

## **Daniel R. Scoggin**

Daniel Scoggin (born July 18, 1937) is a former business executive, inventor, world-class sailor and soon to be published author.

### **Biography**

Born July 18, 1937 in Los Angeles, Scoggin grew up in the restaurant business. His father was a noted San Francisco Chef in the 1940's at the Golden Pheasant, John's Rendezvous and Robert's At The Beach.

Dan received his education from San Jose State University with a goal of first becoming a minister and then settling on a law degree. Carrying a full load at school and holding down a full time job to pay for school, Scoggin began his hard work ethic at a young age. Dan married and before he could complete his education, his first daughter was born. He ended his schooling to support his family.

### **Professional Life**

Scoggin's father-in-law steered him to the new, upcoming firm Boise Cascade. They assigned him to work on the line with the "green chain" lifting wet heavy wood straight off the line. Soon Scoggin was begging for a real job and, after paying his dues, was offered a job as a salesman for the young company.

Over the next decade Dan broke every sales record in the book at Boise Cascade. He still holds the company sales record of 18.5 million square feet of cardboard sold – more than the plant could produce in one month. He was promoted to Sales Manager in 1963, Production Manager in 1964 and General Manager in 1965. By 1969, he was the Eastern Regional Manager in charge of half of the United States.

While visiting a container plant in Memphis, TN, he discovered a new restaurant called TGI Friday's. A group of sharp businessmen were looking for an anchor store for their urban renewal center. They approached the creator of TGI Friday's, Alan Stillman, in New York City and agreed on a licensing agreement for this New York hit. Located at 63<sup>rd</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup>, with lines out the door, Stillman had created an innovative concept for the young singles in the area. It has been said that Allan Stillman built an iconic restaurant and Dan Scoggin took that idea and created not only an international icon, but also a new restaurant segment – the casual theme industry.

After discovering Stillman had agreed to license the concept to the Memphis investors, Scoggin grabbed the next plane to New York City to meet with Stillman. Dan negotiated an eight city deal declaring he would build a better mousetrap. In 1972, Scoggin opened just that in Dallas, TX – with help from Herbert Hughes, Dan created a restaurant that was double the size of the New York original. Friday's blew customers away with its raised four-sided bar, multi-level seating and a stained glass two level phone booth. It was an overnight sensation.

But Scoggin didn't stop there. On the business side, he introduced the fledgling restaurant industry to systems and controls like he had used at Boise Cascade. He redesigned them to fit the restaurant industry, which enabled him to increase Friday's bottom line from 9% to 30%. The systems, philosophies and theories he developed became industry standards. The managers trained at Friday's became the most sought after in the restaurant world, most receiving \$10,000 signing bonuses just to join other companies bringing the systems and training manuals with them. Scoggin also established the core values that would guide hiring and human development including salary review practices. To learn more about his business practices, which have become standard in the restaurant industry, read his upcoming book, "Are You Triceptive?"

The Dallas Friday's opened at double the highest previous sales volume and three times the profit level. Alan became a silent partner and later cashed out, using the capital to start Smith & Wollensky's. Scoggin remained CEO for the first formative 15 years of Friday's phenomenal rise in the restaurant industry. Not only was Friday's the trendsetter and innovator, they established the casual theme industry in the United States which has in turn created concepts like Bennigan's, Chili's, Applebee's, Ruby Tuesday's and many others.

The late sixties and early seventies were an exciting time for the restaurant industry. Though most of the organized segments were coffee shops and fast food, innovators like Norman Brinker were offering an upgraded limited menu featuring quality steaks and a fresh salad bar. Suddenly, it seemed the industry innovations were all coming out of Dallas.

T.G.I. Friday's became known as the leader in the industry with their innovative made-from-scratch menu items, gigantic selection of cocktails, the classic Sunday Brunch, trend-setting summer menus and service beyond compare.

In 1973 the recession created financial pressures on several of Friday's backers. To satisfy their needs, a buyer was sought. Three of the partners including Stillman cashed out at that point leaving Dan to continue on in his position of being architect of Friday's and it's future.

The most notable thing about Friday's was its unique culture. It was centered around the standard of excellence, but the motto was "Be the best, have fun and make money." With that the culture flourished, the triangle was balanced and the company levitated to Triception. Should you encounter anyone who was a part of that phenomenon, they will be happy to tell you about it with a glow and a smile on their face.

In 1979, Scoggin created a second successful concept called Dalt's. An acronym for Dallas, Texas; Dalt's was a classic hamburger soda shop that was highly successful. There were 27 units throughout the company. The meat was the key to the hamburger. It was based on fresh ground meat daily from specific cuts; the formula used by Bill's restaurant in San Francisco. After months of taste testing, they discovered the meat couldn't be cryovaced, so it had to be flown in fresh. The hamburgers were made in an

exhibition-style butcher shop at each restaurant and became known as the best in the industry.

Dalt's fries came from a Baltimore eatery. The secret was the preparation through blanching, holding and racking of the fries for a total of 24 hours prep time. The concept wasn't widely understood by the new ownership so, after Scoggin's departure, the company was spun off.

In 1986, Scoggin took the company international, opening the first store in Birmingham, England. He held firm to the belief that Friday's would stay the same worldwide and did not bend to pressure to reengineer it to fit with local customs. Again, his template for overseas development has become the franchising standard in the industry.

In late 1986, Scoggin left T.G.I. Friday's due to a difference of opinions on franchising with the parent company. Scoggin went on to fulfill his lifelong dream of sailing the world.

### **Industry Impact & Innovations**

The innovations by Scoggin and TGI Friday's are too numerous to explain, but here are a few of the highlights. Scoggin was known as the industry innovator. He was noted for following and often leading customer trends. Beginning with the creation of potato skins, Scoggin went on to create or popularize many of the industry innovations like Alan Stillman's famous champagne Sunday brunch, blended and frozen drinks for the ladies, the limited Summer Menu, and expanded regional cuisines across the nation.

As drinking moderated in the US, he led the casual theme industry toward high end cognacs and wines in an effort to educate the consumer through drinking less, but drinking better. Adding in bartender flair to the service became so popular it led to the Bartender Olympics that is a worldwide event even today. Scoggin also developed the first non-alcoholic menu featuring a line of Smoothies and Flings. Probably the most memorable beverage promotion edged FedEx into the international shipping business by participating in the great worldwide race of Boujolais Nouveau. Friday's was the winner of the American race by arriving early in the states with a DC-10 fully loaded with wine. Being schooled with the Friday's way of bartending flair and 100% pour accuracy, the legendary Magic Mike went on to create ShowTenders, an international bartender training college. The film "Cocktail" starring Tom Cruise was based on Friday's bartending flair.

In the workplace, Scoggin's rule was "if the rule could be challenged by the employee and not justified, it was eliminated." There are many testimonials to the fact that his Open Door Policy was sincere. Many a career was changed or saved by this policy. Recognition was a cornerstone of employee motivation and Scoggin created a recognition program that was emulated by many in and out of the industry. The much heralded compensation review process involved multiple layers of management and career planning. His belief was he wanted unlimited growth for both the employee and the company so no percentage limitations were used.

Casual dress was the order of the day – well in advance of its acceptance. Casual Friday's literally came from Friday's. When asked by outside visitors why business dress was not required, Dan commented, "When you can show me that it improves performance, I will require it."

Ever trying to increase both the employee and the customer's experience, he created a certification and passport program that allowed employees to travel and work at stores around the world. When it became clear that any activity in the restaurant should be able to be ignored by the customer if he so chose, Dan eliminated the happy birthday song and replaced it with employees quietly tying balloons on the customer's chair accomplishing the same result of recognition.

Because many of the corporate employees worked long hours, they had the benefit of an at-cost beer machine. The motto "Work hard and play hard" permeated both the field and the office. Scoggin felt very strongly the corporate office's role was only to work for the stores. Towards that end, every corporate employee had to work a week in the store. Also, when receiving a request from the store, the corporate office employee had to follow it through and see that the store's timetable was met. Any deviation from this could only be approved by Scoggin.

Through the "World Tour", Scoggin made it his mission to talk to every employee in every store on a yearly basis even when the company grew to over 100 stores. The company's made-from-scratch menu was white tablecloth quality in a casual theme environment. Right down to sauces and dressings, kitchen managers – not chefs – were given the support of recipes and systems that could be made easily as well as internationally.

During the 80's, Fridays was the highest volume restaurant chain in the world. There was no advertising, only word of mouth. Though Scoggin believed a happy customer was the only advertising needed, he was not averse to free advertising. At Friday's 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration, he sold any menu item at only 10% of the real price, emulating 1965 prices. This stunt created a massive local traffic jam and was covered in more than 400 newspapers around the country. In another famous stunt and due to an obscure location at the Phoenix store, Scoggin contracted the tallest crane in Arizona and raised a cutout hand with a finger pointing straight down at the restaurant. The famous Friday's gorilla was at the controls of the crane. While generating excellent newspaper coverage and customer traffic, Scoggin also received a citation from a laughing city inspector for sign violation.

### **Second Career**

After sailing the oceans for seven years, Scoggin docked the boat and agreed to be board chairman and operating President for Ground Round Restaurants in Braintree, MA. The board was intent on selling the company and assigned Scoggin to manage the task. He came in; arrested the declining sales, successfully refinanced the company and reversed the trends. He then developed a new concept, Gold Fork and opened five stores. The

original restaurant located in a Ramada Inn managing only \$5,000 a week increased its sales to \$50,000 after reopening as a Gold Fork. After touring the concept with Scoggin in a Lear Jet, investors were convinced to by the company. Scoggin accomplished his objective.

Dan next headed to Kansas City to turnaround Houlihan's. He successfully opened a new Houlihan's prototype in Atlanta and redesigned and opened J. Gilbert's in Washington, D.C. near the CIA offices. They are still watching this successful steak restaurant today. Finally, he converted a Houlihan's restaurant in Philadelphia to a Devon's Seafood Grill. The concept is still a huge success.

Due to funding and timing problems, Scoggin was unwilling to make a further commitment to the company and retired to Lake Tahoe.

### **Sailing**

Mr. Scoggin has always preferred the solitude of sailing the oceans of the world. He has amassed the sea miles equivalent to sailing six times around the world. He and his lovely wife Sandy have docked in ports from La Rochelle, France to Sitka, Alaska as well as sailing the Atlantic Ocean. With their two dogs Boomer and Dutch, they know how to show you a great time on the Black Diamond.

### **Upcoming Book**

Scoggin is writing his first book on the theories and philosophies that can teach anyone how to achieve results in their life. This Triceptive way of dealing in business and personal life will become the standard core values and practices book for generations to come.