



## PERSONAL INFORMATION

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# Executive Overview

## S. Darrin Johnston

S. Darrin Johnston is a senior executive with more than 35 years of proven leadership across the global Housewares and Home Furnishings industries. His career is defined by a singular ability to translate deep consumer insight into high-performance product portfolios and scalable international businesses. His expertise encompasses global brand strategy, product innovation, international market expansion, and organizational leadership—spanning both Fortune-level enterprises and high-growth consumer brands.

Most recently, Johnston served as **President of Ovente**, where he set strategic vision and direction across all product categories and global markets. He led the annual strategic planning cycle, established enterprise-wide KPIs and organizational objectives, and drove product innovation in kitchen electrics and housewares—reinforcing brand positioning through design excellence and operational discipline.

Prior to Ovente, Johnston served as a **full-time Executive Consultant to Cuisinart**, leading a comprehensive brand revitalization and innovation strategy. His engagement modernized the brand's consumer-first approach, expanded the product innovation pipeline, and strengthened omnichannel performance. He developed multi-year product roadmaps targeting next-generation consumers, identified white-space opportunities through advanced consumer insights, optimized the portfolio through rigorous competitive benchmarking, and supported digital and retail strategies that delivered double-digit growth in kitchenware sales. He also partnered with ownership on M&A strategy, tariff mitigation, SKU rationalization, and commercialization modernization—positioning Cuisinart for sustained relevance in a rapidly evolving market.

Earlier in his career, as **Global GM/Senior Vice President at SharkNinja**, **Johnston built and scaled the Non-Electrics Division from inception to more than \$280M in annual revenue within four years**, expanding the business across North America, Latin America, and Europe. He subsequently led the creation and global expansion of the Kitchenware Division, which rapidly emerged as a dominant market force—ranking among the top three brand market share leaders in the U.S. and top two in the United Kingdom.

As founder of **SDJ Global Consulting**, Johnston advises brands from Latin America, Europe, and Asia on successful market entry and growth in the United States. His consulting practice spans market entry strategy, product development, retail execution, and long-term commercial planning—leveraging decades of global operating experience to accelerate expansion in one of the world's most competitive consumer markets.

Johnston has served on the Boards of Directors of both the **U.S. Cookware & Bakeware Alliance**—including three years as President—and the **International Housewares Association**, contributing to industry standards, innovation initiatives, and global category growth.



# Executive Overview Cont.

## S. Darrin Johnston

### What I Do

Johnston specializes in taking world-class consumer products from concept to shelf. His approach integrates:

- Deep consumer insight and trend analysis
- Big data and AI-driven product testing
- Global manufacturing partnerships
- Retail strategy and execution excellence
- Organizational alignment and capability building

Today's market demands performance, innovation, and consumer authenticity. Johnston delivers products that consistently exceed expectations by combining advanced analytics with deep, hands-on expertise in product development, global sourcing, and commercialization.

### How I Partner

Johnston brings broad transactional and strategic experience across:

- Distribution agreements
- Joint ventures
- Venture capital and private equity
- Mergers and acquisitions
- Licensing
- Corporate governance

His leadership philosophy is grounded in building strategic partnerships that unlock new markets, accelerate sustainable growth, and create long-term enterprise value.

### Education

Johnston is completing his **Master of Science in Management (MSM)** with a concentration in **Corporate Leadership** at **Piedmont University**, graduating in May with a **3.8 GPA**, reflecting a steadfast commitment to continuous learning and modern leadership excellence.

### Community & Personal

Johnston is deeply committed to community service, having served on the Board of Directors of the **United Way of Habersham County**, as an Elder at **First Presbyterian Church of Clarkesville**, and as a monthly volunteer at the **Clarkesville Soup Kitchen**.

Married to his wife Leigh for 32 years, Johnston has one daughter and two grandchildren, Riley (14) and Mason (21). Outside of professional and civic commitments, he is a licensed Private Pilot and an avid writer.

# STEWART DARRIN JOHNSTON

President & CEO | Global Consumer Products | \$500M+ P&L | Private Equity Advisory  
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## EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Built and scaled a \$310M global non-electric housewares business across nine countries in four years — growing category from inception to #2 UK market share. Enterprise executive with 30+ years of full P&L leadership exceeding \$500M across North America, Europe, and Latin America. Recognized turnaround architect — reversed a \$17M net loss to \$18M net profit in 24 months at Meyer Corporation following a major brand crisis. Trusted advisor to CEOs, boards, and private equity stakeholders on governance frameworks, EBITDA expansion, SKU rationalization, tariff mitigation, and enterprise value creation.

## CORE COMPETENCIES

P&L Management (\$500M+) Private Equity Advisory	EBITDA & Net Profit Expansion M&A Due Diligence & Support	Turnaround Leadership Corporate Strategy & Roadmapping
Omnichannel Retail (Amazon, DTC, B&M) Tariff Mitigation Strategy	Global Market Expansion (US/UK/EU/LATAM) SKU Rationalization	Supply Chain & Cost Engineering Go-to-Market Architecture
Organizational Design & Governance	KPI & Performance Control Systems	Executive Team Development

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### OVENTE

Oct 2025 – Feb 2026

*President*

Appointed to define enterprise strategy and accelerate growth across kitchen electrics and housewares categories.

#### Enterprise Leadership

- Established corporate strategic vision and multi-year operating roadmap across kitchen electrics and housewares portfolios.
- Led annual operating planning with KPI alignment across sales, marketing, product development, and supply chain.
- Strengthened financial governance frameworks and implemented structured executive decision cadence to increase execution velocity.

#### Commercial & Product Strategy

- Drove innovation roadmap and elevated brand positioning through consumer-first product architecture modernization.
- Optimized omnichannel execution across Amazon, brick-and-mortar, and direct-to-consumer (DTC) platforms.

### CUISINART

Aug 2024 – Jul 2025

*Executive Consultant to the CEO*

- Developed multi-year product innovation roadmap targeting next-generation consumers; activated white-space growth opportunities through advanced consumer insight analysis.
- Supported 25%+ omnichannel kitchenware sales growth through commercialization framework redesign.
- Executed SKU rationalization strategy improving cost efficiency and operational focus.
- Implemented tariff mitigation and pricing realignment strategies to protect margin through factory direct negotiations that returned \$10+ million dollars to the Cuisinart bottom line.
- Advised equity ownership on M&A considerations, competitive benchmarking, and long-term enterprise value creation.

### SHARKNINJA

*SVP / Global General Manager – Kitchenware*

2020 – 2024

2023 – 2024

Global General Manager – Kitchenware

2020 – 2022

Executive Consultant to CEO & Chief Commercial Officer

2022 – 2023

- Built and scaled Ninja global non-electric housewares business from inception to \$310M revenue across 9 countries in under four years.
- Delivered 47% year-over-year revenue growth; achieved #2 UK market share in the non-electric housewares category.
- Maintained full topline revenue, EBITDA, and net profitability accountability across all markets.
- Reduced product costs by 350 basis points through supply chain optimization and negotiated exclusive international manufacturing agreements.
- Shortened production lead times by 30 days through operational process redesign.
- Designed global operating and go-to-market commercialization model; launched Ninja brand internationally at Ambiente (Frankfurt).
- During 2022–2023 consulting engagement, directly drove revenue acceleration, EBITDA modeling, profitability expansion, and strategic alignment with CEO and CCO.

## MEYER CORPORATION U.S.

2011 – 2019

President / Managing Director – Americas

2014 – 2019

Senior Vice President – Americas

2011 – 2014

Directed \$500M enterprise across the Americas with full P&L, operational, and financial oversight. Managed 9 Vice Presidents, \$7M payroll, \$16M in operating expenses, and \$18M advertising budget.

### Turnaround Leadership

Assumed leadership during the 2014-2015 Paula Deen brand crisis, which caused a \$17M net loss and over \$100M in brand revenue erosion. Executed a 24-month turnaround:

- Reduced 2015 net loss from \$17M to under \$3M within 12 months of assuming leadership.
- Returned business to profitability in 2016 with \$18M net profit — a \$35M+ earnings improvement over 24 months.

### Additional Achievements

- Achieved 35% e-commerce revenue growth to \$81M wholesale.
- Delivered 237% direct-to-consumer (DTC) revenue growth following website relaunch.
- Expanded Latin American markets generating \$7–12M in annual incremental revenue.
- Implemented ROI-based governance and KPI performance accountability frameworks across the enterprise.

## BOARD & GOVERNANCE EXPERIENCE

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- International Housewares Association — Past Board Member
- U.S. Cookware Manufacturers Association — Former President
- United Way — Former Board Member
- Habitat for Humanity — Former President
- Economic Development Authority — Former Member

## EDUCATION

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### Master of Science in Management (MSM)

Graduation: May 2026

Piedmont University | GPA: 4.0

Capstone: Total Management Control Systems in Public & Private Equity-Backed Enterprises

### Bachelor of Science in Business Administration (BSBA) — Marketing & Advertising

Western Carolina University | Minor: Industrial Technology