

COLUMBUS BUSINESS FIRST

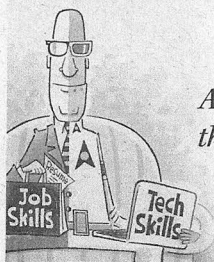
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columbus@bizjournals.com
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40 PAGES \$3.00



All the right stuff

As employers start to hire, they're seeking robust skill sets from workers.

Page 21



Sweetening the deal

Velvet Ice Cream making acquisitions, sales boost in the offing.

Page 3

Angels in waiting

Investor group chief weighs in on finding the right deals.

Page 17



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Patty McClimon oversaw the 5-year expansion of Nationwide Children's Hospital that came in 7 percent under budget, allowing additional features such as the "magic forest" connecting the new and old buildings.

PHOTOS BY DAN TRITTSCHUH | FOR BUSINESS FIRST

NATIONAL CHURCH RESIDENCES

Hopes high medical home pilot can grow

THE DEVELOPER OF housing for seniors thinks its plan to keep vulnerable residents out of expensive ERs can help in fight to keep Medicaid, Medicare spending under control.

BY CARRIE GHOSE | BUSINESS FIRST

National Church Residences starts a test this July adding on-site primary care to its housing and day services that could spread to



change thinking in Washington, D.C., about whether affordable housing – a budget item headed for cuts next year – could be instead thought of as the base of operations for contain-

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UP NEXT

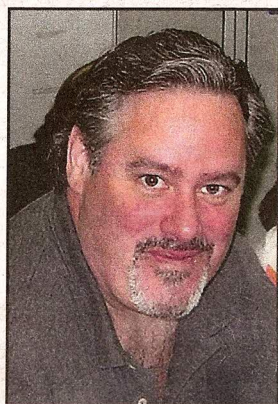
Featuring up-and-coming small-business and microcompany owners in Central Ohio – what makes you tick? Send candidates to Katy Smith at ksmith@bizjournals.com.

Joseph Kreber

Managing member, owner | Trademark
 Real Estate LLC dba SmallBroker.com

How's business?

Business is good, but we could be much better if we could overcome the classic dilemma of spreading the word about our value proposition while still holding down the cost of the offering. Our sales results for the benefit of our home sellers are spectacular and are in league with the top real estate agents.



What's going to change at your company during the next year?

SmallBroker.com plans to open up its Web store, commercial photography and virtual tour offering to other real estate agents and mortgage brokers in other markets.

Your biggest misconception in opening this business:

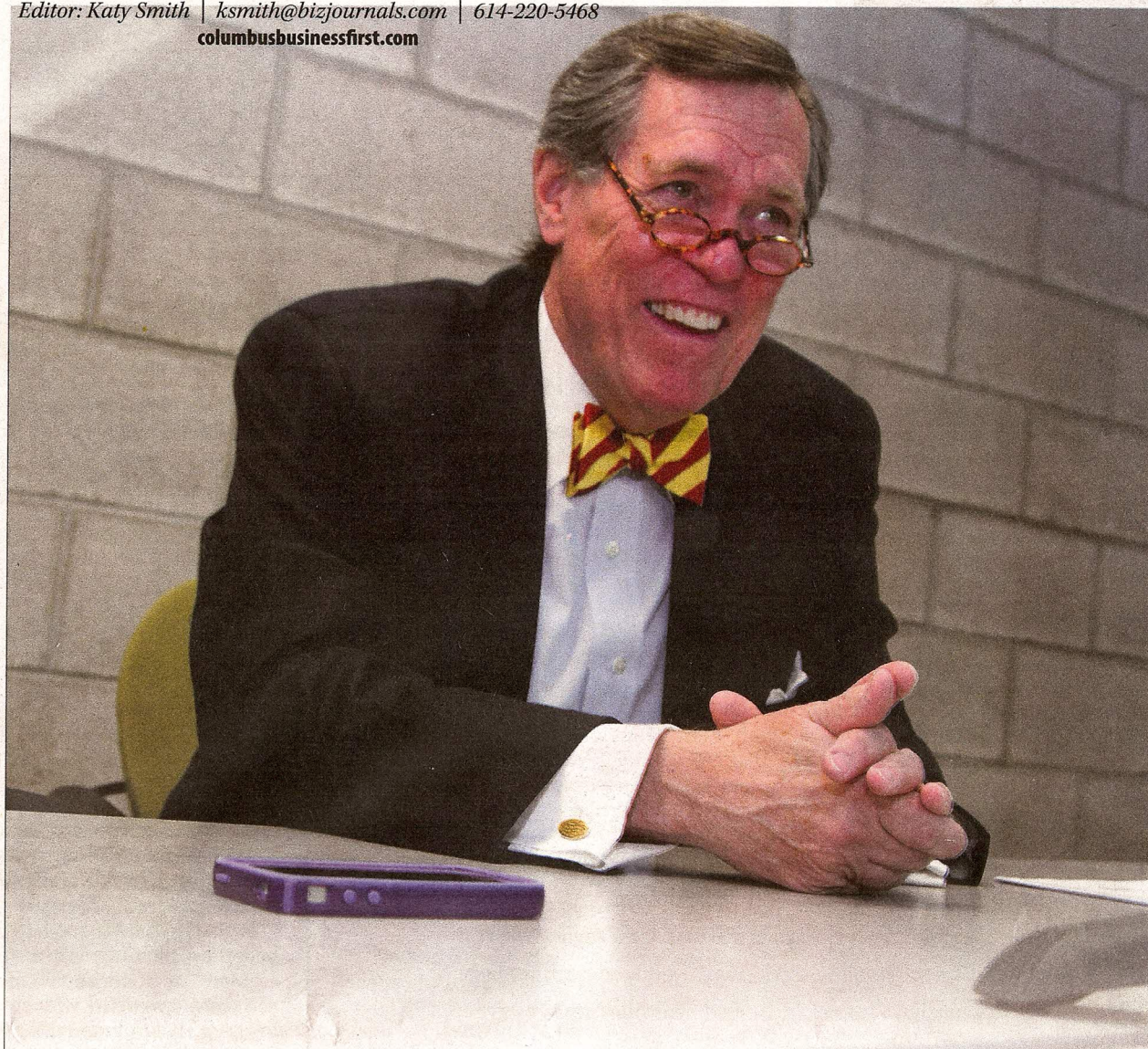
Underestimating the marketing effort and cost to get the word out about our service. We continuously fight the dilemma that the marketing we need to do puts pressure on us to raise our fees.

Age: 52

Founded: 2004

Employees: Four licensed sales associates

Business: Web store providing discount Multiple Listing Service and photo marketing



Ohio TechAngels founder John Huston says for every 100 companies the fund sees, it invests in two.

JANET ADAMS | BUSINESS FIRST

John Huston

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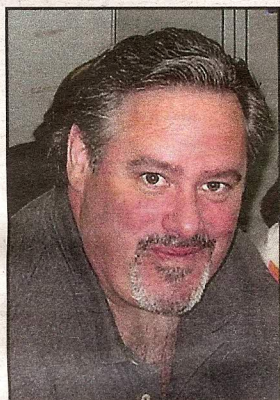
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Age: 52

Founded: 2004

Employees: Four licensed sales associates

Business: Web store providing discount Multiple Listing Service and photo marketing along with a la carte services related to real estate sales and mortgage services.

Location: Central Ohio, also serving Zanesville up to Cleveland.

2011 revenue: Under \$500,000

Background: Bachelor of Science, printing systems management. Licensed in Ohio for real estate since 2003. Previously mortgage loan originator with Financial Innovations LLC since 2010, owner of Kreber & Associates Inc. and Kreber Graphics Inc.

Website: SmallBroker.com

worth. Most homeowners in this position cannot afford to bring cash to closing for the privilege of selling their home. This a huge problem and we have yet to see a solution.

What do you wish you had known from Day 1?

How challenging the marketing aspect is regarding the successful launch of a new business.

Greatest achievement thus far:

To have survived the real estate crash. Most folks do not realize that the market downturn for real estate agents actually began in 2006-07 when values began to slump and the phone calls and buyer inquiries fell off sharply. So, we are six years into the worst real estate market conditions in memory.

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Greatest business strength:

Positive referrals from clients.

Greatest risk:

Surviving the startup period where our sales volume needs to grow and stabilize to sustain our continuing business.

Biggest worry:

Real estate market conditions with 30 percent of homeowners in Central Ohio (and the U.S.) owing more than their homes are current-



Ohio TechAngels founder John Huston says for every 100 companies the fund sees, it invests in one.

John Huston

Founder | Ohio TechAngels

ONE OF THE state's most sought-after venture capitalists talks about what's hot and why some startups just can't get investors' attention.

BY CARRIE GHOSE | BUSINESS FIRST

John Huston, a banker who "flunked retirement," sought an "angel" group to join and invest in startups. Finding none, eight years ago he started one: Ohio TechAngels.

At 282 members, last year it was named the largest by membership in the nation. Huston said it fluctuates between Nos. 1 and 2. Each of its three funds is capped at 100 members who put in \$25,000, so with state matching dollars each fund has \$5 million to invest.

Investors get tiny stakes in the companies but also can make larger "sidecar" investments, writing checks alongside the TechAngels under the same terms, and some also join the startups' boards.

Between the funds and those

side investments, the group has put \$20 million into 36 Ohio-based companies. Four of those have been sold to large publicly traded companies, yielding 58 percent average returns for investors. Seven others were flops.

Its latest investment in May was 7signal Solutions Inc., which the group attracted to Akron from Helsinki, Finland.

"We have dry powder for probably another nine companies," Huston said.

In an hourlong sit-down with

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