



# OUR 9TH ANNUAL PREMIER FLORIDA HOSPITALITY

# 2021 MARKETING OPERATIONS SUMMIT

**AUGUST 18-19, 2021**



**SEMINOLE HARD ROCK HOTEL & CASINO**

JOIN FLORIDA'S MOST INFLUENTIAL HOSPITALITY  
PROFESSIONALS AND TOP-LEVEL EXECUTIVES IN PURSUIT OF  
THE BEST PRACTICES AND BUSINESS TRENDS TO INCREASE  
OVERALL SALES AND CUSTOMER SATISFACTION.

# THANK YOU SUMMIT SPONSORS!

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## — GOLD —



## — SILVER —



## — BRONZE —



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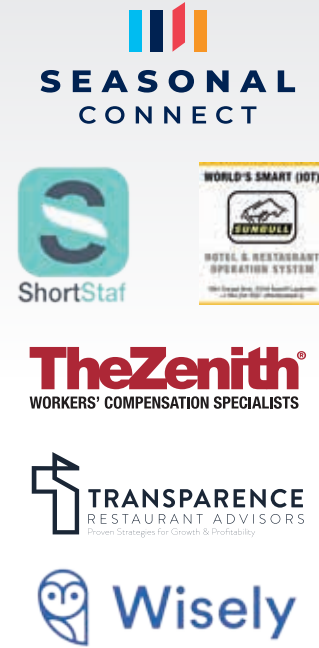
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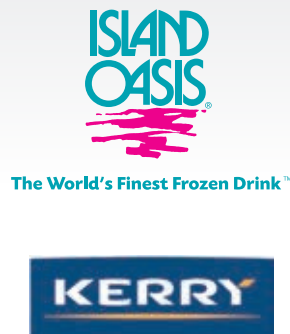
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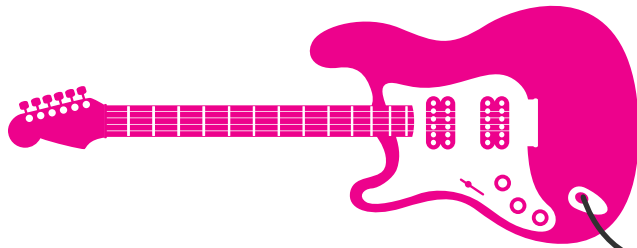


## — COCKTAIL —



## — WELCOME BAG —





# SUMMIT

**Welcome to FRLA's 2020 Marketing + Operations Summit!** As one of our signature events that is now in its ninth year, we are proud to watch its continued growth. We are thrilled to be back in-person for a full-sized event this year as we welcome you to the wonderful Seminole Hard Rock Hotel and Casino.

I am excited to offer a stellar line-up of speakers, including Fred LeFranc with Results Through Strategy; Jeff Gigante, Founder of Next Level Brands; and Brandon Landry, Founder and Owner of Walk On's, to name a few. We will also have incredible breakout sessions with best practices for the rising minimum wage, navigating the labor shortages, and how to successfully brand to move forward and grow your businesses.

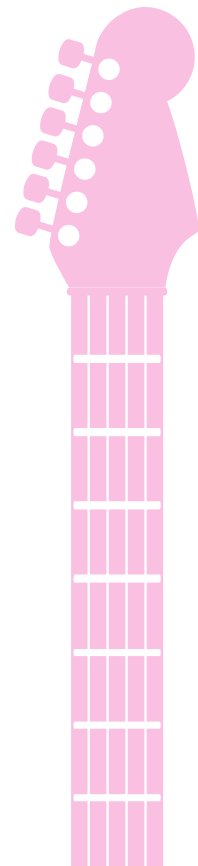
You will have direct access to the speakers and presenters, so make sure you engage with them directly to collaborate with some of the biggest names in our businesses. Networking and creating these connections is one of the best parts of coming to MOS, so I encourage you to take advantage of that.

I have never been prouder to be a part of this industry. We have certainly survived unprecedented times and are actually stronger for it. Each of you helps to make Florida a wonderful place to live, work, and play. We truly appreciate that you are passionate and engaged in every facet of your business.

Thank you for attending our event and for your support of the FRLA.

Carol B. Dover

President and CEO  
Florida Restaurant & Lodging Association





# THANK YOU TO OUR MARKETING COUNCIL

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*ANNA MARIA  
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## 2021 MARKETING COUNCIL

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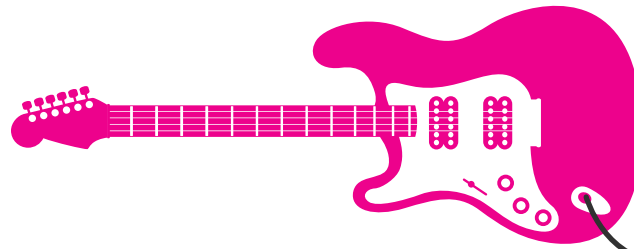
*BJ'S RESTAURANTS*

**KERRY MORRISSEY**

*OCEAN PROPERTIES HOTELS & RESORTS*

# AGENDA

WEDNESDAY, AUGUST 18



WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
10:00 AM – 2:00 PM	REGISTRATION	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
10:45 – 11:30 AM	EARLY BIRD BREAKOUT SESSIONS <b>▼ DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND BIAS 101: AWARENESS TO ACTION</b> <b>▼ THRIVING WITH A \$17 MINIMUM WAGE!</b>	TERRACE BALLROOM C & D TERRACE BALLROOM A & B
12:00 – 1:45 PM	WELCOME LUNCH KEYNOTE <b>▼ WELCOME</b> <b>MARCELLUS W. OSCEOLA JR.</b> , CHAIRMAN SEMINOLE TRIBE OF FLORIDA <b>GOVERNOR RON DESANTIS   SPECIAL GUEST</b> STATE OF FLORIDA <b>▼ STATE OF THE INDUSTRY ADDRESS PT. 1</b> <b>FRED LEFRANC</b> , CHAOS STRATEGIST   RESULTS THRU STRATEGY <b>▼ THE AGE OF DISRUPTION: EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED AND NOTHING IS DIFFERENT</b> <b>SCOTT STRATTEN</b> , PRESIDENT   UNMARKETING	SEMINOLE BALLROOM
1:45 – 2:00 PM	GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
2:00 – 2:45 PM	BREAKOUT SESSION 1 <b>▼ 3 WAYS TO STAY FOCUSED DURING TIMES OF CRISIS</b> <b>▼ HOTEL OPERATIONAL OPTIMIZATION</b> <b>▼ BUILDING LEGAL COMPLIANCE INTO YOUR MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM</b> <b>▼ YOU SURVIVED, NOW WHAT?</b> <b>HOW TO CRAFT YOUR STORY TO THRIVE!!!</b>	TERRACE BALLROOM C & D SALON WEST  SALON EAST  TERRACE BALLROOM A & B
2:45 – 3:15 PM	GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
3:15 – 4:00 PM	BREAKOUT SESSION 2 <b>▼ FRIED CHICKEN TAKES NO SIDES</b> <b>▼ HOTEL ROAD MAP FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD</b> <b>▼ BRANDING: BEING PURPOSEFUL WITH MARKETING AND OPERATIONS</b> <b>▼ GOODBYE TRANSACTIONS, HELLO CUSTOMERS:</b> <b>USING DATA TO FIND AND RETAIN HIGH-VALUE GUESTS</b>	TERRACE BALLROOM C & D SALON WEST SALON EAST  TERRACE BALLROOM A & B
4:00 – 4:15 PM	GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
4:15 – 5:00 PM	BREAKOUT SESSION 3 <b>▼ GROWING YOUR RESTAURANT BUSINESS POST PANDEMIC.</b> <b>FRANCHISE-VS-CORPORATE GROWTH</b> <b>▼ MASTER CLASS – WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE IT TO THE TOP 100</b> <b>▼ LOOKING TO LAUNCH A VIRTUAL BRAND?</b> <b>EXPAND INTO THE DARK/GHOST KITCHEN ARENA</b> <b>▼ LEARN HOW DOORDASH STAYS MERCHANT FIRST</b> <b>TO OPTIMIZE YOUR BUSINESS</b>	SALON EAST TERRACE BALLROOM A & B  TERRACE BALLROOM C & D  SALON WEST
5:00 – 6:30 PM	HOSPITALITY HAPPY HOUR	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
7:00 PM	DINNER <i>If you would like to dine on property, please call-in advance to Customer Care at 954-316-2900 to make reservations at Cipresso Italian, Council Oak Steaks and Seafood, and Kuro Japanese. Please tell the agent that you are with FRLA.</i>	

# AGENDA



10:45 – 11:30 AM

EARLY BIRD BREAKOUT SESSIONS (choose 1 of 2)

► **DIVERSITY, INCLUSION, AND BIAS 101: AWARENESS TO ACTION**

TERRACE BALLROOM C &amp; D

Moderator: **James Pogue, Ph.D.** CEO | JP Enterprises

*Measuring Progress. Improving Performance. Increase Productivity. Hear the latest research around bias and its impact in the workplace, and clarify the connection between diversity, inclusion, bias, and organization success. Outcomes: understand the business case and value propositions connected to diversity, inclusion and unconscious bias. Learn the best practices for leading change during uncomfortable times with sensitive topics.*

► **THRIVING WITH A \$17 MINIMUM WAGE!**

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

Speakers: **Charles Musgrove** Founder | capserv360**Chad Mackay** CEO | Fire & Wine Hospitality

*How can the full-service restaurant thrive with tipped minimum wage scheduled to increase 116% through 2026? Learn how a multi-unit independent restaurant owner from Seattle has thrived in the era where minimum wage has increased to nearly \$17 dollars/hour today and on the way to \$18. Over six years ago Chad Mackay and his restaurant group, Fire & Wine Hospitality, changed their compensation model that would chart a course for long-term success. The pivot changed the focus from minimum wage increases to a focus on sales. His team implemented a COMMISSION base pay for servers and bartenders, combined with a service charge. The result has been happy, well-paid employees, returning customers, and increasing profits for the restaurant owners. According to Chad, \$15 per hour is "so yesterday." With the success of this plan and the benefits it provides for employees and owners, Chad and his partners asked themselves, "Why didn't we do this sooner?" Check out this session for great tips about the commission plan and why this should be an option you consider now.*

12:00 – 1:45 AM

WELCOME LUNCH KEYNOTE

► **WELCOME**

SEMINOLE BALLROOM

Special Guests: **Marcellus W. Osceola Jr.** Chairman Seminole Tribe of Florida**Governor Ron DeSantis | Special Guest** State of Florida► **STATE OF THE INDUSTRY ADDRESS PT.1**

SEMINOLE BALLROOM

Speaker: **Fred LeFranc** Chaos Strategist | Results Thru Strategy► **THE AGE OF DISRUPTION: EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED AND NOTHING IS DIFFERENT**

SEMINOLE BALLROOM

Speaker: **Scott Stratten** President | UnMarketing

*In what feels like an upside down world, knowing what to do and where to go for your marketing needs has both changed drastically and stayed the same. In this encore engagement, Scott will share what he has learned since the last time he joined us and what we can do to not only get through this recovery period but for years beyond.*



1:45 – 2:00 PM

GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK

Sponsor Marketplace

Network with supplier partners, speakers and attendees.

2:00 – 2:45 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 1 (choose 1 of 4)

► **3 WAYS TO STAY FOCUSED DURING TIMES OF CRISIS**

TERRACE BALLROOM C &amp; D

Speaker: **Melissa Hughes** Founder | The Andrick Group

*Current events, financial worries, a global pandemic—it all weighs on us. Negative thinking combined with the stress of uncertainty taxes our cognitive abilities to the point of exhaustion. During these unprecedented times, our brains are working overtime despite the fact that many paychecks don't reflect it. Now more than ever, it's important to remember that the human brain responds to uncertainty in very predictable ways. The good news is we can choose how we respond in ways that build resilience and keep us focused.*



2:00 – 2:45 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 1 (choose 1 of 4) *Continued*► **HOTEL OPERATIONAL OPTIMIZATION**Moderator: **Roger Amidon** General Manager | Marriott Singer Island ResortPanelists: **Jeff Bailey** COO | HDG Hotels**Elias Assaly** Area VP | Naples Grande**Tricia Taylor** EVP/GM | The Breakers

*This is the jackpot of operational expertise! Making sure our hotels are performing flawlessly is always the goal, but it is even more of a focus given the variables in today's operating climate. Engage with a panel that represents a variety of brands and independent properties, owners, operators, and markets; you're sure to walk away with nuggets of knowledge!*

SALON WEST

► **BUILDING LEGAL COMPLIANCE INTO YOUR MANAGEMENT TRAINING PROGRAM**Speaker: **Kevin Johnson** Shareholder | Johnson Jackson PLLC

*The concept is simple: poor managers increase your exposure to legal risks, while well-trained managers help reduce that exposure. We know that training is key, but its effectiveness depends on your training budget, the amount of turnover you face, and the skill of your trainers. How can you adjust your training program to get the most bang for the buck when it comes to teaching legal compliance? Experienced employment lawyer Kevin Johnson will provide common-sense, ready-to-implement suggestions on how to revitalize your training program.*

SALON EAST

► **YOU SURVIVED, NOW WHAT? HOW TO CRAFT YOUR STORY TO THRIVE!!!**Speaker: **Jeff Gigante** Restaurateur, Entrepreneur, Founder | Next Level Brands Hospitality

*In times of crisis or rebuilding, the creative mind wins. How are you going to craft your story to differentiate your brand from everyone else and truly become the leader in your sector for your market? Forget demographics, learn how to crush in the psychographics.*

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

2:45 – 3:15 PM

**GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK**

Network with supplier partners, speakers and attendees.

Sponsor Marketplace

3:15– 4:00 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 2 (choose 1 of 4)

► **FRIED CHICKEN TAKES NO SIDES**Speaker: **Chef Art Smith** Chef, Author, Television Personality

*How the hospitality industry can better create an inclusive atmosphere for both employees and customers. Food is universally accepted and loved. It can be and should be used to bridge the gaps and divisions between people. Chef Art will share many inspiring stories of how he has done this around the world, and he gives insight and advice on how other operators can explore marketing efforts, utilizing international food recipes, historical examples, and much more.*

TERRACE BALLROOM C &amp; D

► **HOTEL ROAD MAP FOR THE JOURNEY AHEAD.**Moderator: **Sheldon Suga** VP/Managing Director | Hawks Cay ResortPanelists: **Keith Space** President | Fort Partners/ Four Seasons**Steve Keup** SVP Operations | Hersha Hospitality**Chris Rollins** COO | South Beach Group Hotels Inc**Nitin Motwani** Co-CEO & Co-President | Merrimac Ventures

*"Road map" is the key to this session. There are options of routes to choose and there are sure to be twists and turns as our industry continues on its road to recovery! Get practical insight from a group with diverse vantage points on ways to navigate operations, revenue management, labor, and more as we get back to (better than) normal.*

SALON WEST

► **BRANDING: BEING PURPOSEFUL WITH MARKETING AND OPERATIONS**Speakers: **Frank Rappa** CMO | PDQ**Jess Vahsholtz** Group Account Director & Lead Strategist | PPK

*Hear the real-world story about PDQ's business turnaround through syncing the brand from the inside and out: streamlining the operation for success; committing to consumer insight and breakthrough advertising strategy; and leveraging operations, marketing, and digital media to build the brand and push the business forward. Hear the story of PDQ and PPK, and see fun and creative ad metrics.*

SALON EAST





3:15– 4:00 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 2 (choose 1 of 4) Continued

## ▶ GOODBYE TRANSACTIONS, HELLO CUSTOMERS: USING DATA TO FIND AND RETAIN HIGH-VALUE GUESTS

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

Speaker: **Mike Vichich** Co-Founder & CEO | WiselyPanelists: **Joe Tenczar** Co-founder | Restaurant CIOs and CSO | Sonny's BBQ**Scott Lawton** CEO & Co-founder | bartaco

There has been a fundamental shift in the restaurant industry. Winning restaurant brands are leveraging customer data to personalize every aspect of the guest experience to maximize customer lifetime value. This panel will explore the practical details of how customer data drives sales.

4:00 – 4:15 PM

GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK

Sponsor Marketplace

Network with supplier partners, speakers and attendees.

4:15– 5:00 PM

BREAKOUT SESSION 3 (choose 1 of 4)

## ▶ GROWING YOUR RESTAURANT BUSINESS POST PANDEMIC. FRANCHISE-VS-CORPORATE GROWTH

SALON EAST

Speakers: **Paul Samson** Founder & Senior Business Developer | The Franchise Edge**Michael Stadnick** Chief Operating Officer | The Franchise Edge

Learn why the restaurant real estate market will never be better, the need for government to spur growth through SBA loans, and why there will never be a better time to acquire second generation assets! Are opening open additional corporate stores a good idea? Or should you be selling franchisees?

## ▶ MASTER CLASS – WHAT IT TAKES TO MAKE IT TO THE TOP 100

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

Moderator: **Carlos Gazitua** President/CEO | Sergio's RestaurantsPanelists: **John Tallichet** President/CEO | Specialty Restaurants Corporation**Jose Cil** President/CEO | RBI Burger King

Learn from the top 100 rated restaurant leaders who have taken family startups to sustainable national and global brands. Be the first to hear about the newest innovations and initiatives, trends, and practical solutions for growing your restaurant to the top. Prepare for an astronomical surprise!

## ▶ LOOKING TO LAUNCH A VIRTUAL BRAND? EXPAND INTO THE DARK/GHOST KITCHEN ARENA

TERRACE BALLROOM C &amp; D

Speaker: **Danielle Guzzetta** Growth Hacker | Consultant

Learn about cutting edge ways to get your product to more guests, this is the breakout session you do not want to miss. 30+ years of marketing and revenue-generation experience; with the last 10 dedicated to restaurants. Over the past decade, Danielle served as CMO for Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza, SVP of Growth Hacking for Smokey Bones (where she developed and executed two virtual brands; resulting in 122 new Virtual Restaurants) and most recently with REEF; where she was able to level the playing field for small brands and allow mass distribution of large brands across the US, Canada and the UK without any capital, operational, or labor costs.

## ▶ LEARN HOW DOORDASH STAYS MERCHANT FIRST TO OPTIMIZE YOUR BUSINESS

SALON WEST

Moderator: **Derek Kopkin** Senior Strategic Sales Manager | DoorDashSpeakers: **Josh Hogan** VP of Operations | Flippers Pizzeria**Francis Castro** Sales & Marketing Director | Flippers Pizzeria

Join DoorDash Senior Strategic Sales Manager Derek Kopkin and restaurant leaders for a conversation about how DoorDash serves as a key strategic partner to help grow sales and customer reach, all while keeping the restaurant front and center in the relationship.

5:00 – 6:30 PM

HOSPITALITY HAPPY HOUR

Sponsor Marketplace

Network with supplier partners, speakers and attendees.

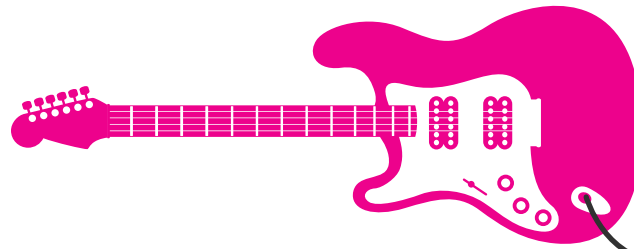
7:00 PM

DINNER

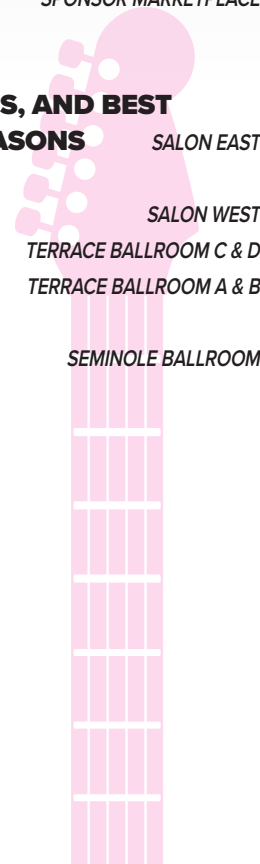
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# AGENDA

**THURSDAY, AUGUST 19**



WHEN	WHAT	WHERE
7:30 – 8:45 AM	BREAKFAST	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
8:00 – 10:00 AM	REGISTRATION	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
8:45 – 10:00 AM	MORNING KEYNOTE <b>WELCOME</b> <b>FRED LEFRANC, CHAOS STRATEGIST   RESULTS THRU STRATEGY</b> <b>IGNITING TOP PERFORMERS</b> <b>TJ SCHIER, PRESIDENT &amp; FOUNDER   SMART RESTAURANT GROUP AND INCENTIVIZE LOOK</b>	SEMINOLE BALLROOM
10:00 – 10:15 AM	GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
10:15 – 11:00 AM	BREAKOUT SESSION 4 <b>NEUROSCIENCE SECRETS THAT INFLUENCE THE CONSUMER EXPERIENCE</b> <b>YOU CAN NOW HIRE NCAA ATHLETES FOR PROMOTIONS... BUT THERE'S A CATCH</b> <b>LEGAL COMPLIANCE STRATEGY FOR TIPPED EMPLOYEES: 80/20 RULE, TIP SHARES, TIP POOLS, AND MINIMUM WAGE</b> <b>THE HOLY GRAILS OF DIGITAL GROWTH</b>	TERRACE BALLROOM C & D TERRACE BALLROOM A & B SALON EAST SALON WEST
11:00 – 11:15 AM	GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK	SPONSOR MARKETPLACE
11:15 AM – 12:00 PM	BREAKOUT SESSION 5 <b>THE SEASONAL STAFFING CHALLENGE: THE ISSUES, SOLUTIONS, AND BEST PRACTICES TO MEET YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NEEDS FOR ALL SEASONS</b> <b>WHY PENDING DATA PRIVACY LEGISLATION COULD CRUSH YOUR BUSINESS: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW</b> <b>OFF-PREMISES DOMINATION</b> <b>SEE FLORIDA LAND, AIR, &amp; SEA</b>	SALON EAST SALON WEST TERRACE BALLROOM C & D TERRACE BALLROOM A & B
12:15 – 1:30 PM	CLOSING LUNCH KEYNOTE <b>MORE THAN A RESTAURANT</b> <b>BRANDON LANDRY, CEO, OWNER &amp; FOUNDER   WALK-ON'S</b>	SEMINOLE BALLROOM



## AGENDA



8:45 – 10:00 AM

## MORNING KEYNOTE

## ► WELCOME

SEMINOLE BALLROOM

Speaker: **Fred LeFranc** Chaos Strategist | Results Thru Strategy

## ► IGNITING TOP PERFORMERS

SEMINOLE BALLROOM

Speaker: **TJ Schier** President & Founder | SMART Restaurant Group and Incentivize Look

*Toughest hiring environment ever? Probably...but why do some businesses seem to have outstanding employees while others struggle? This session will focus on what you can do to attract, train, and retain a team of highly qualified team members. Key insights will include how to create a "magnetic" recruiting strategy to attract the right applicants, where to find them and how to maximize the effectiveness of training, incentives, and communication to build a high-performing team that ignites your business.*



10:00 – 10:15 AM

## GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK

Sponsor Marketplace

Network with supplier partners, speakers and attendees.

10:15 – 11:00 AM

## BREAKOUT SESSION 4 (choose 1 of 4)

## ► NEUROSCIENCE SECRETS THAT INFLUENCE THE CONSUMER EXPERIENCE

TERRACE BALLROOM C &amp; D

Speaker: **Melissa Hughes** Founder | The Andrick Group

*Customer experience is no longer the "4Ps" paradigm – price, product, promotion, and place. The new paradigm is seeing the experience, feeling wowed by the experience, having that feeling embedded in memory, and creating the emotional connection that makes the customer want to return and stay with that company in the long term – in effect, creating loyalty. Evidence from brain scans shows that emotions directly influence consumers' decisions.*

## ► YOU CAN NOW HIRE NCAA ATHLETES FOR PROMOTIONS... BUT THERE'S A CATCH

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

Speakers: **Corey Staniscia** Director of External Affairs | Dreamfield

**Neal Carter** Director of Business Development | Dreamfield



DREAMFIELD

*Everyone in the entertainment and hospitality industries are talking about name, image, and likeness campaigns with NCAA athletes. Thanks to recent legal changes, businesses can now hire NCAA stars for high-impact events, promotions, and marketing campaigns. That sounds great, but there is a catch. Before you can run a campaign with NCAA athletes, you have to know how to book them, how to price them, and what to do with the attention they bring. This session will give you practical tips on booking athletes and detail the proven tactics being used to turn NIL engagements into high-ROI campaigns. If you need to drive business for a bar, restaurant, or hotel, you'll want to hear insights on how to execute revenue-generating, attention-grabbing NIL campaigns.*

## ► LEGAL COMPLIANCE STRATEGY FOR TIPPED EMPLOYEES: 80/20 RULE, TIP SHARES, TIP POOLS, AND MINIMUM WAGE

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

Moderator: **Amanda Simpson** Attorney at Law | Jackson Lewis

Panelists: **Tyler White** Attorney at Law | Jackson Lewis

**Nick Sarra** COO | Saltwater Restaurants, Inc.

**Jorge Rivero** President | HR On Demand

jacksonlewis.

*Tipped employees can represent a legal minefield of liability for employers. The Department of Labor is in the process of reviving the "80/20 rule" that limits the amount of time (i.e. no more than 20%) tipped employees can spend performing side work or non-tip generating duties, while still allowing their employer to claim a tip credit. Tip pools and tip shares are also a hotbed for potential collective action litigation against employers. Are the tipped employee payment practices of your company in legal compliance? Are you properly calculating overtime for tipped employees and ensuring that all tipped employees are receiving at least minimum wage? Are the practices you thought you put in place actually being followed? During this breakout session, learn best practices from subject matter experts for navigating the ever-changing and often confusing landscape of wage and hour laws regarding tipped employees.*

## ► THE HOLY GRAILS OF DIGITAL GROWTH

SALON WEST

Moderator: **Skip Kimpel** Technical Innovator & Public Speaker

Panelists: **Robert Kuyper** Key Strategist and Sales Specialist | Edison Technology

**Trish Giordano** Chief Sales & Marketing Officer | Earl Enterprises

**Patricia Lopez-Calleja** Chief Experience Officer | Fiesta Restaurant Group

Edison Trends

*In the wake of unprecedented consumer demand for mobile, curbside pickup, delivery, and other takeout options, are your restaurant's digital partnerships and playbook the best they can be this year? This panel will explore nine high-impact operations strategies to drive digital growth for restaurants.*

11:00 – 11:15 AM

**GET CONNECTED! NETWORKING BREAK**

Sponsor Marketplace

Network with supplier partners, speakers and attendees.

11:15 AM – 12:00 PM

**BREAKOUT SESSION 5 (choose 1 of 4)****► THE SEASONAL STAFFING CHALLENGE: THE ISSUES, SOLUTIONS, AND BEST PRACTICES TO MEET YOUR ORGANIZATION'S NEEDS FOR ALL SEASONS**

SALON EAST

Moderators: **Keith Pabian** Founder | Pabian Law and Co-Founder | Seasonal Connect**Carly Eglin** Director of Operations | Pabian Law and Co-Founder | Seasonal ConnectPanelists: **Dan Tinghitella** VP of Operations | Jim Shirley Enterprises**Justin Garner** Director of Hospitality Operations | World Equestrian Center**Sheldon Suga** VP and Managing Director | Hawks Cay Resort**Brenden Curcio** CEO | Shortstaf

Staffing is one of the biggest, if not the biggest, issues for hotels and restaurants across the country. This panel discussion will feature representatives from hotels and restaurants from across Florida to lay out and discuss solutions to this massive problem. The panel will delve into the staffing struggles that hospitality organizations are experiencing during all seasons, discuss strategies for addressing these challenges, and share best practices that your organization can employ. These topics and more will be discussed with an eye toward understanding key trends and leveraging them to develop solutions to your organization's biggest staffing and operational struggles. With areas across the country facing staffing challenges, this session is not to be missed.

**► WHY PENDING DATA PRIVACY LEGISLATION COULD CRUSH YOUR BUSINESS: EVERYTHING YOU NEED TO KNOW**Speaker: **Alfred J. Saikali** Chair, Privacy & Data Security Practice | Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.

SALON WEST

Ransomware attacks, privacy laws that allow for class action lawsuits seeking millions of dollars, and compliance obligations that can lead to regulatory enforcement actions. These are some of the hurdle's businesses face on the privacy and cybersecurity legal landscape. This session will teach you about these risks and ways your organization can assess and minimize them.

**► OFF-PREMISES DOMINATION**

TERRACE BALLROOM C &amp; D

Speaker: **TJ Schier** President & Founder | SMART Restaurant Group and Incentivize

Guiding your restaurant through the ever-changing off-premises waters to find the right solutions and processes for your restaurant or brand. Learn an 11-point approach to driving off-premises sales using your brand and the industry at large to create systems and vendor partnerships with recommended solutions and options to accelerate off premises sales.

**► SEE FLORIDA LAND, AIR, & SEA**

TERRACE BALLROOM A &amp; B

Moderator: **Lisa Lombardo** Chief Culture Officer | HDG HotelsPanelists: **Patrick Goddard** President | Brightline**Tamarah Blanco** VP Strategic Sourcing & Site Services | Carnival Cruise Line**Mark Gale** CEO & Director of Aviation | Broward County Aviation Department

As a peninsula state, there are plenty of ways for travelers (local and beyond) to cruise around, be it ports, attractions, events, parks, museums, restaurants, and more. Celebrating and making the most of our coast-to-coast connectivity remains essential, not just to recovery, but also as an ongoing winning strategy. Leaders representing cruise lines, transportation, Florida's ports, and attractions share the state of operations which impacts restaurants, lodging, and suppliers.



12:15 – 1:30 PM

**CLOSING LUNCH KEYNOTE****► MORE THAN A RESTAURANT**

SEMINOLE BALLROOM

Speaker: **Brandon Landry** CEO, Owner & Founder | Walk-On's

The importance of building a winning culture driven and inspired by the walk-on/underdog mentality within all of us. At the core of the Walk-On brand, we care about people and encourage a team-before-self mentality, core values, and guiding principles that are defining a movement that surpasses great food and defines the "why" that encompasses everything that Walk-On's is.





## Art Smith | Keynote

### *Chef, Author, Television Personality*

Art Smith, chef, author, and television personality has brought back meaning and symbolism to the word "table" and has united families and friends through the sharing of a meal.

A native of Jasper, Florida, Art studied at the Florida State University School of Business. He began his career with two internships at The Greenbrier Resort and was then selected to attend the prestigious Walt Disney Magic Kingdom College Program. Following graduation, Art took a position working at the Florida Governor's Mansion where he worked as executive chef for Governor Bob Graham, now a U.S. Senator, and his wife Adele. He continued to cook for families all over the globe, including other well-known politicians and celebrities.

After traveling extensively through Europe and Africa as a family chef, Art took a position as chef on the American European Express Train. Once settled in Chicago, he began teaching at Williams Sonoma and later served as a special event chef for Martha Stewart Living Magazine. In 1997, he began a 10-year-long position of personal chef to Oprah Winfrey and Stedman Graham. He currently acts as the specialty chef for Ms. Winfrey's most talked about events. In 2007 he will launch a new fine dining restaurant in Chicago called "Table," which will serve handmade, organic foods gathered from some of the best farms in the Midwest.

Art is a 2002 James Beard Award winner for his first cookbook, *Back to the Table: The Reunion of Food and Family* (Hyperion, 2001). For his second cookbook, *Kitchen Life: Real Food for Real Families* (Hyperion, 2004), he received the prestigious 2001 Gourmand World Cookbook Award for "Best Family and Children's Cookbook." A National Bestseller and New York Times Bestseller, Art was selected twice as keynote speaker for Florida Governor Jeb Bush's "Celebration of Reading," sponsored by the Barbara Bush Foundation for Family Literacy. He is a contributing chef for best-selling author Dr. Dean Ornish's new family health book and he is currently working on a follow-up to his first best-selling cookbook, *Back to the Family* (Rutledge Hill), which will launch in February 2007.

Art is a contributing editor to O, the Oprah Magazine and the Food section of Oprah.com and has appeared several times on "The Oprah Winfrey Show." He is featured regularly on television programs, appearing nationally on "The Today Show" and "Good Day Live" and serving as a regular tasting judge on Food Network's "Iron Chef America."

A fervent supporter of the community, Art established Common Threads, a nonprofit organization based on his passionate belief that families (whether a family by blood or a family of friends) all share an innate desire to care for each other, regardless of culture, race or geographic location. Common Threads embodies Art's mission to foster a familial environment where children can learn to value each other and discover universal understanding and mutual acceptance. The innovative program serves more than 1,000 children at seven locations around Chicago and recently expanded into the Oprah Winfrey Boys & Girls Club of Kosciusko, Mississippi. A Los Angeles location will open in 2007. Art also serves on the board of directors of "Kids Café," a nutrition program for children in Minneapolis.

Art lives in Chicago's Hyde Park neighborhood with his life partner, renowned artist Jesus Salgueiro, tending to their garden and their three dogs, five cats and 15 fish.



## Brandon Landry | Keynote

### *Chief Executive Officer, Owner, & Founder Walk-On's*

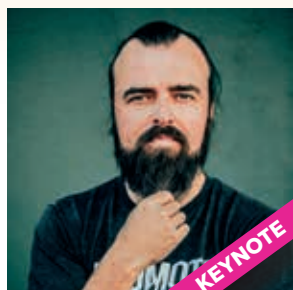
Brandon Landry, Founder and CEO of Walk-On's Sports Bistreaux, always dreamt of a basketball career. As a freshman in college, he joined the Louisiana State University basketball team as a walk-on and it was there that Brandon learned the true meaning of being a walk-on: the mentality of team before self, the importance of every team member's value, and that recognition as a player doesn't dictate how hard you work.

As his college and walk-on career progressed, he realized a sports career might not be the only way to utilize this mentality. On a flight home from an away game, Brandon and his teammate Jack began crafting a business concept for a school project. Using a beverage napkin from the flight as scratch paper, the two drew out a floor plan for a familyfriendly sports restaurant that incorporated a taste of Louisiana. The irony of forgetting to draw a kitchen on the original restaurant sketch highlighted just how much work would be needed to make their dream of opening Walk-On's Sports Bistreaux a reality.

Though they faced challenges including multiple bank pitches for funding, ideation and development of their new-found brand, restaurant jobs to gain experience on how restaurants operate, and constant involvement in the community to recruit both fans and employees, Brandon and Jack never gave up on their dream. On September 9, 2003, the first location of Walk-On's Bistreaux & Bar opened its doors to the Baton Rouge community.

The sports-driven concept isn't the only thing Brandon is known for. His passion for culture, community, and excellence has been a constant differentiator. Through new business partners, including the record holding NFL quarterback, Drew Brees, Brandon has built an ever-growing corporate team, a notable franchise model, and a fan base that is nation-wide. With 49 locations currently open, restaurant number 50 opening next week and over 150 more restaurants in the pipeline, Brandon continues to push the limits of possibilities and success for the brand.

He and his wife, Mackenzie, reside in Baton Rouge, and while Walk-On's has turned into their own version of a family business, their three children remain at the top of the list of achievements. Once just a "local favorite", Walk-On's has become a national brand, bringing a taste of Louisiana and the spirit of a Walk-on to loyal fans, old and new, all across the country.



## Scott Stratten | Keynote

### *President UnMarketing*

Scott Stratten is the President of UnMarketing. He has Co-Author'd 6 best-selling business books with his business partner and wife Alison and was formerly a music industry marketer, National Sales Training Manager, and a College Professor. He ran one of the most successful viral video agencies in the world for nearly a decade before solely focusing on speaking at events for companies like Walmart, Pepsi, Adobe, IBM, Microsoft, Cirque du Soleil and Saks Fifth Avenue when they need help navigating their way through the landscape of business disruption.



## 2021 MARKETING OPERATIONS SUMMIT TALENT



### **TJ Schier | Keynote**

#### ***President & Founder SMART Restaurant Group & Incentivize***

TJ Schier is the President and Founder of SMART Restaurant Group and Incentivize Solutions. Incentivize Solutions provides custom training materials and guest service programs to help companies become more effective.

TJ has developed operational training materials from 'flash cards to flash animation' for Coca Cola, Kraft, Evian, as well as dozens of leading restaurant and hotel chains, including Pal's Sudden Service, the first restaurant chain ever to win the Malcolm Baldrige National Quality Award.

In 2007, TJ founded SMART Restaurant Group - now operating over a dozen Which Wich Superior Sandwiches with a track record of high sales, employee retention and guest service scores. He speaks on key business principles to help franchisees and operators grow their business in any service industry.

He utilizes cutting-edge hiring, guest survey and training methods in his company in his quest to build 'SMART' restaurants and prove out the theories he speaks about to his clients and their managers, franchisees and operators. SMART Restaurant Group won the 2010 QSR Magazine Applied Technology Award, was the Which Wich 2010 Franchisee of the Year and were a finalist for the National Restaurant Association's Operator Innovations Award in 2012.

He has written numerous books including his 2012 release "S.M.A.R.T. Restaurant Guide to Effective Food Service Operations", "S.M.A.R.T. Guide to Effective Recruiting" and "Send Flowers to the Living! Rewards, Contests and Incentives to Build Employee Loyalty" along with over 100 articles on guest service and motivating today's generation. He is a past contributing editor for QSR Magazine, past president of the Council of Hotel & Restaurant Trainers (CHART) and a former long-time member of the NRA Ed Foundation HR Advisory Council.

He has a BBA and MBA from the University of Texas, speaks dozens of times per year at manager and franchise conferences and resides in Dallas/Ft Worth with his family.

## SPECIAL GUESTS



### **Marcellus W. Osceola Jr. | Special Guest**

#### ***Chairman Seminole Tribe of Florida***

Marcellus Osceola Jr. is the elected chairman of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, one of the most successful Native American tribes in the United States. The Seminole Tribe of Florida has more than 4,300 enrolled members and is headquartered in Hollywood, Fla., with reservations in many parts of the state.

Osceola was elected Chairman of the Seminole Tribe in 2016 and re-elected to a full four-year term in May of 2019. He is the seventh elected Chairman since the Tribe adopted its constitution in 1957.

As Chairman, Marcellus Osceola heads an elected five-person Tribal Council, which oversees all government and gaming operations of the Seminole Tribe of Florida. Prior to being elected Chairman, Marcellus Osceola Jr. served as the elected representative of the Hollywood Seminole Reservation to the Tribe's Board of Directors, which manages the Tribe's non-gaming business interests.

The grandfather of Marcellus Osceola Jr., Bill Osceola, served as the first President of the Board of Directors of the Seminole Tribe of Florida, Inc. His father, Marcellus Osceola Sr., served as the elected Tribal Council Representative from the Hollywood Seminole Reservation.

During his time as Chairman, Marcellus Osceola Jr. has helped the Seminole Tribe reach multiple milestones, including the opening of the world's first Guitar Hotel on the Hollywood Seminole Reservation and a major expansion of the Seminole Hard Rock Hotel & Casino Tampa, one of the world's largest and most profitable casinos. The Seminole Tribe owns Hard Rock International, the first international company acquired by a North American tribe. The company's headquarters was recently relocated to Seminole Tribe offices adjacent to the Tribe's headquarters on the Hollywood Seminole Reservation.

Marcellus Osceola Jr. was born in Fort Lauderdale in 1972 and is a lifelong resident of the Hollywood Seminole Reservation. He is married to Trisha Osceola and has seven children. He is also an entrepreneur and the owner of multiple businesses.



### **Governor Ron DeSantis | Special Guest**

#### ***State of Florida***

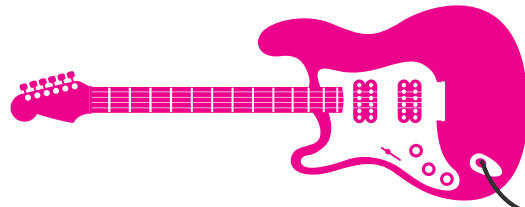
Ron DeSantis is the 46th Governor of the State of Florida. Since taking office in January 2019, he has worked hard to expand education opportunities, improve Florida's water resources and Everglades, champion vocational training, bolster public safety, foster innovation in health care, assist with hurricane recovery, promote infrastructure development and support veterans – all while lowering taxes and being fiscally responsible.

A native Floridian, Governor DeSantis worked his way through Yale University, where he captained the university baseball team and graduated magna cum laude. He also graduated with honors from Harvard Law School. While at Harvard, he earned a commission in the U.S. Navy as a JAG Officer. During his active duty service, then-Lieutenant DeSantis deployed to Iraq as an advisor to a U.S. Navy SEAL Commander in support of the SEAL mission in Iraq. His military decorations include the Iraq Campaign Medal and the Bronze Star Medal (meritorious service).

Prior to serving as Governor, DeSantis served as the U.S. Congressman for Florida's 6th District. As Chairman of the National Security Subcommittee, DeSantis spearheaded efforts to reform the UA, combat terrorism, identify government waste and relocate the American Embassy in Israel to Jerusalem. As a Congressman, DeSantis championed term limits, fiscal responsibility with a strong national defense.

Governor DeSantis is married to First Lady Casey DeSantis, a former Emmy Award winning television host. They are the proud parents of two children, Madison and Mason. They are the youngest family living in the Florida Governor's Mansion in nearly fifty years.

# TALENT



**Roger Amidon**  
*General Manager Marriott  
Singer Island Resort*

Roger Amidon has served as general manager of Palm Beach Marriott Singer Island Beach Resort & Spa since 2012. Marriott International named him "Franchised General Manager of the Year" for its Eastern Region Full-Service Hotels/Resorts in 2015.

Amidon is responsible for the successful operation of Palm Beach County's only AAA Four-Diamond all-suite beachfront hotel, which, at 305 rooms, boasts a prime location on its own private beach on Singer Island, and amenities including the acclaimed 3800 Ocean restaurant and the elegant Condé Nast Traveler award-winning SiSpa. Under Amidon's expert leadership, Palm Beach Marriott Singer Island was named one of Marriott International's "Full-Service Hotels of the Year" in the Eastern Region for 2015.

A longtime Palm Beach resident, Amidon has worked in the hospitality sector since 1983. Joining Palm Beach Marriott Singer Island marked his return to the Marriott brand after serving three years as executive director of the Tourist Development Council of Palm Beach County. As head of the county's tourism development efforts, Amidon focused on promoting and managing tourism-related agencies and activities in Palm Beach County.

Prior to leading the Tourist Development Council, Amidon served Marriott in roles including area general manager for Marriott Palm Beach Gardens, Boca Raton Renaissance and Fort Lauderdale Marriott North. His regional tenure included general manager positions for the Delray Beach Marriott and Sheraton at CityPlace.

Amidon spent his early career in the Northeast, where he managed a number of hotels, including independent ski resorts.

Amidon provides leadership and involvement in a variety of industry and community organizations. Current and past positions include: executive director of the Tourist Development Council; chairman of Discover the Palm Beaches; president of the Palm Beach County Hotel & Lodging Association; president of the Florida Restaurant and Lodging Association (Palm Beach Chapter); and board memberships with Singer Island Civic Association and Loggerhead Marine Life Center, Riviera Beach Business Council, and Coalitions to Senior Leaders and Interns, FRLA State Association, SunFest, South Florida Fair, and Palm Beach Gardens High School Five Star Magnet Advisory Council.

When not working or volunteering, Amidon enjoys golf, fishing, travel with his family and indulging in his passion for classic cars. Amidon and his wife, Tina, have two children and reside in Stuart.



**Elias Assaly**  
*Area Vice President  
Naples Grande*

Elias Assaly is the Naples Grande Beach Resort, Area Vice President and brings over 30 years of seasoned hospitality experience. Assaly will oversee day-to-day operations of the independent resort and its 474 guestrooms, ensuring ongoing initiatives and activations are aligned with the highest hospitality standards, bringing fresh innovative ideas to the resort and creating exciting new opportunities both on a local and national level. Elias also provides his expert guidance and support to Cheeca Lodge & Spa and Tranquility Bay Beachfront Resort in Florida.



**Tamarah Blanco**  
*Vice President Strategic  
Sourcing & Site Services  
Carnival Cruise Line*

Tamarah "Tami" Blanco currently serves as the Vice President - Strategic Sourcing and Site Services for Carnival Cruise Line, overseeing the strategic negotiations/procurement for Hotel, F&B and Medical categories as well as leading Facilities Management/ Site Services which includes day-to-day operational needs and our strategic approach toward workplace enhancements. She joined Carnival in 2011 as the Director of Revenue Accounting Operations and moved her way to a dual role as the Director of Finance, Shipboard Operations & Analytics and then a promotion to Vice President of Finance Operations. After 6 years in the Finance organization, she headed Carnival's shore-side Human Resources functions and later moved to the Operations group overseeing the Crew Recruiting, Crew Scheduling and Travel Operations. Prior to joining Carnival, she held a number of roles at Royal Caribbean International (13 years) and Ryder Truck Rental (RTR)/Ryder System (5 years); her first professional role out of college was that of Reimbursement Specialist for RTR, filing for state reimbursement for environmental clean-up.

A Certified Public Accountant, she holds a BS in Accounting from the University of Florida (GO GATORS!!) and a Master's in Accounting from Florida International University (GO PANTHERS!). For 8 years and still counting, Tami has served as a "Big Sister" in the Big Brother/Big Sister Mentoring Program through Carnival Foundation, mentoring girls through their high school years. She is a member of the Association for Financial Professionals and the National Association of Professional Women. In January 2019, she joined the advisory board for The Commonwealth Institute (TCI) - a non-profit organization devoted to advancing businesswomen in leadership positions - and currently holds the co-chair position for the Florida chapter as well as the Treasurer role for the TCI organization. In mid 2019, she took a roll on the Girl Scouts of Tropical Florida (GSTF) Fundraiser Host Committee that aims to raise money to support Girl Scouts of Tropical Florida and the 3,500 girls we serve and joined the GSTF advisory board just this year. Lastly, Tami joined Miami Women's Panhellenic (MWP) with a goal to expand beyond her own Kappa Alpha Theta sisterhood and build new and lifelong relationships while doing good in the community; she currently serves as Secretary for MWP.



**Patricia Lopez-Calleja**  
*Chief Experience Officer,  
Fiesta Restaurant Group*

Patricia Lopez-Calleja has served as Senior Vice President, Guest Engagement of Fiesta Restaurant Group since September 2019. Previously, Ms. Lopez-Calleja served as Vice President, Guest Engagement from August 2018 to August 2019, Director of Customer Relations of Pollo Tropical from September 2017 to July 2018 and Director of Guest Relations for Pollo Tropical from July 2016 to August 2017. During her tenure at Pollo Tropical, which began in November 1996, Ms. Lopez-Calleja held numerous positions within the organization with increased levels of responsibility that included building the catering infrastructure and guest engagement platforms.



**Jeff Bailey**  
*Chief Operating Officer  
HDG Hotels*

Jeff Bailey's hospitality career began more than 30 years ago in South Florida. Before joining HDG, Jeff worked at more than a dozen full-service hotels in six states and also owned two restaurants. He has experience with a number of hotel brands including Marriott, IHG, and Hilton. His accolades include General Manager of the Year, Most Improved Marriott in the World (for Guest Service and Overall Satisfaction), and Best Customer Experience for two consecutive years.

A leader within several community and state hotel associations, Jeff has been engaged in efforts to help secure local tourism funds and lead hotel leaders locally and bring toward a common goal.

Adept at developing talent, his past team members continue to be recognized in their respective communities in high-level positions. Jeff's desire to develop others has extended to organizing hospitality management high school programs and finding ways to help introduce the hotel industry to organizations that focus their efforts on special needs individuals.



**Neal Carter**  
*Director of Business  
Development Dreamfield*

Neal Carter is the Director of Business Development for Dreamfield Co. He attended Barry University with a degree in Marketing. For nearly fifteen years he has been at the forefront of hospitality management with companies like Hilton, the Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, and Discover the Palm Beaches.



**Francis Castro**  
*Sales & Marketing Director  
Flippers Pizzeria*

As Director of Sales & Marketing, Francis M. Castro oversees all aspects of Flippers' marketing and leads companywide campaigns and brand communication across all restaurants.

A thinker first, Francis spearheads the companies' social, digital, and creative initiatives; and fosters partnerships with schools, organizations, local businesses, and communities. In his mission to "add value daily," Francis has driven demand and brand loyalty by elevating guest experiences and driving brand equity.

His work ethic has led him to partner with professional sports teams, influencers, athletes, and community pillars. Francis earned his B.A. in business from the University of Central Florida and currently sits on the USF Digital Marketing board.

## 2021 MARKETING OPERATIONS SUMMIT TALENT



**Jose Cil**  
*President/ Chief Executive  
Officer RBI, Burger King*

José E. Cil is Chief Executive Officer of Restaurant Brands International Inc. (RBI) and has set out to build the most loved restaurant brands in the world: BURGER KING®, TIM HORTONS® and POPEYES®.

José brings to the role a 20-year track record of results-driven leadership at Burger King, most recently serving as Global President. RBI generates approximately \$31 billion in annual system-wide sales, offering an exceptional guest experience in each one of its more than 27,000 restaurants in more than 100 countries. Through its Restaurant Brands for Good framework, RBI is improving sustainable outcomes related to food, the planet, and people and communities.

In 2021, José was awarded Restaurant Leader of the Year by Restaurant Business Magazine. He was recognized for his collaborative leadership style and for his vision and ability to drive growth for RBI brands in home markets and across the globe.

José was formerly on the board of directors for Carrols Restaurant Group, Inc., Burger King's largest franchisee, and served as Co-Chairman of the Burger King McLamore Foundation, an organization that creates brighter futures through education and emergency relief. Earlier in his career, he held the position of Vice President and Regional General Manager for Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. in Florida.

A leader in his community, José is involved in organizations that promote the economic development of Florida. He serves as a Council Member on the Florida Council of 100 and as a Board Member of Enterprise Florida. José is also an active member of the Orange Bowl Committee, which promotes South Florida through an annual football game and community events.

He is a graduate of Tulane University and started his career practicing law after earning his Juris Doctor degree from the University of Pennsylvania Law School.



**Carly Eglin**  
*Director of Operations &  
Co-Founder Pabian Law  
& Seasonal Connect*

Carly Eglin is the Founder/Chief Operating Officer of Seasonal Connect, a software platform that is revolutionizing the staffing and operational struggles of seasonal organizations. Seasonal Connect features a robust opposite-season and same-season employer search, an opportunity for seasonal workers (American and international) to apply for jobs, housing and daily transportation assistance, and inclusion into a community of seasonal organizations for help, support, recruiting, and assistance for one another. Carly has also worked in the hospitality industry as a seasonal worker herself, which provides her with a dual perspective into the hospitality and seasonal world, including the challenges that seasonal organizations encounter.



**Mark Gale**  
*CEO & Director of Aviation  
Broward County Aviation  
Department*

Mark Gale assumed the position of CEO/Director of Aviation for the Broward County Aviation Department in March 2016. Prior to his arrival in Broward County, Mark served as the CEO of Philadelphia International Airport (PHL) from 2009 to 2016, and as the Deputy Director of Aviation for Operations and Facilities from 2000 to 2009. Mark held several other positions with PHL dating back to 1985, and he retired from the City of Philadelphia in January 2016.

In his current role, Mark is responsible for the overall executive management and operation of Broward County's Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International (FLL) and North Perry (HWO) Airports, including master plan and strategic vision development, implementation of capital improvement programs, financial metrics and performance, internal and external business relationships, operational efficiency and guest experience initiatives.

Mark holds a bachelor's degree in Aeronautical Studies from Embry-Riddle Aeronautical University. Mark is an accredited member in the American Association of Airport Executives (AAAE) and currently serves as Second Vice Chair on the Executive Committee of the National Board of Directors. He also serves on the U.S. Policy Council in the Airports Council International-North America (ACI-NA), and also on the National Board of Directors in the Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO). Additionally, Mark serves on the Board of Directors for both the Greater Fort Lauderdale Alliance and the Greater Fort Lauderdale Chamber of Commerce.

Mark has been the recipient of several awards and recognitions including: Women's Transportation Seminar (WTS) Sec. Ray LaHood "Man of the Year Award", Conference of Minority Transportation Officials (COMTO) "Executive of the Year", the American Society of Civil Engineers "Government Service Award", Smart CEO "Circle of Excellence Award" in Hospitality, and the South Florida Business & Wealth "Apogee Award".



**Justin Garner**  
*Director of Hospitality  
Operations World  
Equestrian Center*

As the opening Director of Hotel and Hospitality Operations at the World Equestrian Center – Ocala, Garner oversees restaurant and lodging operations for the largest multi-sport equestrian facility in the United States, including its 300,000 sq. ft. of exhibition space, 9 restaurants, the luxurious 248 room Equestrian Hotel, concession operations, RV Campgrounds, and off-site short-term rentals. With over 20 years of restaurant and hotel experience from Austin to Hawaii to Orlando in big-box convention, destination resort and lifestyle hotels, in addition to an award-winning, independently held restaurant group, Garner is uniquely qualified to lead this world-class facility.



**Carlos Gazitua**  
*President/Chief Executive  
Officer Sergio's Restaurant*

Carlos Gazitua is CEO of Sergio's Restaurants and creator of Sergio's Cuban in South Florida. Gazitua has been a leader in the hospitality for 13 years and is third generation running his family-owned business. Mr. Gazitua was included in Florida's 500 most influential Business and Hospitality Leaders by Florida Trend Magazine. As CEO of Sergio's, Gazitua has shared his small business insight as a guest on FOX Business' "After the Bell," NPR, WLRN, and the Mike Gallagher Show. His opinion articles have been featured in The Washington Times, The Hill, Miami Herald, and the South Florida Sun Sentinel.

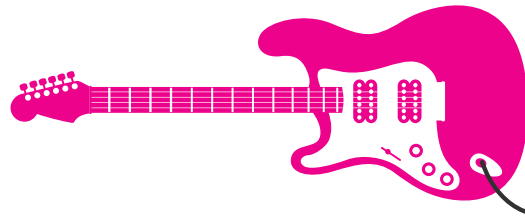
Under his leadership, Sergio's was awarded "best sit-down restaurant" by South Florida Independent Retailer awards and South Florida's Tourism Professional Restaurant of the Year Award. In addition, Sergio's was featured on the Cooking Channel's "Cheap Eats" and Emeril's Florida, where Gazitua prepared empanadas with host Ali Khan and showcased Sergio's authentic Cuban cuisine to famed chef Emeril Lagasse. Recently, Gazitua lead Sergio's to become the first Cuban Restaurant to sell their homemade Cuban food on QVC.

During the Covid-19 crisis, The New York Times featured Sergio's in its "24 Hours in Pandemic Nation" article. Mr. Gazitua served on the Dade County Mayor's Task force to assist in creating the rules to open the county safely. Senator Marco Rubio named Sergio's Restaurants as the Senate Small Business of the Week in recognition of supporting their community and donating thousands of meals to first responders and health care workers. In addition, Sergio's initiated a grassroots effort with the Florida Restaurant Lodging Association to provide over 1 million free masks to Florida's hospitality industry. In 2021, Job Creators Network announced Carlos Gazitua as the Small Business Owner of the Year for advocating on behalf of Main Street and his actions to help his community during the pandemic.

Carlos earned his undergraduate degree from Georgetown University and his MBA and Law Degree from Stetson College of Law. He resides in Miami with his wife, Liana Gazitua, and their two young boys.



# TALENT



**Jeff Gigante**  
*Restaurateur, Entrepreneur,  
Founder Next Level  
Brands Hospitality*

Jeff Gigante, a St Petersburg Fla. native, has been successfully developing a diverse collection of restaurant concepts, for 25 years, steadfastly earning a reputation for hospitality, community involvement, and philanthropy.

Gigante started his path to a culinary career at a young age. Inspired by memories of the shared family table, he began working in all areas of hospitality, including, service, management, and operations.

During his senior year at Florida State University, where he received a Bachelor of Arts and a Master of Arts in Film, Gigante, made his foray into the restaurant world, opening Gigamo Bros pizzeria.

A few short years later, while pursuing acting and hospitality in NYC, Gigante worked with and befriended the Lanza family, successful entrepreneurs with a passion for restaurants.

Rising from food runner to trusted manager, Gigante convinced James Lanza to come to Tampa Bay, a city he saw as bright with potential for food and beverage and entertainment concepts.

Lanza was hooked and together the two would co found along with chef Luis Flores, Ciccio Restaurant Group, establishing multiple popular brands over the better part of two decades.

In 2019, Gigante, with an eye towards his own vision, opened Forbici Modern Italian, in Tampa's Hyde Park Village, known for Roman style pizza and pastas, in a lively, convivial atmosphere.

The formation of Next Level Brands is a natural evolution and the culmination of Gigante's life's work.

Bringing together a talented and dedicated team built on valued relationships and an unwavering commitment to next level hospitality.

Gigante's true inspiration comes from his wife and best friend of 20 years, Erica and their children, Ciro and Isabel. The Gigante's enjoy travelling, water sports, family bike rides, and of course shared meals where Gigante's favorite saying has become a family motto..... "Every friend was once a stranger."

Jeff believes that the secret to living is giving back. He has or is currently serving as a member of several charitable and community organizations including The Bullard Family Foundation, Metropolitan Ministries, Glaziers Children's Museum, CEO Council of Tampa Bay, Advent Health Carrollwood, The Tampa Foundation. He is also a supporter of the Children's Cancer Center and The Children's Home. In his free time, Jeff enjoys fishing, Diving, traveling, speaking to students about the inspiration and drive it takes to succeed in business. He recently started his newest venture Grand Theming Studios, a 8000 Sq Ft full 3 D Theming Fabrication Studio with childhood friend and world renown artist Jason Hulfish where they create amazing experiential 3D themed areas for corporations, churches and Healthcare. He is married to the love of his life, Erica, and he has two amazing children, Ciro and Isabel.



**Patrick Goddard**  
*President Brightline*

Patrick Goddard is the President of Brightline, the first privately owned and operated intercity passenger rail system in over 100 years.

Patrick was responsible for the company's development and construction and bringing this innovative system to market. This includes the development of about 1.5msq of Transit Oriented Development around the system's stations.

He comes from the hospitality industry having worked in hotel development and operations for Hilton Hotels, Loews Hotels and Rosewood Hotels. He also ran a large international Hotel Management Company, Trust Hospitality, for 5 years as its President and Chief Operating Officer prior to joining Brightline in 2016.

He has a degree in hospitality management from the Dublin Institute of Technology with a Bachelor's Degree in Strategic Management from Trinity College Dublin.



**Danielle Guzzetta**  
*Growth Hacker  
Consultant*

30+ years of marketing and revenue-generation experience; with the last 10 dedicated to restaurants. Over the past decade,

Danielle served as CMO for Anthony's Coal Fired Pizza, SVP of Growth Hacking for Smokey Bones (where she developed and executed two virtual brands; resulting in 122 new Virtual Restaurants) and most recently with REEF; where she was able to level the playing field for small brands and allow mass distribution of large brands across the US, Canada and the UK without any capital, operational, or labor costs. *Looking to launch a virtual brand, expand into the dark/ghost kitchen arena, learn about cutting edge ways to get your product to more guests, this is the breakout session you do not want to miss.*



**Josh Hogan**  
*VP of Operations  
Flippers Pizzeria*

With a passion for delivering world-class customer experiences and profitable growth, as Vice President of Operations, Joshua

J. Hogan ensures the company's Mission Statement, Core Beliefs, and Keys to Excellence are upheld, putting food and team member culture first.

A 20 plus year restaurant-industry veteran, Joshua has been instrumental in the evolution of Flippers Pizzeria, adding to top-and-bottom-line growth through efficiencies, menu implementations, and integrations.

A master at follow-up, Joshua leads the day-to-day operations at Flippers and ensures top-level directives, policies, and initiatives are implemented through training and development.



**Melissa Hughes**  
*Founder  
The Andrick Group*

Melissa Hughes, PhD, is a self-proclaimed neuroscience geek and the author of two best-selling books, Happy Hour with Einstein and

Happier Hour with Einstein: Another Round. Dr. Hughes helps us to understand how the brain works and how to increase and optimize its function. Having worked with a wide range of audiences - everything from students in the classroom to the boardroom of Fortune 1000 companies - she combines her PhD in education and her vast experience in marketing communications with extensive research in neuroscience and behavioral psychology to share simple, applicable strategies that improve outcomes both at work and in our personal lives. With energy and humor, Melissa gives attendees tools to harness the skills to create a culture of learning and inspire organizations and teams to tap into their inner genius for extraordinary results!



**Kevin Johnson**  
*Shareholder  
Johnson Jackson, PLLC*

Kevin D. Johnson is a shareholder of Johnson Jackson PLLC. He has represented management in labor and employment law

matters for 25 years. Kevin has experience litigating cases in jurisdictions throughout the United States, ranging from single-plaintiff cases to nationwide class and collective actions. He has represented many clients in the hospitality industry, including Outback Steakhouse, Carrabba's Italian Grill, Bonefish Grill, Fleming's Prime Steakhouse & Wine Bar, Jason's Deli, Metro Diner, Caspers Company, Oxford Exchange, Caspers Service Company, Epic Restaurant Group, Ocean Properties, and several other franchisees and independent restaurants.

Kevin graduated from the University of Florida's Levin College of Law in 1994 and has been board certified by The Florida Bar in Labor and Employment Law since 2007. Kevin has been recognized in the field of employment law by various publications, including *Best Lawyers in America*, *Florida Trend* magazine, and *Super Lawyers* magazine, which has named him as one of the Top 100 lawyers in Florida for six out of the last seven years.



**Trish Giordano**  
*Chief Sales & Marketing  
Officer, Earl Enterprises*

With over 25 years in the restaurant & hospitality industries, Trish's tenure and extensive career commenced in 1989 and

has continued through to today with renowned restaurant entrepreneur, Robert Earl. In her current role, she engineers and manages all sales & marketing initiatives and national alliances & partnerships for concepts including Planet Hollywood, Earl of Sandwich and Buca di Beppo. Earlier in her career, under Rank Leisure/Orlando Entertains, Ms. Giordano served five years as Director of Travel Industry Sales promoting Mr. Earl's restaurant brands and dinner show concepts, including Hard Rock Café, Café Tu Tu Tango, King Henry's Feast, and Blazing Pianos.

## 2021 MARKETING OPERATIONS SUMMIT TALENT



**Steve Keup**  
*Senior Vice President  
of Operations  
Hersha Hospitality*

A seasoned hotel professional with more than 28 years of experience in all facets of hotel operations. His experience in regional roles encompasses major brands from Marriott, Hilton, Starwood, IHG to independent boutique and lifestyle hotels. He has been involved in numerous acquisitions, new builds, major renovations and dispositions and directed teams in major markets from Miami, Washington DC, Houston and Chicago as well as extensive experience in the Key West resort market.

In his current role as Regional Vice President-South Florida for HHM, Steve oversees 10 hotels for HHM including Cadillac Hotel & Beach Club Miami Beach, Islander Resort and Parrot Key Hotel & Villas in the Florida Keys, Thesis Hotel in Coral Gables, AC Miami Wynwood and Hampton Inn & Suites Wynwood- Design District plus two small independent boutique hotels in the trendy South Beach Entertainment District.

In his prior role as Area Vice President for Remington Hotels in Key West, Florida, Steve oversaw 3 properties including LaConcha, a high-volume boutique hotel located in the Duval historic district of downtown, the famed Southernmost House; an 18th century Victorian mansion and Key West's only Bed and Breakfast located on the waterfront and the Inn at Key West, known for having the largest resort style pool on the island.

Previous regional roles included Regional Vice President Operations for GF Management where Steve was directly involved with several acquisitions and directing leadership teams in achieving high levels of operational performance including achieving budgeted revenues and profits, guest service scores and gaining market share.

In previous General Manager roles Steve was opening General Manager for two full-service Marriott's including the 400 room Raleigh Marriott City Center which was the pivotal part of a downtown revitalization attached to the city's state of the art new convention center. He also was opening GM at the Franklin Marriott Cool Springs and Conference Center which won Marriott's coveted "Marriott Hotel Opening of the Year" award. Prior roles include the Westin Embassy Row Hotel (currently the famed Fairfax Hotel), in the stylish west end district in Washington, DC. Lastly, Steve managed the Melrose Hotel, a lifestyle boutique hotel located in the fashionable Foggy Bottom, DC corridor on Pennsylvania Avenue.



**Derek Kopkin**  
*Senior Strategic Sales  
Manager DoorDash*

Derek began his career at DoorDash almost 6 years ago as the company's first sales team member in the Southeast. He helped support the partnerships of 1,000+ restaurants of all shapes and sizes including some of the first to come on board in Miami, our first Florida market. Derek has gone on to help build and define multiple teams throughout our sales org. Most recently Derek is leading a strategic team of sellers in effort to gain the trust and partnership of our customer's most sought after restaurants.



**Skip Kimpel**  
*Technical Innovator  
and Public Speaker*

Technology leader with more than 20 years of strategic and hands-on experience delivering systems and programs that propel a company's productivity and competitive advantage.

- Technical Innovator who conceptualized and led R&D efforts that resulted in new products including assistive technology, adaptive technology, interactive kiosks, and Point of Sale touch screen devices.
- Team Leader skilled in hiring, training, and inspiring onsite and remote team members to attain high levels of performance and breakthrough results.
- Thought Leader and Public Speaker who gained worldwide prominence for The Director Podcast featuring topics on Adobe Director that demonstrated expertise across 40+ episodes. Created and starred in The Kiosk Podcast that discussed all aspects of kiosk development in 20+ episodes.



**Fred LeFranc**  
*Chaos Strategist  
Results Thru Strategy*

Fred is the founding and managing partner of RTS. LeFranc's aptitude in strategic planning, leadership training, and business development has helped numerous companies achieve increased sales and profits.

His expertise is in strategic planning, organizational development, executive coaching, performance management, marketing strategy and technology-based systems enhancement. Mr. LeFranc's 4 decades of hospitality experience includes stints as COO, CEO board member and President of numerous hospitality and technology brands, including Flat Rock Grille, Ruby's Diner, Fishbowl Marketing and Louise's Trattoria. His admirable turnaround for Louise's, which involved design, concept development, food production, IT systems and operational executions, was chronicled in Inc. Magazine.



**Keith Pabian**  
*Founder & Co-Founder  
Pabian Law &  
Seasonal Connect*

Keith Pabian is the Founding Partner of Seasonal Connect, a software platform aimed at assisting seasonal employers with their staffing and operational challenges, and Pabian Law, a national immigration law firm focused on assisting employers through the visa and immigration process. Keith has a unique specialization in representing hospitality organizations from coast to coast with H-2B visa petitions. Keith regularly presents at conferences on immigration topics affecting hospitality organizations and has received numerous awards for his success in providing solutions for employers' most pressing staffing issues.



**Lisa Lombardo**  
*Chief Culture Officer  
HDG Hotels*

Lisa has worked in a coaching, strategy and fund development capacity within a variety of industries including: nonprofit, finance/banking, higher education, arts and culture, manufacturing, televised and other high-profile event production, and hospitality.

As HDG's Chief People and Culture Officer, Lisa manages all things engagement – internally and externally. Internally, she works with leadership and creates programs to help ensure that team members who are onboarded actually feel on board and stay onboard. Externally, she represents the HDG brand – its mission, vision, values – in advocacy, community outreach, and public and partner relations. She also oversees communications, payroll, and human resources within the Office of People and Culture.

She believes that clarity of purpose leads to attracting the right people to do their best, become their best, and to stick around for more!



**James Pogue, Ph.D.**  
*Chief Executive  
Officer JP Enterprises*

Leadership and training are at the core of who Dr. Pogue is and align with his ongoing commitment to equip executives and professionals with the thought leadership to improve communicate & manage effectively. His military service and overseas deployment in the Middle East, gave him tangible examples of the critical balance between leaders and followers on teams.

His work provides leaders with well researched data partnered with highly engaged training to drive their ability to impact behavior and the bottom line.

After nearly 10 years in higher education as a Researcher, Professor and Administrator where he focused Diversity, Inclusion and Unconscious Bias, Dr. Pogue expanded his work to include Multigenerational Leadership. He helps companies prepare, recruit, and retain talent across gender, culture, ethnicity, and generations from Baby Boomers, to Millennials and now Generation Z.

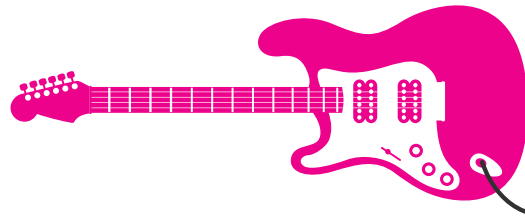
As an Expert Keynote, Dr. Pogue supports leaders in making the decisions that impact cross functional teams at all levels. He travels frequently impacting professions across the spectrum including the food industry, high technology, travel, leisure, medical and legal fields.

As a Consultant and Executive Coach, Dr. Pogue helps organizations realize breakthrough outcomes by helping them identify and overcoming what is getting in their way. His work helps executives achieve optimal working relationships and achieve organizational expectations through both Personal and Corporate Executive Coaching.

James's recent clients include The Women's Foodservice Forum (WFF), Dallas Convention Visitors Bureau, The Association Forum, Panda Foods, Brinker International and AMD (Advanced Micro Devices), Connectiv, American



# TALENT



**Chad Mackay**  
*Chief Executive Officer  
Fire & Wine Hospitality*

Since joining El Gaucho and his father and founder, Paul Mackay in 2003, the two worked together to build a special place for people to celebrate their lives. Chad took the helm as CEO in 2013 and over the years, developed strategic direction to promote continual growth. In 2017, the company announced the evolution to Fire & Vine Hospitality which provides operational leadership, marketing and technology support for some of the Pacific Northwest's most iconic properties, and the Revelers Club program which includes El Gaucho Seattle, Bellevue, Tacoma, Portland and Vancouver (opening in 2021), AQUA by El Gaucho, Aelume, Basel Cellars Estate, Walla Walla Steak Co., and Crossbuck Brewing. Chad is the outgoing Board Chair of the Washington State Hospitality Association and is the Finance Chair for Visit Seattle. In 2018, he became one of the founding members of Third Door Coalition working to solve chronic homelessness in Seattle and King County through the proven solutions of Housing First and Permanent Supportive Housing.



**Alfred Saikali**  
*Chair, Privacy & Data  
Security Practice  
Shook, Hardy & Bacon L.L.P.*

Al Saikali is considered a national leader in privacy and data security law according to Chambers USA and Legal 500. Al represents companies in matters involving the collection, use, storage, and security of personal information. Al and his team at Shook Hardy & Bacon have represented companies in more than 150 privacy and data security class action lawsuits, including more biometric privacy class actions than any other law firm in the United States. He has represented companies in data breach response matters impacting as many as ten million individuals in 120 countries. Al's dedication to his clients earned him the Lexology Client Service Award two years in a row.

In addition to chairing Shook Hardy & Bacon's Privacy and Data Security practice, Al founded and is Chair Emeritus of the Sedona Conference's Working Group on Privacy and Data Security Liability. He is one of less than 5% of privacy practitioners who holds the Fellow in Privacy designation, accredited by the International Association of Privacy Professionals. Al is often quoted by the Wall Street Journal, Bloomberg BusinessWeek, and Law360 for his thoughts on privacy and data security legal trends.

In his spare time, Al enjoys watching Florida Gator sporting events and pretending to be athletic on his Peloton bike.



**Nitin Motwani**  
*Co-CEO & Co-President  
Merrimac Ventures*

Nitin Motwani is the Co-CEO and Co-President of Merrimac Ventures. Merrimac Ventures is a Real Estate investment and development firm located in Fort Lauderdale, FL. Its primary focus is on prime resort and mixed-use development but also has extensive investments in multi-family residential, condominiums, retail and office. While Merrimac Ventures began its journey in South Florida, it has substantially expanded its holdings into a national footprint. Partners in Merrimac Ventures are currently involved in over \$3 billion in real estate development projects, which are transformational, building communities and advancing cities. In this role, Mr. Motwani is involved in all aspects of acquisitions, development, and capital markets for mixed-use projects as well as hotel, office, retail, and residential assets on a national scale.

As Managing Partner for Miami Worldcenter Associates, Mr. Motwani has overseen the development of Downtown Miami's \$4 billion Miami Worldcenter mixed-use real estate project since 2006. Mr. Motwani is responsible for every facet of the project, including land acquisition, zoning and entitlements, financing (public and private), joint ventures and development. Mr. Motwani is currently overseeing \$1.5 billion of development at Miami Worldcenter.

An active member of the greater South Florida business community, Mr. Motwani serves as a member of the board of the Miami Downtown Development Authority where he is the co-chair of the enterprise committee. He also served as Board Chair of the University of Miami's Master of Real Estate Development (MRED) program and is currently on the board. He has also served as Co-Chair for One Community One Goal, Miami Dade County's long term strategic plan for economic development. Nationally, he is a member of Young Presidents' Organization (YPO), Urban Land Institute (ULI), and International Council of Shopping Centers (ICSC). He is also a member of City Year's Red Jacket Society. Mr. Motwani is actively involved in the R. Motwani Family Academy of Hospitality and Tourism Management at Broward College.

Mr. Motwani earned a Bachelor's degree in International Relations from Duke University and holds a Master of Science in Real Estate Development from Columbia University.



**Scott Lawton**  
*CEO & Co-Founder, bartaco*

Scott Lawton serves as CEO and Co-Founder of bartaco, a coastal-inspired restaurant serving fresh, upscale street food in a relaxed environment. Bringing over twenty years of leadership experience in the hospitality arena, Lawton rejoined bartaco, under the new private ownership of L Catterton, overseeing the concept's overall vision and growth. Prior to becoming CEO, Lawton was Chief Operating Officer of Barteca, managing development, day-to-day operations and personnel recruitment. For over seven years, Scott led bartaco's growth from zero to fifteen stores, 60+ million in sales operating in eight different states. While President, the brand achieved five consecutive years of double digit, same-store sales growth while maintaining 29% store level EBITDA. Lawton previously held key leadership roles with Tribeca Grill, Buckhead Life and Big Time Restaurants.



**Charles Musgrove**  
*Founder  
capserv360*

Charles is a CPA and entrepreneur with over 30 years of experience. Charles has provided business and accounting solutions to many businesses in a variety of industries. He has guided numerous entrepreneurs to create and improve their businesses. In addition, Charles has founded, operated and sold many ventures himself. This collective experience gives Charles a unique perspective to deliver high impact solutions to the entrepreneurial business. Charles has also owned and operated a full-service restaurant. This experience into the restaurant industry gives Charles a deeper appreciation of the challenges and opportunities shared by restaurant owners and operators.

In addition to providing business and accounting solutions to clients, Charles is also the host of the Answers That Count podcast. This podcast provides content for entrepreneurs, business owners, managers and those who are trying to get there. Charles features an array of business experts such as attorneys, human resource experts, insurance professionals, financial advisors and many more specialists. Charles and his guests discuss the hottest topics pertaining to the current economic climate, regulatory actions and topics of the day.

In 2001, Charles transitioned from a partner with the CPA firm to starting an accounting and bookkeeping firm currently known as Bean Team. This firm has provided bookkeeping and back-office solutions for entrepreneurs for nearly 2 decades. During the initial 2 decades, Bean Team focused on clients in North Florida from Tallahassee, FL to Destin, FL.

In November 2020, Charles sold Bean Team to a larger bookkeeping firm with nation-wide coverage.

Charles' experience began in the mid-1980's in the public accounting industry. Charles worked with small businesses by providing accounting and attestation services. During this 16-year period, Charles advanced to a Partner in a regional CPA firm. His appreciation for the small-business owner grew immeasurably. Charles learned about the challenges and tools needed for the entrepreneur to succeed. In 2001, he founded an accounting and bookkeeping firm that evolved into Bean Team. The mission of Charles and Bean Team was to deliver accounting and back-office solutions that helped their clients succeed.



**Paul Samson**  
*Founder & President  
Franchise Edge*

Founder and Senior Business Developer, Mr. Samson founded The Franchise Edge (TFE) in 2005 because of a need that he saw in the market for an affordable, client focused franchise consulting service. His experience in franchising began as President and Founder of Lenny & Vinny's Management, Inc., a corporately owned and managed pizza chain that he grew to 14 units before deciding to franchise. Mr. Samson was also the Founder of Head West Enterprises, LLC, which grew the Westshore Pizza chain from 16 stores to 52 stores in 3 1/2 years, with an additional 90 units committed and combined sales of over \$27,000,000 prior to the sale and transition of the marks.

## 2021 MARKETING OPERATIONS SUMMIT TALENT



**Chris Rollins**  
*Chief Operating Officer*  
*South Beach Group*  
*Hotels Inc*

Chris Rollins is the COO of South Beach Group Hotels Inc, a 20-property conglomerate of over 1,500 hotel rooms. The single largest and most successful operator of hotels in Miami Beach. Chris' days are filled with executing the strategic vision and exciting daily hospitality operations of the company. Chris joined South Beach Group Hotel 21 years, growing up with the brand, that he truly feels represents Miami Beach.

From the moment he greets you, Chris disarms you with his charm, upbeat personality, and friendly demeanor. He was born and raised in a small town called Cocoa, Florida, just 10 miles west of Cape Canaveral, home of NASA's Kennedy Space Center. Chris ventured further south upon his acceptance to the University of Miami as a Finance Major. While attending the university, he worked for the Biltmore Hotel where the seed for hospitality was planted. Post-graduation, he began his finance career at PaineWebber Financial services as a Financial Advisor. Chris quickly realized his passion was elsewhere and sought employment where he could utilize his exceptional people skills and charismatic personality. A brief assignment in the fashion industry allowed Chris to hone his gift of people, before embarking on what would be the ride of his life, South Beach Group Hotels Inc. He has never looked back in the past 21 years, in fact the experience has catapulted his adoration for Travel, Tourism, and Hospitality to an exponential level.

Chris Rollins possesses strong leadership qualities which encourages communication and cooperation; that along a high ethical standard, is what guides him to be best he can be. Currently Chris is an active board member of The Miami Beach VCA, The Greater Miami Convention and Visitors Bureau, The Florida Lodging Association, and The Miami Beach Chamber of Commerce. His philosophy is that you have to be involved to make a difference.

Above all, Chris has a passion for Miami Beach. As a proud member of the Miami Beach Visitor and Convention Authority Board, he facilitates partnerships with local leaders and elected officials for decision making in the city's future, convention center, infrastructure, and new development. He cares about the success of Miami Beach and works tirelessly to bring exciting events and programming to the city. The passion for hospitality runs deep in his blood. Being a member of the award-winning VCA Board enables Chris Rollins to promote the image of Miami Beach locally, nationally, and internationally as a vibrant community and a beautiful tourist destination. His goal is to keep Miami Beach in the dazzling spotlight it deserves.



**Frank Rappa**  
*Chief Marketing Officer*  
*Management PDQ*

Frank Rappa is the Chief Marketing Officer of PDQ ("People Dedicated to Quality"). Rappa oversees all marketing and brand activation for the Tampa-based chicken concept, which currently has 63 locations in 10 states.

Rappa came to PDQ after a successful career with international brands AX: Armani Exchange and Equinox Fitness. Rappa has extensive experience in leading strategic marketing and brand management operations at a global level, and has developed and implemented wholesale strategies, introduced innovative products, and scaled brands internationally.

Rappa spent four years with Equinox Fitness as its Head of Retail and Product, developing a revenue collection strategy for the brand. His work produced an increase in Average Unit Retail (AUR) as well as a significant increase in average transaction within three years. Prior to that, Rappa spent 13 years with AX: Armani Exchange, quickly ascending to Vice President of International. He began his career with AX: Armani Exchange as a District Manager and then Regional Manager before being promoted to Vice President.

Rappa, who hails from New York, is heavily involved in the community as well. Rappa is a spokesperson and major fundraiser for Cycle for Survival.



**Jorge Rivero**  
*President*  
*HR On Demand*

Jorge J. Rivero served 30 years with the U.S. Department of Labor, Wage and Hour Division, the last 13 of which were as District Director for South Florida. Mr. Rivero was responsible for developing and directing the Division's programs and operations in his area of jurisdiction. This included the enforcement, compliance, education and information programs conducted under the statutory authority contained in the Fair Labor Standards Act, Family and Medical Leave Act, and others. He was also a member of the Wage and Hour National and Regional Office teaching staff. Since retiring from the Department of Labor, Mr. Rivero has acted as a consultant for businesses in designing policies and procedures and implementing compensation systems to ensure compliance with the various labor and employment laws. Additionally, Mr. Rivero has served as an expert in the Federal District Court for both management and employees on matters relating to the FLSA. Mr. Rivero is currently President of HR On Demand. He is also Past President of the South Florida Compensation and Benefits Association, an affiliate of the World at Work organization and currently serves on the Board of Director for the Florida Restaurant Association, Miami-Dade Chapter.



**Amanda Simpson**  
*Attorney at Law*  
*Jackson Lewis*

Amanda Simpson is a Principal in the Orlando, Florida, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. She is Co-Leader of the firm's Hospitality-Restaurant Industry Group and a core member of the Class Actions and Complex Litigation Practice Group. Amanda is passionate about partnering with clients to understand their business needs so that she can effectively and efficiently help prevent and resolve workplace disputes.

Amanda has extensive experience handling complex litigation, including defending against high value, high stakes wage and hour class and collective actions across the country. Amanda's class action practice primarily focuses on claims for employee misclassification, off-the-clock work and meal and rest break violations. Amanda also works closely with employers on Department of Labor audits as well as voluntary self-audits as to the exemption status of hundreds of positions.

Amanda's robust litigation practice allows her to provide employers with practical advice and counsel to help avoid litigation. Amanda understands that the goals and operations of each client's business are unique and works closely with employers to develop a plan to reduce risk and minimize legal costs that is specific to their business needs. Amanda gives advice on the full spectrum of the employment relationship, from hiring and promotions to disciplinary action and terminations.

Amanda also frequently speaks and trains on a variety of workplace related issues. Amanda believes that education and manager training are key to helping clients navigate the ever-changing workplace regulations, stay apprised of critical information and avoid litigation.

Amanda has extensive litigation experience in arbitration, before administrative agencies and in state and federal courts across the nation with respect to claims involving discrimination, harassment, retaliation, breach of contract and wage and hour disputes. She also has successful trial and appellate experience in both state and federal courts.

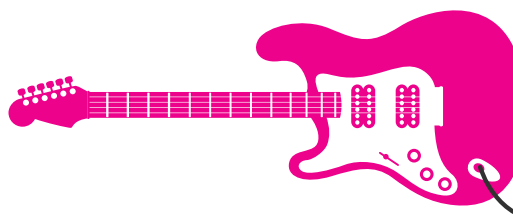


**Keith Space**  
*President Fort Partners/*  
*Four Seasons*

Keith Space is President of Operations for FHG and leads Fort Partners' plan to make FHG a leading company in the luxury hospitality market. Mr. Space has over 30 years of leadership experience in hotel operations, domestically and overseas. Prior to joining Fort Partners, he was VP of Operations for Highgate Hotels, which operates 100+ hotels and approximately 30,000 rooms around the world. Preceding that, Mr. Space was founder and CEO of Boutique Hospitality Management, which managed multiple award-winning hotels in gateway cities in the U.S. and London. Mr. Space is currently getting his graduate degree at Florida International University in Hotel Management with a specialization in Hospitality Real Estate Development. Mr. Space lives in Coral Gables, FL with his wife and three children.



# TALENT



**Nick Sarra**  
*Chief Operating Officer*  
*Saltwater Restaurants, Inc.*

Nick Sarra is Chief Operating Officer for Saltwater Restaurants Inc. which includes 9 iconic high-volume restaurants with over 1,000 employees across the Florida panhandle, a sizable beachfront shopping & dining venue, and an award-winning golf course. Sarra's 40-year career began as a busser at the Sonesta Hotel in Connecticut and followed with an associate degree in Culinary Arts and bachelor's in Hotel & Restaurant Management from Johnson & Wales University. His management career started at our nation's capital in Washington D.C. as part of the Specialty Restaurant Division of Gilbert Robinson, including Charlie's Place Bar & Grill, H.I. Ribsters, and Hogate's Seafood. After moving to the Gulf coast, Sarra operated many well-known establishments before opening his first restaurant nearly 20 years ago.

Sarra dedicates his time to the FRLA Minimum Wage Working Group, is an active member and past-president of the FRLA Board of Directors Northwest Florida Chapter, and serves on the Okaloosa County Tourism Development Council.



**Joe Tenczar**  
*Co-founder of Restaurant CIOs*  
*CSO of Sonny's BBQ*

Joe Tenczar is a founding partner of Restaurant CIOs, a strategic advisory company where he and his CIO partners collaborate to help hospitality companies see their restaurant business through the eyes of seasoned CIOs. Joe Tenczar also acts as the Chief Strategy Officer for Sonny's BBQ, one of the largest and most popular barbecue restaurant companies in the country. Tenczar has also led the Technology, Marketing, Finance, and Purchasing areas for Sonny's. Before Sonny's BBQ, Tenczar was the global CIO for Hard Rock International, where he led the R&D and rollout of many innovative technologies that still affect Hard Rock guests and staff members. After beginning his career as a programmer and manager for financial software companies, Tenczar was a senior technology leader for the second largest arm of the Marriott Corporation. His specialties include a strategic focus on emerging technology's place in hospitality. Tenczar holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Telecommunications and Computer Science from the University of Florida and a Masters of Business Administration from the Crummer Business School at Rollins College. He sits on the executive advisory boards for many industry groups, conferences, and cutting-edge hospitality technology companies.



**Cory Staniscia**  
*Director of External Affairs*  
*The Franchise Edge*

Corey Staniscia recently served as the Chief of Staff to Florida State Representative Chip LaMarca, where they authored the transformative Florida name, image, and likeness legislation. The Florida legislation led to nationwide collegiate athlete reform on July 1, 2021. On July 1, 2021 Corey left the Florida House of Representatives and joined Dreamfield as the External Affairs Director where he coordinates press, strategic development, and government affairs.



**Sheldon Suga**  
*Vice President Managing Director*  
*Hawks Cay Resort*

Sheldon Suga is the VP and Managing Director of Hawks Cay Resort located in the Florida Keys. He is a seasoned hospitality executive with over 35 years of industry experience. He has worked for ITT Sheraton, Wyndham Hotels and Resort, and Gaylord Entertainment. His career has taken him to hotel and resort properties in the U.S., Canada, Japan and Puerto Rico.

Sheldon has served on numerous industry related boards and committees as well as community organizations. He and his wife Laura on Duck Key and they have four children 5 grandchildren living in various parts of Florida. When has the time, he has a passion for fly fishing.



**John Tallichet**  
*President/ Chief Executive Officer*  
*Specialty Restaurants Corporation*

Specialty Restaurants Corporation (SRC) has always been a family affair, ever since World War II veteran David C. Tallichet first opened the doors to Long Beach, CA's The Reef in 1958 – one of the first themed restaurant in the US – which led to the development of SRC, followed shortly by its remarkable reputation as a pioneer in the themed restaurant industry. Now, almost 60 years later, SRC continues to be a family-owned and -operated business, delivering excellence with 18 restaurants across the country and real estate activities in 8 states and Baja California, Mexico.

As Chairman, CEO and President, John Tallichet sits at the helm of this family business. Born and raised in Southern California, he has seen his family's business grow up around him. Tallichet holds a Bachelor of Science from University of Southern California, and Masters of Business Administration from Haas Business School at UC Berkeley and Columbia Business School at Columbia University. With more than 35 years of experience, Tallichet has led multiple restaurant business, working in a variety of roles – from back of the house to front of the house to overseeing restaurant operations, he has touched every possible role within a restaurant.

In his role as President and CEO, Tallichet is responsible for the company's restaurant, real estate and aviation divisions. He aims to be a collaborative and supportive mentor to the many departments he works with, building trust with both the individuals and the teams to ensure their growth and success. As a family business, putting the company ahead of family issues has always been the key to the organization's success. He is also able to set the tone for company culture fully supported by family.

Tallichet is also heavily involved in the restaurant and aviation communities – he works closely with the California Restaurant Association (CRA), where he serves on the CRA's Orange County Board of Directors, is the Vice Chair of the CRA State Board, and as Past Chair of the CRA Foundation Board. He is also a board member of the Pima Air and Space Museum in Tucson, AZ, and is a trustee of the Flight Test Historical Foundation at Edwards AFB. Additionally, he is a member of the United States Soccer Los Angeles Development Council.



**Tricia Taylor**  
*Executive Vice President*  
*General Manager*  
*The Breakers*

As executive vice president & general manager of The Breakers Palm Beach, Tricia Taylor holds a pivotal leadership role at this multi-faceted, luxury oceanfront resort, located in Palm Beach, Florida.

Her wide-ranging responsibilities consist of leading 1,800 associates throughout the property's four operating divisions (Rooms, Food & Beverage, Event Services and Recreation), as well as support departments including Facilities Management, Golf & Grounds, Marketing, Revenue Management and Security.

She believes that an outstanding guest experience begins with hiring the right people and creating an inspired workplace that is committed to team member fulfillment and well-being.

Her career at The Breakers began in 1996, but her passion for hospitality was passed down from her grandparents, who built, owned and operated two motels in Seattle, Washington. She graduated with honors from both: Cornell University, School of Hotel Administration and Florida Atlantic University, Master's Degree in Business Administration. Her most prized role is mother to her two daughters.



**Michael Stadnick**  
*Chief Operating Officer*  
*The Franchise Edge*

Mr. Stadnick is a Senior Partner of The Franchise Edge. His broad business background includes his former role as Vice President of Franchise Development for a 60 plus unit Chicago based Franchise chain; in addition he currently owns Taco LuLu, a high volume restaurant in downtown Chicago. As the VP of Franchise Development he oversaw franchise site selection, lease negotiation, SBA financing, equipment design and layout, construction services, and training along with the implementation of national marketing programs.

Prior to that, he was the Executive Vice President of Francorp Consulting; he served in that capacity for many years, assisting the franchise growth of over 250 companies worldwide. Mr. Stadnick was responsible for prototype design, development and implementation; strategic planning and business plan development, operational system design, development and documentation, franchise sales and marketing programs, and franchisor training programs.

Mr. Stadnick is a graduate of DePaul University, where he earned an MBA and Bachelor's Degree in Entrepreneurship. While at DePaul, he held scholarships for excellence in leadership and scholastic merit, and won international awards for business plan writing. In 2010, Mr. Stadnick was named DePaul University's Entrepreneur of the Year."

## 2021 MARKETING OPERATIONS SUMMIT TALENT



**Dan Tinghitella**  
*Vice President of Operations*  
*Jim Shirley Enterprises*

As COO, Dan oversees all aspects of daily operations across Jim Shirley's family of restaurants- seven unique businesses on NW Florida's Gulf Coast including a full-service southern-cuisine cafe, a gourmet grilled cheese airstream, a walk-up frozen drink bar, a coal-fired pizza restaurant with a speakeasy, and a wine & sushi bar to name a few.

Dan began his restaurant career at the age of fifteen, was managing partner of a steakhouse for over thirteen years, and general manager of an upscale pizza restaurant for over six years. He currently oversees the company's management teams who serve 300+ seasonal and full-time employees, as well as oversees the logistics plans for company appearances such as two recent trips to cook at the James Beard House in New York City, Governor DeSantis' inaugural candlelit dinner in Tallahassee, The Seeing Red Wine Festival, The Children's Home Society of Florida's annual fundraiser in Pensacola, and many, many more. Dan also played an integral part in the coordination and setup of the mobile relief kitchen in Port St. Joe that fed thousands of people in the area following hurricane Michael in 2018.

With his trademark devotion to his family, self-leadership, and extreme ownership, Dan empowers others to create a work-life balance. While he wears many hats to satisfy the diverse needs of his teams and responsibilities, his devotion is reflected by the quality of talent and relationships he has been able to enlist and nurture throughout his management career.

Outside of the office, you can typically find Dan with his family, wife Joannah and three kids — and most likely outdoors. He was appointed Chair of the Vision and Mission Committee for Dune Lakes Elementary School and continues to serve on the Dune Lakes Elementary School Improvement Board. Dan also currently serves on the Board of Trustees for the Point Washington United Methodist Church, and is the current president of the Northwest Florida Chapter of FRLA.



**Brenden Curcio**  
*Chief Executive Officer*  
*of ShortStaf*

Brenden Curcio is the CEO of ShortStaf, which provides a unique peer to peer App-based technology platform that empowers restaurant and hospitality owners and managers to locate and engage staff. Brenden is also a seasoned C level executive with over 26 years of extensive experience in the financial services industry. Brenden has participated in several venture capital transactions at the Angel and Pre-A round levels over the last 15 years, providing him with a robust knowledge in deal structure, contracts, management, and strategic guidance across a multitude of different industries. He also participated in the seed round of funding for ShortStaf over five years ago and continues to lead the company today.



**Jess Vahsholtz**  
*Group Account Director*  
*& Lead Strategist PPK*

Jess Vahsholtz is a Group Account Director and Lead Strategist at PPK, a full-service advertising agency in Tampa, FL. Jess has been with PPK for 13 out of the agency's 17-year young life. He has played an integral role in growing and scaling PPK's Account Management department around great client relationships and award-winning strategy & creative. Today, he oversees his Account Management teams while also playing a leadership role in brand strategy development, research, campaign development, analysis and budgeting to help meet the needs of PPK's clients.

Through his tenure at PPK, Jess has managed integrated campaigns for Bridgestone Retail Operations, Tampa Bay Rays, ASPCA, Florida Department of Highway Safety and Motor Vehicles, and many others. He has led strategy and research for Tires Plus, PDQ, Metro Diner, Waggin' Train and Bare Naked Kitchen.

Prior to PPK, Jess lived in Kansas City and worked on the USAA and Payless ShoeSource accounts at Bernstein Rein, and the Keiser University account at Gragg Advertising.



**Mike Vichich**  
*Co-Founder &*  
*CEO Wisely*

Mike Vichich is co-founder and CEO of Wisely ([www.getwisely.com](http://www.getwisely.com)), the leading Customer Intelligence platform for restaurants—empowering brands to say goodbye to transactions and hello to customers. Wisely brings everything you know about each customer to every interaction—from how guests are greeted at the door to how they're personally invited back across marketing channels. Innovative brands of all sizes such as bartaco, California Fish Grill, Chuy's, First Watch, Global Franchise Group, Lazy Dog, P.F. Chang's, and thousands more, leverage Wisely to improve guest experience, increase Customer Lifetime Value, and use customer data to inform every business decision.

Mike has 15 years of experience in client success, digital transformation, and quantitative marketing data. Under Mike's leadership, Wisely has tripled in size each year for the last three years. In 2021, he was named one of the most influential solutions providers in the country by Nation's Restaurant News and a finalist in the Entrepreneur of the Year program for Michigan & Northwest Ohio.

Prior to co-founding Wisely, Mike was a Senior Manager of Strategy Practice at Accenture where he focused on improving profitability, operations, and customer acquisition and retention for Fortune 500 brands like American Express and Microsoft. He leveraged this experience to found Develop Detroit, an iOS app development boot camp that is now part of Grand Circus Detroit LLC. Mike holds a degree in Finance from Michigan State University. He lives in Ann Arbor, MI with his wife and two sons.



**Tyler White**  
*Attorney at Law*  
*Jackson Lewis*

*Tyler White is a Principal and Litigation Manager in the Jacksonville, Florida, office of Jackson Lewis P.C. He represents and counsels employers in the public and private sector on all aspects of employment-related issues. He is a member of the firm's Hospitality-Restaurant Industry Group and its Class Actions and Complex Litigation Practice Group.*

Tyler regularly represents employers in disputes, litigation, and arbitration involving trade secrets, non-competition agreements, non-disclosure agreements, wage hour allegations, and allegations of race, gender, national origin, disability, age, marital status, genetic information and religious discrimination. Tyler also defends employers in cases involving allegations of breach of contract, defamation, sexual harassment, and whistleblower and workers' compensation retaliation.

Tyler assists employers in drafting employee handbooks and policy manuals, and responding to Equal Employment Opportunity Commission and state and local agency charges of discrimination. He also guides employers through Department of Labor investigations involving allegations of unpaid overtime and minimum wages.



**Robert Kuyper**  
*Key Strategist and Sales*  
*Specialist, Edison Technology*

Robert Kuypers is a respected restaurant industry veteran with over 25 years of experience working every position in a restaurant, from back to front of the house. He served as a marketing and beverage lead for TooJay's, Tony Roma's, Friendly's and Jamba Juice. Starting at the age of 15, as a busser, Robert quickly worked his way up to Area Marketing Director, for TooJay's Restaurant, while still in college and even became a master brewer. Following 6 years at TooJay's, Robert was recruited by Zimmerman Advertising to run the advertising efforts of the legacy brand Friendly's Restaurants. During his stewardship, they saw the first positive quarter in over a decade. Robert transitioned to Tony Roma's as the Director of Marketing and Beverage eventually garnering the responsibility of national marketing efforts for Jamba Juice's corporate stores. Robert was then recruited by one of his vendors, Cardlytics, to come work with their burgeoning restaurant team. He played a pivotal role in helping the company launch from seed stage to a large public company. He joined the team at Edison Technology as a key strategist and sales specialist within their restaurant division.





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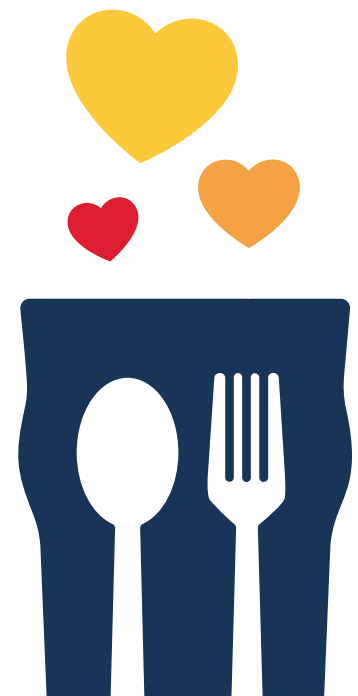
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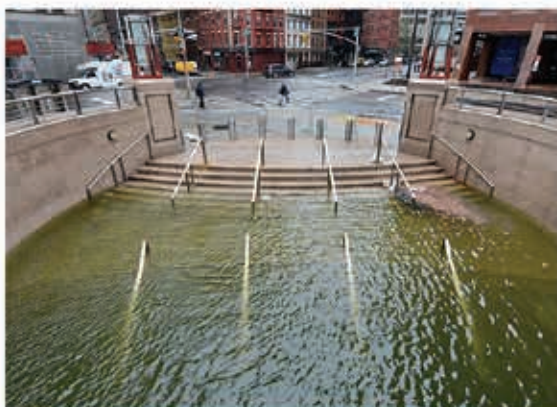
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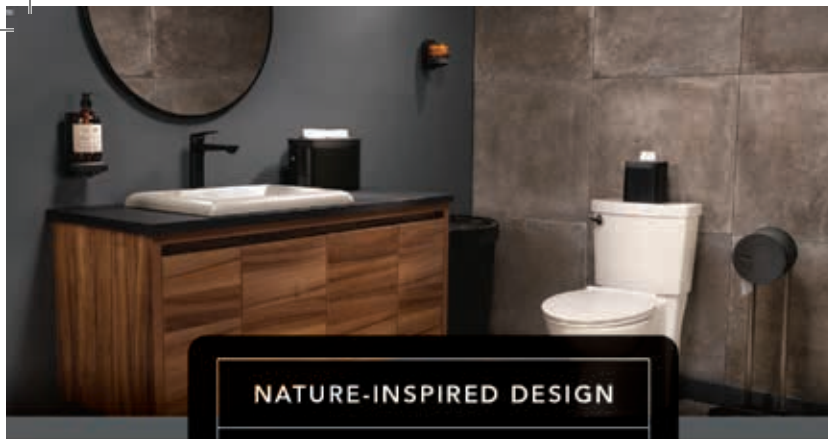
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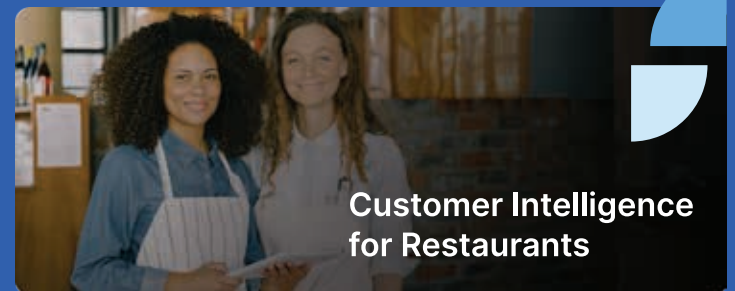


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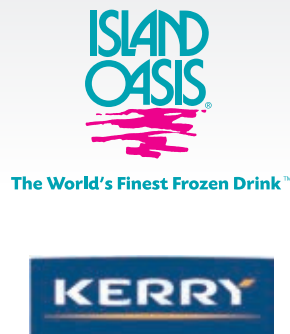
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