

You're the Boss



The Art of Running a Small Business

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7 Blogs and Newsletters That Can Help You Sell a Business

By BARBARA TAYLOR

In a recent [Transaction post](#), I suggested four questions to ask a business broker. Here is a fifth. Before you hire a business broker, ask something like this: "I'll bet you've seen it all, haven't you?"

TRANSACTION

Putting a price on business.

I've met advisers who have been helping business owners for 30 years who answer this question with an unqualified "no." There are too many variables when it comes to selling a business. Every set of circumstances is different, and no one has seen it all. As Rob Slee (see No. 3 below) said in a recent [newsletter](#), there is no teaching, only learning. If you are on a quest for knowledge about when, why and how to leave your business, here are some blogs and newsletters that can help.

1. Best library of articles

The [Certified Business Brokers blog](#) is a treasure of information about how to sell your business. Located in Houston, CBB is one of the oldest independent business brokerage firms in the country. The managing partner, Rose Stabler, writes most of the articles and covers a wide range of frequently asked questions, including [how long it takes to sell a business](#) and [whether a one-time advertising expense should be considered an add-back?](#)

2. Best blog on exit planning

Josh Patrick writes prolifically at the [Stage 2 Planning Partners blog](#) about the exit-planning process. Mr. Patrick, a certified financial planner, discusses all manner of exit options — from traditional third-party sales and internal transfers, to lesser-known alternatives like passive ownership. The blog also covers the financial and emotional issues that accompany the decision to leave a business.

3. Most fun to read

I love John Warrillow. As the author of the best-selling [Built to Sell: Creating a Business That Can Thrive Without You](#), his [blog](#) and [articles](#) in Inc. magazine are informative and delightful. Mr. Warrillow speaks from experience. He built a successful market research firm, sold it, and moved his family to France where he now lives, writes and hatches new business ideas. I hate John Warrillow.

4. Best reality check

No one will buy your business unless it has value. Rob Slee, founder of [Midas Nation](#), will never let you forget this fact in his [Midas Notes newsletter](#). I think of Mr. Slee as the [Gordon Ramsay](#) of business. Mr. Slee's in-your-face style entertains while making you wonder why you're sitting around reading instead of building long-term value in your company.

5. Best for buying a business

Richard Parker writes the [blog at BizQuest](#). A former business broker, serial entrepreneur and author of the [How to Buy a Good Business at a Great Price](#) series, Mr. Parker's posts offer a real-world perspective on all aspects of buying a business. Even though he focuses on buying, I highly recommend his blog to business owners who are selling. Your chances of closing a successful sale increase if you understand the buyer's point of view.

6. Best for deal terms & strategy

Dave Kauppi writes the [Exit Strategist Newsletter](#). Mr. Kauppi, a seasoned merger-and-acquisition adviser, explains deal minutiae that business owners ignore at their peril, including the dangers of selling a [C corporation](#) in an asset sale and why you should care about depreciation recapture. As the saying goes, it's not what you get, it's what you keep. Mr. Kauppi will help you understand how deal structure affects after-tax proceeds from a sale.

7. Best for women business owners

Chia-Li Chien (pronounced Jolly Jan) once owned an information technology company and is now a certified financial planner who specializes in working with women business owners. Ms. Chien's [blog](#) and [newsletter](#) focus on building strategic value in companies that can be translated into meaningful personal wealth. Her goal with her clients, and her writing, is to help women business owners build businesses that can be sold, whether the owners choose to sell them or not.