



Table Topics and Transitions: 2016 Canadian Community RetailNOW® Event Recap

By Stephen Gift and Amber Murdock

On Monday August 1st, RSPA hosted its second Canadian Community networking event of the year in Grapevine, TX, during RetailNOW 2016. During this year's event, the Committee decided to steer more towards an education/conversation topic based event rather than the networking focus we had earlier in the year in Montreal. After many conversations in Montreal, the committee felt there were a handful of important topics on everyone's mind and that it would be beneficial to gather into small groups to discuss the challenges and opportunities around these industry hot topics.

Committee Chair Transition

Before the discussion tables kicked off, exciting news was announced: a new chair for the Committee. Longtime Committee Chair, Jacques Lapierre of BlueStar Canada, who had held the position for several years, officially passed the gavel to Justine Terlon Bohonis of Logivision.

"Serving as a Chair for the Canadian Community was a great eye opener," reflected Lapierre. "It made me realize that we share more common purposes and needs than at first thought. As VARs and Vendors, we often see ourselves as isolated, and with unique problems or perspective. The reality is that we belong to a somewhat small industry, sharing a significant number of commonality, for which the best line of action for success is active networking. RSPA allows us that intimate conversation with peers, so beneficial in selecting the right paths to reach our goals."

During Lapierre's tenure, a solid foundation was built for the RSPA member community in Canada. Among the accomplishments during his time as Chair, the Community's activities have expanded to include: two events—one at RetailNOW and one on Canadian soil; a regular Canadian focused feature column in RSPA's connect magazine; and an expansion of Community sponsors. With the increase of visibility and involvement within the community, the composition of the Canadian contingent of RSPA has also diversified, which the new chair reflects.

"I am encouraged at the prospect that younger people, such as Justine Terlon Bohonis, are taking the lead of some of the RSPA committees," he continued. "Changes are happening faster than ever, and it is only by enabling new visions that organizations such as RSPA can hope to remain purposeful. Justine has been an integral part of the Canadian Community growth and involved in the committee for several years. We're am glad to see that a familiar face will be helping takeover to lead this committee to even greater heights."



Table Topic Discussions

While in Montreal, and during the Canadian Committee meetings following that event, Committee members identified three areas on which to focus discussion: Anti-Spam Laws, Internet of Things (IoT), and Preparing for PCI/QIR. Each table had a leader to help guide the conversation with questions that were submitted during the event's registration process. These leaders helped take some notes along the way so we have a few takeaways to share:

Anti Spam Law

Discussion Leader: Bruce Mann, CRS

Canada's Anti-Spam Law (CASL), one of the toughest laws in the world related to online communication, has impacted the VAR community in some significant ways. Since any electronic message that encourages participation in a commercial activity, both VARs with customer mailing lists (as well as the retailers and other merchants they serve) are now tasked with receiving consent from recipients before sending out messages.

One of the questions to the table about Canada's Anti Spam Law (enacted in January 2015):

What is the best method to obtain consent and what methods have been used for anyone at the table and, what methods have you used?

A few suggestions from the table:

- Any new dealer must check a box opting into communications, include an option in your partner agreements and mass emails to opt in/out of further communication.
- Utilize Constant Contact or similar platform to assist with contact consent management

Internet of Things

Discussion Leaders: Jean-Luc Major, Star Micronics and Jacques Lapierre, BlueStar Canada There were two tables filled for the Internet of Things discussions, one of them lead by Jean-Luc Major of Star Micronics. The comments centered on the ROI that is paramount in any IoT solution. "No one will buy IoT without proven ROI. What is needed is a basket of IoT solutions that VARs can choose from for resell to their clients," was a comment noted at the table.

Suggestions from the table on how IoT can become a new opportunity for VARs to generate more revenue:

- VARs can use digital signage connected to the POS system
- VARs can utilize the data collected on the IoT platform

PCI/QIR

Out of ten people at the table, only one had completed the QIR certification examination, and that person was still waiting on results. Consequently (and predictably), more questions came from this discussion than answers. Some of the important questions that emerged:

- Which payment processors or acquirers will require QIR certification?
- What about "semi-integrated" solutions—do those need to be done in a QIR method?
- What about out-of-scope solutions—do they need to be a QIR install?

The table topic discussions proved to be a valuable interaction between attendees, and a great way to promote new connections and insight to how each topic affects Resellers, ISVs, Manufacturers and Distributors.

Join us next year at RetailNOW for the Canadian Community Event. Please keep an eye out for the announcement later this year on our 2017 event in Canada (location TBA).

Check out www.GoRSPA.org/Canada for more community news and updates! c



RSPA_Canada Does your company do any business in Canada?

The annual Canadian Community event helps keep members of the Canadian Community engaged with the association while helping us continue to grow our presence in Canada. This community is not just for companies who have office locations in Canada. Many of our members do business in Canada and have contacts within their companies directly responsible for growing business in Canada. Through these events we not only have added new companies but helped open doors for individuals within current member companies who work primarily in Canada.



Here we "grow" again!



RSPA_Canada Seeking Canadian #Ambassadors! The RSPA's Canadian Community is looking to expand its presence through several future initiatives, including sending representatives to industry events in Canada. If you, or someone in your organization would like to be involved, contact Membership@GoRSPA.org.

Canadian Community Sponsors



RSPA_Canada Thank You, Sponsors!

If you have any questions about the event, RSPA Canadian Community or sponsorship opportunities please contact Membership@GoRSPA.org.