

VIBE CONFERENCE

VERY IMPORTANT BEVERAGE EXECUTIVES

For Immediate Release

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OPERATORS LEARN ABOUT THE LATEST BEVERAGE TRENDS AT THE 2020 VIBE CONFERENCE FEB. 24 - 26

*The Eleventh Annual Premier On-Premise Beverage Conference Featured
Networking Opportunities, Workshops, Tastings and More*

*VIBE Conference's Official Charity, Children of Restaurant Employees (CORE) Raised
\$138,000 for Families in the Food and Beverage Industry Facing Terminal Illnesses or
Sudden Losses*

CARLSBAD, CA - More than 200 operators representing more than 150 separate chain restaurants, hotels and cruise lines traveled to Carlsbad to attend the **2020 VIBE Conference** Feb. 24 - 26. Throughout three days, attendees learned about the latest beverage trends through education workshops, beverage tastings, research sessions and lively networking opportunities.

About 400 sponsor attendees representing more than 100 companies also attended in support of the conference, with more attendees coming from associations, distributors, agencies, consultants, speakers and industry notables, taking total attendance above the 700 mark. Before the start of the conference, the official charity of VIBE, **Children of Restaurant Employees (CORE)** invited operators to its annual "Giving Back to Our Own" party on Monday, Feb. 24. Through the event and its partnership with VIBE, CORE raised a total of \$138,000 for families in the food and beverage industry facing terminal illnesses or sudden losses.

On Tuesday, Feb. 25, well-known wine consultant Evan Goldstein kicked off the two-day event by welcoming operators to the VIBE Conference inside the Omni La Costa Resort and Spa. Following the opening remarks by Goldstein, American Beverage Institute's Rick Berman and Questex CEO Paul Miller, attendees heard one of the top-rated presentations annually, from Colleen McClellan of Datassential on the current trends that influence consumer behavior in the on-premise environment and how operators can best get their attention.

Then Goldstein presented the **VIBE On-Premise Industry Legend Award** and the **On-Premise Industry Innovator of the Year Award** to, respectively, Joe Smith, Senior Vice President, Sales, MONIN Gourmet Flavorings, and Bert "Tito" Beveridge, Founder and Master Distiller of Tito's Handmade Vodka.

After a brief break, David Henkes and Donna Hood Crecca of Technomic looked at the ways diminished traffic is affecting chain restaurant business and how beverages can help change that. Then a panel led by consultant Matt Durbin and including operators and technology providers explored the most useful tech tools currently available to operators.

During the afternoon sessions, operators had access to a workshop series featuring a variety of tastings, research sessions and discussion panels. Workshops included:

Series One

- “Global Drink Trends,” presented by Brandy Rand of IWSR Drinks Market Analysis
- “Menu Your Wine to Sell,” with Datassential’s McClellan
- “Refining Your Drink Program Based on Global and Local Trends,” with Nielsen CGA’s Matthew Crompton and Scott Elliott
- “Me and My Negroni...Which Gin is Right for You?” tasting by master mixologist Tony Abou-Ganim

After a break, two general sessions to end the day: David Portalatin, Vice President, Food Industry Advisor, The NPD Group, Inc., addressed another facet of the changing retail landscape, especially how inroads into food and beverage have disrupted restaurant business; and Technomic’s Henkes returned with a panel of hotel F&B execs for their outlook on what has become a growth segment.

After the sessions, attendees networked at the welcoming cocktail party, while sipping on delicious craft cocktails prepared by celebrity mixologists, beer and wine at the sponsored themed bars.

On Wednesday, the conference opened with an update on the role of cannabis in hospitality, now and as the momentum continues to grow and more states legalize usage, with Hood Crecca from Technomic joined by marketing expert Freddie Wyatt, Munch & Co. Then more break-out sessions ensued:

Series Two

- “Global Drink Trends,” presented by Brandy Rand of IWSR Drinks Market Analysis (repeat)
- “New Horizons in Non-Alcoholic,” with Kathy Casey of Liquid Kitchen and a panel of operators
- “A Rosé for All Seasons,” including tasting presented by sommelier Rebecca Fineman
- “What’s Next for the Changing Status of Beer?” a panel of operators and consultants led by author and consultant Stephen Beaumont.

Series Three

- “Making Use of Secondary Ingredients,” with David Commer of Commer Beverage and Brian Bell of Abuelo’s
- “Leading by Styles: Unlocking Growth in the Beer Category,” with Sara Hillstrom of AB InBev
- “Refining Your Drink Program Based on Global and Local Trends,” with Nielsen CGA’s Matthew Crompton and Scott Elliott (repeat)
- “Growing Green: Responsible Grape Farming,” a panel of operators led by sommelier Bob Bath, Culinary Institute of America

To close the conference, Goldstein and nationally-known wine and spirits educator Ed Korry then presented the **VIBE Vista Awards** to restaurant, casino, hotel and cruise line operators for their positive, result-driven corporate beverage programs, followed by Tom Fox, managing partner of CM Profit Group presented the **VIBE Supplier Awards** to supplier

companies for their concrete business-building support as well as service and support performance.

About VIBE Conference:

VIBE Conference, a division of New York-based Questex LLC, is the premier event for chain and hotel adult beverage executives and suppliers. Produced for Questex LLC by Weiss Foodservice Visions, Inc., the top on-premise conference is held annually and involves high-level content, tastings and networking opportunities. The 2021 conference will be held Feb. 22-24 at the Omni La Costa Resort and Spa in Carlsbad, CA.

About Questex:

Questex helps people live better and longer. Questex brings people together in the markets that help people **live better**: travel, hospitality and wellness; the industries that help people **live longer**: life science and healthcare; and the technologies that enable and fuel these **new experiences**. We live in **the experience economy** – connecting our ecosystem through live events, surrounded by data insights and digital communities. We deliver experience and real results. **It happens here.**

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