Steve Koonin
Chief Executive Officer

Steve Koonin was named Chief Executive Officer (CEO) of the Atlanta Hawks Basketball Club in April 2014. Koonin oversees all business, financial and strategic operations of the Atlanta Hawks and Philips Arena, and represents the owners as the head of the organization.

Under Koonin’s direction, the Hawks launched an innovative rebranding campaign and focused on a strategically established set of target audiences: millennials and next generation Atlantans; multicultural residents; and business-based consumers. His brand-centric approach and commitment to connecting with the Atlanta market led to the addition of more than 20 new corporate partners in just one year.

With oversight from Koonin, the Hawks have enjoyed a renaissance of relevance in Atlanta and beyond. The club landed on Google’s year-end list of the 10 most-searched sports teams and Sports Illustrated’s “Social 100” list -- one of only three clubs to make the list, and ranked as the No. 1 NBA team to follow on Twitter. Additionally, the organization was named a finalist to receive a MAX Award, presented by Atlanta Business Chronicle and Georgia State University’s J. Mack Robinson College of Business, and won the Business Champion of Diversity Excellence Award from the Technology Association of Georgia.

After his first year with the team, the Hawks led the NBA in year-over-year attendance increase and set single-season franchise records for retail sales, sellouts and season ticket memberships, including a record 500% uptick in annual season ticket sales. The organization also experienced a substantial increase in engagement with digital audiences, leading to across-the-board surges in popularity on all team-operated social media channels and a 250+% rise in television viewership among people 18-34 years of age. In December 2014, Koonin helped establish a new standard in the NBA, appointing the first Chief Diversity & Inclusion Officer in professional sports and overseeing the creation of the NBA’s first diversity council.

Koonin, a longtime entertainment and marketing veteran, joined the Hawks after spending the previous 14 years with Turner Entertainment Networks, most recently serving as the division’s president. As president, he oversaw programming, marketing, scheduling, strategy and operations for top-rated networks TNT, TBS, truTV, Turner Classic Movies, as well as Peachtree TV. Prior to his stint at Turner, Koonin helmed the marketing and worldwide advertising operations at The Coca-Cola Company, where he spent over a decade. While serving as Coca-Cola’s vice president of sports and entertainment marketing, he was named Sports Executive of the Year by Sports Business Journal.

A lifelong resident of Atlanta, Koonin serves on the boards of Emory Healthcare, the Georgia Aquarium, the Fox Theatre, the Metro Atlanta Chamber of Commerce and the Woodruff Arts Center. He is also on the board of GameStop, the world’s largest video game and entertainment software retailer.

Among his many accomplishments, Koonin has been named one of The 100 Most Influential Atlantans by Atlanta Business Chronicle, one of Atlanta Magazine’s Most Powerful People Shaping Atlanta, one of Entertainment Weekly’s Smartest People in Television, and was selected for The Power List by TV Guide.

He studied marketing at the University of Georgia, where he and his wife, Eydie, have established the Koonin Scholars Fund at the Grady College of Journalism and Mass Communication. The fund provides scholarships for Grady students preparing for careers in the creative industries and media.

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