

JOE FENTEN, P.E.

COO • Integrator • Operating Partner • Founder

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EXECUTIVE PROFILE

Founder, COO, and Operating Partner with 19+ years leading operational transformation, turnaround, and growth initiatives across SaaS, construction, manufacturing, hospitality, and professional services. Founded and exited South Carolina's first craft distillery through a seven-figure private equity transaction, then served as COO, Integrator, and Operating Partner to founder-led and private equity-backed businesses. Experienced in operational scaling, financial controls, operating system design, leadership infrastructure, capital readiness, and growth execution.

SELECTED CAREER HIGHLIGHTS

- Founded, scaled, and exited South Carolina's first craft distillery through a **seven-figure private equity transaction** — \$10M P&L, 40 employees, two locations
- Served as **COO, Integrator, or Operating Partner across seven founder-led companies** spanning SaaS, construction, hospitality, manufacturing, and professional services
- Reduced cash burn **50%+** while supporting **83% annualized ARR growth** at a high-growth cybersecurity SaaS company
- Identified and mitigated over **\$1.2M in operational and financial exposure** at a multi-division painting franchise with zero prior controls
- Built operating systems, financial controls, and accountability infrastructure supporting businesses from startup through **\$20M+ revenue**

CORE EXPERTISE

Operational Transformation • Turnaround Management • Organizational Design • Strategic Planning • Financial Controls • Capital Raise Support • Operational Due Diligence • Growth Constraint Analysis • KPI Development • Revenue Operations • Change Management • Process Architecture

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

Brightline Painting

Aug 2025 – Jun 2026

Chief Operating Officer & Integrator • Greenville, SC

Brought in as COO to a \$21M multi-division painting franchise. Inherited a \$21M multi-division business with limited financial controls, fragmented operating processes, and significant hidden operational risk. Implemented the entire operating foundation across four Southeast markets while the business was under active revenue pressure.

- **Operating System:** Built company-wide operating system including executive scorecards, accountability frameworks, structured issue resolution, and a 60-minute leadership cadence replacing 97-minute sessions that produced zero decisions.
- **Financial Controls:** Conducted operational and financial risk assessment that surfaced **\$200K** in materials exposure, identified **\$160K** in unmanaged purchase orders, recovered **\$300k+** in overpayments, flagged **\$30K+ month** in suspected vendor fraud, and led implementation of enterprise controls across four markets.
- **Annual Operating Plan:** Led 2026 AOP in 10 days — pressure-tested CEO growth assumptions, defended \$28M target over \$38–42M aggressive options using operational constraint data, established formal go/no-go gate framework for expansion decisions.
- **Division Turnaround & Commercial Launch:** Reversed Repaint division from **\$20K/month** losses to breakeven in five months; supported commercialization of a newly established Commercial Contracting division that enabled \$8.2M in submitted bids during the initial operating period.
- **People & Infrastructure:** Established 30/60/90 onboarding framework, seven leadership scorecards, FM Training Program, and compliance library across 18+ municipal licenses.

TechCXO — Fractional COO Practice

2024 – 2025

Fractional COO & Operating Partner • Greenville, SC

Concurrent Fractional COO engagements across founder-led businesses focused on operational scaling, financial discipline, leadership infrastructure, capital readiness, and growth execution.

- **I AM Roofing:** Implemented full operating system from scratch. Identified **\$37K/month** in expense reductions, surfaced **\$250K+** in collectible receivables, originated investor relationships with LB Capital resulting in a successful funding transaction.
- **TealHaus Strategies:** Led financial turnaround during a leadership crisis; implemented Profit First cash management system, organizational redesign, and 48-hour stabilization plan.
- **Hospitri:** Developed operational infrastructure for a fast-growing vacation rental company — client journey, onboarding systems, KPI frameworks, SOP library, Notion platform.
- **SolidFuture:** Repositioned a \$3M+ technology services firm;
- **Studio Luddite:** Established pricing frameworks and accountability infrastructure for a luxury lighting manufacturer during rapid growth.

Hook Security

2023

Chief Operating Officer & Integrator • Lakeland, FL (Remote)

High-growth cybersecurity SaaS company. Implemented EOS as COO and Integrator.

- Drove **83% annualized ARR growth** while reducing cash burn by over **50%** through financial controls and process discipline
- Developed 30 core processes improving gross margins by **7%** in four months; introduced 13-week cash calendar and budget monitoring
- Restructured financial operations — reduced AR and executive spending by **50%+**; cut CAC payback period by **50%** and software expenses by **20%**
- Created a tailor-made KPI tracking and reporting system for SaaS performance metrics, enabling data-driven decision-making across the leadership team

Katalyst | American Distilling Institute | Ansuz Capital

2023

EOS Integrator, Fractional CFO & Process Consultant (Contract) • Charlotte, NC | Hayward, CA | Greenville, SC

- Built operating, financial, and reporting systems across cybersecurity, manufacturing, and advisory organizations; supported executive transitions and EOS implementation initiatives.

Brass Ring Spirits Brands | Dark Corner Distillery & Hilton Head Distillery

2010 – 2022

Founder & President • Greenville, SC / Hilton Head, SC

Founded South Carolina's first craft distillery, scaled to a \$10M P&L and 40 employees across two locations, and executed a seven-figure private equity exit after 12 years — including a COVID pivot that secured Fortune 500 contracts and delivered record EBITDA.

- Scaled business from startup to seven-figure private equity exit — **200% profit growth** and **50%+** sales growth in peak years (2021–2022)
- Orchestrated COVID pivot to hand sanitizer production; secured Fortune 500 contracts; maintained **90%+** employee retention throughout
- Implemented SAP and S&OP systems improving on-time delivery by **20%**; negotiated high-value private label and distribution partnerships

Jacobs Engineering | Shaw Group | Duke Energy | Others

2007 – 2020

Engineering Leadership — Early Career • Southeast US

- Progressed through engineering roles across power, industrial, and manufacturing sectors.

EDUCATION & CREDENTIALS

Clemson University

Bachelor of Science, Electrical Engineering

Concentrated Studies in Power Systems Analysis

Professional Engineer (P.E.)