



## **Thomas Haas (Tom) – *Managing Director***

Tom is a Retail and Operational Services Executive with over 35 years of experience as a Chief Executive Officer and owner of multiple businesses in retail enterprises. He has extensive retail and specialty finance expertise with chain and single store operations and has developed multiple market concepts to grow and launch businesses.

Since joining BlackBriar in January 2014, Tom has served as CEO of a regional full service security firm developing a strategy to expand operations in the DFW market and explore opportunities for growth through organic growth and targeted acquisitions. He has worked with the management team and ownership team of which he is a part of, to reposition the Company's offerings to focus on recurring revenues and develop infrastructure to allow the firm to serve larger clients including provided dedicated support for national security firms.

He also directed the sale of the assets of a distressed 62 year old international sports equipment manufacturer, importer and wholesaler to a strategic buyer and facilitated an orderly wind down of operations achieving a successful resolution that included full satisfaction of all creditors and ability for an earn out for the ownership group.

Prior to joining BlackBriar, he served for seven years as President and CEO of PawnMart, Inc. a \$50 million 34-store pawnshop chain, headquartered in Atlanta, GA, until its acquisition by Cash America in December 2013. PawnMart was a BlackBriar client during his tenure as CEO. Tom established and implemented a clear strategy of improving productivity of PawnMart's current assets and pursuing market domination in its Georgia and Charlotte, NC markets. His initiatives included:

- Establishing best practices and standards that resulted in a systematic replacement of many existing personnel with a team of highly dedicated and competent professionals;
- Closing certain underperforming stores;
- Expanding and/or relocated others;
- Remodeling virtually all stores for cosmetic as well as operating efficiencies;
- Developing and executing a sophisticated brand image, awareness, and call-to-action marketing campaign;
- Renegotiating long term leases in the down market to create enterprise value in anticipation of an exit.

As year-over-year profitability increased, PawnMart made several strategic acquisitions in its existing markets and opened five *de novo* stores to fill in gaps in its core geography. The company's success was noted by the big three public pawn chains as well as dozens of private equity groups, which led to the successful sale of the company to Cash America after a five-fold increase in enterprise value under Tom's leadership resulting in \$61 million sale.

Prior to PawnMart, Tom had a similar success as President and COO of SuperPawn a \$67 million revenue pawn store chain headquartered in Las Vegas, NV. He joined the company in 2000 when



## **Thomas Haas – Managing Director, *BlackBriar Advisors LLC (cont'd)***

SuperPawn had 28 stores. He expanded the company's presence in Nevada, doubled the number of stores in Arizona, and opened the Seattle market. Building an effective team and applying the same marketing strategy as PawnMart resulted in a sale of the business for \$125 million, a valuation three times greater than when Tom had joined the company.

Prior to SuperPawn, Tom and his wife Cathy, opened an upscale furniture store in the Austin, TX market. They owned it for approximately 12 years before closing it to concentrate on their other business interests.

Tom's earlier career primarily involved senior management positions at a number of specialty and general retail store chains. As a retail consultant, Tom was hired by Viacom, the \$13 billion entertainment conglomerate, to help execute a retail store concept in Chicago. After successfully completing this project, he was promoted to President and CEO of Viacom's retail and licensing group. With design studios in New York City and Dallas, TX, the group executed over 4,000 proprietary licensed products, such as a Blue's Clues' talking plush dog plus an entire children's clothing line based on the Nickelodeon brand. Also, under Tom's leadership, 17 Nickelodeon children's stores were opened in some of the country's most prestigious malls. The success of the merchandise development was such a hit that Viacom decided to license its products to Sears and J.C. Penney directly and close its company-owned stores.

Earlier, shortly after perestroika with Russia, Tom had formed a partnership with a Russian businessman and an expatriate from Georgia for the purpose of bringing Ace Hardware stores to Moscow. Tom was granted an exclusive for Ace Hardware for the entire Russian market and Tom successfully raised \$5 million from the World Bank. While the first store was being constructed, Tom accepted the Viacom position and turned over the Russian operation to his partners in Moscow.

Other career highlights include:

- Founder (1987) and CEO of SportsTown, Inc. - one of the first big-box specialty sporting goods companies. After achieving annual revenue in excess of \$230 million, Tom had the experience of taking the company public before selling it out during a reorganization nine years later.
- CEO of Eastern Mountain Sports, New Hampshire, a specialty camping and backpacking company with 37 stores and a large mail-order catalog operation.
- Division President for Zales Jewelry, responsible for their sporting goods business, which operated in 17 states.

### **Education and Certifications:**

- Bachelor of Arts - Baylor University, Waco, TX with majors in economics, business and English literature.
- He was also the staff artist and cartoonist for the daily newspaper as well as the chief illustrator for David Campbell's Texas Football magazine and the cartoonist for Rodeo Pictures magazine.

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