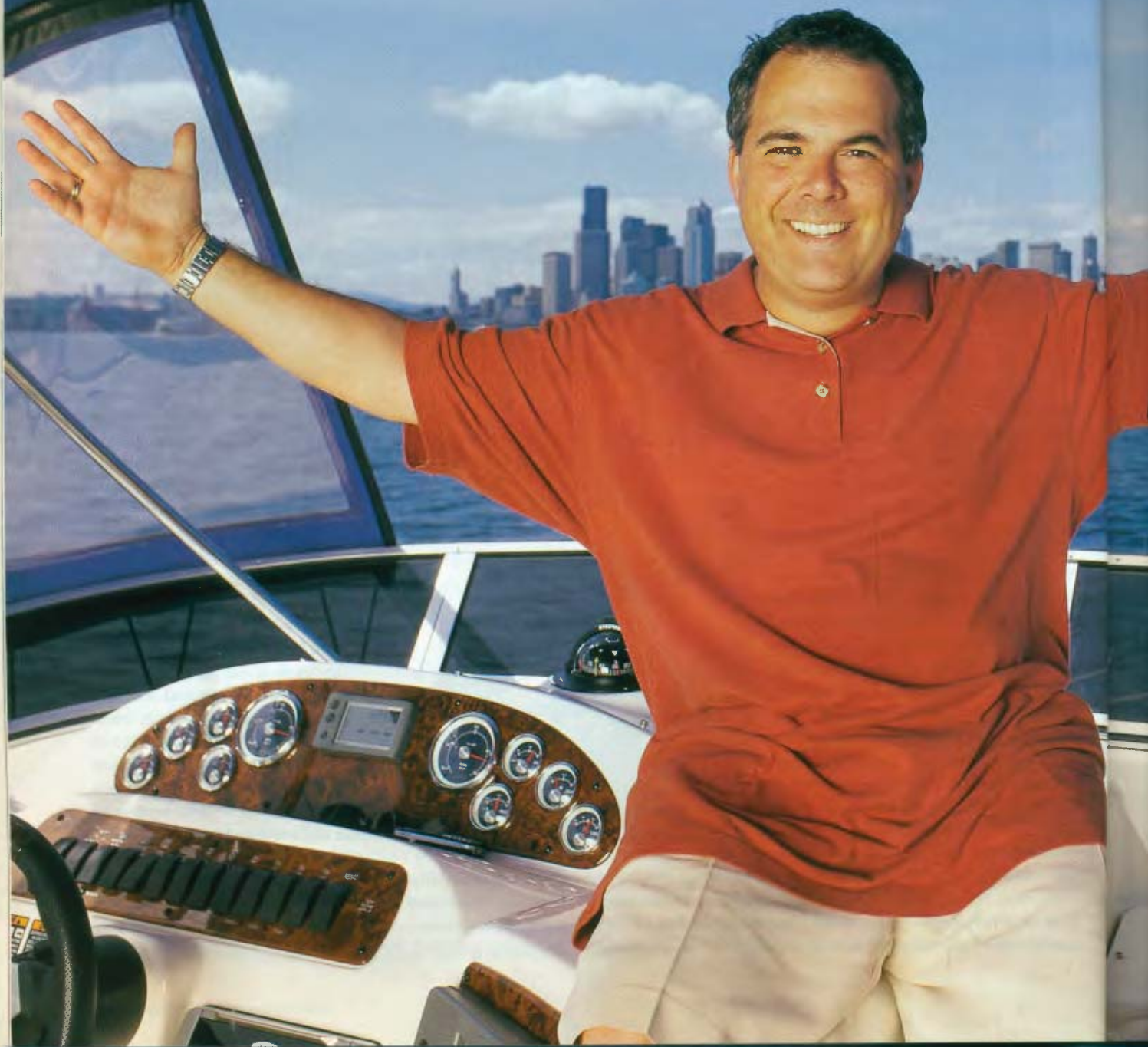


When media consultant Scott Ehrlich offers to “float an idea by you,” take him up on it.

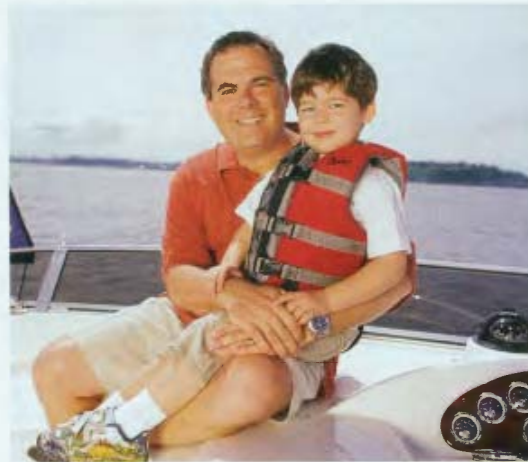


WORKPLACES with WOW!



rocking
the
boat

by Rebecca Dimling Cochran
Photography by Allison Shirreffs



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hen Scott Ehrlich went shopping for office space, buying life jackets wasn't originally part of the plan.

After leaving a senior position at Real Networks in 2003, he knew he could easily return to New York, where he started his career, or move to Los Angeles. But after discussing it with his wife, Ehrlich says, "We made a lifestyle decision, which was to live in Seattle. We like our life here."

But Ehrlich felt there were not many media companies in Seattle where he could leverage his background and skills. "That left me in a position of figuring out a way to work that wasn't anyone else's mold." He started Red Tie Inc. and launched Impulse Media, a consulting company that helps clients predict and capitalize on the intersection of new technologies and media. Initially he worked out of his home, but after his 3-year-old son

walked in during an important conference call, he began to look at office space.

Ehrlich found that traditional offices were high-priced and didn't offer what he really wanted. "Then I went down to the marina and there was a sign that said, 'Check out the new broadband access,'" he recalls. "I thought, I'm already paying for this and going down to the marina every morning doesn't seem like a bad thing to do. So I just started doing it, as a trial more than anything else."

Two years later, Ehrlich has established a routine where he spends three days on the road with clients such as Sony Pictures Digital Networks, ABC News Digital Media, DivX Networks and iFilm Inc. The rest of the time he is in Seattle, working and holding meetings on the 46-foot powerboat — named the

“Nobody ever says, ‘No, I won’t meet you down at the marina,’ especially if the weather is good.”

Impulsive – at the Elliott Bay Marina.

Five minutes from downtown Seattle, the idyllic location has views of Mt. Rainier in one direction and the Olympic range in another. “It’s a great work environment because it is both solitary and a little bit social,” says Ehrlich. “Nobody ever says, ‘No, I won’t meet you down at the marina,’ especially if the weather is good.”

The marina offers three restaurants, which he uses when the weather is bad. In the summer, he hosts lunches on board, often bringing together people who don’t know each other to exchange ideas. “This is the beauty of the whole thing. The boat has a salon with a sitting area. There’s a dining area. It’s kind of a condo on water.”

Ehrlich made no modifications to the boat to turn it into his office.

He works entirely from three pieces of wireless technology: a laptop, a BlackBerry and a cell phone. “I don’t have a satellite

TV connection. I don’t have a hard-line Internet connection. ... I’m forced to be a power user of wireless technology,” he says. This helps when he thinks of digital media and its uses. “Because I’m not sitting in an office, I actually think about things like, ‘There’s a piece of video I want to watch on the boat; how do I get it here?’” **W**

Rebecca Dimling Cochran is a Seattle-based writer.



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