

# Ira Blumenthal



Referred to as the **food industry's "Renaissance Man,"** Ira Blumenthal is the president of **CO-OPPORTUNITIES, Inc.**, an Atlanta-based consulting company that has **counseled world class clients** such as Coca-Cola, Nestle, Kroger, McDonald's, Harrah's, Albertson's, TGI Friday's, United Artists, Disney, Sara Lee, Wal\*Mart, Fairmont Hotels, Marriott, Circle K, Darden, Brinker, Compass, Trump, Sodexo, 7-ELEVEN, Aramark, etc... in areas such as branding, strategic alliances, change management, re-invention and more.

Highly respected as a **food industry visionary,** Ira received one of the industry's highest honors as its 1990 recipient of "The Key Person Award" (IFMA) as well as the NRA's "President's Award." His list of food industry honors and awards are many. He has also been **featured and quoted** in most food industry publications (**foodservice AND retail**), and media sources such as "The Wall Street Journal," "USA Today," "BrandWeek," "People," CNN, "Entrepreneur" and others... These media sources have used Ira as a **food industry subject matter expert**... as well as seeking his

opinions, insight and quotations on **branding, change management** and **business development**.

He is a **published author... Ready, Blame, Fire!** and **Managing Brand You**. . .the recipient of the coveted "George Washington Honor Medal For Literary Excellence" (Freedoms Foundation). . .and has served as **visiting university instructor** at both **The Foodservice Institute** (The University of Notre Dame) and **The Food Industry Institute** (Michigan State). Ira was also the inaugural "**Executive in Residence**" at **Georgia State University's School of Hospitality** and in 2012 was named "**Executive in Residence**" at **Kennesaw State University**.

A food industry leader, Ira created the first restaurant-branded food court in an American supermarket, **The Supreme Court** (Kansas City which was honored by "Supermarket News" as one of the "**Top 100 Visionary Supermarket Initiatives In the Century**"... Ira founded the food industry's "**Branding Institute**". . . is credited as a pioneer of "**home meal replacement**" and "**meal solutions**". . . is a national leader in helping restaurants and manufacturers extend their brands into alternative distribution channels (i.e. Colleges, Airports, Stadiums, Casinos, etc.)... Ira also led in the conversion of over a dozen foodservice brands into retail consumer packages. . . He is a frequent **SPEAKER** and **EDUCATOR** on food, foodservice, retail and restaurant related issues. **Delivering over 40 speeches annually,** Ira has served as the "opener" for notables such as President George Bush (Sr.), General Colin Powell, Tommy Lasorda, Bob Dole, Lech Walesa, Dr. Henry Kissinger and others...and has lectured, as well as consulted, on four continents.

Serving as the catalyst and strategist working for **The Coca-Cola Company** and **The National Restaurant Association Educational Foundation** in their shared commitment to making foodservice an important "**industry of choice,**" Ira is the co-founder and former **Executive Director** of the **Resource Center For Workforce Solutions**. He is also the architect of the **NACS CAFÉ (Center for Achieving Foodservice Excellence)**, an educational institute operated by the **National Association of Convenience Stores (NACS)** in an alliance Ira developed with Georgia State University, Coca-Cola, Georgia Pacific, Ecolab, McLane Foods, Anheuser-Busch and Kraft.

In 2014, Ira assumed the prestigious role as the "Managing Director" of The Restaurant Industry Executive Council, a stellar group comprised of the CEO's (no substitutions) of the top 35 restaurant chains in the U.S. Their mission is to enhance and/or protect the long-term economic vitality of the restaurant industry.

On a personal note, Ira is a tireless community activist and youth coach (coached a travel baseball team national championship). . .and in his own youth, was a "World Cup" athlete, as well as a collegiate Football and Lacrosse coach. Originally from New York, Ira resides in Hot-lanta, Georgia with his red-head Missouri bride, Kim. He is the father of two daughters and three sons. . . and has two grandchildren. Certainly in sync with Ira's stellar, diverse career, his favorite quotation is "**The true measure of a man is how many lifetimes he can cram into one...**"

Contact Ira Blumenthal at [Ira@IraSpeak.com](mailto:Ira@IraSpeak.com), 678-797-9199 or visit [www.IraSpeak.com](http://www.IraSpeak.com).