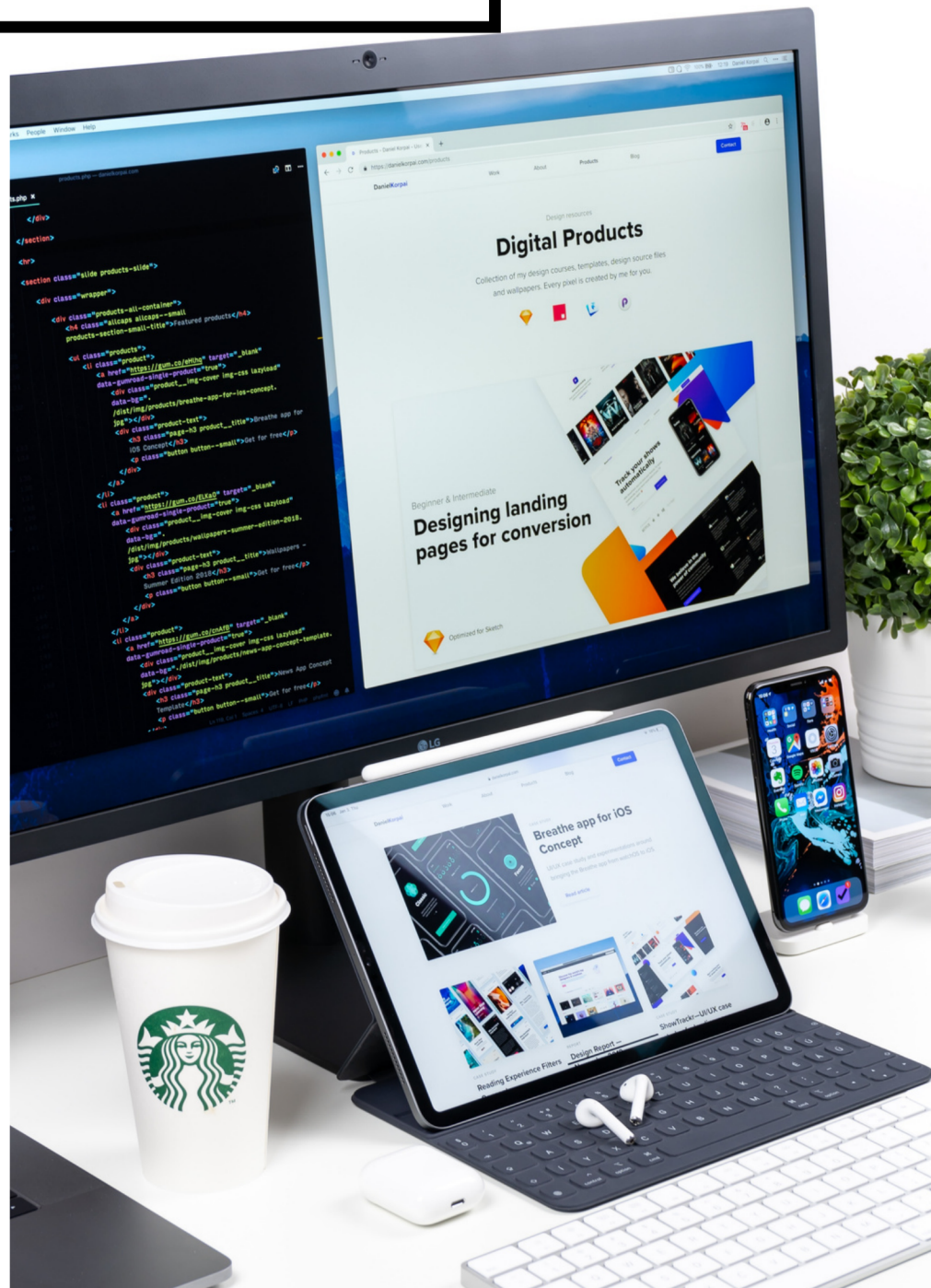
Responsive web design is a way to design a website that automatically scales content and elements to fit the screen size on which it is viewed. It's website design for one flexible experience that's delivered to every device that might visit that website. The user experience might change in layout or presentation according to the size of the screen but the website is the same no matter the device or browser.

Responsive web design is a key element of the modern design process. Relying on the inherently flexible nature of the web, responsive web design is used to create websites that respond to people wherever they happen to be on their technology.

What is the purpose of responsive web design?

It used to be that web designers made one website for desktops and another one for mobile devices.

The original responsive web design geek, independent web designer Ethan Marcotte found that after he designed desktop websites for his clients they were coming back to him requesting that he also "make a website for the iphone." Marcotte, who coined the term and also wrote a book on the subject "Responsive Web Design," knew that he needed to develop design that would make his websites' appearance and usability seamless on mobile devices as well as desktops.

Mobile computing has exploded and there are 8 billion mobile devices in use today globally.

Industries across the board, in e-commerce, design, technology, publishing, and education - use responsive design because they can create a responsive experience with one website and reach more people and more devices than ever before.

With the rapid rise in mobile usage, companies know they are delivering an experience to a user who might be accessing the website multiple times a day on whatever screen happens to be closest at hand. On just one user journey, a viewer may use devices interchangeably. A reader might view a newsletter on the desktop at home, subscribe to it on the laptop at work, and check back later on their smartphone to send the link to a friend.

The user experience of a website is consistent no matter the device with responsive web design. The appearance of the website is not distorted on varying screens and the user doesn't encounter any difference in appearance of the website or have to take any extra steps, like pinching or zooming.

Small businesses and companies will have lower maintenance costs with one website, and easier analytics reports. Your pages will load faster on mobile devices, helping you avoid the bounce factor connected to slow loading content.

And you can't argue with Google. Google's mobile-first indexing is an important algorithmic development which promotes the use of responsive web design. Small businesses who incorporate responsive design benefit from mobile-first indexing, which is Google's search engine algorithm ranking mobile-friendliness. Google's bots will take the mobile version of a website first for indexing and ranking in the search engine results pages (SERPS). Google's approach is a significant factor urging responsive development.

How responsive web design works

With responsive web design, the website is cued, with its program coding, to revise itself so that it looks and works the same on each and every device. Responsive web design's flexible canvas changes the shape of content and images on the website to make them accessible to screens both small and large.

Responsive web design uses flexible grids, flexible images and media queries.

The responsive design syncs the layouts, graphics and images to respond to the user's device environment. Fluid grids, also called liquid layouts, scale to suit the user's screen. Responsive web design's CSS3 media queries instruct the websites to collect data from the site's visitor and to then implement CSS styles which tell the website software which design to respond with. The CSS will tell the user's browser to respond with a flexible image that suits the user's screen. The website responds to the user's environment. The layout, with responsive web design, may look a little different on the company's website accessed by a desktop computer than it does on a smartphone. On the cell phone, the grids may have recalibrated to a vertical preference layout, but ALL the same information will be there, in pretty much the same order.

Responsive web design examples:

One of the first companies to default to responsive web design was Audi.com. Audi.com is cited as the first example of responsive design website in 2002 as the company recognized early on that to develop fixed-size web pages was neither good practice nor forward thinking. The design was primitive but the pioneering concept was born.
Higher education institutions are adopting responsive web design, conscious that the first impressions they make will likely be on a prospective students' cell phone. Millennials and berond are being born into this technology and have expectations for mobile website response. If they can't get it on the cell phone they will pass it by.

https://er.educause.edu/articles/2015/11/responsive-web-design-in-higher-ed

Companies across industries are getting high marks for their responsive web design:
International Energy Agency
Financial Times
Illy Issimo

Responsive web design will soon be essential to the viability of your business. Adapting responsive web design in your design or business website practices now also allows for the potential capability to respond to future mobile device designs. It has become the basic starting point in modern website design.

Web designer vs. UX designer vs. UI designer

Written for JotForm Blog

First impressions are key.

Experts say we size up a new acquaintance in between 30 seconds and two minutes.

First impressions are key. Experts say we size up a new acquaintance in between 30 seconds and two minutes.

With work being conducted remotely, with e-commerce shops and virtual portfolios, websites are now more than ever an essential business tool. And a website has even less time to make a first impression. Under six seconds to be exact.

Whether for a personal introduction, a business showcase, or a woodworker's portfolio, the best websites hold the interest of the user. The creation of the intricate design appearance, user interface and facility that make up the website are the responsibilities of three design professionals – the web designer, the user experience (UX) designer and the user interface (UI) designer.

What are these roles? How are web design, UX and UI defined and, how do these skills dovetail, overlap and fit in the job market?

Web design encompasses numerous components like graphic design, UX, UI, content creation and SEO (search engine optimization). While good web design is somewhat subjective, it can be and is measured in conversions. Conversions is the term for getting the user to take the next step: to click on the call to action button; to make a purchase; to book a reservation.

UX and UI are increasingly listed as key jobs in the website design job market. But what is a web designer vs. UX designer or web designer vs. UI designer?

It's not always clear because in the technology world things are constantly morphing and evolving. There is a lot of overlap between these job function skills. For instance, an experienced web designer who works primarily with early stage small companies may be called a web designer, but she also possesses the UX skills needed for the job. But in a large company like Twitter or Google, there may be call for a web designer, a UX designer, a UX researcher and a UI professional.

This blogpost looks at the different roles of web designer, UX designer and UI designer as they are viewed today and how each design talent fits in the current job market.

Web Designer

Web designers typically began as graphic designers and evolved, along with the expanding digital world, into web designers.

A web designer is different than a web developer. A web developer works on what is called the back end of site design – knowing the computer languages (e.g. HTML, CSS, JavaScript) and writing the code to create web pages, setting up the maintenance for database and servers. In the U.S. web developers are referred to as engineers.

A web *designer* works on the front end – what you see when you visit the website – the aesthetic look of the site, pages layout, photos and graphics, color, typography, content and the mobile device versions.

- *Web designer role and responsibilities*: being current with industry trends, best design practices and software; producing excellent visual design; collaborating with clients on design goals and budgets and often with working with other designers

- *Web designer skills and education:* Number one is an interest in this creative field. Associate's degree, bachelor's degree preferred, in computer science, business, graphic arts. Facility with top design software platforms. Some UX knowledge. Communication skills are important for marketing your business and working with clients and other professionals. Time management, organization and the ability to meet deadlines.
- *Income:* Income range reflects education, experience and your own business goals. Many designers are freelance entrepreneurs. But you may want to work in an industry or for a marketing agency. The average cost to design a small business website is $3,000 to $6,000. Experienced freelance designers aim to charge $10,000 for optimum websites. Large tech companies can pay six figures for complex websites. The median income for website designers is $64,657 (Salary.com).

UX Designer

The terms UX and UI design have been around since the 1990s, originally cited in "The Design of Everyday Things", by Don Norman. UX and UI approaches are applied in all design – of coffee cups, chairs, flowerpots – but now these terms are mostly applied by the tech world to websites and apps.

It is helpful to know that this job title started as UX designer, then tech companies began using the job title product designer for the same role, and now they are back to using the term UX designer. The UX role is about the usability of the product (U.S. Department of Health and Human Services) https://www.usability.gov/what-and-why/user-experience.html.

UX designer roles and responsibilities: designs, prototypes, and develops solutions for web and mobile apps; takes the research data from the research team to begin coming up with solutions; sketches out solutions; turns solutions into prototypes with software like Figma; tests with users and continually refines the design according to user feedback.

Some UX designer traits: cognitive, analytical, problem solver, psychological.

UX designer skills and education: knowledge of web and mobile apps and design patterns; good knowledge of applicable software – e.g., Figma and Sketch; good communication and facilitator skills because you will be working with clients, other designers and users; collaboration skills; prototyping and wireframing sites or apps; pitching and presentation skills. Background with Associate's degree or B.A./B.S. in relevant fields including computer science, visual design, web programming, information architecture, communications, psychology and anthropology.

Income: Large companies, like Apple, Twitter and Facebook post job advertisements specifically for UX Designers. In a smaller company, or early stage start-up, it's rare to be hired as a sole UX designer. As all three roles have similar end goals, at a smaller venue you might be combining web design and UX design in your role. Some talented designers wear all three hats in smaller companies. Salary range: $56k - $120k (LinkedIn.com); average salary $95,225 (Indeed.com).

UI Designer

What is UX vs. UI web design? UI and UX are related to each other, but they are very different. UX is more analytical and UI is concerned with the visual appearance. UI is about the user interface specifically.

If we look at the overall design of a classic vintage automobile say, the Milan-crafted 1962 Aston Martin DB4 GT Zagato, you can identify the general design work of the UX and UI Designers:

UX – transmission, horsepower, torque, speed, axels, steering column, engine, steering column, control dials' functions.

UI – the beautiful blue sapphire paint color, the streamlined curvy shape, the light maple steering wheel that contrasts with the richness of the body color, the emotion you feel when you put your foot on the accelerator, the control dials' appearance.

Who would design the spoke racing wheels? Good question. You can see that these roles are different, complement and overlap.

The UI designer designs the look and feel of the website, but in a different way than the web designer. The UI designer designs the elements of the Interface - how the user actually processes the apps and products on the web pages vs. the more passive sense of the overall web design.

Some UI designer traits: visual, problem solving, aesthetically driven

UI designer role and responsibilities: receiving the needs and structure of a product or app from UX and designing an aesthetically attractive platform; designing the look and feel of products with graphic design, color and typography; designing visual interfaces for machines and software; graphic design; while not a branding designer, implementing the brand through all screens; creating visual consistency

throughout a company's digital sphere; up to date with the competition and market trends; UI designers play a key role in designing for users with disabilities.

UI designer skills and education: Visual communication arts, graphic design, web development, print design, branding design, collaborative people skills, with an associate's or bachelor's degree.

Income: As with UX, sole UI design positions are found in the large Silicon Valley companies. In some locations, like California, salaries are higher for all designers than other parts of the nation. Range: $43k – 95k (LinkedIn.com); average salary $81,267 (Indeed.com).

Web designer, UX and UI skills are increasingly relevant with the encompassing web presence for personal portfolios, online business, virtual learning and more.

The skillsets are defined and different, but frequently overlap. Development, analytics and visual elements combine to make for the best websites and user experiences. Knowing about these design categories can help you position yourself in this rewarding career vertical.
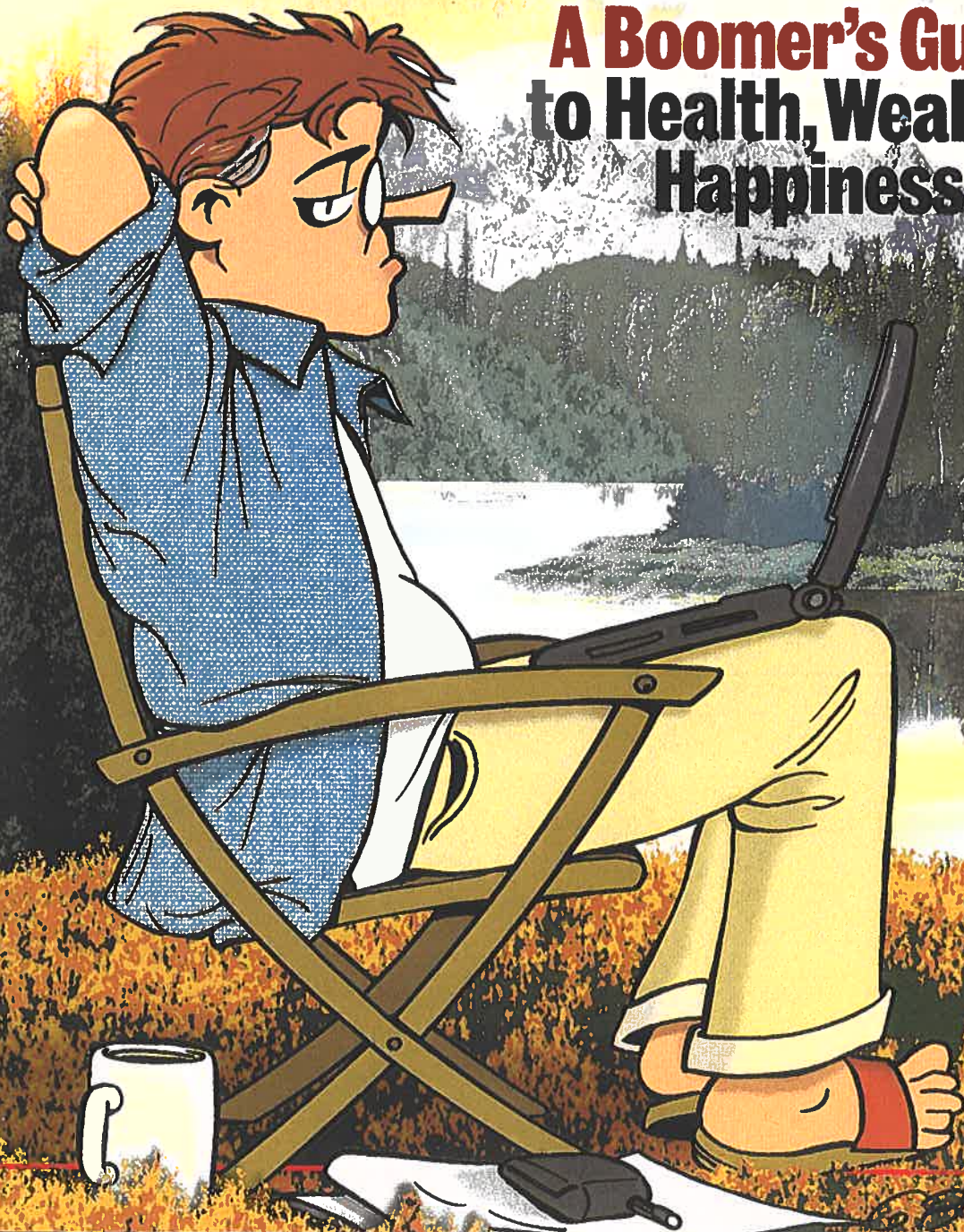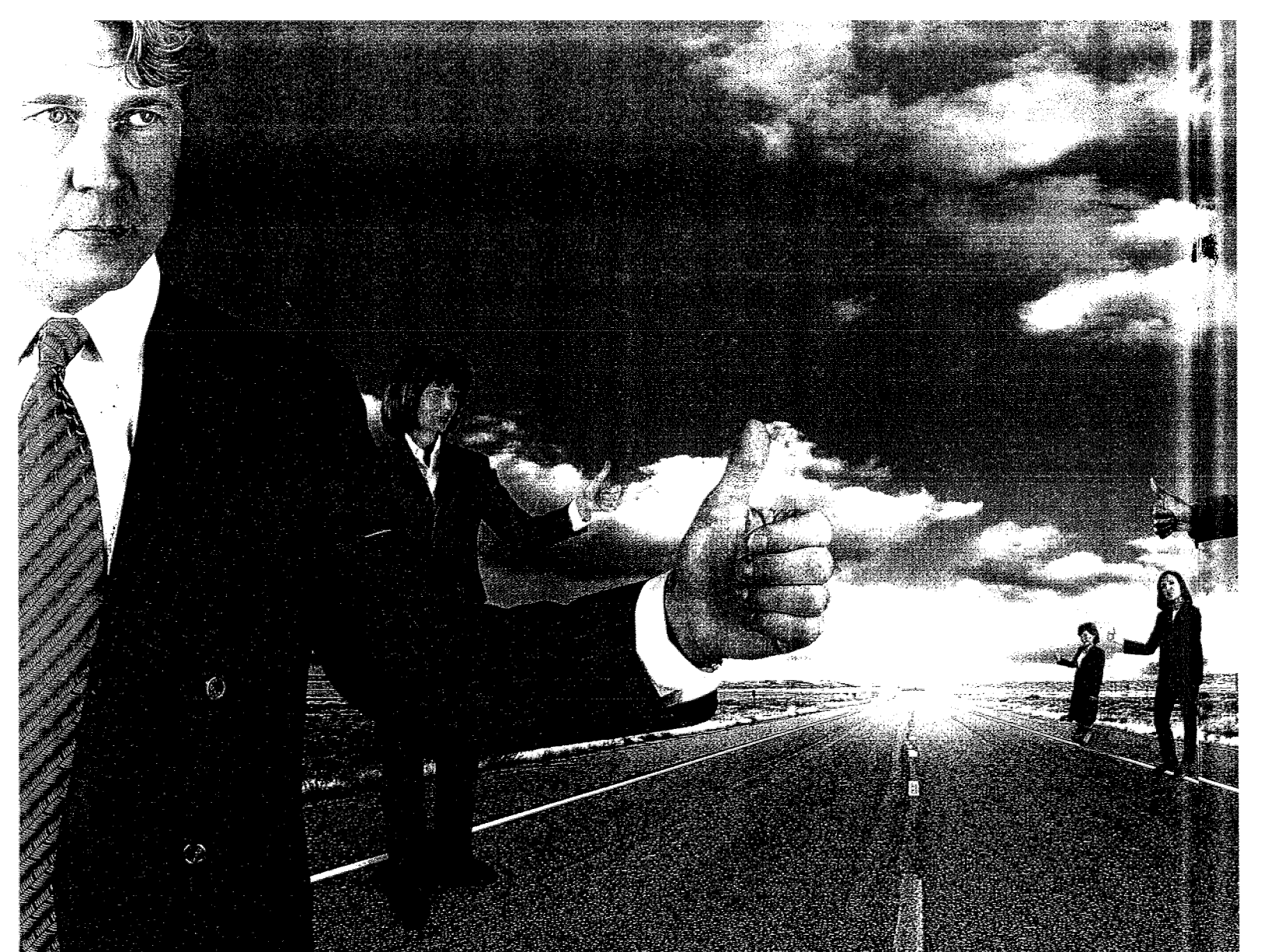
Newsweek

April 3, 2000

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The New Middle Age

A Boomer's Guide to Health, Wealth & Happiness

The Road Ahead:
A Boomer's Gu
To Happiness

THE NEW MIDDLE AGE: The baby boom has always made its own rules, and now it's redefining growing old. From work to family to money, here's how boomers are writing the next chapter. BY BARBARA KANTROWITZ

THE 50 THING STARTED HITTING KATE DONO-hue at 49.5. "I don't want to be that old," says the San Francisco psychologist. "It's a half century." But when the big day came in January, Donohue decided to see it as a chance to fix the things in her life she didn't like. She made three resolutions: to worry less, to "make more space" for herself by not being so busy and to be more adventurous—more like the woman she was in her 20s and 30s when she routinely set off on solo trekking and biking trips. In August, she will head off to Africa to learn more about West African dance, a longtime passion. Procrastination is not an option. Her 83-year-old father is in the advanced stages of Parkinson's disease; her mother, 79, is active but suffers from a heart condition and glaucoma. "Seeing my parents get so tiny is the way it hits me," Donohue says. "How many more years do I have?"

This report on boomers kicks off a special series on the changing face of America, as we look at the people and ideas that are shaping the nation's future

For so long, the generation born between 1946 and 1964 (an estimated 78 million Americans) has been in collective denial as the years added up. Boomers couldn't be getting older—although, amazingly, everyone else seemed to. But while they're still inclined to moments of self-delusion ("No one would ever guess that I'm 50"), they can no longer escape intimations of their own mortality. The oldest boomers will turn 55 next year, an age when many people begin thinking seriously about retirement. Even the youngest members of this overchronicled cohort are on the cusp of Grecian Formula time.

Their own parents are aging and dying, making
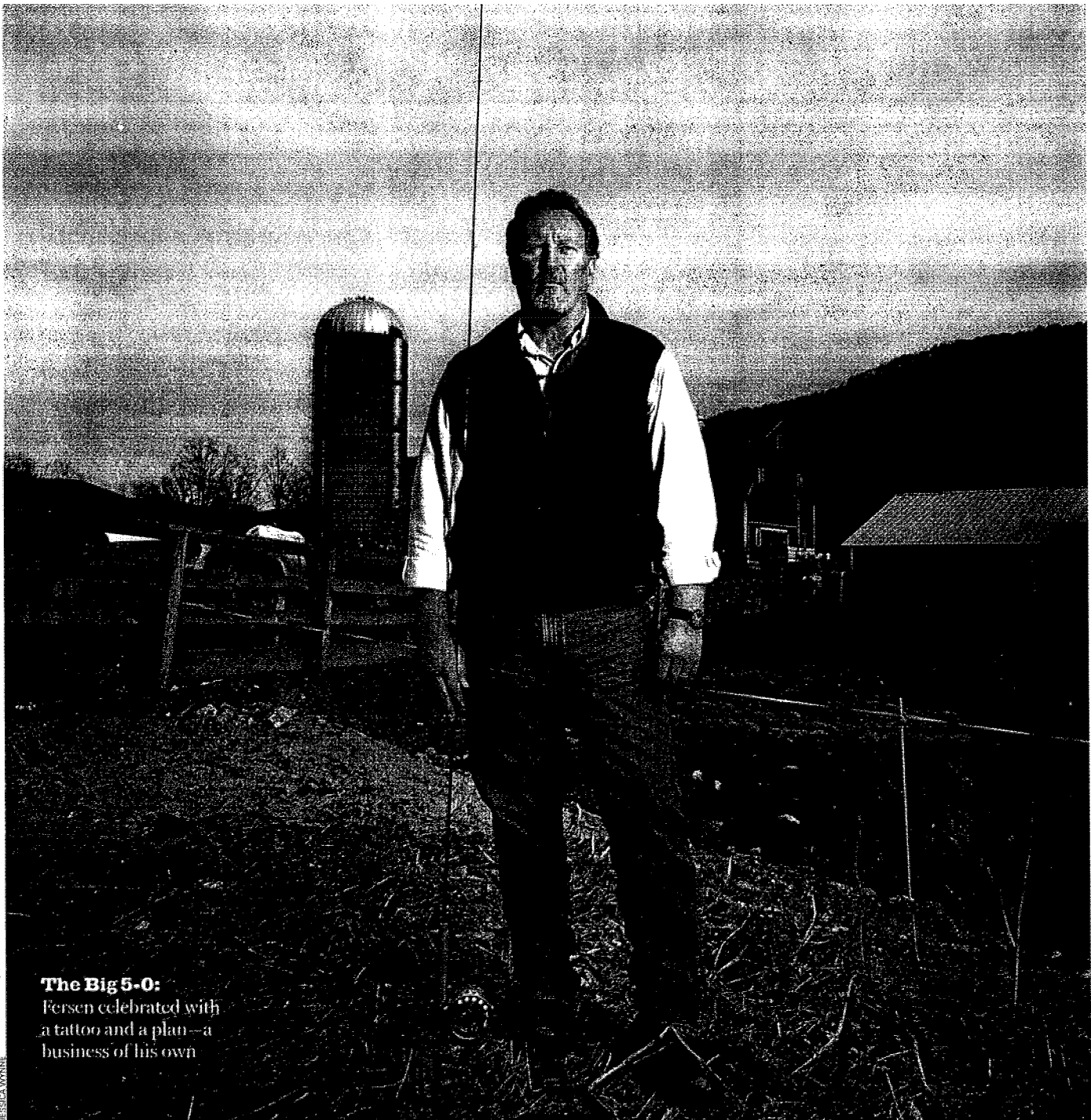
The Big 5-0:
Fersen celebrated with
a tattoo and a plan—a
business of his own

JESSICA WYNNE

many of them the elders in their families. "There's the feeling that you're the next in line, and there's nothing between you and the abyss," says Linda Waite, director of the Center on Aging at the University of Chicago. When they look in the mirror, they see gray hair and wrinkles. Their bodies are beginning to creak and they're worried that all those years of avoiding the gym and stuffing their faces with Big Macs may add up.

At work, they're feeling the threat of a

new generation fluent in technology and willing to work 24/7. Corporate America seems to value experience less, and has come to view older workers in the same way investors view Old Economy stocks: sure, they perform at a steady pace, but these younger, untested companies/employees have so much *potential.*

But don't expect boomers to go quietly into boring and predictable senescence. They're likely to transform the last decades of life just as they have already demolished other conventional milestones. There are 50-year-olds lugging toddlers and 40-year-olds retiring early after cashing out piles of

dot-com stock. Settling down is anathema. Boomers switch jobs, and even careers (not to mention spouses) in a never-ending search for fulfillment. "The first generation to grow up with remote controls, we invented channel-surfing and attention-deficit living," says journalist Michael Gross in his new book, "My Generation." "That taught us to be infinitely adaptable, even in the baby-boom cliché of 'diminished expectations'."

It helps that they're better educated and richer than previous generations and, as their parents die, expected to benefit from the largest transfer of inherited wealth in history. In a new Heinz Family Philanthropies/

'Nick at Twilight'

An imaginary guide to classic boomer TV, at midlife. By Mark O'Donnell

Lassie: After Large Timmy buries the seventh Lassie, he's gripped by a sudden sense of his own mortality and halfheartedly plans to visit Tibet. Guest appearance by, amazingly, June Lockhart. Large Timmy's trophy wife: Jennifer Lopez. Lassie Eight: a shiny red Lamborghini.

NEWSWEEK Poll, nearly half of all boomers said their personal financial situation was "good" or "excellent." Unlike their parents, they don't have to rely on Social Security or limited pensions. A healthy economy and a strong stock market give them new options as they phase out of full-time employment. They may decide to freelance, work part time or start their own companies.

At the same time, they're likely to embrace their more spiritual side, motivated by a need to give back—an echo of the anti-materialism of the '60s. Marialice Harwood, 53, a marketing executive with the Minneapolis Star Tribune, had her moment of reckoning three years ago when her brother, then 51, died of a heart attack. "My faith is more important to me," says Harwood, a Roman Catholic. "I care about different things." She's downsized to a town house now that her kids are grown and, al-

though she intends to work until she's 65, "when I retire, I don't see myself in a resort community. I see myself in the inner city working with kids. That's my dream."

California gerontologist Ken Dychtwald, who has written extensively about boomers, says many "will age rebelliously," resisting stereotypes and convention. Paul Fersen celebrated turning 50 by getting a tattoo and putting down a deposit on a Harley. "I always wanted a tattoo and I got one, a striped bass," says Fersen, a marketing manager for Orvis, the fly-fishing outfitters based in Manchester, Vt. But that's just one of the changes he sees in his future. "Some people say my job could be voted best on the planet," Fersen says, given that he gets paid for fishing all over the country. But, he says, "I'm still working for somebody else." He has a quieter, more independent vision for his future: "There's a little country store in the

next town. It's got two gas pumps and it's a deer weigh-in station. It's the main focal point of the town. I'd like to finish out my days by owning that store."

While their parents—seared by the Depression and war—craved security, boomers have always embraced the new and the unknown. Boomer women, in particular, have learned to march ahead without a road map. "Ours was the generation that broke the rules," says Jeanne Giordano, 51, an urban planner in Manhattan. "Anything was possible. You could speak back to your parents. You didn't have to get married." She found meaning in her work, including designing the master plan for the restoration of Grand Central Terminal. Now, like many boomers, she's thinking closer to home. "What I would like is to have a relationship that takes me into my final chapters," she says. "I no longer look at it as an imposition. The one thing I haven't done is rely on someone, trust someone to be a part of my life."

Unfinished business is a persistent theme. Dreams interrupted or delayed, regrets about relationships that fizzled. Staring at the abyss, many boomers are reordering their priorities. "You recognize that life is really very short," says Terry Patten, 49. In 1998 he sold his company, Tools for Exploration, and he's now working out of his house in Marin County, Calif., writing a book on improving intelligence. His marriage of 22 years broke up three years ago but he's committed to a new, "wonderful, loving" relationship. He's doing yoga, lifting weights and running. Like many boomers, he's also a prodigious consumer of products that claim to extend life and takes 25 supplements, including DHEA. Says Patten, "I'm just trying to optimize my quality of life as I embrace the inevitable." In other words, going out with a bang—and just a little bit of a whimper.

With PATRICIA KING in San Francisco, SARAH DOWNEY in Chicago and HOPE WHITE SCOTT in Boston

Career Convert: Dwight Morita, 47, a Silicon Valley entrepreneur, now attends the San Francisco Theological Seminary

Three's a company

By HOPE WHITE SCOTT

Even after opening the successful Michela's restaurant in East Cambridge, Michela Larson felt overwhelmed.

"At the time, my son had a severe learning disability, and it was almost impossible to continue doing the work and giving him the care he needed," Larson said. "I knew something had to change, and I was prepared to sell."

So she sold the restaurant and formed a business partnership with two other women. The Sapphire Business Group then launched Rialto, a restaurant in the Charles Hotel in Cambridge.

The trio sings the praises of partnership. But not all partnerships work out this well.

Partnerships can be disastrous, said Irwin Gray, author of "The Perils of Partners: How to Protect

You can create partnership that works for everyone

Yourself Against Crooked, Conniving and Incompetent Partners" (Smith-Johnson Publishing), relating disastrous partnership experiences of his own.

"I went into partnership with a man who turned out to be incompetent and a liar," said Gray, who now runs Smith-Johnson Publishing in Flushing, N.Y. "It was a giftware business, and he was supposed to handle sales — but I rarely saw him. When he did show up at the office, he'd brag about his successful sales calls. One day, he went to meet an important potential client. I called the client's office to give my partner a message,

but they said he'd never shown up. Later, I asked him how the meeting went, and he said it was the best ever. At that point, I dissolved the partnership."

A partnership is "like dating, or the modern marriage," said Howard Stevenson, a professor who specializes in entrepreneurship at the Harvard Business School. "You meet someone you like, but in the long run, there may be someone better. In the long run, you will either get married or go your separate ways."

Despite the challenges of partnership, many successful businesses have grown from the meeting of

two (or more) minds.

A key element in the Rialto partnership is that each of the three partners brings a distinct complementary talent.

Larson is the self-described producer. She gets the show on the road, bringing in talented people. Jody Adams is the award-winning chef and has total charge of the kitchen, which includes teaching sous-chefs. Karen Haskell is "the suit." With a background in computer software start-up companies, Haskell takes care of finances and minds the bottom line.

The partnership is opening a new restaurant — Red Clay — in the Atrium Mall this spring. Haskell has brought in the investors, negotiated space and other deals.

"Partnerships work when everybody brings something different to

WORKING TOGETHER: Michela Larson, left, Jody Adams and Karen Haskell are co-owners of Rialto in the Charles Hotel in Cambridge.

Consider relationship before

the table and everyone admires what the other person brings," Haskell said. "We bring different skills. We are vastly different. We all approve of each other's strengths and each other's weaknesses don't bother us."

To form a beneficial partnership, you need to clearly assess your values as well as the added value of your potential partners. And, in assessing the business marriage, you need to know where you stand.

Stevenson said people can bring all sorts of offerings to the partnership table — skills, money, contacts,

even "ethics." As in: "Have these people been good partners to other people before?"

In considering a partnership, think about whether you envision a short-term collaboration or a long-term arrangement.

"People are overzealous in terms of need," Stevenson said. "You

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Looking into the different types of partnerships

A partnership may be formed as one of several legal entities:

■ **General partnership.** This involves two or more people. All partners have equal control on management issues and are personally liable.

■ **Limited partnership.** One or more of the partners has limited liability, but — in most cases — not if they are active in management.

■ **C corporation; a major corporation.** This has all the formalities of compliance with state and federal requirements.

■ **S corporation — like C corp but smaller.** It's treated like a partnership for most tax purposes and is inexpensive to operate from accounting and legal standpoints. Government compliance is less complicated than a C corp. However, it is restricted — no venture capital firms, or nonresident foreign owners.

■ **LLC (limited liability corporation).** This is a cross between a corporation and a partnership that is more flexible than S corps (in terms of owners), or limited partnerships (in terms of limiting liability).

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jumping into a partnership

should think about how little you need from (a partner). If you need a minimum of one year, why ask for lifetime exclusivity?

"In the short term, you think a lot less about the personality than if you were making a decision for the long term," Stevenson added.

Business partnerships typically break up not over money issues, but over personal and power issues, said Stevenson.

In formalizing a partnership, planning is key, said Kate Perrelli, a partner with the law firm Finnegan, Hickey, Dinsmoor & Johnson, who specializes in business counseling and commercial litigation.

The three issues to focus on are: liability, tax issues and control — that is, who is in charge, who are simply investors. Most people want to shield themselves (and their personal assets) from the liability of the business matters and debts, Perrelli said.

Bruce Levine and Alan Katz, who merged their accounting firms last year to form Levine, Katz, Nannis & Solomon, P.C., in Needham, have known good days and bad with different partners and they formed their partnership cautiously.

They circled each other at cocktail parties and business seminars for more than 15 years and, in the meantime, went through some partners who didn't work out. "I've been very

Think before you commit

Here are issues and questions to explore before you form a partnership:

■ **The makeup of your group and the level of involvement:** How many people are involved and how great is each person's involvement?

■ **Investment goals.** Will you take on investors? Might key employees want equity in the future? What are the expectations for your business? Do you have a person who is capable of complying with the demands of a corporation? Or are you a creative type who won't take care of annual filings?

■ **Economic status of the partners.** How concerned are the partners with avoiding risk? Most people want to shield their personal assets from the business and others may have limited assets.

■ **Game plan.** Where do you want to be 10 years down the road? Most small businesses are set up to be sold. Do you intend to go public eventually? Are you more likely to be purchased by a larger player in the industry?

■ **Tax consequences.** Will you have a business in which you and your partner are taxed only on your earnings, or a corporation where the individuals are taxed on compensation and profit?

fortunate on the whole," said Levine.

This past summer during their merger, Levine and Katz held a partner's retreat with lawyers and an outside facilitator.

"You need to negotiate all the terrible things that could happen," said

Levine. "It's like a prenup — you go into it with the wonderfulness of being together, but you agree: Here's what we'll do if it doesn't work out."

Herald wire services contributed to this report.

Tennessee Falls Claim Verified

by Hope Scott

Taughannnock Falls is the highest waterfalls east of the Rockies and north of Tennessee. That is Ithaca's changed claim to fame.

Fall Creek Falls in Tennessee is the highest free-falling waterfall east of the Rockies. Ithaca's claim became uncertain when Ralph Jordan, executive director of the Tompkins County Chamber of Commerce, said a Cortland man informed him that Taughannock Falls is not the highest falls east of the Rockies, which Ithaca had always purported.

Ross C. Vartlett sent Jordan the information that Fall Creek Falls in Pikeville, Tenn. drops 256 feet compared with the 215 to 219 drop of the Ithaca Falls.

Today after Mary F. Ward of 247 N. Applegate Rd. displayed a postcard from Falls Creek Falls which pictures the falls, a call was placed to the Falls Creek Park to verify the claim. The picture of the falls indicates that the falls does not drop freely, but falls first to a rock ledge.

Ms. Sharon Patterson, and employe of the Fall Creek Falls State Park, 110 miles southeast of Nashville, said that the

southern falls drops unimpeded by ledges for 256 feet.

She said the falls drops into a cold pool about seven feet deep. Swimmers, Ms. Patterson said, can swim at their own risk. There is no lifeguard.

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