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# HUMAN CAPITAL

A snapshot of the jobs — and people — powering Greater Baltimore's technology industry.



NICHOLAS GRIMMER | STAFF

## Exploring new dimensions Engineer harnesses 3-D tech to build business

RYAN SHARROW | STAFF

### Michael Raphael

Direct Dimensions

**TITLE:** President

**EDUCATION:** Bachelor's in engineering science and mechanics, Virginia Tech; master's in engineering administration, George Washington University

**BBJ:** What's keeping you awake at night?

**Raphael:** Lately, it's how do I keep the operations going while developing new business models that we'd like to start up. We've been doing this for a long time and we see some applications for this technology that have some explosive capability. The challenge is I have to keep a business running and can't exactly step off and do another business. We've developed what we think is a business model developed around iPhone-style apps on things that we do.

**BBJ:** Where do you see Direct Dimensions in five years?

**Raphael:** Hopefully we'll have launched this new venture. Hopefully as a company we'll go thrive and be the core technology backbone of several external business models. We'll be the central business and technology development group and spinning out these new ideas; new ventures around 3-D imaging technologies.

**BBJ:** Where do you see technology in five years?

**Raphael:** Some of the 3-D imaging technology we're working with will be miniaturized, consumerized and will be readily available virtually at desktops. We are looking for things like museums, for example, where will you be able to go to a museum Web site and see all the objects in 3-D. That's the question. But it will happen and we will be a part of that.

It's fair to say Michael Raphael has an obsession with transforming something vanilla into a more surreal three-dimensional image.

Owings Mills' Direct Dimensions, with annual revenue eclipsing \$3 million, uses laser scanning, reverse engineering and digital modeling to turn virtually any object into a computerized 3-D figure.

Raphael, 46, formed the company in 1996 after a stint with Martin Marietta.

**BBJ:** What makes you excited to come to work in the morning?

**Raphael:** Everybody here is extremely excited. We see different things every day. The technology is new, it's broad and it's awesome to see where it can be applied.

**BBJ:** What advice would you give a new boss?

**Raphael:** Be prepared to juggle. We're 15 years old and we have 22 employees and I wear a hundred hats all day long. Juggling is critical.

RYAN SHARROW | STAFF  
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Marilyn Carp

PRESIDENT & CEO, AEGON DIRECT MARKETING SERVICES, INC.



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