

Distinguished executive with a multifaceted career as a manager, owner, operator and consultant. Possessing a reputation as one of the foremost experts and innovators in the procurement, merchandising and marketing of perishables, prepared and specialty foods.

PROFESSIONAL CAREER**BLAZER CONSULTING****2001-Present****Owner/Principal**

My associates and I are passionate about Fresh and committed to helping our clients be the **Best@Fresh, Specialty and Prepared Foods**. We seek partnerships with selected retailers, distributors and manufacturers with the ability, intention and commitment to provide the Everyday Best Value (EDBV) in their marketplace, where Value is the Nexus of Price, Quality and Experience. We have been innovators in Fresh, Prepared and Specialty Foods for over 37 years, with expertise and success in all aspects of Food Retailing, Manufacturing, Product Development and Supply Chain. We are able to envision unique solutions and customize them to meet your market requirements, business objectives and organizational capabilities.

Because of our success in all aspects of Brand Development and our principle-based approach to business and relationships, we have been asked by companies outside of the food industry that share our perspective, to advise and assist in their business development as well.

- **In charge of business development in USA for two brands** – a German manufacturer of Law Enforcement equipment and a U.K-based Race Car manufacturer. **2019**
- **U.S.Fods** **2018**
Contracted to prototype a “Go-Local” initiative for produce for a major division. Served as advisor on executive committee for reengineering produce organization and operations company-wide to improve efficiencies and competitiveness.
- **Supply Chain Solutions Company** **2017**
Contracted to assist management team with marketing strategy to include reformulation of their mission and messaging.
- **Manufacturing and Sales Company of Latin American Specialty Foods** **2017**
Contracted to guide executive team in business development, merchandising, marketing and strategic planning. Also participated in process analysis and improvement at production facilities in South America, including the procurement of machinery to optimize various manufacturing processes.
- **MAJOR SOUTHEASTERN U.S. SUPERMARKET CHAIN** **2015**
Contracted to improve the selection, merchandising, procurement and handling of all fresh and specialty foods.
- **MORRISONS, UK** **2011-2014**
Contracted to revitalize their fresh offering company-wide. Various initiatives over four years helped not only to transform their merchandising of all perishables but also influenced the way retailing of fresh was executed by other major UK retailers. The contract culminated in the development of a totally new food retail format.

- **WESTON BAKERY** **2010**

Contracted by the largest Bakery Products Manufacturer in the world, to prototype new retail solutions in several Loblaw stores, which included:

 - total redesign of the physical retail environment (look and feel);
 - the development and introduction of over 100 new “clean ingredient” products;
 - re-merchandising of the department including fixtures, packaging, signage, messaging;
 - re-engineering of back room processes and procedures and development and deployment of specialized machinery to help support the new retail program;
 - utilization of fully-baked frozen and rapid reheating technologies to provide hot artisan bread throughout the day;
 - development of specialized IT programs.

- **COLES, AUSTRALIA** **2008**

Contracted by this second largest supermarket chain in Australia to help develop innovations in fresh retailing; which led to the creation of several successful new store prototypes and catalyzed the revitalization over the next five years of its business nationally.

- **LOBLAW, CANADA** **2007-2010**

The largest supermarket chain in Canada, asked us to help revitalize all of their fresh departments. This resulted in a multi-year contract, where our team was the primary engine for innovation for fresh within the company. We were involved in store operations, procurement, distribution, merchandising, marketing, store design and product development.

In the process, our team was instrumental in helping to revitalize Loblaw’s conventional store business. These efforts culminated in the development of an effective culture for fresh and specialty innovation within the company and the consequent development of the Maple Leaf Garden format, to which many of Loblaw’s conventional stores have been converted nationally.

During our consulting assignment at Loblaw, we:

 - had operational and merchandising control of two stores that were used as “labs” to prototype innovations;
 - procured tens of millions of dollars of produce and specialty food items through our buying arm and developed and ran a distribution center that supplied Loblaw’s most prominent stores in the chain, located in the Greater Toronto area, with produce and specialty groceries;
 - developed and administered the IT and accounting systems to support these procurement, distribution and logistics operations;
 - developed innovative programs for fresh departments;
 - helped rollout specific programs into 100’s of store;
 - were instrumental in revitalizing Loblaw’s conventional supermarket business nationwide.

Our team engaged in all aspects of innovation: conceptualization, development and implementation to include recipe development, working with manufacturers to actualize new products, prototyping of new products in stores, developing new merchandising, procurement and marketing methodologies, optimizing logistics and supply chain, creating information systems to support fresh, developing new operational procedures and processes, teaching the teachers, etc.

- **HEB/CENTRAL MARKET** **2006**

After the sale of HFM to Whole Foods and the culmination of a 5-year consulting/non-compete agreement with Whole Foods, I was approached by HEB again to help rejuvenate their Central Market concept. This led to a one-year consulting agreement, which included the procurement of produce for the Central Market division.

Whole Foods **2001-05**

Five year consulting and non-compete agreement after selling to Whole Foods.

- **HEB** **1990**

Approached by HEB, the largest privately owned supermarket chain in the USA, for help in coaching the company in the procurement, merchandising and marketing of fresh and specialty foods. This was a multi-year consulting project that saw about 500 HEB employees, from produce clerks to corporate executives, receive training at the Harry's Alpharetta store.

In essence, we helped HEB reengineer their entire fresh food-supply chain, change how they merchandised and marketed fresh, prepared and specialty foods, and provided valuable input into their manufacturing, distribution and procurement operations. Our efforts also culminated in the creation of the Central Market concept (CM), which subsequently grew into a separate division within HEB, and the establishment of HEB as one of the foremost leaders in the merchandising, manufacturing and procurement of fresh and specialty foods.

Central Market validated for the industry the power inherent in the farmers-market/grocery store hybrid, aspects of which have been much emulated across the industry. Like DFM and HFM, CM is dedicated exclusively to the sale of perishables and specialty foods. Even today, Central Market stores are among the preeminent food stores in the USA.

HARRY'S FARMERS MARKET (HFM) **1988-2001**

I opened Harry's Farmers Market (HFM) in Alpharetta, Georgia and in 1993 opened our first neighborhood fresh convenience store, called Harry's in a Hurry (HIAH). Over the years, the business grew into a chain of 9 stores (3 Megastores and 6 Hurry stores). In 2001, HFM was sold to Whole Foods as the cornerstone for their expansion in the Southeast. Many of HFM employees went on to gain regional and national leadership positions within Whole Foods, and reputedly IT systems that we developed were expanded for use throughout the company. A little about Harry's Farmers Market and Harry's in a Hurry Stores:

- Recognized by Fortune Magazine as one of the 100 fastest growing companies in the USA.
- Consumer brand recognition within the Atlanta metro area on par with the most well-known national consumer brands.
- Some of the highest volume perishable stores in the country, with the largest selection bakery, seafood, meat, produce and specialty grocery departments in the country at the time.
- One of the most extensive produce inspection and field buying staffs in the country.
- Industry standard-setting logistics to optimize freshness.
- First retail organization in the southeast to monitor pesticide residues in their produce.
- Direct receivers for fresh and specialty foods from around the world through our own food distribution company.
- The first retailer to be certified under the Department of Commerce HACCP program that also allowed us to grade our seafood Grade A.
- The first to introduce the Fresh Convenience Store concept in the USA supported by our own procurement, distribution and manufacturing infrastructure (the stores were called Harry's in a Hurry).
- We envisioned, built and operated the highest compliance USDA prepared foods facility in the United States (99.7%) that produced hundreds of proprietary fresh products, made from scratch daily including Harry's ready-to-eat, ready-to-heat and ready-to-cook items that became the recognized forerunner of the Home Meal Replacement category including "Hungry in a Hurry" and "Healthy in a Hurry" meals, which bore the "Heartwise" seal from the American Heart Association. These were fresh, refrigerated, microwavable/reheatable/ovenable, entrees and sides made with very high quality, all natural ingredients that rivaled restaurant fare while providing superior value.
- First to introduce artisan breads and baked goods in the USA to scale, that were previously only available in the small, artisan bakeshop. Developed unique processes and methods to optimize efficiency while remaining true to artisanal quality. Produced tens of thousands of units daily without the use of starches, stabilizers, extenders, fillers, conditioners, artificial sweeteners and flavorings, preservatives or hydrogenated fats. In 1994, HFM was awarded The Retailer's Bakery-Deli Association's "The Leading Edge Award" for its innovativeness.
- Named Grocer of the Year an unprecedented 3 years in a row by the Georgia Department of Agriculture. HFM set the standard for cleanliness and food safety among food retailers, nationally.
- Won more consumer-based awards for excellence than all other food stores combined in its service area.
- The most successful IPO offering up to that time in the Southeast (1993).
- Highest produce industry rating for Integrity in business dealings (Blue Book and Red Book).
- On the must see list of the most prominent retail business leaders in the world.
- Some of the most admirable vendor relationships in the industry.

- The Harry's family was comprised of team members representing 26 different nationalities.

DEKALB FARMERS MARKET (DFM), DECATUR, GA**1979-1986**

I left a career in music to join my brother at DFM in 1979. I learned the business from the ground up – doing every job there was to do. Over the next few years, under my direction, we expanded seafood and added meat, cheese, deli, bakery, flowers and plants, and complementary specialty ambient offerings. With my help, the store grew from a neighborhood fruit and veg stand to a 25,000 sq. ft. destination fresh and specialty store with reputedly the highest productivity in terms of sales, comp sales growth and profit in the retail food industry (\$2500/sq. ft. – 10% EBT). It was soon busting at its seams. In 1985, as General Manager and Chief Operating Officer, I orchestrated the relocation of DFM from its original location to a new 100,000 sq. ft. facility several miles away. The new market also served as a “terminal market” for local wholesale trade and contained in-house facilities for the manufacturing of bakery and prepared food items. DFM remains a destination for millions of shoppers a year and is today still one of the largest and most successful retail food stores in the country (140,000 sq. ft. selling no national brand groceries).

PROFESSIONAL MUSICIAN**EARLY 1970s**

I had been playing drums since I was 8 and professionally since age 12, and in the early 70's began touring with such luminaries as Johnny Mathis, Paul Anka, Dean Martin, Diana Ross, Doc Severinsen and jazz legends such as Freddie Hubbard, Lee Ritenour, Gary Burton and Ernie Watts. I left the music industry in 1979 to work with my brother in the food industry.

EDUCATION

I attended public schools through junior high and then attended one of the oldest preparatory schools in the country, Moses Brown, in Providence, R.I., where I graduated as a national honor student after being allowed to skip 11th grade. I attended Brandeis University for three years and then Berklee College of Music in Boston for a semester (a school with which I had been affiliated since I was 12 years of age and later served as a member of their Board of Advisors). I left college to pursue a career in music and then the food industry. Somewhat recently, I have had success as an amateur racecar driver. I have spent significant time in the wilderness areas of Northwest Montana. Life has provided ongoing profound learning experiences and opportunities.