

TIPS TO KEEP THE FAMILY BUSINESS ALIVE

seattle **business** MONTHLY

INSPIRE. INNOVATE. CREATE.

54 BEST PLACES TO WORK



» THE COOLEST JOBS

» WHO HAS THE BEST BENEFITS AND PERKS?

» WHICH EMPLOYERS ARE FAMILY-FRIENDLY?

THRIFTY THINKER

How Tom Ellison made second-hand goods sexy

BLUE-JEAN BABY

Simply Blue's marketing blitz creates A-list buzz

GET YOUR GROOVE BACK

How technology can improve your golf swing

← CANDICE REIMERS, WES CARR AND TROTSKY, THE WHEATON TERRIER, AT GOOGLE'S FUNKY FREMONT OFFICE.

JUNE 2008

\$3.99US \$4.99CAN



seattlebusinessmonthly.com

Gadget of the Month > THE TINY PC THAT SIPS AC

COMPULAB'S
FIT-PC // \$325
// FIT-PC.COM

WITH COMPANIES ACHING to prove how "green" they are, Israel-based CompuLab provides a new challenge: Just how small can your desktop computer get and still function at the level you want? The Fit-PC, released last July, may provide some answers. In an unassuming black box measuring roughly 4.5 inches square, the Fit-PC has a 60-gigabyte hard drive and can run various types of business software on just 3 to 5 watts of power (most PCs chug down 150 watts). The low-cost unit operates with Linux, but Windows XP drivers can be downloaded from Fit-PC.com. Because of its miserly use of power, Fit-PC needs no cooling fan, which lowers maintenance costs and allows IT staff to network several together in a small space; monitors and other peripherals can be hooked up via USB ports. CompuLab expects enough demand to produce a few thousand units per month by this summer. For those looking for a no-frills solution to save desk space—and lower energy bills—this Fit may be just right. —Randy Woods



NICE DAY FOR A WEB WEDDING



IN AN INDUSTRY dominated by hefty price tags, four Seattle entrepreneurs are giving couples the tools they need to plan weddings without busting budgets.

The idea behind **mywedding.com**, founded by Drew Reynolds,

Jim McGarvey, Eric Bernal and Rob Johnsen, is to help couples eschew "fairytale" expectations—which can cost more than \$30,000—in favor of more practical, personalized events.

Three of the four founders realized a need for an online wedding portal in 2001, while they were working at a web development business in Portland. All three became engaged during that year.

"There were no resources for finding local wedding vendors in big cities," Bernal says. So the team chose Seattle for its first localized wedding guide.

The seven-year-old site now serves 56 markets, with listings for caterers, dress designers, dance instructors, honeymoon spots and more. The company, which grossed \$3.2 million in 2007 and expects \$4.6 million this year, says about 6,000 brides per month create their own pages via the service. The Seattle-specific site now receives about 1 million unique visitors per month.

Mywedding.com recently partnered with Seattle's wishpot.com, which allows couples to compile unique registries from multiple retailers. —Caitlin Hostetter

BUST IS BOOM

PROVING THAT ONE person's misfortune is another person's opportunity, USA-Foreclosure.com has had a banner year.

The Bellevue-based site, which launched in May 2007, has become one of the nation's largest free resources for online foreclosure listings. In March, the company reported a 58 percent growth in unique visitors during the site's first nine months.

"This is an exciting time for us," says site manager Chad Thornton, whose database "reflects the overwhelming increase in foreclosures throughout the United States."

Using data from foreclosure trustees, attorneys and loan servicers, the site is updated every few minutes, allowing USA-Foreclosure to provide updates on properties nearly in real time. The site also lets users search and filter properties by city, ZIP code or sale date, and to create a "Favorite Properties" list to track the status of certain locations.

USA-Foreclosure data showed that 23 percent of Washington homes in late 2007 were sold to third-party buyers, the highest percentage of all 11 mostly Western states covered by the service. As of late April, the site posted 4,661 listings in Washington, led by King County (999) and Pierce County (950). —R.W.

SHRINKING YOUR COMPUTER'S TOXIC FOOTPRINT

EVER WONDER how "green" your computer really is? Online technology service provider **Softchoice** is betting you do. The Canadian firm, with a sizeable Seattle workforce, is partnering with American online tech news and review service CNET.com to launch what it calls the world's first fully searchable online green information technology (IT) products listing.

According to the company, IT purchasers will be able to use softchoice.com to identify the "world's greenest technologies" from about 350,000 products in Softchoice's database. The products have been rated by EPEAT, the Electronic Product Environmental Assessment Tool. EPEAT was created to help product purchasers evaluate, compare and select technology products based on certain environmental attributes. EPEAT's ratings are based on criteria such as the amount and type of environmentally sensitive materials in the manufacturing process, a product's longevity, its end-of-life management and its energy use.

Softchoice says that, in the next five years, the purchase of EPEAT-rated products could eliminate more than 13 million pounds of hazardous waste and save about 600,000 megawatts of energy. —Milton Gill

