



Julio C. Avalos

OPERATING EXECUTIVE · CEO / PRESIDENT / COO · BOARD DIRECTOR

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 [Wikipedia](#)

Systems-oriented operating executive who scales category-defining technology companies at inflection points. I connect product strategy, go-to-market, brand, people, policy, legal structure, and culture into one operating system for growth. At **GitHub**, I was the senior operating leader as the company grew from a bootstrapped developer tool into the global platform for software development and a \$7.5B **Microsoft** acquisition. My current focus is AI-native companies where trust, ecosystem strategy, regulation, and operating discipline determine which products become durable platforms.

I'm looking to run a hypergrowth company as CEO, or to partner with an exceptional technical founder as President / COO.

HIGHLIGHTS

- **\$7.5B exit.** Took GitHub from bootstrapped startup to a \$7.5B acquisition by Microsoft — the richest revenue multiple Microsoft had ever paid — as the senior operating leader across everything but engineering.
- **Zero to ~\$300M ARR.** Grew the business from single-digit millions to roughly \$200–300M ARR and from 1.7M to 30M+ developers, with expansion across EMEA and APAC.
- **Brand, culture & people.** Built (and at least initially personally oversaw) the marketing, communications, legal, business systems, and people functions — and stewarded the developer-first brand and culture — that made GitHub one of the most loved names in software and a magnet for talent through hypergrowth.
- **At the origin of AI coding.** Set the data-and-automation strategy GitHub built into Actions and Copilot, and presided over the era that produced Atom, Electron, and the founding team of Zed.
- **IPO.** Helped take Yelp public, working closely with bankers and stakeholders as Corporate Counsel on the S-1, road show materials, etc.

 **Observable**

2019 – Present

CO-CEO (JAN 2024 – PRESENT) · BOARD DIRECTOR (2019 – PRESENT)

A board director since 2019; stepped in to assist founder Mike Bostock — creator of D3.js — in January 2024, bringing operating focus and partnering with him on strategy and operations to lead the company's pivot toward AI for data analysis.

 **Shades**

2021 – 2025

CO-FOUNDER

Co-founded a Gen-Z news platform that evolved into an AI product surfacing multiple perspectives on the issues of the day. Full zero-to-one founder experience across product, fundraising, brand, and growth, including the strategic realities of competing for attention against platform incumbents.

 **GitHub**

2012 – 2018

CHIEF BUSINESS, STRATEGY & OPERATIONS OFFICER · GENERAL COUNSEL · BOARD MEMBER

Joined in Q4 2012 as the company's first General Counsel — bootstrapped, at the Series A — and became the senior operating executive across the entire business outside of engineering, running legal, policy, people, brand, and partnerships as one connected system and serving on the board through the Microsoft exit.

- **Owned the full non-engineering operating surface** — legal, policy, people, strategic partnerships, marketing, and communications — and served as Chief Business & Strategy Officer through the Sequoia-led Series B (Thrive Capital also participating) and the \$7.5B Microsoft acquisition.
- **Repositioned the product** from a “social coding tool” into the world's global code repository, and drove the move into enterprise (B2B) without alienating the open-source community that initially adopted us.
- **Set the strategic foundation for GitHub's data-and-automation thesis** — that a platform with a record of every bug and every patch should learn from itself and automate that work — the direction GitHub realized in Actions and, ultimately, Copilot.
- **Took the company international** (EMEA, APAC), with the majority of users outside the U.S., and was an early, public architect of remote work and open-source business models.
- **Scaled the team from dozens to over a thousand** while protecting a distinctive remote-first culture, and treated brand and developer trust as core strategy — not decoration — building one of GitHub's most durable competitive moats.
- **Built the legal, policy, and GTM functions from zero** and reinvented it as “legal-as-code” — lawyers shipping in Markdown on GitHub itself. Named the top in-house technology lawyer in the U.S. (Legal 500, 2015); inaugural recipient of *The Recorder's* legal-innovation awards.

CORPORATE COUNSEL

Joined while the company was still private and helped take it public — S-1 through IPO from the inside. Crossed deliberately from litigation into corporate, governance, and capital-markets work to round out a complete operating toolkit.

III Orrick, Herrington & Sutcliffe

2006 – 2010

MANAGING ASSOCIATE · IP LITIGATION

Litigated at the digital frontier as one of the top associate trial lawyers in America, focusing on frontier IP, privacy, and cyber governance. Represented early-stage Facebook and Mark Zuckerberg in the matter that became the basis for Aaron Sorkin's *The Social Network*, and worked with Apple, early LinkedIn, and nearly every early social network.

AWARDS & RECOGNITION

- **Top in-house technology lawyer in the U.S.** — Legal 500 (2015) and GC Powerlist; inaugural recipient, *The Recorder* legal-innovation awards.
- **HITEC 100** — named one of the 100 Most Influential Hispanic Leaders in Technology by the Hispanic IT Executive Council (2018).
- **40 Gators Under 40** — University of Florida Alumni Association Outstanding Young Alumni Award (2020).
- **Public speaker and writer** on remote culture, open source, and the intersection of technology, policy, and law.
- Written about in the *Wall Street Journal* on data-privacy regulation and global tech policy.
- [Wikipedia Biography](#)

BOARD MEMBERSHIPS

- **Merico** (board director, 2018–present) — an AI company specializing in generative code and developer analytics, measuring and accelerating how software gets built.

EDUCATION

- **Columbia Law School** — J.D., 2006. Harlan Fiske Stone Scholar; Janes Marks Murphy Prize for Excellence in Clinical Advocacy (multi-year pro bono counsel at Brooklyn Legal Aid, Juvenile Rights Division, specializing in advocacy for children in the foster care system).
- **University of Florida** — B.A., English (literary theory), minor in Philosophy, 2003. Graduated first in class; Academic Hall of Fame inductee; Valedictorian; Phi Beta Kappa; 4.0 GPA; full academic scholarship.

- **Recent writing** — *A Marxist Guide to Getting Rich in AI: A Theoretical Reconstruction of the AI Transition and Operating Framework for Evaluating Future Value in the Space* (forthcoming, June 2026).
- **Interests** — time with my wife and children; daily yoga practice since 2007 (registered yoga teacher, 200hr certification); fitness; reading; back-country driving my '72 Chevy Blazer; music; vinyl collector; sportsfan; pop-culture fan; high-culture fan; mid-culture fan; low-culture fan.
- **Languages** — native Spanish; conversational French; beginner Japanese.