

People You Need to Know to GET CONNECTED

Canadian Community Thrives!

On Monday, February 26, 2018, RSPA returned to Toronto, Ontario, for its first Canadian Community networking event of 2018. The event was held to coincide with the dates of the RC Show, the country's largest Hospitality event of the year, which also attracts many RSPA members and other technology providers. With the support of our Canadian Community sponsors, RSPA was again able to secure the prominent Hockey Hall of Fame to host this event.

CONNECTING CANADIAN MEMBERS ACROSS OUR INDUSTRY

With more than 100 individuals in attendance, the gathering included a healthy mix of approximately 30 percent resellers, 40 percent software companies, 21 percent payment providers/card brands, distribution vendors, and hardware manufacturers —

another great representation of the POS ecosystem and RSPA membership. The highest represented verticals were 87 percent retail, 73 percent hospitality, 63 percent grocery, and 36 percent healthcare. Fifty-eight of the attendees indicated this was their first time attending an RSPA Canadian Community event.

Attendees were able to take in the history of hockey along with some casual networking and a short program on the future of the RetailNOW industry. Attendees also had an opportunity to stop by and visit the event sponsor tables showcasing some of the industry's newest solutions. With the support of our 2018 Community Sponsors, we were also able to open the doors to non-member attendees at this event. In fact, more than half of this year's attendees were not members of

RSPA, giving our sponsors a chance to meet with new faces as well as RSPA an opportunity to continue growing our community.

Executing this event could not have been possible without RSPA Canadian Committee Chair, Paul Leduc, who also serves on the RSPA Board of Directors. *"This again was a great event," said Leduc. "The attendance keeps growing and the engagement increases year after year. With 167 pre-event registrations, we broke our record [58 percent increase over last year's registration numbers]. It was nice to change the format this year and hear from the retail council of Canada. It should help our members focus on the future customers' requirements and stay ahead of the technological curve."*

continued on page 22



**By Stephen Gift,
Member Services, RSPA**

"This was the best RSPA Canadian event that the association has ever run in my 18 years attending them... I want to be educated, informed, and told something I don't already know. The RSPA succeeded in that. Well done."

— Harry Mitchell,
Armagh POS Solutions,
RSPA Reseller Member



People You Need to Know to GET CONNECTED

“The presentations by John Kirk and Michael LeBlanc felt like they were designed specifically for our company, as if the spotlight was on us. The whole event provided valuable validation that we are in the right space, at the right time with the right product.”

— Alex Smith Co-Founder,
CEO of Moduurn —
First-time attendee

continued from page 21

RSPA President and CEO John Kirk made the trip to Toronto as well for his first official Canadian Community event. “Our Canadian members and attendees serve as a great example of the unique energy and passion that exists in this association,” he said. “We have multiple business models and team constructs that make up the RSPA. We also have a common purpose to serve the SMB community. Nobody does it better. Our members fuel our fire as we work to deliver a positive impact to this community. We look forward to expanding on the togetherness that our Canadian team has modeled for all.”

PROVIDING IMPORTANT INSIGHTS INTO THE STATE OF THE RETAIL INDUSTRY IN CANADA

Michael Leblanc provided the community with a pre-view into the future of Retail. He also addressed the myth of the “Retail Apocalypse” noting that since the media reports of major retailer loss in profits and major closings, there has been significant growth in the SMB market and retail employment in the US has actually increased. In Canada, retailers are projecting to open new stores, experience 5 percent growth in online sales, as well as projecting significant growth within the mall space.

Retail is evolving, as it always has, but there are ways to prepare for it, and some of those include making changes in your personal life. Technology is becoming an experience, and we have to be aware of the way consumers are adapting. Leblanc even took time to encourage attendees to

go out and get an Amazon Echo or Google Home and start understanding the way people are interacting with these devices. He also noted that “More Americans are members of Amazon Prime than go to Church on Sundays.” Cost of labor is going up, and we have ways for technology to help offset that.

HERE ARE SOME ADDITIONAL TAKEAWAYS FROM LEBLANC’S PRESENTATION:

- The retail apocalypse was a powerful media narrative in North American retail in 2017, but the reality is the retail industry as a whole is showing some of it’s best sales results in many years. No question, the changes happening, and to happen, will be significant. But change, competition, and challenge are like oxygen to

John Kirk, President and CEO, RSPA kicks off the first Canadian Community networking event of 2018 in Toronto.





retailers: they will not just survive — but thrive!

- Retailers are really beginning to shift their focus from driving incremental store traffic into thinking about how they can improve the customer experience to increase conversion of customers already in the store. There is a huge role for POS technology in this strategy as retailers in Canada look to square the circle of dealing with rising employee costs and at the same time focusing on improved customer experience
- Post-Apocalyptic retail looks different and in years will be in some ways hard to recognize, in others very familiar. From “conversational commerce” to AI-infused merchandising to shopping centers that feel more like

town squares, exciting times are ahead for savvy merchants and their partners that take these challenges head on!

As the POS and technology industry grows, the need for an association like RSPA grows as well. With education, industry access, advocacy, and business support, RSPA offers all companies in the POS ecosystem a trusted resource and connection point in a fast-moving and advancing industry. If your company is located or does business in Canada, consider joining the RSPA Canadian Community. The live events continue to help keep members of this community engaged with the industry they serve and continue to help grow the association’s presence in Canada. Through these

events, new companies have been added to RSPA, and doors have been opened for individuals within current member companies who work primarily in Canada.

Save the Date! The next community event will take place during RetailNOW 2018. Any registered attendee of RetailNOW at the Gaylord Opryland in Nashville, August 5 - 8 is invited to join us for this breakout event. A special thank you to our Canadian Community Sponsors — these supporters continue to be one of the driving forces behind the success of this community. If you have any questions about the event, RSPA Canadian Community or sponsorship opportunities, please contact **Membership@GoRSPA.org** or visit **www.GoRSPA.org/Canada**. **C**

With more than 100 individuals in attendance, the gathering included a healthy mix of resellers, software companies, payment providers/ card brands, distribution vendors, and hardware manufacturers.

“Nobody does it better. Our members fuel our fire as we work to deliver a positive impact to this community. We look forward to expanding on the togetherness that our Canadian team has modeled for all.”

— John Kirk, President and CEO, RSPA

SPONSORS:

acceo

APG CASH DRAWER®

BlueStar
Your Solutions Distributor

CRS

globalpayments

PARTNER
CARE · TRUST · RESPONSIBILITY

star
Always Leading · Always Innovating

scansource
pos and barcode