2025 Beverage, Winter Session

Education & EPPS Programs

ECRM's educational sessions provide EPPS attendees with the opportunity to learn from thought leaders and category experts on a variety of topics aimed at their professional development. These sessions include presentations, moderated panel discussions, special events, workshops, and roundtable discussions focused on category insights and trends, as well as hands-on workshops to help buyers and sellers enhance the effectiveness of their meetings during an EPPS.

Monday, February 17, 2025

Beverage Breakthroughs: Trends Shaping the Industry



40 minutes

Join NIQ's Marcelo Fazio as he provides a comprehensive overview of the latest trends shaping the coffee, tea, and broader beverage industries this winter. In this session, Marcelo will explore evolving consumer preferences, innovative product offerings, and key market shifts across these categories. From the rise of wellness-driven beverages and sustainability initiatives to emerging flavor profiles and brewing techniques, Marcelo will uncover what's driving demand in coffee, tea, and other popular drink segments. This session offers actionable insights for professionals looking to stay ahead of industry trends and capitalize on new opportunities in the dynamic beverage landscape.

Marcelo Fazio, Director, Emerging Brands Beverage Vertical
NielsenIQ

Beverage Tasting Experience

60 minutes

Join us for a fun evening where participating Beverage Suppliers will sample their product offerings. The will be held in conjunction with the cocktail reception. All attendees will have the chance network and sample an assortment of beverages.

Tuesday, February 18, 2025

Innovate X: Winning in Grocery

195 minutes

Tuesday, February 18th | 2:00 PM - 5:15 PM

Are you ready to elevate your brand and seize the opportunities in today's fast-paced marketplace?

Join us for a transformative event designed specifically for suppliers eager to thrive in a competitive landscape. This is your chance to gain invaluable insights from industry leaders providing actionable insights to help take your business to the next level.

The event InnovateX event fee is waived for ECRM participants. The series of educational sessions is included in your participation at the ECRM Session.

InnovateX is presented by MPG in partnership with ECRM.

Unleashing the Power of Social Commerce: Driving Omnichannel Growth with TikTok Shop



40 minutes

Bloomberg reported TikTok Shop expects to reach $17.5 billion in sales by the end of 2024 and McKinsey projects the U.S. social commerce market to reach $80 billion by 2025. Join us for this session where we will explore the key social commerce platforms, the fundamentals of how they all work, and help explain the essential building blocks for how to win and drive incremental revenue.

Oliver Bogner, Head of Social Commerce & Digital Strategy
MPG

From Aisle to Amazon: Amplifying Your Success on the World's Largest Marketplace



30 minutes

This working session is tailored for brands with success in brick-and-mortar or DTC channels that are ready to launch or improve performance on Amazon. It covers the critical steps for a successful Amazon entry, including the decision between 1P (first-party) and 3P (third-party) fulfillment models. We'll dive into listing optimization, branding, and advertising strategies, as well as evaluate the pros and cons of 1P and 3P models in terms of pricing control, inventory management, and customer reach. Attendees will leave with a clear framework for choosing the right fulfillment path, backed by actionable insights to drive sales and growth on Amazon.

Bryson Buck, Sr. Account Director eCommerce
MPG

Navigating Growth and Innovation: Insights from Whole Foods' Local and Emerging Brands Team



40 minutes

Join us for an insightful panel with Casey Gaston, Executive Leader, Local and Emerging Brands Team at Whole Foods Market, as she discusses her role and the unique enter Store Local and Emerging Brands Program, which helps identify and elevate emerging brands. Learn what sets Whole Foods apart from other retailers and the key factors for growing and scaling in this competitive landscape. Casey will also share insights into the latest trends shaping the industry and provide essential advice for new brands looking to succeed in the Whole Foods Market ecosystem.

Casey Gaston, Executive Leader, Local and Emerging Brands Team
Whole Foods Market

Unlock Growth: Strategic Capital Access and Scaling Insights for CPG Brands in a Competitive Landscape



45 minutes

This presentation explores strategies for consumer packaged goods (CPG) brands to access, leverage, and scale capital effectively to fuel business growth. Attendees will gain insights into the key funding options available—from venture capital to strategic partnerships—as well as best practices for making their brand attractive to investors. We'll discuss how to leverage capital to support scaling, innovation, and expansion, and cover how brands can build financial resilience in a competitive landscape. This session equips brand leaders with practical knowledge to navigate the complexities of capital management and unlock their growth potential in the CPG industry

Mollye Santulli, Senior Associate
Springdale Ventures

Data, Analytics, & Storytelling for the Modern Merchant Mindset



30 minutes

The role of merchant has evolved rapidly over the past few years. With increased expectations from delivering an omnichannel experience to working cross-functionally to deliver lower costs, many merchants are finding less time to meet with suppliers. Therefore, building a data-centric story to either catch their attention and secure the meeting or help secure your item in distribution is critical. You need to break through the clutter by understanding what's meaningful for them and presenting the data in a compelling manner. In preparing for a retailer meeting, you should be familiar with their goals and strategies - and show how you can deliver meaningful results for them.

Heather Grantham, Vice President – SmartSights, Marketplace Intelligence Team Lead
MPG

Marketing Transformation: How a Full Funnel Approach Unlocks Growth



40 minutes

Whether you are building an emerging business or looking to drive brand expansion, profitable consumer engagement is continuously changing and ever harder to attain. We will explore how brand building and performance marketing can complement each other, and how to strategically move consumers through the funnel by creating a complete commerce path of effective engagement. Walk away with a roadmap to transform your organization's mindset and priority initiatives!

Cheryl Policastro, VP Strategic Marketing & Communications Team
MPG

Sunday, February 15, 2026

Retail Rodeo Scavenger Hunt

210 minutes

Sunday, February 15th | 2:00 PM - 5:30 PM

Ride Along for a Texas-Sized Retail Adventure!

Join ECRM's Retail Rodeo — an energizing, on-the-road learning experience where buyers and CPG brand owners explore Dallas-area stores.

With our "Bingo Scavenger Hunt," you will uncover the retail trends shaping tomorrow's grocery aisles and have time to browse for your own insights.

Connect attendees, spark insights, and highlight real-world packaging, merchandising, and pricing strategies across Texas's most influential retailers.

TOUR STOPS

We depart from our hotel for 3 stops and bring you back to the hotel for a hosted cocktail hour and award ceremony!

H-E-B Alliance Market - Fort Worth

Why Visit: H-E-B is one of America's most admired regional grocers and a Texas icon, known for exceptional store layout and private label innovation.

Total Stores: 430+ statewide (Privately held by H-E-B Grocery Company, in San Antonio, TX)?

Central Market - Southlake

Why Visit: Central Market is the gourmet, high-end division of H-E-B — a Texas exclusive known for its elevated shopping experience, international selections, and unique "experiential" merchandising

Total Stores: 10 Statewide (Privately held by H-E-B Grocery Company)

Tom Thumb? - Grapevine

Why Visit: A traditional grocery format ideal for observing category management, promotional strategy, and shopper flow.

Total Stores: 60+ in North Texas under the Tom Thumb banner (Publicly owned by Albertsons Companies, NYSE: ACI)?

Created by Emily Anne Page & START to SOLD