

Jeff Norling

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Profile

Successful people believe in team power. They step out to meet, talk and share ideas. They aim for giving great value. They focus on quality. They encourage creativity. They never lose focus. My success is shaped by work that matters. Work I am happy to make sacrifices for. Work that holds me and my team accountable for greatness. Achieved through passion, curiosity, accountability, resourcefulness, commitment, teamwork, openness and energy.

Experience

Henning Lee, LLC (President)

June 2020 – Present

Designer, manufacturer, and wholesaler of housewares goods to HSN, QVC, and Marmaxx Group.

- Day to day operator in all areas of business.
- Outsourcing Industrial Design and Graphic Design.
- Partnered with manufacturers rep for sales.
- Developing product under brand name Henning Lee and private label.

Food Fight LTD (Senior Vice President)

February 2017 – May 2020

Multi-national designer, manufacturer, and wholesaler of housewares goods under the Curtis Stone brand to TV retailers HSN, QVC, and The Shopping Channel.

- Day to day director of all operations, with offices in 4 countries.
- Joined an organization in search of processes, facilities, structure, and strong direction.
- Implemented a strict channel strategy focusing on TV retail, proving to pay dividends for growth and profitability.
- Developed procedures, communication standards, and product focus to a developing team of professionals.
- Grew revenue by 41% and profitability by 50%, while forging an organization uniquely well suited for future growth.
- Negotiated licensing deal with Hearst Corporation for the brand Good Housekeeping. Launching in Q4 2020.

Jascor International (Vice President Sales & Marketing)

May 2016 – February 2017

Multi-brand designer, manufacturer, importer and wholesaler of consumer goods to retailers worldwide.

- Responsible for growing the brands Messy Mutts and Totally Pooched pet supplies in the United States.
- Connected via phone and in person with retailers and distributors nation-wide in search for appropriate distribution partners.
- Leveraged my network to secure manufacturer representation, distributorship, and retail partners.

Fox Run Brands (Director of Product Development & Marketing)

November 2010 – December 2015

Multi-brand designer, manufacturer, importer and wholesaler of consumer goods to retailers worldwide.

- Establish and direct the overall product strategy.
- Product planning and the strategic development for current products as well as R&D projects.
- Identify key product opportunities, channel of distribution, marketing and pricing. Coordinate and monitor the implementation of this strategy across various business departments from Marketing, Sales, R&D, Manufacturing and Distribution...insuring sales volumes, market share and profit goals are met or exceeded.
- Personally launched over 200 items in 4 years.
- Created a 250 sku Grilling/BBQ accessory line for grocery and hardware to launch in March 2016.
- Sold into Crate & Barrel, Target, Sur La Table, Whole Foods, Pampered Chef, Williams-Sonoma, World Market, Tommy Bahama, Bed Bath & Beyond, Wegman's, Kitchen Collection, SuperValu, Kroger, Albertson's, and more.

Outset (CEO / Founder)

November 2002 – November 2010

Multi-brand designer, manufacturer, importer and wholesaler of housewares goods to retailers worldwide.

- Designed, manufactured, imported and distributed housewares goods under brand names such as Outset, Kingsford, Tyler Florence, Guy Fieri, Tim Love Collection, Cottage Collection, Roy Yamaguchi, and many other private label brands.
- First revenue was in 2003, with launch of Outset brand in March 2005. Grew from zero to 10 million by 2009. Sold company in November 2010.
- Developed 155 sku Grillware & Chillware brand under the name Outset.
- Created the world's first and best, colored non-stick grillware. Privately developed with Whitford Corp.
- Negotiated licensing deals with Chef Tyler Florence, Chef Guy Fieri and Kingsford brand.
- Secured 3 rounds of debt financing for inventory and working capital.
- Visited 150+ factories in China & Taiwan in the process of forming a secure supply chain with advantageous abilities, costs and compliant work conditions.
- Organized a nation-wide "best of class" independent sales rep force for our Outset launch in 2005.
- Created a lean organization of designers, product development managers, inside sales, customer service, finance, purchasing and warehouse personnel.
- Authored all operational processes, including RFQ's, product testing protocols, materials testing, team communication, external communication, financial reporting, customer margin analysis, budgeting, marketing, inventory analysis, and more.
- Directed our trade show design and launch of Outset brand in 2005, which outstanding branding and sales results at the International Housewares Show and Gourmet Products Show.

Norwest Marketing (Partner)

July 2003 – November 2010

Independent manufacturers rep agency in the housewares industry, serving Gourmet Independents, Specialty, TV Retail, Catalog, .com, Hardware & Mass Merchants.

- Exclusively represented brands such as Shun Cutlery, Jura Capresso, Chef'n, Progressive Int'l, MuKitchen, Outset, Luigi Bormioli, ISI, USA Pan, Signature Housewares, Joseph Joseph, Takeya & Toastess.
- Personally served on the Gourmet Independent advisory board for the International Housewares Association in 2009.

RPGM, LLC (President/Founder)

July 2003 – November 2010

The Restaurant Purchasing Group of Minnesota brought buying power to independent restaurants.

- Negotiated food & supplies purchasing programs with national distributors for 20 independent restaurants in the Twin Cities metro area.
- Negotiated rebate programs with dozens of national food & paper goods distributors and manufacturers, providing cash back on quarterly volume purchases.
- Worked with restaurants and vendors to negotiate favorable payment terms for both parties as a prerequisite for continued benefits of the negotiated RPGM purchasing programs.

Norling Enterprises Inc. (President/Founder)

July 1992 – November 2006

Designer and operator of corporate café & catering facilities.

- Opened 11 restaurants under 8 brands in 5 years, with a 91% success rate (success rate defined as double digit contribution margins by month 6 with continued growth and sustained profits after 36 months).
- Purchased 2 locations in 1992 with a combined annual revenue of \$600k. Grew revenues to over 7 million by 2002.
- Served over 4000 customers daily.
- Secured debt financing for restaurant build-outs and working capital for each location.
- Negotiated and secured favorable long-term percentage rent lease structures. Leveraging our reputation as “best in class” restaurateurs, I negotiated percentage rent structures that afforded us minimal rents during slow periods and a cap on rents during our busiest periods.
- Recruited and trained General Managers for daily operation of each restaurant.
- Created and kept relevant breakfast, lunch, and catering menus.
- Secured corporate & social catering functions for events ranging in size from 10 – 3000 persons.
- Developed inventory process and program allowing for maximized fresh ingredients & food cost savings.
- Negotiated food & supplies purchasing programs with national distributors.
- Developed and implemented training programs, employment manuals, recruiting methods and quality standards.
- Purchased and outfitted 3 vans with refrigeration and heating capabilities for food delivery.
- Designed staffing structure throughout organization providing exceptional service, high employee morale and clear roles/responsibilities.

Education

University of Minnesota

September 1990 – May 1991

Attended a semester of general courses before opening my first retail business.

United States Army

October 1984 – July 1990

Trained from October 1984 – May 1985, before entering the reserves.

Summary

Highly motivated, results oriented CPG business leader with 28 years of experience in brand building, product development and sales & marketing, as well as the management of people, processes, and strategic planning. Especially skilled at building effective, productive working relationships with customers, vendors, and staff. Proven ability to motivate and work effectively with persons from other cultures and all walks of life. Skilled in working in a foreign environment with limited resources.

Selected Skills

- Product development and management.
- Strategic Sales & Marketing planning.
- Leadership, training and development of teams.
- Identifying new opportunities within distribution channels and at key accounts.
- Managing the revenue and costs of business.
- Brand building and development.
- Building effective, productive working relationships with customers, vendors and staff.
- Acute understanding of global markets.
- Highly skilled in all areas of home shopping network strategies including product development, sales, demo strategies, talent acquisition and analysis.
- High emotional EQ, steeped in vulnerability.

Selected Accomplishments

- Created 250 sku product launch in 9 months, just prior to leaving Fox Run Brands. Product line launched as planned just after my departure.
- Orchestrated the rebranding of Fox Run Brands from a single brand into a multi-brand distributor.
- Oversaw sales increase at Outset from <1M to >10M in four years.
- Successfully negotiated licensing partnerships & associated product launches with Chef Tyler Florence, Chef Guy Fieri, Chef Tim Love, and Kingsford (Clorox Corporation).
- Designed, opened, staffed and managed 11 profitable restaurants.
- 2008 Vesta Awards finalist for Barbeque Accessories (cast iron saucepot w/ nesting handle for basting brush).
- 2008 Housewares Design Awards "Best in Category" for Lighting, Home Décor and Outdoor Living (repositionable magnetic light for grill tools).
- 2012 Gourmet Retailers Editors' Pick for Best New Product (2 step corn prep tool)
- 2013 Gourmet Retailers Editors' Pick for Best New Product (collapsible chimney starter)
- Hold 2 patents with the USPTO.