

FRIDAY | OCTOBER 4, 2019

# Henry Armour Has a Story for You

The c-store industry is full of good stories waiting to be told.

Everyone has great stories to tell about their business that no one hears about.

We rarely tell the stories and take credit for the great things that we do. And we have so many great stories to tell.

So Henry Armour, NACS president and CEO, began Thursday's General Session with a short storytime that focused on just a few of the good things the industry is doing.

The first story was about food.

"For years, we were often demonized for the food we sold in our stores. The perception was that we sold unhealthy—and only unhealthy—

food. We thought a different story could be told," Armour said. "So we went to work telling our story and working with every health-focused group we could find."

And it worked. Last April, the industry received the Partnership for a Healthier America's Partner of the Year award.

"Of the hundreds of leading businesses that are part of the PHA, NACS—our industry—was given this prestigious award," he said.

The second story was about how the industry shares its stories with elected leaders. A few weeks ago, NACS held its 100<sup>th</sup> NACS In Store event, inviting

members of Congress to work for a few hours in a c-store to learn more about the industry.

"And for this special event, we held it in Washington, D.C., and even brought together a Republican and a Democrat," Armour said. "We don't get much bipartisanship in Washington anymore, but both sides of the aisle can agree on the value of convenience stores in their communities."

The third story was about an exciting new program launched this summer to recognize an important group of consumers who maybe rely on c-stores' 24/7 service more than

see **ARMOUR**, page 4



## Good Jobs, Greater Margins

Zeynep Ton offers investment advice during Super Session.

Zeynep Ton has a keen sense of observation. When she steps inside a convenience store, the first thing she notices is the speed at which employees work in their effort to serve busy customers. Those keen observations, combined with her two decades of studying retail

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# It's Cold Out There

Aim for balance in your cold vault.

Kim Cuellar, Ph.D leads a panel discussion on cold vault trends.

**R**etailers are opening the door to a new look in the cold vault category. Thanks to the exponential growth in alternative non-alcoholic beverages, craft beer and mixed alcoholic drinks, today's cold vaults look dramatically different from those of 20 years ago.

Attendees took stock of today's infinite choices, while looking at trends and research that can help

them build their own cold vault. Kim Cuellar, Ph.D., category manager for beer and wine at OnCue Marketing LLC, led a panel of speakers who provided much of that data during the Thursday education session, "Cold Vault: Trends and Takeaways."

"I project some pretty substantial shifts in trends but also see some trends continuing to sustain growth. For new trends, CBD is king, as there is a lot of unknown about CBD," Cuellar said.

In an effort to help retailers design cold vault sales and space in the coming years, Cuellar enlisted the help of Sara Hillstrom of Anheuser-Busch InBev, Brett Gilliam of MillerCoors, Damian Marano of Docklight Brands, Chris Schmidt of Monster Beverage Company and Michael Yager of Coca Cola.

According to NACS 2018 data, 24% of all packaged beverages are sold in c-stores. Non-alcohol, including beer, represents 22% of all inside sales, and there are 1,400 new, non-alcohol

beverages introduced each year.

Water leads the non-alcohol segment. According to Cuellar, three-fourths of Americans prefer water, and kids are choosing water over soda and juice, thanks to some "cool new packaging." Cuellar also expects to see continued growth in plant-based milks. Retailers sell three times as many refrigerated plant-based milks than unrefrigerated ones.

In the alcohol segment, everyone is talking about seltzer.

"Seltzers are on fire," Hillstrom said. "Will the trend stick? I strongly believe this is a trend that's here to stay, mostly because brands are doing a good job of recruiting new drinkers and because it has a 70% repeat rate."

Whether trend or fad, the key to designing the right cold vault, according to the panel, is to strike a balance in what you have to offer.

"A balanced approach will maximize your growth overall," Hillstrom said. ●

## Jackowski Leads NACS Board

**J**ulie Jackowski, senior vice president, corporate general counsel and secretary of Casey's General Stores, has been named the 2019-20 NACS chairman.

Casey's General Stores is a Fortune 500 company operating 2,100 convenience stores in 16



Julie Jackowski

Midwest states. Jackowski oversees Casey's legal, risk management, enterprise risk management, child care and administrative services.

Jackowski also leads the NACS Executive Committee, which provides strategic direction and financial oversight to the association. Committee members are:

- Vice Chairman, Treasurer: Kevin Smartt, Kwik Chek Food Stores Inc. (Austin, TX)
- Vice Chairman, Legislative: Don Rhoads, The Convenience Group LLC (Vancouver, WA)
- Vice Chairman, Member Services: Jared Scheeler, The Hub Convenience Stores Inc. (Dickinson, ND)
- Vice Chairman, Research & Technology: Andy Jones, Sprint Food Stores Inc. (Wrens, GA)
- Vice Chairman: Ari Haseotes, Cumberland Farms Inc. (Westborough, MA)
- Vice Chairman: Billy Milam
- Vice Chairman: Ken Parent, Pilot Travel Centers LLC (Knoxville, TN) ●

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NACS SHOW 2019

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## NACS Announces Its New Board of Directors 2019-2020

**N**ACS is led by a 30-member Board of Directors, including three retailers from non-North American countries. The chairman and chairman-elect of the NACS Supplier Board also serve on

the Board of Directors. NACS named five new retail members to its Board of Directors:

- Dr. Varish Goyal, Loop Neighborhood Markets (Fremont, CA)
- Thomas Gresham, Double Quick

Inc. (Indianola, MS)

- Christine Hogan, Wheels Convenience Stores (Milford, CT)
- Lonnie McQuirter, 36 Lyn Refuel Station (Minneapolis, MN)
- Robert Razowsky, Rmarts LLC (Deerfield, IL) ●

## Pitching In!

NACS is reducing its environmental footprint at the NACS Show through a number of initiatives and recycling efforts. And you can help!

For the first time, attendees can recycle their name badges at the conclusion of the NACS Show. Specially designated name badge recycle bins, provided by Terracycle, are located at convention center exits today. According to Carolyn Schnare, NACS director of strategic initiatives, there are plenty of other ways attendees can make a difference, even on



the final day. "Recycling is something everyone can do easily and

conveniently throughout the NACS Show venues," Schnare said. "Remember to think before you throw and be sure to put the correct items in the correctly labeled bins. When in doubt, throw it out!"

Even on the final day, you can make a difference.



Recycle empty beverage containers (with the caps on) in marked bins throughout the Georgia World Congress Center. Continue refilling your water bottles with the filtered water stations throughout the GWCC.

"People are becoming more concerned with the sustainability practices of the brands they interact with and we, at NACS, recognize that we have to do our part to be transparent in our actions which is why the NACS Show is making positive contributions in Atlanta," Schnare said.

Learn more at [www.nacsshow.com/about](http://www.nacsshow.com/about). ●

## Retail Mindshift

### Moving from fuel to energy

**F**orward-thinking convenience retailers are well-positioned to serve and capitalize on the fast-growing but still-niche electric vehicle (EV) market—if they take steps to ready infrastructure for fast-charging and equip their stores with the amenities that EV drivers expect. Those are some of the key takeaways from Thursday's education session, "EVs: Shifting from Fuel Provider to Energy Provider."

"At NACS, we want to make sure that convenience stores continue to be the transportation energy source for our customers," said John Eichberger, executive director, Fuels Institute. Eichberger was joined by Glen Stancil, president, eMotive Solutions, and Karl Doenges, Internet of Things consultant, FSG Smart Building.

There were 27,137 EV charging stations in the United States as of August, up 37% from 19,826 EV charging stations in November 2018. Still, there's a huge lack of infrastructure.

When considering charging stations, DC fast chargers are a must to maintain the "fast and quick" model of convenience, Stancil said.

EV charging requires a significant

amount of infrastructure—switchgear equipment and transformers, for example—and is more space intensive than gasoline fueling.

"You'll need about 4.5 parking spaces for four spaces of charging," Stancil said.

Although capital and operating costs vary by location, expenses run about \$150,000 to install one high-speed 150 KW charger. Once installed, gross margins are high. With gasoline sales, stations can see a fast clip of customers filling up but are making less money per session per fill-up than they'd make on EV charging.

With EVs, retailers need four charging sessions per day to achieve monthly cashflow breakeven, but occupancy limits use eight to nine sessions a day. The upside is that EV drivers will stay longer on site than fuel customers.

IoT consultant Doenges urged retailers to think of EVs as a holistic offer. To rent charging time, drivers will need to use a loyalty app, which can be used to tailor coffee offers, for example, to get them into the store.

Early EV adopters are usually more affluent, with higher expectations of their store visits.



Glen Stancil

"Cleanliness is absolutely paramount," Doenges said. "They want the clean bathroom; they want the aesthetics. It's not the Cokes and smokes. [The EV customer] wants to sit in a nice area, read his newspaper, have a cup of coffee." ●

## ARMOUR

*continued from page 1*

anyone: First responders.

"So we launched 24/7 day to tell our story. And we picked the only day that made sense for that: July 24, or 7/24," said Armour. "So many of our member companies in so many ways support first responders—the firefighters, police officers, EMTs, doctors and nurses delivering disaster relief wherever and whenever it's needed, 24/7."

NACS asked Sheetz, Wawa and RaceTrac to run a first responders recognition promotion on the same day. Each ran a different promotion, but they were all run on July 24, and all were targeted to recognize first

responders.

"The results were terrific. A whole bunch of people heard about the great things we do," said Armour.

The promotion generated 85 million media impressions across 130 news outlets and 3.1 million social media impressions. It was so successful that NACS plans to do it again next July 24 with a greatly expanded base. Armour predicts that perhaps one day, with enough industry participation, Congress will proclaim July 24 as First Responders Day at the nation's c-stores.

"We plan on telling similarly coordinated industry-wide stories on how our industry is fighting hunger in our communities, supporting children's health, funding education and building sustainable

environments. These are not new activities," he said, "and that's the point. You're already doing these great things. We, NACS and you just need to tell the stories." ●

## The Storytelling Continues Online

At Thursday's General Session, NACS President and CEO Henry Armour introduced the always popular Ideas 2 Go video, highlighting some of the most innovative ideas in the industry. To view the video and gather new ideas, visit [www.convenience.org/Ideas2Go](http://www.convenience.org/Ideas2Go).





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**SUPER SESSION***continued from page 1*

operations, captivated the crowd at Thursday's education Super Session, "The Good Jobs Strategy."

Ton, a native of Turkey, author, professor at the MIT Sloan School of Management and co-founder of the Good Jobs Institute, offered an impassioned look at why retailers should invest in their employees. It pays off financially, competitively and morally, she said.

"Regardless of company size, competitive advantage comes from creating a highly satisfying and loyal customer who has a compelling reason to shop at your store," Ton said. "Operational excellence is the key to achieving this type of environment."

Some barriers to operational excellence are due to the complexities of the retail sector. But the biggest barrier is people, specifically high

turnover, insufficient training and being short-staffed. Thus, it makes sense to focus on your people.

Low wage is the most glaring cause of turnover. That's a difficult pill for retailers who are concerned about profit margins to swallow. But Ton says research shows that putting your employees first positively impacts your bottom line.

According to Ton, 42 million people work in a service industry, such as retail, where the average hourly wage is \$11.33. Beyond low wages, retail employees are subjected to unstable work hours, further putting a strain on personal and family lives. Turnover is inevitable, she said.

"If a person's basic necessities aren't met, they can't put food on the table, they can't count on a stable schedule, and they don't feel safe physically or psychologically, they're going to leave," Ton said. "When you're constantly hiring and

retraining, you're just fighting fires. You're not managing your business."

Ton hailed a number of retailers who have established reputations for providing decent wages and retaining loyal employees, including QuikTrip, Costco, Trader Joe's and Mercadona, a retail chain in Spain. Mercadona, for example, pays almost double the average wage in Spain and has a turnover rate of 3.8%.

Ton doesn't believe paying higher wages alone is the path to success. She offered other ways to achieve operational excellence, including focusing and simplifying your store's products. That may mean offering fewer SKU's that employees can knowledgeably and compellingly sell to customers.

Operational excellence impacts more than the bottom line, however. Ton made her own compelling case for investing in good people.

"Your sector can make a huge

Zeynep Ton



difference for our society. There's a healing power to retail. Every single day, 165 million customers visit your stores. People from all walks of life come to your store. Those 165 million could magnify our differences with negative interactions or bring us together through positive interactions. In this divided country, we need you more than ever." ●




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# TOP 10

## COOL NEW PRODUCTS



The Cool New Products Preview Room, located in B401, is the perfect place to experience a selection of the latest products and services in the convenience store industry. Use a handheld scanner to capture details of your favorite products, including exhibitor name, booth location and release date. Simply return the scanner when you're done and receive a printout of your customized product list. The Preview Room is open from 8:00 am to 5:30 pm today.

\* The Top 10 Cool New Products list is effective as of Thursday at 4:00 pm.



1

**LANCER TWINPOUR**  
Lancer Corporation  
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2

**ED300 DIGITAL**  
Marmon Foodservice  
Booth 7605



3

**MOBILE STOCKER**  
Mobile Merchandisers  
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4

**OREO MOST STUF**  
Mondelez International  
Booth 1619



5

**KRISPY KREME DOUGHNUT ITEMS**  
Krispy Kreme Doughnut Corp.  
Booth 6023



6

**HOT FOOD OPEN TOPPER**  
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7

**GOETZE'S CANDY CO.**  
Goetze's Candy Co. Inc.  
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8

**PHADE**  
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9

**VOLTZ**  
ET Products, Inc.  
Booth 5834



10

**HONEY STINGER**  
Honey Stinger  
Booth 404

## question of the day

### What trends are you seeing in the exhibit hall?



**Amrit Dhaliwal**  
Clovis Shell  
Clovis, CA

Everything is trending toward technology and social media. Now you have to be present "outside" your store with social media as much as you have to be present inside your business.



**Jaimi Jayswal**  
BP AMPM  
Chicago, IL

Technology is the big trend I'm watching. Verifone has all new POS systems, and since I'm with BP, we are supporting that. We want to know what's coming out and how to do things better.



**Dennis Boydston**  
LSAA, LLC DBA Sam's Mart Inc.  
Matthews, NC

Plant-based snacks seem to be trending, like mushroom jerky, rice snacks, CBD. I thought the CBD exhibit was cool. But it's still confusing since it's all so new.





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# TV Shark Shows His Gentler Side

Daymond John delivers this morning's General Session keynote.

**P**opular reality TV star Daymond John of "Shark Tank" is no stranger to giving advice. Each week, he offers tips to entrepreneurs who are looking for both guidance and investments to fuel the development of their new products. So it's no surprise that John has advice for convenience store retailers. Chief among that advice? Let employees know you care. John is today's closing speaker at the General Session.

John has a personal connection to the convenience industry. At the age of 12, he swept the floors of a Queens, New York, convenience store after school, earning less than \$3 per hour. As his followers know, John later achieved huge success as the designer behind hip-hop sportswear brand FUBU, long before jumping into the shark tank.



Daymond John

"I have more in common with NACS members than they realize," John told *NACS Magazine*. "They can probably relate a lot better to that person who experiences failures than to the guy who finds that everything he touches is gold."

In those early years of his after-school job, John watched how the store's owner treated customers. It was like family—or more like "superstars"—he said, recalling how the store owner called each customer by name and even extended credit to many of them.

That was John's first glimpse at running a business. And it was a lesson that wasn't wasted on the shark. More than anything else, he said, success in the workplace and at home comes from listening—really listening—to those around you.

**NACS Show 2019**  
General Session—  
Friday  
8:30 am - 9:30 am

"Let your employees know that you care," said the TV personality dubbed "The People's Shark." "The most unhappy employees are those who feel like they've hit a glass ceiling—or that their ideas aren't considered or appreciated."

Sometimes, knowing that your employer values you is just as important—if not more—than the paycheck itself, he said. In fact, studies show that "people would rather have acknowledgment over money," he said. And despite his huge success, John

never stops thinking of and reaching out to his employees.

John's entrepreneurial journey is not unlike a c-store owner, he said. John managed to capitalize on changing fashion trends, promotions and pricing. In fact, John insists that achieving success in the workplace is "all about how to keep changing with the times."

Another important step is to set goals and stick with those goals, he said.

John likens the entrepreneurial journey to that of parenthood. There's no "how-to" book on how to be a good parent or a good entrepreneur. As such, he encourages c-store retailers to try many different things and replicate those tactics that worked. Sometimes, choices don't work out. Learn from that, too, he said.

Though the entrepreneurial path has its ups and downs, John looks back fondly on his own path, even those times when he had to navigate personal battles with dyslexia and thyroid cancer.

During the General Session, John will share his personal success story and offer practical advice about operating a business, increasing sales, improving employee morale, increasing productivity and optimizing staff talents. ●

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# Lessons from the Best

## NACS | Ideas2Go®

The highly anticipated Ideas 2 Go video program debuted to a full house on Thursday and didn't disappoint. Nine convenience store retailers were featured in this year's video—a staple of the NACS Show for more than 40 years. Each was chosen for its unique take on an aspect of convenience that's critical to future success.



### High's

Gambrills, Maryland

This High's store is the first to undergo a brand revitalization. The 4,870-square-foot store showcases High's signature items, including hand-breaded chicken, hand-made pizza and hand-dipped ice cream. High's began as an ice-cream store chain in 1928. Tech upgrades and a frictionless payment option allow customers to use their phones to purchase items.

### The Goods Mart

New York City

This convenience store in New York City's SoHo neighborhood is quintessentially New York. It focuses

on curation and community.

Owner Rachel Krupa works with a dietician to provide items that meet certain nutritional profiles. The store has a tip jar where customers can donate to specific local causes, and they can sign up to participate in community events, such as cleanups at local parks.

### Alltown Fresh

Plymouth, Massachusetts

Alltown launched Alltown Fresh this year as "the fresh convenience market." It offers fresh food choices, bean-to-cup coffee, outdoor seating, groceries, craft beer, a water fountain for pets, traditional snacking options and phone and electric vehicle

charging stations. Made-to-order meals include organic, natural, gluten-free, vegan, vegetarian and locally sourced alternatives. The retailer's commitment to the community includes its support of numerous local events and charities.

### Russell's Xpress

Denver, Colorado

Located in a Denver office building, Russell's Xpress is an unmanned convenience store operated by HJB Convenience Corporation. The store is stocked with snacks, confections, beverages and general merchandise for grab and go. To enter the unmanned store, customers must enter their phone number or the number for the office they are visiting inside the building. Customers make their selections, scan the UPC at one of two checkouts and pay using credit or debit, Apple Pay, Samsung Pay or Google Pay.

### "New Retail"

Shanghai, China

Retail disruption is so advanced in Shanghai, China, it's called "New Retail." The seamless integration of the in-store and online shopping experiences has launched four new retail concepts:

**Ratio:** A fully automated coffee shop.

**BK24:** A small store offering lunchbox delivery where customers can order a lunchbox from their phone, and the hot meal is delivered to their office or home.

**Hema:** Part market, part restaurant, part warehouse and part fulfillment center, customers pay with the Alibaba payment app through self-checkout and kiosks. Employees fulfill online orders by collecting items throughout the store, and ceiling conveyors move full shopping bags overhead to a common fulfillment area, where an army of electric scooters waits to make deliveries.

see **IDEAS 2 GO**, page 22





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# Doing Good

A reimagined NACS Foundation amplifies the charitable efforts of NACS members.

It's been one year since the launch of the revamped NACS Foundation, and the organization has accomplished quite a lot in these past 12 months. The Foundation's new vision is to support and amplify the charitable efforts of the convenience and fuel retailing industry within their communities and nationwide.

"Retailers were already making a difference within their communities, so we really wanted to celebrate collectively what NACS retailers and suppliers have been doing," said Stephanie Sikorski, NACS vice president of marketing. "And we thought we could make a bigger impact if we all combine forces and tell our story."

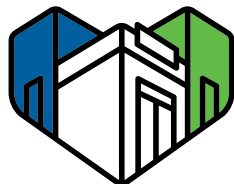
## A nod to the past

For more than 27 years, the NACS Foundation (formerly the Convenience Store Foundation for Education and Research) served as a charitable beacon for NACS, providing scholarships to convenience store employees nationwide. During this time, the Foundation awarded more than \$500,000 in scholarships to dozens of employees in its retail member companies. Yet, NACS believed the Foundation could extend its impact on communities around the country.

"We recognized a disconnect," Sikorski said. "We were operating a foundation that was largely transactional: There was no direct link to NACS. Our foundation and its programs were not memorable.

"Retailers were already making a difference within their communities, so we really wanted to celebrate collectively what NACS retailers and suppliers have been doing."

**Stephanie Sikorski**  
NACS Vice President of Marketing



## NACS Foundation

Participation was limited. And, most importantly, there was very little 'heart' in what we were talking about."

## Vision for the future

Today, the NACS Foundation aims to rally members around five areas of focus that already are important to the industry:

- Response Relief, designed to provide disaster relief aid and serve first responders
- Neighborhood Nourish, which fights hunger by collecting donations for local food banks and helps people experiencing homelessness or food insecurity
- Tomorrow Thrives, which fights childhood disease, supports children and families affected by illness and encourages kids to live active lifestyles
- Community Cleanup, focused on keeping communities beautiful, raising awareness about

environmental issues and elevating community pride

- Future Fund, which continues to provide scholarships and internships to convenience store member employees and their children

For future initiatives, the Foundation plans to partner with nonprofits that not only offer regional or community outreach programs in many cities but also are large enough to scale the charitable campaign and garner national attention for the c-store and fuel industry.

"The research centers on the ROI on corporate social responsibility," Sikorski said. "It does a lot for communities and makes stores more credible in consumers' eyes."

On July 24, 2019, the NACS Foundation launched 24/7 Day—its first nationwide charitable initiative. The annual event was created to honor first responders, doctors and nurses, military and disaster relief volunteers

who work around the clock to support communities when disasters occur. RaceTrac, Sheetz and Wawa were among the convenience retailers celebrating local heroes, inspiring volunteerism and raising awareness for first-response and disaster-relief efforts. Proceeds from the campaign benefitted the American Red Cross.

"We saw it as a good opportunity to say thank you to the first responders who are doing so much good in our communities," Sikorski said. "In a way, convenience stores serve as the first supporters for these emergency workers because we're often the first or only places with lights on."

## How to get involved

Nothing exists without a strong foundation. The NACS Foundation is partnering with NACS retail and supplier members, convenience stores and nonprofit partners to propel brighter futures.

Here are some of the ways to get involved with the NACS Foundation today:

- Visit [conveniencecares.org](http://conveniencecares.org) to learn more or contact the Foundation.
- Join the conversation at [twitter.com/NACS\\_Foundation](https://twitter.com/NACS_Foundation) and [facebook.com/TheNACSFoundation](https://facebook.com/TheNACSFoundation).
- Donate to the American Red Cross from the 24/7 page: [conveniencecares.org/24-7-Day](http://conveniencecares.org/24-7-Day).

Through collaboration and connection to our communities, the NACS Foundation can fuel both minds and bodies. ●



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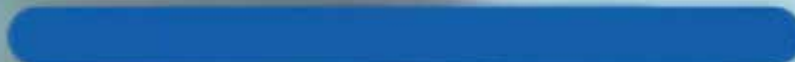
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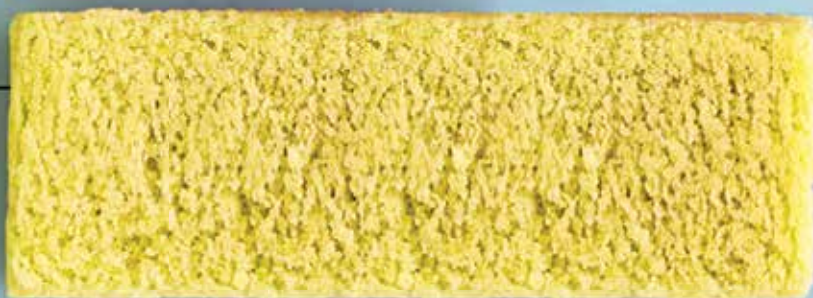
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\*THIS RATING IS BASED OFF OF OUR CURRENT CUSTOMER RATING VIA OUR CORPORATE FACEBOOK PAGE.



# The Leader Within

NACS Executive Education programs address your unique needs.

In today's competitive market, skilled leadership is critical for survival and long-term success. To address this within the convenience industry, NACS has partnered with world-class institutions to customize executive training that advances convenience retail leaders and shapes industry innovators.

NACS Executive Education programs help develop well-rounded leaders. Each unique program acts as a puzzle piece in creating nimble, adaptive strategists and thinkers that help forward-thinking retail organizations grow and evolve.

Take for example, the Women's Leadership Program. Women face unique challenges in the workplace, and they also add unique value and perspective. Women shatter groupthink, improve communication dynamics and

reinvigorate companies in ways that make them more competitive. In fact, research shows companies with a critical mass of top-team gender diversity enjoy better financial performance. This is an opportunity for retailers and supplier companies to exchange ideas with a peer group of experienced and emerging women leaders who face similar, professional challenges. The program is administered by thought-leading faculty at Yale and successful female convenience industry practitioners.

So which NACS leadership program is right for you or your team members? Take a look:

## Women's Leadership Program

Designed for women executives to develop critical skills, including developing strategic perspective and decision making, understanding and

honing leadership style, improving executive presence and leveraging diversity to accelerate innovation.

## Innovation Leadership Program

Building on MIT's prestigious reputation and innovative culture, this program combines research-based management frameworks with practical hands-on experiences and offers networking opportunities for top-tier convenience industry retail leaders. Attendees will directly apply methods and frameworks to their own businesses—to build innovation capability and improve business results.

## Financial Leadership Program

Designed for high-potential retail executives looking to expand their financial insights and, in turn, provide greater value to their organizations.



## Marketing Leadership Program

This program is designed for senior-level retail executives looking to enhance their knowledge in topics such as branding, consumer experience and analytics.

## Executive Leadership Program

Designed for senior-level retail management already in or preparing to take on key leadership roles, this program gives participants the skills needed to successfully respond to the challenges of a competitive marketplace. ●

Visit [www.convenience.org/leadership](http://www.convenience.org/leadership) for information and to register for any of these leadership programs.

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# Transformation Turns Heads

Reitan Convenience Denmark earns International Retailer of the Year award.

**R**eitan Convenience Denmark has reason to celebrate in 2019. The Danish convenience retailer was named the NACS 2019 International Retailer of the Year at this summer's NACS Convenience Summit Europe in London and is being hailed for successfully transforming its 7-Eleven stores to become one of the biggest food-to-go retailers in Denmark.

In an attempt to stay relevant in Denmark's competitive convenience store arena, Reitan has aggressively embraced digitalization in its operations. Reitan is part of the Norwegian Reitan Group. The retailer first opened its doors in Denmark in 1993 and currently operates 177 stores across the country. With the strong focus on foodservice, especially

its bakery and beverages, Reitan experienced a drop in sales when grocery-store extended hours changed the retail landscape in 2012.

"Categories that used to be very good for us started declining. We had to decide whether we wanted to accept that 7-Eleven was becoming less and less relevant for consumers, or whether we wanted to prosper and survive," said Reitan CEO Jesper Østergaard. "We had to change our strategy from being a more traditional convenience store to become a food destination selling convenience products."

As such, Reitan shifted its attention to people, focus and communication, adding fresh talent and expertise to drive its transformation forward. That included recruiting a different type of franchisee—individuals interested in

food products and customer service, rather than retail operators focused solely on staying open 24/7.

Internally, Reitan gave its corporate office a fresh look, as well. Reitan wanted category managers with a passion for foodservice, according to Østergaard. This approach included hiring managers who were trained as chefs or had worked in the restaurant segment.

Extensive market research followed to identify the company's areas of growth, both in traditional beverages and foodservice and healthier options. More food is prepared fresh on-site, and an extensive grab-and-go section is stocked with private-label fresh salads, wraps, sandwiches, juice, smoothies, fruit and snacks. Today, 35% of its in-store sales of food, drinks and bakery come from healthier product lines.

A visual transformation occurred, as well, when the store grew from a traditional kiosk into a modern convenience store format with dedicated areas for in-store eating. Today, the new layout resembles a café. As a bonus, the new format and seating has promoted customer dwell time and increased basket sizes to boot.

Additionally, the revamped 7-Eleven Denmark is answering

consumer demand for fresh, healthy food options by stocking more organic products. This includes fair-trade coffee served with organic fresh milk in 100% plant-based cups. In fact, the stores embrace environmentally friendly packaging of all products whenever possible. The stores now carry more than 64 SKUs of vegan and vegetarian ranges.

"That's unheard of in our market," Østergaard said. "Every time a customer came into our store, we wanted to surprise them with products they perhaps didn't even know they wanted."

The transformation is paying off. The Danish market is not yet saturated, and Reitan Convenience Denmark sees potential for expansion, even in a small country like Denmark. Among the potential store sites are hospitals and university campuses.

"We have become more relevant to more customers than we have ever been in the last 25 years," Østergaard said.

The International Retailer of the Year award, sponsored by Jack Link's, recognizes the most innovative and successful international convenience and fuel retailing store of the year, as chosen by a grand jury of leading international retailers and experts. The winner earns the accolade of "the best convenience store in the world." ●







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# CALENDAR OF EVENTS

# 2020

## FEBRUARY

**5-7**

### NACS Leadership Forum

Venue: Eden Roc  
Miami Beach, Florida

## MARCH

**3-5**

### NACS Convenience Summit Asia

Venue: Waldorf Astoria  
Bangkok  
Bangkok, Thailand

**10-12**

### NACS HR Forum

Venue: Westin Dallas  
Downtown  
Dallas, Texas

**10-12**

### NACS Day on the Hill

Venue: Four Seasons Hotel  
Washington, D.C.

## APRIL

**7-9**

### NACS State of the Industry Summit

Venue: Hyatt Regency  
O'Hare  
Chicago, Illinois

**19-24**

### NACS Leadership for Success

Venue: Virginia Crossings  
Hotel and Conference  
Center  
Richmond, Virginia

**26-30**

### Conexus Annual Conference

Venue: Loews Ventana  
Canyon Resort  
Tucson, Arizona

## JUNE

**2-4**

### Convenience Summit Europe

Venue: Berlin Marriott  
Hotel  
Berlin, Germany

## JULY

**12-17**

### NACS Financial Leadership Program at Wharton

Venue: The Wharton  
School at the University of  
Pennsylvania  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**19-24**

### NACS Marketing Leadership Program at Kellogg

Venue: Kellogg School  
of Management at  
Northwestern University  
Evanston, Illinois

## AUGUST

**2-6**

### NACS Executive Leadership Program at Cornell

Venue: Dyson School at  
Cornell University  
Ithaca, New York

## OCTOBER

**11-14**

### NACS Show

Venue: Las Vegas  
Convention Center  
Las Vegas, Nevada

## NOVEMBER

**1-6**

### NACS Innovation Leadership Program at MIT

Venue: Sloan School  
of Management at the  
Massachusetts Institute of  
Technology  
Cambridge, Massachusetts

**To be announced**

### NACS Women's Leadership Program at Yale

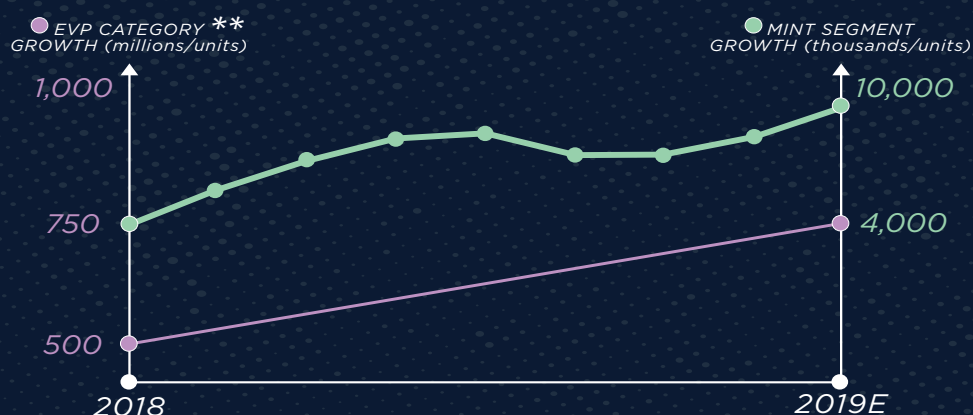
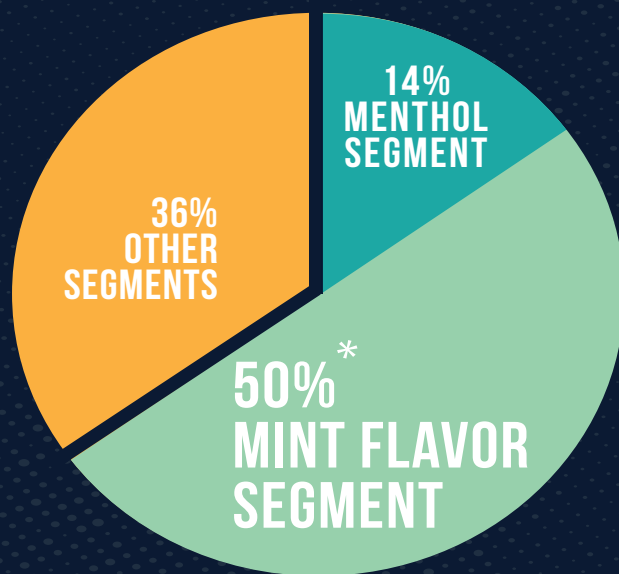
Venue: Yale School of  
Management at Yale  
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\*Source: IRI - Total Conv Latest 4 week periods Top 50 SKUs Unit Sales, Units Sold Per Selling Store, Unit Sales and Stores.  
\*\*Source: [Tobacco, Market]: Nielsen US Tobacco YoY rates for C-store channel (2013-2014) and all channel (2015-2017); UBS Global Tobacco Report 2017 YoY forecast (2018); Morgan Stanley Tobacco report (2018-2025 forecast); CDC 2017 unit tobacco sales; [EVP Market, 7-Eleven EVP]: MSAI Partnership Retail Database; [C-Stores sales]: Wells Fargo Convenience Stores Report. \*7-Eleven 2016-2018 CAGR excludes 7-Eleven Horizon  
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# In Case of Emergency

NACS rolls out resources for c-store disaster planning.

In the middle of a disaster is not a good time for your employees to be scrambling, wondering what to do or how to respond. Putting a plan into place in advance protects employees in a disaster and arms them with a method for keeping customers safe, as well.

If you're wondering where to begin, or you can't remember when you last updated your emergency plan, fear not. NACS has released new resources to help you develop or enhance your disaster planning procedures. The NACS Convenience Store Emergency Planning and Job Aids is available for download at [convenience.org/disasterplan/](http://convenience.org/disasterplan/).

It identifies and enhances how c-stores can boost their resiliency as they plan, prepare and recover from a disaster, whether man-made or natural.

"These resources are designed to help convenience retailers quickly and efficiently determine the best course of action for their teams to plan for an emergency, such as a hurricane, or bring their stores back into operation

"Communities and emergency response teams depend on their local convenience stores in times of need, especially for much-needed food, water and fuel. These new NACS resources can help retailers evaluate their internal processes for reopening quickly and returning to normalcy."

**Carolyn Schnare**

NACS Director of Strategic Initiatives



after events that happen with little to no warning, like a tornado or earthquake," said Carolyn Schnare, NACS director of strategic initiatives.

"After curating emergency plans and insights from our convenience industry community, we have developed useful and practical resources that retailers can adapt for their own businesses."

The NACS Convenience Store Emergency Planning and Job Aids is a result of the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's National Infrastructure Protection Program Challenge, which was awarded to NACS in 2018.

Disaster recovery for c-stores is more critical than just keeping your immediate employees and customers safe. Consider these statistics: There are more than 153,000 c-stores in the United States, of which about 122,000 stores sell an estimated 80% of the fuel in the country. Convenience stores also operate one-third of all ATMs. In areas affected by disasters, c-stores with generators may serve as the only source of electricity to recharge phones, as well as keep fueling dispensers operational for first responders to access.

"Communities and emergency

response teams depend on their local convenience stores in times of need, especially for much-needed food, water and fuel," said Schnare. "These new NACS resources can help retailers evaluate their internal processes for reopening quickly and returning to normalcy."

The NACS resources are customizable and include a plan evaluation document and 17 Job Aids of tasks and checklists for specific functions that store employees perform during disaster planning and recovery. The Job Aids also can be used as on-boarding employee training, refresher training or immediate training when emergency conditions approach.

NACS worked with more than 20 convenience retailers across the country—from one-store operators to retailers with more than 1,000 stores—to develop the NACS Convenience Store Emergency Planning and Job Aids and incorporated information supplemented

by government regulatory requirements and professional association recommendations. ●



## IDEAS 2 GO

*continued from page 12*

### Hy-Vee Fast & Fresh

*Altoona, Iowa*

This new concept from the well-known Midwestern grocery chain is a hybrid of grocery and convenience. It blends prepared foods and take-home meal solutions amid a pared-down grocery selection and grab-and-go fare. The store also offers indulgent items, as well as a robust spirits, wine and beer selection, including growlers and crows for craft beer.

### Good To Go Markets & Bullhead Pit Beef

*Columbia, Maryland*

Bullhead Pit Beef food truck is Good To Markets' answer to a foodservice program. This food truck is in the fast lane, operating at community events, festivals and local breweries. Pit beef

sandwiches are the main attraction of this Baltimore favorite. The menu also includes chicken, pork, tacos and sides, such as mac and cheese. Teamwork is key in this small space, requiring the right attitude, people and culture to problem-solve quickly and adjust on the fly.

### Choice Market

*Denver, Colorado*

Located in a 350-unit apartment complex, Choice Market is a combination of a convenience store for coffee, drinks and snacks on the go, a fill-in grocery store for fresh meats, cheeses, fruits, produce and household items, and a quick-service restaurant featuring seasonal and locally grown ingredients for fresh-prepared sandwiches, salads, bowls and juices. Choice is committed to recycled and compostable packaging.



Check out this year's Ideas 2 Go video and those from past years that continue to inspire by visiting [www.convenience.org/Ideas2Go](http://www.convenience.org/Ideas2Go).

### 7-Eleven

*Denver, Colorado*

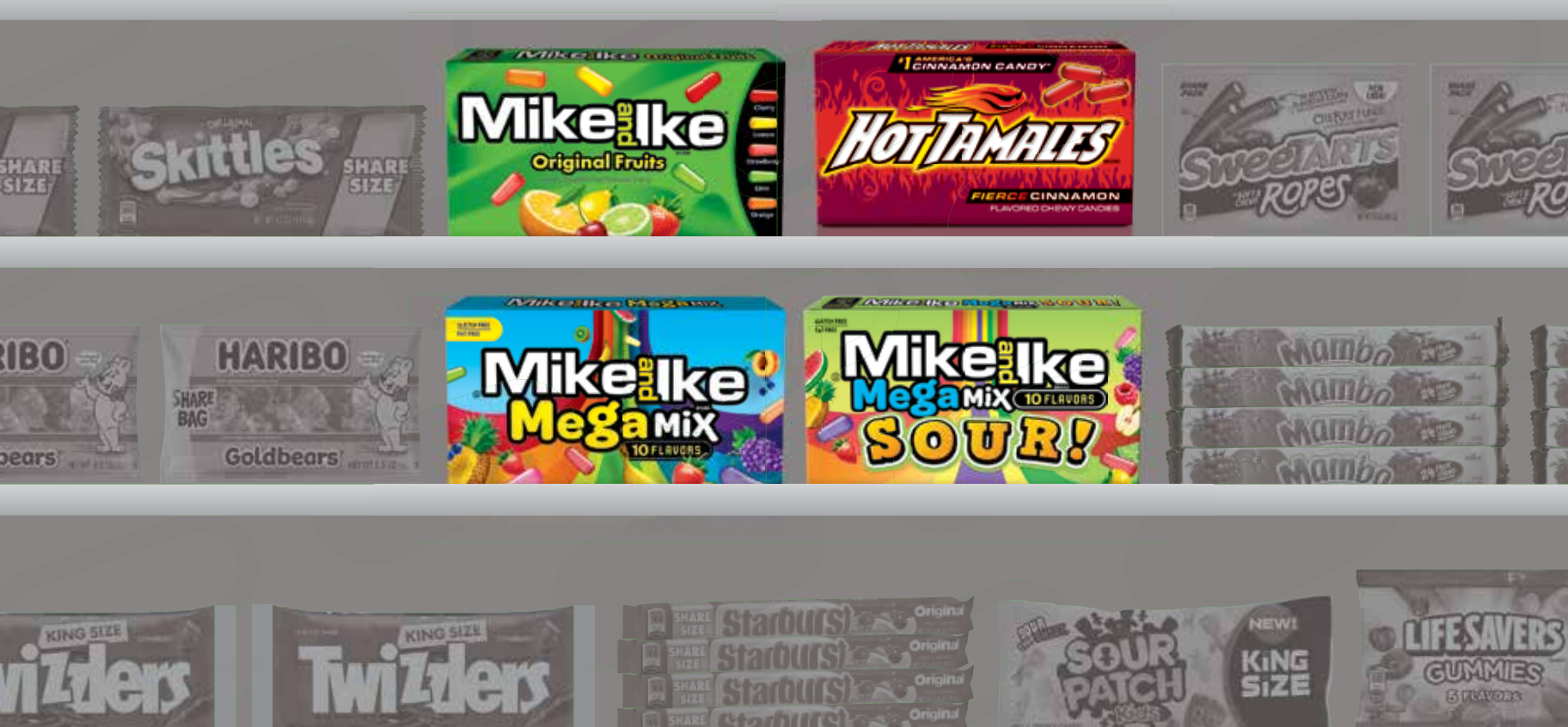
Former NACS Chairman Dave Carpenter, president and CEO of J.D. Carpenter Companies Inc., recently opened a new 7-Eleven store just

outside of Denver inspired by the visualization of food that European retailers create with their fresh and prepared food offers and displays. The store even features kombucha on tap and 7-Now delivery. ●



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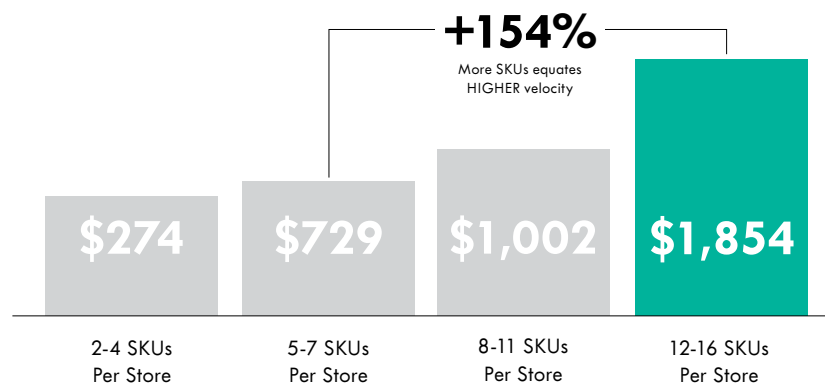


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Source: Nielsen AOD, \$/Store Weeks Selling thru 3/30/2019.

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# Building Champions in Congress

NACS In Store program celebrates five years of legislative success.

**F**ive years ago, Congressman Chris Stewart (R-UT) stepped behind a counter at a Maverik store in Pleasant Grove, Utah, and got to work. Stewart was participating in the inaugural NACS In Store program, an effort to educate legislators about the inner workings of the convenience industry.

The idea was the brainchild of the 2012 NACS Global Government Affairs Council. Today, the program has gained incredible traction, welcoming more than 100 members of Congress to convenience stores across the nation.

“From fuel policy issues to swipe fees, tobacco, tax, labor, health care, the environment, SNAP, menu labeling, food safety, payments and more, it is critical that policymakers see how these issues impact our industry, our people and our customers,” said Anna Ready Blom, NACS director of government relations.

The NACS In Store events do more than introduce legislators to the convenience store industry, Ready Blom said. They demonstrate how federal policies affect their operations.

During the NACS In Store events,

a member of Congress works behind the counter, interacts with members of the local community and discusses with community members the issues important to them. In fact, that’s the fun part, Ready Blom said.

“We’ve seen some pretty funny reactions from customers when they realize their representative is standing behind the counter,” she said.

From the experience, legislators gain an understanding and appreciation for not only the store operation in which they are working, but also for the broader convenience and fuel retailing industry. It’s the perfect opportunity for elected officials to experience how convenience stores serve the public in their home districts.

## Policies on the forefront

Top of mind for NACS government relations staff and the convenience store industry is S.1253 and H.R.3942, the Preventing Online Sales of E-Cigarettes to Children Act. This bipartisan bill seeks to prevent online sales of electronic cigarettes to minors by ensuring an ID check occurs upon

delivery—the same requirements already in place for cigarettes and smokeless tobacco products.

“The NACS In Store events offer a great opportunity to educate lawmakers on the responsible retailers in our industry,” Ready Blom said. “We’re showcasing the extensive training on selling age-restricted products and our proven consistency in checking IDs. Our whole message is that the government shouldn’t be picking winners and losers in the marketplace. Retailers—whether brick-and-mortar or online—should be able to operate on a level playing field.”

## Pressing on

The NACS In Store program has evolved over its five-year lifespan. In 2014, the strategy was to create awareness of the event by involving as many legislators as possible. Today, the event is so popular that NACS government relations staff are becoming more strategic in who they invite to participate.

“In the beginning, our champions in Congress were the ones who visited, and that’s great because

we want to further solidify those relationships with our industry,” Ready Blom said. “But we’re trying to be more strategic now. What legislators do we need to educate about our industry and show them the great things we’re doing in their communities?”

As the program grows, Ready Blom sees potential in including state and local officials in the events.

## Visit NACS In Store at the NACS Show

Check out photos from previous events posted on the NACSPAC Lounge exterior walls at Georgia World Congress B Lobby. You can find more information about the program online at [convenience.org/NACSinStore](http://convenience.org/NACSinStore).

The NACSPAC Lounge will open at 10 am on Tuesday, October 1, and will remain open throughout the Show for NACSPAC contributors. If you would like to learn more about NACSPAC or the NACSPAC Lounge, please contact NACSPAC Manager Katie Bohny at [kbohny@convenience.org](mailto:kbohny@convenience.org).

## FOR MORE INFO

Grab a copy of the **NACS Show On-Site Guide** to find:

- Shuttle bus schedules, routes and boarding locations
- Sessions and speakers
- NACS Show expo map
- NACS Show exhibitors
- Product category listings
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- Information about NACS



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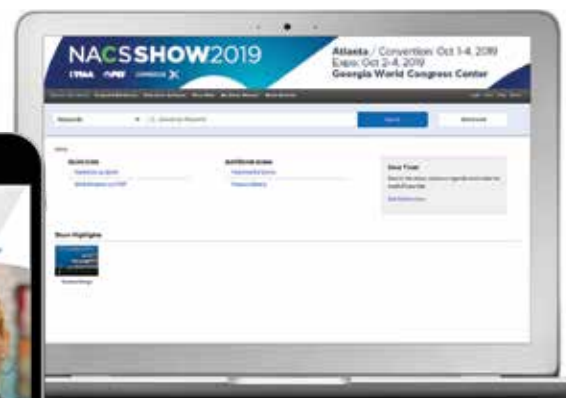
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\* Source: Better-For-You Snacks: The New Snacking Reality Study – April 2017; IRI, Total U.S. MULOc and Grocery



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**7:30 am – 1:30 pm**  
Registration

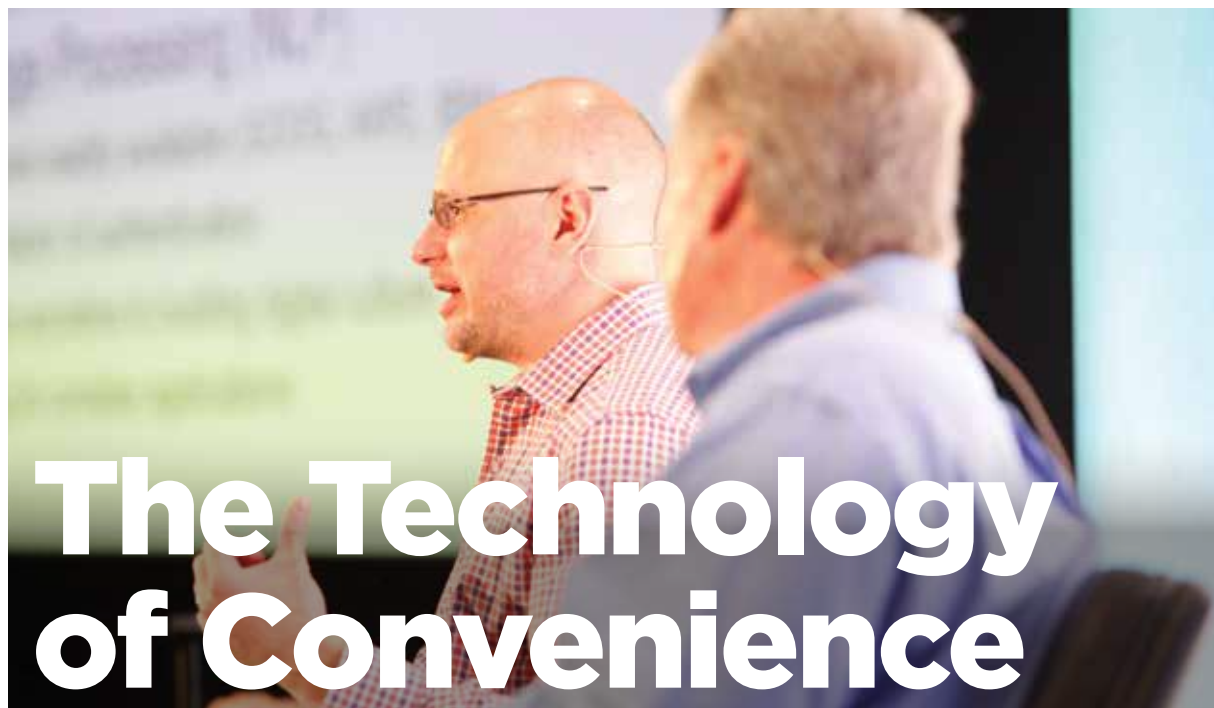
**8:00 am – 1:30 pm**  
Cool New Products  
Preview Room  
B401

**8:30 am – 9:30 am**  
General Session Featuring  
Incoming NACS Chairman  
Julie Jackowski and  
Keynote Daymond John

**9:00 am – 1:30 pm**  
Expo

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# The Technology of Convenience

Data and API are the bridge to the future.

**H**ow much more convenient can convenience get? It all depends on technology.

Ed Dzadoovsky, vice president, North America IT, CircleK Stores Inc., and Gray Taylor, executive director of Connexus, gave a snapshot of the current state of technology and how we move forward during Thursday's education session, "Connexus Technology Roadmap."

Technology continues to shift power to the consumer, who has been lured onto Apple and Google platforms, and who has become more demanding.

The digitized consumer has a sky-high expectation when it comes to convenience. McKinsey & Company described today's consumer in a January 2019 article this way: "They've become accustomed to near instant gratification: on-demand movies and music, speed of delivery of online orders and even smart devices that can purchase items automatically."

In a world where convenience is king, where does this put convenience stores?

"We sell time, we don't sell Twinkies," said Taylor. "How can I help my customer to have a friction-free life, not just a friction-free store experience?"

To improve convenience, the industry must rely on technology.

He used Alibaba, the multinational conglomerate, as an example of a company that has embraced technology to push ahead of the pack.

Their operating theory: Automate all operating decisions. They "datafy" every exchange. They "software" every activity.

If the future of technology is artificial intelligence (AI)—and it is—the focus right now should be collecting data. It's critical to the AI.

"We don't have enough data to make AI worthwhile right now," Taylor said. "That's why we need to datafy." He noted that all technology companies populate the top 10 companies in the world.

Taylor projected that technology in the near future will focus on API (application program interface) as fundamental. In the next two to five years, technology will zero-in on wrapping context around sales using data that incorporates weather and news within the geocode. This will feed the predictive analytics to help shape business and sales moving forward.

Currently, though, it's our legacy systems that are holding us back and inconsistent data structures, Taylor said. That's why APIs will be so critical.

"Right now we have to focus on 'let's make it work better.' That's how we need to think," he said.

"There are some cool things you can do with legacy systems," added Dzadoovsky. "Collect lots of data. Storage is cheap, and when AI comes, it will be incredibly valuable to you."

"The future loves history's data," he said, as he encouraged attendees to

get their "data house in order."

As fast as technology has come, it's showing no signs of slowing down anytime soon.

"The pace of innovation is stressing the traditional IT method," Dzadoovsky said. "Nimble is the new 'strategy.'"

One of the biggest obstacles to technology isn't about building it, though, it's about buy-in.

"We don't need more computer scientists, we need more business experts who understand computer science," said Taylor.

"Without organizations to support it, none of the technology works," added Dzadoovsky.

Taylor said he believes getting executives to buy in on technology will get easier.

"The next generation of CEOs grew up with videogames. They understand technology because they grew up with it. What keeps them up at night is how do we keep up the pace and out-innovate potential competitors?" Taylor said.

Are there c-stores succeeding without tech?

"If you stay with gas, Cokes and smokes, you're just treading water," Gray said. "There are those who think they can't pay for this, but they need to reevaluate, and that's what I don't see happening in the industry. Some companies say, 'I'm too small,' but they need to remember that it's harder to turn a big ship around, so now's the time to reconsider." ●



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Stop by Booth 318 to sample Taste of Nature Inc. new products. We are running a promotion on Mrs. Fields Cookies—buy four caddies and get one free.



## Camera Cool

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#### BOOTH 4073

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*\*New customer agreement must be signed by November 29, 2019.*



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## In the Bank

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### NUARX BOOTH 347

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## On a Roll

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Highlights of the 2019 NACS Show

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