

Agenda

June 22 – 24, 2026 | The Westin Chicago Lombard | Lombard, IL

Day 1 - Monday, June 22

2:00 – 3:00 p.m.

Welcome and Opening

Mitch Morrison, Vice President, Retailer Relations + Event Content Director, Informa

3:00 – 3:30 p.m.

Can we Make Sense of the Economy?

Arjun Chakravarti, Managing Partner, COGKNITION

Rarely has reading the tea leaves been so difficult.

Consumer sentiment has plummeted. Tariffs have left their impact. War in the Middle East doubled the price of crude oil in late February/March. And, oh yes, we have mid-term national elections this fall.

So how should our businesses be feeling?

To give clarity to confusion, COGKNITION Marketing Director Arjun Chakravarti will help localize how broader national and global factors may impact your operations through the rest of the year.

3:30 – 3:45 p.m.

Networking Break

3:45 – 4:30 p.m.

The Power Shift

Chris Costagli, Vice President, Thought Leadership, Food & Beverage Insights Lead, NielsenIQ

It would be cliché were it not true. For years we've talked about the rise of better-for snacks. Healthier, while a niche, has never captivated the convenience consumer.

Until now.

In an exclusive study, NIQ Vice President Chris Costagli details shows how the rise of healthy-targeted apps like Yuka and Food-E- combined with the growth in GLP-1 users and tighter SNAP guidance -- are motivating convenience consumers to not only look for, but demand healthier and cleaner products. Are c-store operators responding or missing out on this multi-billion-dollar opportunity?

4:30 – 5:15 p.m.

Think Like a CEO

Tony Miller, Partner, W. Capra

We have said it time and again—you, the category managers/director, are the CEOs of your center store.

Sounds great, but what does that mean?

In a special session, join us for a fireside chat with Tony Miller, partner at W. Capra. Tony brings incredible experience in the executive and M&A arenas.

Tony served as President and CEO of Southwest Convenience Stores and MAPCO Express, building both their portfolios and annual revenues. Tony will share the difference between managing a category and driving a category like an executive.



Agenda

June 22 – 24, 2026 | The Westin Chicago Lombard | Lombard, IL

Day 1 - Monday, June 22

5:30 – 8:00 p.m. **Welcome Reception & Dinner at Pinstripes!**

Strike up some fun at Pinstripes! Come ready to bowl, eat and mingle! Whether you're aiming for strikes or just striking up conversations, it's all about good times and great company!

Bus departure outside of lobby at 5:30 p.m.

Day 2 - Tuesday, June 23

8:00 – 9:00 a.m. **Breakfast**

9:00 – 9:45 a.m. **Retailer Talks**

Amanda Lobes, Category Manager, InConvenience Inc.
Rebecca Gregory, Center Store Category Manager, Weigel's

9:45 – 10:00 a.m. **Networking Break**

10:00 a.m. –
12:30 p.m. **1:1 Meetings**

12:30 – 1:30 p.m. **Lunch**

1:45 – 4:00 p.m. **1:1 Meetings**

4:00 – 4:15 p.m. **Networking Break**

4:15 – 5:00 p.m. **Thinking & Drinking**

Mitch Morrison, Vice President, Retailer Relations + Event Content Director, Informa

5:00 – 6:00 p.m. **Reception**

6:00 p.m. **Dinner on your own**

Agenda

June 22 – 24, 2026 | The Westin Chicago Lombard | Lombard, IL

Day 3 - Wednesday, June 24

7:30 – 8:30 a.m.

Breakfast

8:30 – 9:15 a.m.

From Cost Center to Profit Driver: Optimizing Your Inventory Investment

Richard Poye, COO/Strategic Retail Advisor, Food Trends Think Tank

With the dramatic increase in COGS over recent years, the total inventory 'investment' value is skyrocketing, leaving businesses with less available cash to invest in other areas. How do we reverse this trend?

Industry expert and former retailer Richard Poye plunges into planogramming, inventory, product selection, merchandising and both the opportunities that abound and the common errors that continue to afflict us.

9:15 – 9:45 a.m.

Retailer Panel

Jodi Riggs, Category Manager, WESCO

Stephanie Reeder, Category Manager, Center Store Refuel

9:45 – 10:00 a.m.

Networking Break

10:00 – 10:45 a.m.

From Shelf to Screen: Unlocking Center Store Growth with AI, RMNs, and the Digital Shelf

Matt Van Gilder, VP, Omnichannel Retail, NexChapter

Technology is rapidly changing from enhancement to empowerment. NexChapter Omnichannel specialist Matt Van Gilder shares how you can prepare your digital foundation and leverage Artificial Intelligence, Retail Media Networks and other transformative solutions to reshape and recharge your center store from a market basket add-on to a traffic driver.

10:45 – 11:00 a.m.

Closing Thoughts

Mitch Morrison, Vice President, Retailer Relations + Event Content Director, Informa