Contents

Preface ix

Part I: Starting an Interior Design Business 1

Chapter 1: The Beginning 3

Why Do You Want to Have Your Own Business? 3
Will You Make the Cut? 4
Do You Have What It Takes? 5
The ABCs of Planning 6

Business Planning vs. Strategic Planning: Johnson Consulting Services 6
Thinking Ahead: Peterson-Arce Design Group 8
Thinking Strategically: Carson Guest Interior Design Services Inc. 9

Financial Planning 10

Sound Structure: Daroff Design Inc. + DDI Architects PC 11
Establishing Fees: Deciding What You Are Worth 13

Protecting Your Business: Insurance and Contracts 18

Preparing for Risk: Buying Insurance 18
Complete Contracts = Profitable Projects 20

Setting Up Shop 23

Location, Location, Location 23
Looking Back for Those Moving Forward 25

Advice in Hindsight: If I Were Starting a Firm Today 26
Chapter 2: Structure and Support

Building the Team
Finding Their Motivation: Rabaut Design Associates
Help Wanted: Finding Team Members
Getting Started: Studio 2030
Making the Cut
Tips for Avoiding Costly Hiring Mistakes
Going It Alone: Sole Practitioners
Flying Solo: Patterson House Design Group
In Process: Design Team Structure and Project Management
Process Makes Perfect: Soucie Horner Ltd.
Step-by-Step: Chute Gerdeman Retail
Come Together: Working with Collaborators and Consultants
LEEDing the Way: Ecoworks Studio
Supply and Demand: Vendors and Suppliers
Love the One You're With: Bullock Associates Design Consultants Inc.
Love the One You're With, Part Two: Renwall Interiors Limited
A Two-Way Street: Coopertech Signs & Graphics
Clients and Customers
Know Your Client
Constant Communication: Duffy Design Group
Keeping It Personal: Adesso Design Inc.
Decoding the Design Process: Steven Miller Design Studio
Building Long-Term Relationships: SJvD Design

Chapter 3: Communications and Technology for a Modern Practice

Who Are You? Creating the Brand
What Is a Brand?
A Decade of Design: JJ Falk Design LLC
Repositioning, Rebranding, Reinventing: Palládeo
To Market, To Market: Marketing and Public Relations
Being a Professional: Networking and Professional Organizations
Integrating Technology
The Wired Practice
The Communications Business: Domus Design Group
Log On
Going Global, Going Mobile: Retail Clarity Consulting
Part II: Sustaining and Growing Your Business

Chapter 4: Taking Your Business to the Next Level

Deciding When to Grow

Deciding How to Grow

On Her Own, but Not Alone: Mosaic Design Studio

Jumping Right In: Catlin Design Inc.

A Deeper Look at More Complicated Means of Growth

Deciding to Franchise

Picking a Franchise

Evaluating a Franchise Package: Questions to Ask

A Franchise in Practice: Designs of the Interior

Let’s Make a Dealership

Finding the Right Mix: Elements IV Interiors

Ownership Transition: Contract Office Group

Residential Roots: Barbara Goodman Designs

A + B = C: Mergers and Acquisitions

Buying In: Larry Wilson Design Associates

Preparing for an Acquisition

A Successful Future: Sustaining Growth

Suite Success: Cole Martinez Curtis and Associates

Riding the Tide: Mancini Duffy

Open to the Possibilities: Wilson Associates

Parting Shot: A Sixty-Second Guide to Managing Growth over the Long Haul

Chapter 5: Transitioning from Small to Midsize and Large Firms

Sprint to the Start: Diane Boyer Interiors

Getting It Down on Paper

Team in Training

Hire and Seek: Creative Business Interiors
Personnel Management Issues: Looking Outside for Internal Help 136
Creating Policies and Guidelines 137
Bringing in Benefits 139
Monitoring Growth and Progress 140
Success in Seattle: EHS Design 140
Added Responsibility: Sechrist Design Associates Inc. 142

Part III: The End Game 149
Chapter 6: Planning for the Future 151
Learning from Experience: KSA Interiors 151
Thinking Ahead 154
The Value of Planning 154
Next in Line: Succession Planning 159
An Action Plan for Succession 159
Setting Goals: Facilities Connection 161
Successful Succession: TRIO Design Group and David-Michael Design Inc. 167
Conclusion 171
Appendix A: ASID Sample Interior Design Services Agreements 173
Appendix B: ASID Code of Ethics and Professional Conduct 213
Notes 217
Bibliography 219
Index 223