FRANCHISE MARKETING *Live!*

A Marketing & Tech Assembly

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MONDAY, NOVEMBER 2

8:00 AM-12:00 PM: Four Hours With Ingrid and a Claude Subscription - *Ingrid Schneider, CEO & Founder, Stay in Your Lane / Train in Your Lane Team*

This four-hour, hands-on workshop shows franchise marketers how to use Claude to create clearer, more effective marketing without becoming programmers. Working with their brands, attendees will define the problem they solve, establish a core belief and diagnosis, identify four customer friction points, and build a campaign designed to overcome them. They will also create a Claude Project, write a stronger ad, explore AI image-generation tools, analyze real marketing data, and develop a practical planning system with an accountability agent. Participants should bring a laptop, Claude subscription, marketing data, and real business challenge–and expect to leave with work ready for Monday.

1:00-1:45 PM: Networking Hour

2:00-2:15 PM: Welcome - *Liane Caruso & Michael Hyam, Franchise Assembly*

2:15-3:00 PM: From Brand Builder to Business Leader: Why Marketing Is the New CEO Pipeline - *Kristen Pechacek, CEO, MassageLuXe*

For years, marketers were viewed as the storytellers of the business. Today, they are becoming the operators, strategists, and growth drivers companies need in the CEO seat. In this keynote, Kristen Pechacek, CEO of MassageLuXe, shares her path from marketing leader to chief executive officer and makes the case for why marketers are uniquely positioned to lead companies. Marketers sit at the intersection of customer insight, brand, revenue, and growth, giving them one of the most complete views of the business. This session will break down what marketing leaders should be doing now if they want to move into broader business leadership. From building financial fluency and operational credibility to understanding unit economics and influencing across departments. For CMOs and marketing leaders ready for a bigger role, this conversation pushes beyond campaigns and into what it really takes to run the business.

3:00-3:45 PM: Consumer Behavior 2026-2027: Loyalty Drivers & the Impact of AI - *Emily Bielak, Director, Martec*

Consumer expectations are shifting faster than brands can adapt. This session explores how changing sentiment, economic pressure, digital convenience, and AI are reshaping the path from brand discovery to lasting loyalty. Drawing on original consumer research across leading franchise industries, we will examine what drives trial, switching, repeat business, referrals, and word-of-mouth recommendations. We will also look at whether AI-powered personalization strengthens relationships or erodes trust, and how referral-led customers behave differently from those acquired through other channels. Attendees will leave with practical insights for attracting new customers, earning loyalty, and building brand experiences consumers trust and recommend to others.

3:45-4:05 PM: Power Play | Balancing Brand Control and Local Freedom: A Conversation with Winmark's Sarah Broadwater - *Sarah Cucchiara, VP of Business Development, Tiger Pistol; Sarah Broadwater, Vice President of Marketing, Winmark Corporation*

How can franchise brands maintain a consistent brand identity while empowering local owners to connect authentically with their local communities? In this live conversation, Winmark's Sarah Broadwater joins Sarah Cucchiara to explore how brands including Plato's Closet, Play It Again Sports, and Once Upon a Child are reshaping local marketing. They'll discuss Winmark's move toward a scalable advertising platform, the challenge of franchisee adoption, and the value of balancing brand guardrails with local creativity. Attendees will learn how Tiger Pistol supports easier campaign execution, clearer performance insights, localized creative, and stronger collaboration among corporate teams, franchisees, and their external agency partners.

4:05-4:50 PM: Attribute or Grow: Your Dashboard Sees One Step. Your Customer Took Six. - *Aditya Varanasi, Founder & CEO, Awarity; Brooke Janousek, CMO, IV Nutrition; Laura Vodvarka, Vice President of Marketing, HorsePower Brands*

Your CFO wants a receipt for every marketing dollar. Your customers won't give you one. They see your ad, ask a neighbor, ask ChatGPT, and buy months later, and the last click gets all the credit. With 68% of Google searches now ending without a click and budgets under more scrutiny than ever, marketing leaders face a real choice: fund what you can prove, or fund what grows the business? Two marketing decision-makers go head-to-head in a live debate, and the audience casts the deciding vote.

4:50-5:40 PM: Change Your Convention, Change Your System: Let's Raise the Bar - *Joey Goone, CEO, Utopia Experience*

Your annual convention is the one time each year you have your entire system's full attention in one room. Done strategically, it's where alignment happens, where franchisees reconnect with the brand and each other, and where the energy that carries the next twelve months gets set. Too many franchise events fall into the ""same old, same old"" rut, static slides and over-packed agendas, and by day two the room has checked out. When events lack energy and connection, zees leave feeling like taking a few days away from their business wasn't worth it. By the end of the session, you'll see your convention through a new lens, with concrete ideas for increasing attendee engagement and driving sponsorship ROI that you can put to work right away.

7:00-9:00 PM: Join us for dinner, networking, and ping pong at Ace Eat Serve! - *Hosted by Enspire for Enterprise*

TUESDAY, NOVEMBER 3

8:00-8:45 AM: Breakfast & Networking

9:00-9:30 AM: Beyond the Feed: Scaling Local Discovery with Short-Form Video - *Paul Elliott, CEO,* *Tiger Pistol;* *Oliver Silzer, Team Lead, Channel Sales Partnerships,* *TikTok*

TikTok is reshaping how franchise brands and local businesses build trust, get discovered, and turn attention into action through short-form video. Join TikTok and Tiger Pistol to explore how locally relevant creative, full-funnel advertising solutions, and technology-enabled partner workflows can help franchise brands activate and scale across locations–while maintaining brand consistency and control.

9:30-10:15 AM: Now Franchising: Dearly Departed - *Ingrid Schneider, CEO & Founder,*
Stay in Your Lane / Train in Your Lane

We built a ghost franchise from scratch with Claude and other AI tools. In this session, we show how a working marketing agency actually uses them today: the skills we build for campaigns, content, and fran dev, the hot tips we'd only give clients, and how fast all of it is changing.

10:15-10:45 AM: The LOCAL Method – Turning Customers Into Advocates - *Katherine LeBlanc, Fractional CMO,*
Apollo CMO

A real framework for word-of-mouth marketing you can take back to your franchisees. Everyone knows word-of-mouth is the highest-converting channel. Almost nobody has a system for generating it. In this session, Katherine introduces the LOCAL Method – a five-stage practitioner framework for turning satisfied customers into active advocates. Built from real brand strategy work, LOCAL gives marketers a repeatable tool to audit any franchisee's customer experience, identify where advocacy breaks down, and engineer the moments that make a brand genuinely referable. You'll leave with a framework you can apply to your local store marketing immediately.

10:45-11:00 AM: Networking Break

11:00-11:30 AM: Roundtables Round 1

11:35 AM-12:05 PM: Roundtables Round 2

12:10-12:40 PM: Roundtables Round 3

12:40-1:45 PM: Lunch, Awards, & Networking - *Liane Caruso & Michael Hyam,* ***Franchise Assembly***

1:45-2:05 PM: Power Play | How to Nurture Your Leads Like a Pro - *Corey Nicholson, CEO; Cindy Hill, COO,* *Cadence Franchising;* ***Bryan Vohsing, Director of Marketing,*** *OhDeer*

This interactive case study will demonstrate how Cadence Franchising implemented a system to increase ohDEER's franchise lead conversions. Find out how fast-growing franchisors are modernizing the way they contact, nurture, and qualify their franchise leads.

2:05-2:55 PM: What Franchise Marketers Should Cut, Keep, and Add in 2027 - *Mindi Grissom, Director of Marketing,* *Adduro*

The franchise marketing playbook is overdue for a rebuild. The channels that delivered for the last decade aren't delivering the way they used to, and franchisor marketing leaders aren't imagining it. AI Overviews are reshaping search behavior, with click-through rates on top organic results dropping from 15% to 8% (Pew Research Center). Social attribution keeps getting harder. The pattern is more spend for less return. This session gives franchisor marketing leaders a clear-eyed look at what should come out of the 2027 plan, what's worth protecting, and what deserves a test. We'll cover the full-funnel case for streaming TV and audio, showing how upper-funnel awareness drives branded search and lifts the search and social spend in the mix. We'll also tackle who owns what between corporate and local, plus measurement standards every franchisor should hold their partners to. Attendees leave with a planning framework and a checklist.

2:55-3:15 PM: Power Play | National Scale, Local Results: Inside BaseCamp's Marketing Program -
Nick Dan-Bergman, CMO, *LT.agency;* ***Katie Clifford, Marketing Director,*** *BaseCamp Franchising*

How can a franchisor create a national marketing program that delivers local results while earning franchisee trust and participation? BaseCamp Franchising, parent company of Uptown Cheapskate and Kid to Kid, faced inconsistent local marketing across more than 260 stores, fragmented budgets, and varying levels of franchisee marketing expertise. Katie Clifford, Marketing Director at BaseCamp Franchising, and Nick Dan-Bergman, CMO at LT.agency, will share how they built a centralized digital media program around the needs of individual stores. Attendees will learn how shared creative, hyper-local targeting, store-level budgets, localized social media, and transparent reporting came together within one scalable system. The session will also explore how BaseCamp demonstrated local value, increased franchisee adoption, and generated stronger sales and customer acquisition results among participating stores.

3:15-4:05 PM: How AI Is Transforming Franchise Development Marketing: From Better Leads to Stronger Relationships - *Hosted by:* ***Rick Batchelor, CXO,*** *Franchise Ninja; Panelists:* ***Yona Smith, Senior Director of Marketing,*** *Threshold Brands;* ***Jennifer Campbell, COO & President,*** *Hot Dish Advertising;* ***Greg Morrell, CEO,*** *Tidehouse Agency;* ***Marci Kleinsasser, VP of Franchise Development Marketing,*** *Hotworx*

AI is transforming franchise development by helping teams identify stronger candidates, personalize engagement, and move qualified buyers forward faster. This session explores practical, real-world ways brands can use AI across franchise development marketing without sacrificing the human connection essential to sales. Attendees will learn to prioritize high-impact opportunities, improve lead scoring, automate territory checks, strengthen candidate and broker conversations, and tailor campaigns for first-time and multi-unit buyers. The session also covers persona-driven websites, advertising, nurturing, and scalable outreach that preserves an authentic brand voice. Participants will leave with actionable strategies to improve acquisition, qualification, conversion, relationships, and overall development efficiency.

4:05-4:35 PM: Hot Topic Ask Me Anything Panel - *Hosted by:* ***Alex Porter, CEO,*** *Location3;* ***Larisa Walega, Chief Growth Officer,*** *Ziebart;* ***Lizzie Webb, Vice President of Operations,*** *IMAGE Studios;* ***Wendy Winder, Founder & Chief Strategist,*** *Ray Strategic Marketing;* ***Christina Parsons, CMO,*** *United Franchise Group;* ***Shana Krisan, CMO,*** *Goldfish Swim School;* ***Abby Fogel, VP Brand Management & Communications,*** *Unleashed Brands*

Join Alex Porter, CEO of Location3, for a candid, fast-paced Ask Me Anything panel featuring some of franchising's top marketing leaders. No topic is off limits as our panelists tackle the questions franchise marketers are asking right now–from balancing brand and local priorities to generating leads, measuring performance, managing technology, supporting franchisees, and adapting to a rapidly changing media landscape. Bring your toughest challenges, biggest curiosities, and real-world scenarios for practical answers from leaders who have been there. Whether you lead marketing for an emerging concept or an established system, you'll leave with fresh perspectives and actionable ideas today.

4:35-4:55 PM: Power Play | Every Stage, Its Own Trigger: European Wax Center's SMS Lifecycle Blueprint
Maxwell Maser, Senior Account Executive, *Voxie;* ***Lillian Bond, Director of CRM & Retention,*** *European Wax Center*

Most franchise brands build their SMS program around a promo calendar. European Wax Center built theirs around where the guest actually is. Lillian Bond, Director of CRM & Retention, breaks down how it works: which moments earn an automated series, which need a real person, where corporate drives the message and where the local center picks it up.

4:55-5:35 PM: Fireside Chat | From Views to Visits: How TikTok Drives Franchise Performance
Brad Petersen, Executive Vice President, *Vendasta;* ***Oliver Silzer, Team Lead, Channel Sales Partnerships****, TikTok*

TikTok is increasingly part of how consumers discover, evaluate, and engage with businesses, yet franchise leaders are still determining where it fits within their broader marketing strategy. In this fireside chat, Brad Petersen of Vendasta sits down with TikTok's Oliver Silzer to discuss TikTok's role beyond awareness–from local search and lead generation to measurable business outcomes–and the questions franchise brands should consider when evaluating the platform for their goals.

5:35-7:00 PM: Networking Happy Hour

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