

TAVIS SCHOLZ

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FRANCHISE & MULTI-UNIT OPERATING EXECUTIVE

Multi-unit operating executive who scaled a national specialty chain from 21 stores to 173 and ran it end to end: the stores and the field organization underneath them. Twelve years and six leadership roles at Pepper Palace, store manager to Vice President, spanning retail operations, sales, store development, real estate, and the franchise system built on top of all of it. Builds the operating infrastructure a growing brand runs on: operations standards and manuals, training and onboarding, field support structure, unit economics and four-wall P&L discipline, and cross-departmental playbooks for every store lifecycle event. Former franchisee, so the standards get written for the person who has to run them. Open to full-time operating roles and to fractional, interim, and project engagements.

EXPERIENCE

TAVIS SCHOLZ ADVISORY | Franchise and multi-unit operating advisory, Sevierville, TN 2026–Present

Principal

July 2026 – Present

Independent practice offering fractional and interim operating support to franchisors and multi-unit operators.

- **Practice areas:** operating constraint assessments covering operations, field and franchisee support, unit economics, and the development pipeline, each producing a written diagnosis, an impact estimate, and a 30/60/90 execution plan; interim operating leadership; and defined project work.
- **Focus:** franchise and multi-unit operating infrastructure (manual, onboarding, training, field support model), unit-level P&L and four-wall economics, portfolio and site decisions, and store development execution.

PEPPER PALACE, INC. | National specialty hot sauce retailer, Sevierville, TN 2014–2026

Vice President, Real Estate & Franchise Development

July 2025 – July 2026

Converted the operating model into a franchise system: standards, training, unit economics, and support structure.

- **Authored the 17-chapter Franchise Operations Manual:** daily operations, the Seven-Step Sales Process and Show 5 sampling, staffing and scheduling, POS and cash handling, inventory, marketing, and compliance, written as the contractual operating standard.
- **Built the onboarding and support infrastructure:** Franchisee Onboarding Guide, Construction & Buildout Guide, and Ownership Transition Tracker; prepared 20+ corporate locations for conversion to franchise ownership.
- **Built the unit economics toolkit:** a corporate-to-franchise conversion P&L model, an owner-led vs. corporate performance study across 11 stores, and a rebuilt Item 19 verified by independent legal review.
- Closed and transitioned the brand's first three franchisees (Canadian conversions, May–June 2026): live, staffed, trading stores handed to owner-operators on documents developed with counsel.
- Returned same-store sales to growth (+1.6% in 2025 after two years of decline) on a concentrated portfolio, with median AUV up 14% and median occupancy cost inside the 15–18% target band.
- Ran the development function alongside it: US FDD (Aug 2025) and Canadian FDD (Oct 2025), a 600+ market scored territory model, AI-assisted site evaluation, and an AI-augmented sales process that carried 150 inquiries to 20 qualified opportunities and 4 candidates in financing.

Vice President, Store Operations & Development

February 2023 – July 2025

Inherited the department with zero staff; rebuilt it and ran the operating turnaround behind a 142-store portfolio.

- **Rebuilt the organization from 0 to 10:** four project managers running three concurrent projects each, a four-person in-house tenant-improvement crew, a maintenance operations director, and a project coordinator.
- **Delivered roughly 160 store projects:** 21 openings, 30+ relocations, and 100+ wind-downs, including 21 simultaneous closures in January 2024, executing the portfolio keep/close rationalization.
- Owned the store development budget and P&L, and modeled the 2024 keep/close plan to four-wall level across 142 stores.
- **Created the cross-departmental playbooks for builds, resets, relocations, and closures:** each project decomposed into owned workstreams across retail operations, store operations, accounting, marketing, and print, with named task-level ownership and automated timeline distribution at kickoff.
- Standardized second-generation retrofits to a fixed five-day delivery, the identical store set on the same clock every time, built to a fixed budget with no line for going back.

- Built and ran a 158-intervention store uplift program (41 corral conversions, 35 presentation resets, facilities and personnel interventions) modeled at +5.25% same-store sales; retrofit every store to centrally managed OptiSigns digital signage (2024).
- Absorbed Real Estate after the COO's departure: rebuilt the lease database in Monday.com, authored the site-selection process and proforma SOP, and hired a Commercial Real Estate Manager.

Vice President of Sales (Head of Retail)

June 2019 – February 2023

Ran sales and retail operations for the full chain through its peak growth years.

- **Grew the chain from 95 to 173 trading stores** with 3.3x POS sales growth in three years, +107% volume in 2021 alone, peaking at roughly 595 store employees.
- **Built the chain-wide daily sales-plan system (2022):** set every store's plan, then gave each store a workbook tracking day-level plan vs. actual in volume and transactions, weekday-true prior-year comps, AOV, and an automatic staffing-budget trigger on high-plan days, coordinated centrally through Teams and replacing month-lag corporate reporting.
- **Created the 154-store field evaluation and triage system:** dual manager and supervisor scoring, per-manager development paths, 21 PIPs, 22 relocation flags, and a three-tier investment priority across the chain.
- Built the field organization to 12 area managers, 8 store-attached and 4 roving (2021); implemented Glew.io retail business intelligence, unifying POS and e-commerce data into one reporting layer.
- Kept stores trading through COVID with phased, jurisdiction-by-jurisdiction reopening while growing volume 54% (2020); led the chain-wide POS migration from Lightspeed to Shopify (2019).

Sales Director (Retail Operations)

May 2016 – June 2019

- Nearly quadrupled the footprint (25 to 95 trading stores) and nearly doubled POS sales.
- Introduced the company's sales incentive program for store managers and associates (2018), later extended to area and district sales managers; formulated retail pricing strategy and opened wholesale and partnership channels.
- Implemented Lightspeed POS chain-wide (2016) and the PlayerLync mobile learning platform (2017); built the operations bench: a Retail Operations Manager (promoted to Assistant VP, 2019) and three traveling performance managers.

National Sales and Recruitment Manager

March 2015 – May 2016

- Established the corporate training department and curriculum and the recruitment function with company-wide hiring standards, as the chain grew from 21 to 25 stores.
- Aligned the national retail fleet around a consistent customer experience, the groundwork for the Seven-Step Sales Process later codified as the franchise operating standard.

Store Manager, Baltimore, Maryland

August 2014 – March 2015

- Ran a profitable unit while supporting the launch of six new stores in 18 months; created sales best practices and performance benchmarks adopted across the retail division.

Earlier career: corporate management and training roles with Schwartz Brothers Restaurants (Seattle) and United Airlines; business development with the International Rescue Committee (Baltimore).

Teaching: University of Maryland, Baltimore County (UMBC), Adjunct Lecturer, Entrepreneurship (2013).

EDUCATION

Master of Business Administration, Carson College of Business, Washington State University

December 2020

Bachelor of Business Administration, cum laude, Washington State University, Pullman

May 2012

CORE COMPETENCIES

Multi-Unit Operations Leadership • Franchise Operations & Standards • Franchisee Onboarding, Training & Support • Unit Economics & Four-Wall P&L • Field Organization & Performance Management • Incentive Compensation Design • SOP & Playbook Architecture • Store Development & Portfolio Rationalization • Retail Technology (POS, LMS, BI)

LANGUAGES & COMMUNITY

English (native) • German (native/bilingual) • Spanish (limited working proficiency)

Volunteer: American Red Cross, Duty Officer (Active) • Junior Achievement Washington • ACE Programs for the Homeless • Humane Society of Greater Dayton