

FOOD & BEVERAGE INDUSTRY UPDATE: Disruptive Products/Technologies & Alternative Funding Options

Join our event to hear a panel of CEO's and Founders of East Bay businesses tell their stories about how they are moving into the 21st Century with new and alternative products and funding opportunities.



Moderator:
**Rodney Clark, Aspect
Consumer Partners,
LLC**
*Founder & Managing
Partner*

Expert Panelists:

Joel Sjoström, Fairn & Swanson, Inc.
Chief Executive Officer

Alex Porter, Oak Brewing Company, LLC
Owner & Brewmaster

Ben Lee, CircleUp Network, Inc.
Business Development

Sam Snyder, Greyrock Capital Group
Vice President

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MEET THE PANEL:

Rodney J. Clark, Aspect Consumer Partners, LLC (Moderator)

Mr. Clark is Founder and Managing Partner at Aspect Consumer Partners, LLC, a boutique M&A, strategic and corporate finance advisory and consulting firm based in San Francisco, California, where he focuses on Food & Beverage, Consumer Products, Health, Wellness & Lifestyle companies.

Prior to founding Aspect Consumer Partners, Mr. Clark spent over 20 years on Wall Street at firms such as Canaccord Genuity Inc. (TSX: CF), where he served as Head of the Consumer & Retail and Healthy Living groups, The Presidio Group LLC, where he served as Managing Director and Head of the Consumer, Food & Retail Group, Piper Jaffray (NYSE: PJC), where he served as Managing Director in Consumer M&A and Head of Consumer Products, Lehman Brothers, where he was a Senior Vice President in Mergers & Acquisitions, as well as Thomas Weisel Partners LLC and Montgomery Securities.

Mr. Clark's transaction experience includes a wide variety of strategic and financial advisory assignments including, buy- and sell-side mergers and acquisitions, public offerings and private placements. He has been involved in over \$65 billion in M&A and financing transactions in consumer and other industries, including consumer and branded products, food & beverage, nutrition, ingredients, hardlines and softlines retail, apparel, footwear, beauty and cosmetics, household and personal care, lodging, business services, distribution and education. He has also completed a number of significant transactions in the technology sector.

Mr. Clark graduated from the University of Washington and received an MBA, with Honors distinction, from Columbia Business School. He currently serves as a Director for Mammography Reporting Systems, Inc. [Click here to learn more.](#)



Joel Sjostrom – F&S

Joel joined F&S as the CEO in March of 2015 bringing more than 25 years of hospitality and specialty retail experience in companies ranging in size from small start-up companies, including one successful initial public offering (IPO), to Old Navy of Gap Inc. with sales in excess of \$8B. At Gap/Old Navy, Joel and his team supported warehouse & and store teams for 960 stores and over 36,000 employees. In his recent experience with Peet's Coffee & Tea, Joel and his team led the successful opening of over 70 new stores growing the employee base from 1500 employees to over 3500 over a 3 year period.

F&S is an established warehouse & distribution company in the retail travel industry and includes a chain of retail stores on the US/Mexican border. As one of the largest domestic duty free suppliers in the country, and the largest on the West Coast, Mr. Sjostrom is excited to lead F&S in a new phase of growth and development. [Click here for more information.](#)



Alex Porter - Blue Oak Brewing Company, LLC

Alex Porter is the owner and head brewmaster of Blue Oak Brewing Company, LLC. In founding this company, he has applied his scientific biotechnology expertise towards the art of beer brewing. While Blue Oak Brewing is still undergoing licensing, Alex hosts workshops teaching students the art of brewing science, and donating time and product to non-profits around the bay area.

Alex currently serves a mentor for other aspiring entrepreneurs through the Renaissance Entrepreneurship Center in San Francisco, serving on a panel reviewing business plans, and working with aspiring business owners one on one. [Click here to learn more.](#)



Ben Lee – CircleUp Network, Inc.

Ben Lee is the Director of Business Development at CircleUp, an online investment platform focused on connecting innovative consumer brands with accredited investors. He leads the company's efforts to discover and evaluate promising high-growth companies. He is also focused on building out CircleUp's network of industry partners, who can provide companies with the resources they need as they continue to grow.

Prior to CircleUp, Ben worked with both startups and consumer products companies. He was previously at JH Partners, a consumer-focused private equity firm, where he invested in and supported companies in a variety of industries, including personal care, home goods and direct marketing. He also worked at GoSmile, a developer of innovative teeth whitening products, and TaskRabbit, an online services marketplace. Ben started his career as an investment banker at Thomas Weisel Partners.

Ben received a BS in Physics from Stanford University and an MBA from Harvard Business School. He holds Series 63 and 82 licenses. [Click here for more information.](#)



Sam Snyder – Greyrock Capital Group

Sam is a Vice President at Greyrock Capital Group responsible for transaction origination, underwriting, and portfolio company management primarily in the Western US. Prior to joining Greyrock, Sam was an Associate at Goldman Sachs in the Technology, Media, and Telecommunications investment banking division helping corporate clients with financings, mergers and acquisitions, and anti-raid defense. Before Goldman, Sam worked as a Senior Research Analyst at Renaissance Capital responsible for global coverage of initial public offerings (IPOs). Sam currently serves as a board member of Allen Technologies, a provider of patient interactive systems to hospitals, Ogle School, the largest operator of beauty schools in Texas, Paragon Products, the leading supplier of fuel pumps to locomotives, and Solair Group, a leading fabricator of maintenance tooling and ground support equipment for commercial aircraft.

Sam earned an MBA with Honors from the Haas School of Business and an AB in History from Princeton University. Sam is also a CFA charterholder. [Click here for more information.](#)

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