



Executive Biography

Karen J. Conte

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Karen has over 30+ years of sales, marketing and operational management experience. She has a proven record of developing profitable sales and marketing programs in emerging channels. Her career included Warner Wellcome-American-Chicle Division, Procter & Gamble and Gillette/Oral-B where she was Regional Manager over 23 states managing both the broker and retail organizations.

After her tenure with Gillette, she became Vice President with PIA Merchandising Co., Inc., a national category management and retail merchandising group. Her team was responsible for establishing many of the original Retailer Preferred Supplier Programs such as Safeway Private Label, Safeway Beverage Category Management Programs, and Drug Store Merchandising Operation Category Management Programs (currently CVS and Walgreens). She was promoted to VP National Business Development where she was responsible for the development of national programs with both retailers and manufacturers.

In 1998 Karen established ARS Consulting, Inc. As Chairman – CEO, her organization has been a pivotal figure in shaping, formulating and executing corporate strategies that have significantly enhanced the development of new products and services within a broad range of global industries.

ARS has nurtured many business relationships which have resulted in implementing growth opportunities having a direct impact in gaining profitable revenue, driving innovation and collaborative partnerships while increasing shareholder value.

Notable Achievements:

- Led the strategic development of Akara Partners' Multifamily Housing Corporate Brand, securing \$18.5 million in new business. Within the initial eight months of launching the brand, she demonstrated her ability to leverage market opportunities and forged partnerships.
- Management and leadership of a full line food distributor provisioning company supplying Alaska Maritime market. Realigned and established KPI's for all departments within operations, sales, logistics, marketing and purchasing
- Developed an innovative integrated multi-tribal Farm-to-Table program, leveraging the unique intellectual property of each tribal group within the protein and plant-based industry. Engaged purveyors, distributors, and outsourced sales groups, enabling representation of finished goods products across all market segments, demonstrating a commitment to sustainable practices and community engagement
- Initiated and executed a transformative \$150 million alliance/acquisition program for The Mosaic Group, significantly enhancing the company's market presence and competitive edge through strategic restructuring and operational optimizations
- Identified and assisted in establishing a joint venture between IRI and The Mosaic Group. valued at \$650MM.
- Developed an integrated multi-service ADA (American's Disability Act) Compliance and Solutions Program
- Worked with Beringer Capital in initiating and facilitating a \$120 MM acquisition.

Karen lives in Arizona. Outside of professional interests she enjoys playing golf, hiking, traveling, community economic involvement and spending time with her family.