2026 Convenience 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 2, 2026

Convenience Leadership Summit

210 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 4:00 PM - 7:30 PM

This is your chance to gain insider perspectives from the senior leaders defining convenience retail's future—and discover how to position your business for success. Hear how retailers are tackling the most pressing challenges—and uncovering growth opportunities—transforming convenience today. Through high-impact panels, interactive roundtables, and peer-to-peer networking, you'll gain the insights, connections, and strategies to stay ahead in an industry that never stands still.

Convenience Leadership Summit: Chris Costagli, NielsenIQ



30 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 4:00 PM - 4:30 PM

Explore the evolving landscape of convenience stores, where innovation and customer experience drive in-store success. During this session, we will explore the latest in-store trends and insights for CPG brands, highlighting how data-driven strategies can enhance product placement, optimize assortment, and elevate shopper engagement within the C-store environment. Tailored for CPG professionals, this session reveals emerging consumer behaviors and how to leverage them to drive decision-making and maximize brand visibility in an ever-evolving convenience landscape. Join us to discover actionable insights that can empower your brand to thrive in the C-store channel.

Chris Costagli, Vice President | Thought Leadership, Food & Non-Alcoholic Beverage Insights Lead
NIQ

Convenience Leadership Summit: Fireside Chat with Derek Gaskins, BP



25 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 4:30 PM - 4:55 PM

Join Derek Gaskins, BP's Head of Guest Experience, to discuss BP's mission to be customer-obsessed. BP is rapidly evolving convenience into a food destination by expanding freshly prepared meals and the Epic Goods private-brand program. Learn how this strategy, which integrates store design, loyalty, and personalization, creates immense new opportunities for food, beverage, and impulse suppliers to align with local customer needs.

Derek Gaskins, Head of Guest Experience
BP

Convenience Leadership Summit: Fireside Chat with Lee Wilburn, Casey's



25 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 4:55 PM - 5:20 PM

Join us for a 30-minute fireside chat with a merchant executive from Casey's, the U.S. convenience-store leader. Designed for brand leaders, this session explores Casey's strategies in merchandising, category innovation, supplier partnerships, and meeting shifting consumer expectations. Gain actionable insights into what it takes to win shelf space and grow in a competitive retail environment.

Lee Wilburn, Senior Director
Casey's

Convenience Leadership Summit: Winning in the Convenience Channel: Connecting Shoppers, Assortment & Retail Media for Growth



25 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 5:30 PM - 5:55 PM

Convenience retail has become the fastest-learning channel in retail media — where strategy turns into activation and the path to purchase becomes the path to growth. In this session, Brian Owens unpacks how brands and retailers can collaborate through Joint Business Planning (JBP) and retail media networks to unlock measurable growth across brand stages.

Drawing from real-world case studies — including PepsiCo × 7-Eleven, BLK & Bold × Casey's, and Red Bull × Circle K — Brian explores how convenience missions, influencer partnerships, and in-store storytelling drive awareness, trial, and loyalty.

Attendees will learn how to transform shelves and screens into growth engines — and why convenience is where retail media innovation moves fastest.

Brian Owens, Consultant
Retail Cities

Convenience Leadership Summit: Fireside Chat with Matt Bunevich, 7-11



25 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 5:55 PM - 6:20 PM

Winning 7-Eleven Distribution: Product Category Trends Join Matt Bunevich from 7-Eleven's Business Ventures team to uncover how brands can secure US distribution within the retailer's massive structure. This discussion focuses on key product categories and the consumer trends driving them. Learn to align your offerings—specifically functional beverages (energy, hydration, nootropics), fresh and better-for-you prepared foods, and bold-flavor snacks (spicy, savory, and hybrid profiles)—with 7-Eleven's scope to achieve success in a rapidly evolving convenience landscape.

Matt Bunevich, Manager
7-Ventures & Business Development

Convenience Leadership Summit: Sip & Sample Social

60 minutes

Monday, February 2nd | 6:30 PM - 7:30 PM

Round out the day at our Sip & Sample Social — a relaxed cocktail reception where you can network, unwind, and experience the latest innovations from leading and emerging c-store brands.

Roundtables

45 minutes

Tuesday, February 3rd | 5:15 PM - 6:00 PM

This is a great networking event, giving participants the opportunity to discuss relevant industry topics in a round table format with fellow industry professionals sitting at the table.
Over the 45 minutes, participants can choose a table with an assigned topic to discuss. After 20 minutes, we will pause and ask everyone to switch to a second table topic.

- **The Digital Shelf & Physical Store: A Unified Strategy**
  - Discuss strategies on integrating online product information (content, reviews, images) and purchasing experiences with instore.
- **Driving Impulse: The Next Generation of Checklane & Front End Sales**
  - Where, how and what categories are driving the most profit in the modern store
- **Getting on-shelf: What Retailers REALLY need from Brands**
  - Discuss on best practices and partnerships that drive success for both retail and brands
- **The Changing Shopper: How Auto & Hardware Categories are Evolving?**
  - Discussion on how shift in consumer behavior-more DIY, younger buyers, online research- changes product selection and store layout.
- **Finding Margin in Innovative Ways to Increase Profit in General Merchandise**
  - Where are there opportunities to increase profits, outside of just rising prices?

***If you are interested in moderating, please contact Lisa Burkart at LBurkart@ecrm.marketgate.com

Supplier Spotlight Display in Hospitality - Stop by Anytime

60 minutes

Kick off the session in style! During the entire week, we'll feature Supplier Spotlights, a showcase where participating suppliers can spotlight one standout product for buyers to check out and vote on their favorites. It's free to participate for suppliers, and a great way to spark conversations and get your brand noticed right from day one. Buyers, be sure to stop by to check out and vote on the featured products throughout the reception!