

TOM MINER

As the managing partner of the CHAIN ASSOCIATES, LLC, Tom is responsible for the successful completion of all client engagements and project deliverables. Particular duties include: strategic planning, corporate support systems, unit operating systems, concept & menu development, due diligence, competitive assessment, business plans, and expert witness.

Experience

Tom has led professional service engagements for food industry clients since 1990. His past clients include over 100 chains, suppliers, and financial groups.

As a practice leader at Technomic, the foodservice market research firm, Tom led concept development projects by conducting market research such as competitive benchmarking, industry data analysis, product testing, and focus groups, as well as telephone and written guest surveys. He pioneered the use of voice-of-the-customer research in the foodservice industry. Tom led the research and writing teams for a number of industry studies including “Actionable CMS/HMR Strategies for Top-of-Mind Impact,” (IDDBA) and the Harvard-style case studies for the Food Marketing Institute’s, “Meal Solutions Conference – 1999”.

As a founding officer of the *Lettuce Entertain You Consulting Group* start-up, Tom initiated the marketing strategy including brand position, service design, pricing, PR, sales, and promotions. Also director of the firm’s manufacturers’ practice, Tom conducted operator research and product development projects. His “side work” for *Lettuce’s* restaurant group included concept-based consumer research programs, competitive research for partnerships, and strategic planning for restaurant brand promotions, as well as concept/brand evaluation.

Prior to consulting, Tom worked in restaurant operations in New York and France. He started cooking in SOHO in the 1980s then traveled to Paris where he worked under Chef Pascal Daquet at *Le Verre Gallant* (Haute Nouvelle). Back in NYC, Tom wore the executive chef toque for 12 years, leading culinary marketing and operations at *The Boat House in Central Park* (Upscale Italian), *Fraunces Tavern* (American Fine Dining), and *Mickey Mantle’s* (American Regional).

Trade Publishing

Tom has written numerous foodservice articles: “Customer-Focused Menu Marketing,” *Cornell Quarterly*; “Why Good Trends Go Fad,” *Carlson Report*; “Restaurant Branded Products: The Future of HMR?” *Prepared Foods*; “Branding for Sales and Profits,” *Supermarket Business*; and the “Menu Engineering,” columns for *Take Out Business*. He is the author of a textbook for chefs, *The Business Chef*, Van Nostrand Reinhold, 1989.

Education

Tom received a BA from Columbia University, graduating magna cum laude with honors in Creative Writing. He earned an MBA at the University of Chicago, Booth School of Business with concentrations in Marketing and Policy Management.