

People You Need to Know to GET CONNECTED

RSPA's W2W Community Empowers Women in Technology

The W2W Community hosts an annual event at RetailNOW. This year it was held on the last day, August 9, first thing in the morning. Right from the start, with a delicious breakfast (featuring an espresso bar!), the event was a bit of an oasis from the otherwise fast-paced and hectic show. The attendees networked—with both longtime acquaintances and new faces—prior to the educational portion, a workshop facilitated by speaker Hilary Corna, a former senior executive officer for Toyota in Asia and author of the memoir *One White Face*.

W2W committee chair, Cindy Marcoux (vice president, Partnership Development, Vantiv Integrated Payments), welcomed the group, and debuted the new mission of the Community: “to unite, lift and empower women in technology by providing educational opportunities and peer-to-peer collaboration in a supportive environment.” (The W2W event delivered on just that!)

Marcoux then introduced Corna, who revealed the secret sauce of Toyota's success and how to empower it in others in the ever-changing industry of technology. A key principle of the Toyota Production System is *Genchi Genbutsu*, which suggests that to truly

understand a situation, one needs to go to the *genba*, or the “real place”—where the work is done.

In her talk, entitled, “Kaizen and the Power of Empathy in the POS/Payments Business,” Corna explained some of the teachings of Kaizen: the Japanese business philosophy of continuous improvement of working practices and personal efficiency. Kaizen is a way to standardize proactive problem solving, and has enabled Toyota to maintain its ability to effectively and efficiently adapt to change.

She told us that about two thirds of Fortune 1000 companies that existed ten years ago are no longer in business, because they were unable to sufficiently adapt to change. Among the enlightening and inspiring examples of Kaizen that Corna focused on was “Plan, Do, Check, Act.” She explained that “plan” is the

biggest and most important step in the Kaizen 8-step process—and noted that 60% of the time spent should be on up-front planning. Corna shared examples from her own experience at Toyota of how that concept was put in place. For instance, prior to introducing new solutions at Toyota, teams like hers would analyze and monitor each job role that would be a part of the new solution, and how those roles could be more efficient with even the smallest of changes. She said that Toyota places a tremendous amount of focus on respect for people and on the importance of understanding everyone's role within the company, from the top down, and how one small miss can have a big impact.

Following the session, members of the W2W Community gathered and had one-on-one conversations with Corna during a book signing. **C**



Hilary Corna

To connect with and to learn more from Hilary Corna, find her at www.HilaryCorna.com.



By Ashley Naggy

A Special Thank You to our 2017 W2W Community Sponsors. Without the support of these companies, the 2017 W2W Community events would not have been possible: APG, Bluestar, and Scansource

ABOUT THE W2W COMMUNITY & ITS RETAILNOW PRESENCE

The W2W Community is centered on empowering women in the male-dominated retail technology industry, and has been strongly supported by RSPA membership for nearly ten years. At the RetailNOW shows, the W2W Community events provide both female and male attendees a wonderful opportunity for networking as well as an educational experience. W2W Community volunteers identify areas of development (and/or of concern) to not only the female members of the retail technology industry, but to RSPA members as a whole. Each event, therefore, provides a supportive and collaborative environment. Allotting time for direct access to the presenter, and to other attendees, is part of that commitment.

To learn more about or to join the work of the W2W Community, contact Education@GoRSPA.org.