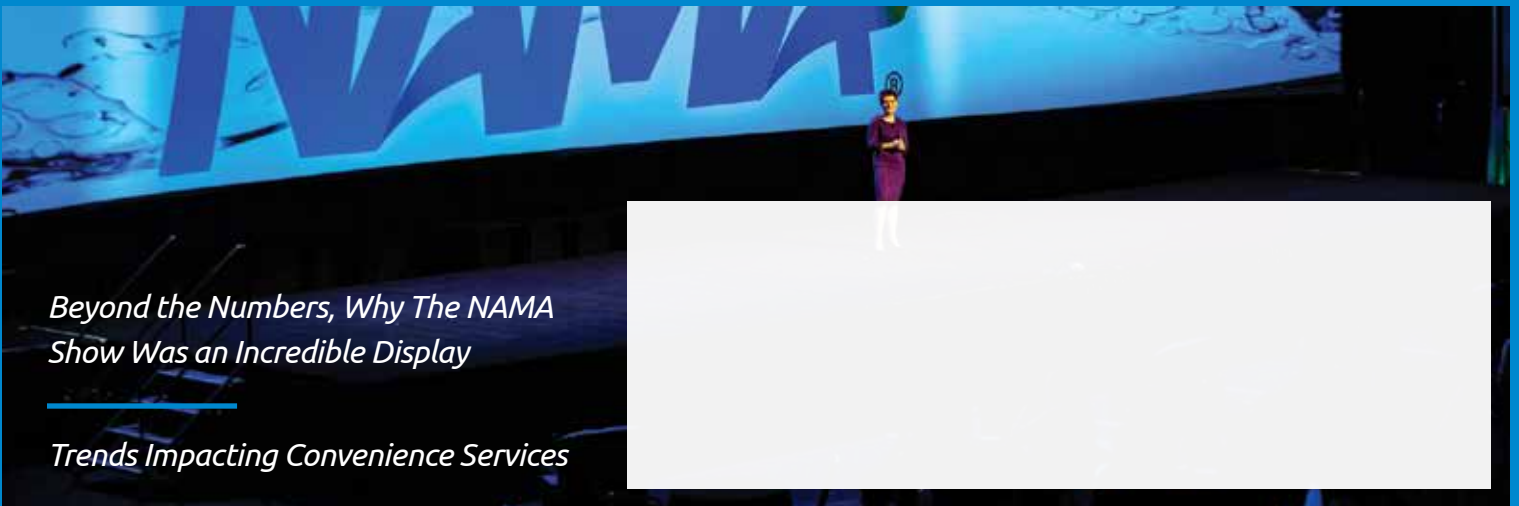


FALL 2021

The Official Magazine of NAMA

# Intouch

2021 NAMA Show Recap



*Beyond the Numbers, Why The NAMA Show Was an Incredible Display*

*Trends Impacting Convenience Services*

Fall 2021

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# The Way Forward

*Carla Balakgie, President & Chief Executive Officer of NAMA*

*The courage to keep going is what will propel the industry into the future.*

**P**recarious. Unsettled. Limbo. All synonyms for “uncertain times” and likely words each of us has used to describe how it feels to do business, or to simply get through a pandemic. And what lies ahead? Does a post-COVID-19 world, where things return to life as we knew it, still exist? Or is the way forward forever different?

In the beginning of the global health crisis, we eagerly anticipated a one-time fix that would put all of this in the rear-view mirror. When we shut our doors and shut down our lives, it was a temporary disruption. But that’s rarely how life works. No matter what the circumstance, it ebbs and flows like a river. It’s always changing — sometimes calm and smooth and other times rapid and unpredictable. But never the same. I reflected on this Buddhist tenet during my general session comments at the NAMA Show back in August, applying it to the business conditions we continue to encounter for the foreseeable future.

A recent vacation to Europe codified the concept for me personally. Prior to 2020, I’d made annual trips to the United Kingdom for more than 14 consecutive years. My preparation, packing and travel were almost rote. It was a predictable, but always fulfilling journey, and I was anxious to resume my customary travel routine.

Of course this year, nothing about the travel process was routine. In addition to being armed with the available preventative tools, there was extensive documentation to be provided, governmental hoops to jump through (ours and theirs) and public health measures to be taken — all just to be eligible to board the plane.

And these requirements changed from

*“How long should we wait for something that may never come? We’ve all had to operate under very different circumstances for over a year. And I posit that ‘different’ is here to stay — our world has been fundamentally altered.”*

week to week, making it confusing, daunting and stressful. There were moments when I wondered if it could really happen, and more than once, I questioned whether it was worth it.

But it did happen. After navigating all those preliminary hurdles, the holiday turned out to be very much as usual — filled with friends and activities, both familiar and once-in-a-lifetime. But it was also quite different, overlaid with the new norms of masking, social distancing, public health reporting and heightened concern for one another. I returned from my trip with my health, lasting memories and new experiences to cherish. Despite markedly different conditions, I had found a way forward.

That’s when a light bulb went off. I was struck by the parallels of navigating this new “travel process” and doing business in the ongoing environment. Over the past 18 months I listened to many stories from our members on how they operated through uncertainty and figured out how to keep going when it was so much harder than usual. A couple of themes emerged, germane to both:

### 1. Remember your “why”

When doubt creeps in and you find yourself questioning if all the effort

is really worth it, remember the reason you’re here in the first place. Whether it’s your passion for meeting client and consumer needs; the thrill of seeing innovation become the norm; or the pride that comes with supporting your family, employees and community; make it your rallying cry. And don’t let it go. **Find your way forward.**

### 2. The time is now

It’s clear that the return to normal is not happening as we expected. How long should we wait for something that may never come? We’ve all had to operate under very different circumstances for over a year. And I posit that “different” is here to stay — our world has been fundamentally altered. There are new driving forces, habits and conditions in place. I encourage you to lean into them and use them to shape success. If anyone can do it, it’s the resilient convenience services industry. **Use this momentum to find your way forward.**

### 3. Harness your courage

Wherever and however possible, our industry chose to keep its businesses running every day during the pandemic and throughout the environment that continues to

unfold. It took grit and a willingness to stick to our “why” and figure it out. That same spirit propelled me in the determination to move forward in pursuing life’s experiences. The courage to keep going is what will propel the industry into the future.

### Lean on it to find the way forward.

These same principles also undergirded NAMA’s decision to proceed with Together in 2021 — The NAMA Show and Coffee Tea & Water. The event was decidedly different than usual. But it successfully delivered an opportunity for people to say “yes” to getting back to in-person business and digital alternatives for those unable to travel to New Orleans. Despite many hurdles, we found a way forward, persisting because of our why. And looking back, I’m glad we did.

So, here’s to the way forward — for our country, our great industry and for NAMA! 🍷



## The Labor Shortage — Working With Less To Get More

*Joe Hessling, NAMA Chair, Founder and CEO 365 Retail Markets*

*Embracing innovation, culture and collaboration for the future of convenience services.*

**F**rom signing bonuses to reimbursement for personal expenses, employers across the nation are pulling out all the stops to fill vacant positions. While many have turned to generous benefit packages as a short-term solution, experts believe and early indications show that even massive monetary incentives will not permanently alleviate the frictions of today's labor market.

If only there were another way? Spoiler alert — there is.

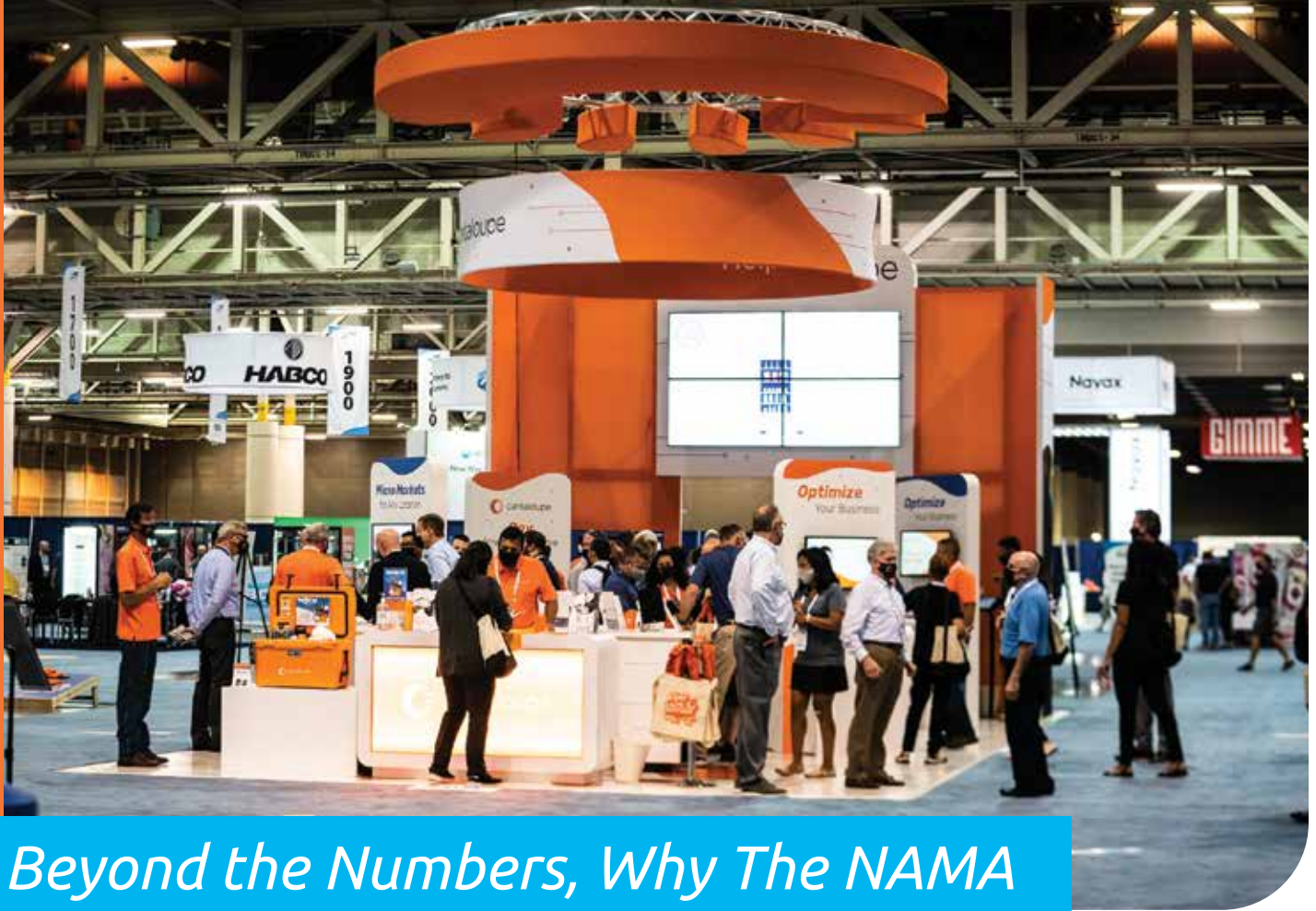
The labor crisis is one of the most critical issues in the pathway to recovery today. Less people in the workforce, looking for more meaningful careers, at companies that fit their lifestyles. These are all signs that it is time to reimagine solutions to today's problems using new tactics, tools and technologies. It's also a signal that convenience services is headed in the right direction.

That was made abundantly clear just by the sheer presence of so many technology partners at The NAMA Show and Coffee Tea & Water in New Orleans this August. The show floor has transformed to include solutions for a better consumer experience, data collection, merchandising and more — reflecting where we're headed as a forward-thinking, consumer-first industry.

The labor force (or lack thereof) is just one example of a challenge that automation is poised to help solve, and of course, there's no one-size-fits-all approach. But operators are sure to benefit from considering the role automation can play in alleviating operational stresses. Some may turn to technology out of necessity but find it can improve virtually every facet of business — from the consumer experience to the bottom line.

Today, automation truly is key to improving multiple aspects within unattended retail business operations. From maximizing inventory to improving online ordering and market restocking, automation helps reduce workforce costs by reducing need for additional labor. Our innovative systems make operations more streamlined, allowing for flexibility and at the same time consistency when trying to increase efficiency during these changing times.

Thankfully, we have what it takes to embrace the digital revolution and use it to our advantage — the momentum is building. By leaning into technology, we'll solve some of our greatest challenges, continue to lead the way as the "original innovators" and maybe even save ourselves from shelling out briefcases of cash just to fill one position. 🌿



## Beyond the Numbers, Why The NAMA Show Was an Incredible Display

By Bob Tulli, Industry Consultant and Vending Market Watch Contributing Editor

**D**espite a gloomy backdrop, my takeaway from the NAMA Show was overwhelmingly positive. Keep in mind, this outlook comes from a guy who spent three hours presenting to six people in a room that was set up for 200.

My optimism was driven by two factors: the incredible New Orleans oysters that were readily available (both raw and grilled) and what I saw with my own eyes on the trade show floor — innovation that will be instrumental in helping the industry to move forward.

### The backdrop

At first glance, the 2021 NAMA Show in New Orleans reminded me of the 1990's conventions that happened right after the big tobacco companies decided to abandon the vending industry. There were gaping holes on the convention floor. Operator participation was

down due to COVID-19 concerns and an unprecedented drop in revenue, especially among OCS operators.

### Technology solutions, product innovations

As contributing editor of Automatic Merchandiser and VendingMarketWatch.com, I was assigned to do eight video interviews with a wide variety of exhibitors who have one thing in common. They want the industry to know that their product is something special — something that operators need to have in their arsenal as they work to rebuild their sales in the coming months.

The videos will allow them to reach operators who could not attend the convention, as well as those who attended and want a deeper understanding of the offerings.

Doing these interviews, I saw how much the convenience services industry has truly evolved in just the past year. There are more technology solutions and product innovations available than ever before. For the survivors

of this brutal period in our industry, when the offices finally repopulate, we should be looking at a “Golden Age” of opportunity. Hopefully, that will begin in 2022’s first quarter.

### A look at the innovators

The eight companies that I interviewed were quite enthusiastic and excited to share their stories, innovations, technology, products and solutions, all designed to give operators a competitive advantage. With that in mind, here is an inside look at eight companies that are poised to elevate the industry.

#### Ansa

[www.ansa.coffee](http://www.ansa.coffee)

**Featured:** On demand coffee roasting for the workplace, including the Barista model and the Retro model that hovers above and feeds roasted coffee into a bean to cup brewer. *“When you talk about the whole world of culinary, it always comes down to two things: the quality of the ingredients that you use and how fresh it is. When you take green coffee beans, roast them, grind them and brew them, you are tasting coffee for the first time.”* — Matan Scharf, Chief Marketing Officer, Ansa

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#### Avanti Markets

[www.avantimarkets.com](http://www.avantimarkets.com)

**Featured:** SimpliGet — Avanti’s remote ordering solution. *“It creates an entirely new business line for an operator, whether they have their own commissary, or they use a ghost kitchen or they work with a local kitchen. It allows them to provide a fresh food, on demand ordering solution, integrated with a custom delivery option.”* — John Reilly, President, Avanti Markets

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#### Marco Beverage Systems

[www.marcobeveragesystems.com](http://www.marcobeveragesystems.com)

**Featured:** POUR’D (for cold brew) and FRIIA (for drinking water). *“There are a few issues with having cold coffee at the office now. Kegs are big, they are bulky, they are heavy and they require refrigeration. Concentrates are shelf stable. Now, with POUR’D, an operator can have two, three or four boxes in a closet. They can replace a bag-in-box system when it is empty, recycle the used box and they are back up and running in three minutes.”* — Brendan Murphy, Western Regional Manager, Marco Beverage Systems

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#### Emerald Transportation Solutions

[www.emeraldtransportationsolutions.com](http://www.emeraldtransportationsolutions.com)

**Featured:** Cost-efficient refrigerated delivery trucks. *“Operators can use fewer trucks, reducing their fleets by as much as 20%.”* — Todd Cawley, President, Emerald Transportation Solutions

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#### 365 Retail Markets

[www.365retailmarkets.com](http://www.365retailmarkets.com)

**Featured:** The PicoMarket and the new MM6 self-checkout kiosk. *“We have a platform called the Global Market Account, which is a single account that consumers can have to go across the entire 365 ecosystem. The consumer only has to fund a single account, and they can use our 365 pay app and access every single point of sale we have in the ecosystem.”* — William Kolpasky, Product Manager, 365 Retail Markets

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#### Gimme

[www.gimmevending.com](http://www.gimmevending.com)

**Featured:** Gimme VMS — Manages an operator’s vending, micro markets and OCS equipment and routes. *“What surprises operators is that our VMS program looks like a modern software application. From a consumer app perspective, there are high demands, high standards — for apps that run on your iPhone, that look good, feel good, work every single time, are convenient and fast — and I think that is the type of experience we deliver on with our VMS.”* — Evan Jarecki, Cofounder, Gimme

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#### Cheesewich

[www.cheesewich.net](http://www.cheesewich.net)

**Featured:** Cheesewich — The original meat and cheese sandwich, plus some new product introductions, like the breakfast taco. *“We have a quality product, the shelf life is amazing, the price point is great and it really is something that everyone loves, especially if they are looking for a healthier product, no carbs, gluten free, high protein.”* — Sarah Nesci, Vice President, Cheesewich

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## Elkay

[www.elkaysmartwell.com](http://www.elkaysmartwell.com)

**Featured:** Elkay's Smartwell beverage dispenser.

*"Operators and facility managers absolutely love this equipment. A lot of our customers are taking out their old school water machines and competitive products and putting in an Elkay Smartwell. It really allows you to elevate the workplace experience and give your employees healthy hydration options while staying onsite."* — Josh Kohn, Senior Business Development Manager, Elkay

### Some surprising feedback

Several exhibitors at this year's NAMA Show said one unexpected fringe benefit of the decreased attendance was the opportunity to spend more time with actual decision-makers. "We look to have quality conversations with the right people," said Gimme's Jarecki. "This particular show definitely sets up well for that."

Matan Scharf of Ansa agreed. "We have not been overrun in the booth which is perfect for us. Our technology and our product

is so new, so groundbreaking, it requires some explanation," he said. "The operators have questions that need to be answered and fortunately, we are primarily speaking to owners and decision makers." 🌿



*About Bob Tullio: Industry consultant and Vending Market Watch contributing editor Bob Tullio is a content specialist who advises operators in the convenience services industry on how to build a successful business from the ground up and advises suppliers on how to successfully connect with operators. Tullio's YouTube channel, b2b Perspective, is designed to "elevate your business in two minutes." Tullio is currently developing an online course, Leverage the power of LinkedIn to grow your business. Visit [tullioB2B.com](http://tullioB2B.com) to learn more about VMW's contributing editor and his b2b services.*

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# CONGRATULATIONS NAMA INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS

Each year the NAMA Industry Awards are presented to individuals that best exemplify consistent support of the convenience services industry through a history of service and leadership throughout the industry, their companies and their communities.

## 2021 NAMA INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS



**INDUSTRY PERSON OF THE YEAR**

**Greg Sidwell**  
President, G & J Marketing

**COFFEE LEGEND OF THE YEAR**



**Tom Steuber**  
President/Owner,  
Associated Services

**OPERATOR OF THE YEAR**



**Jerry Scott**  
Vice President and  
General Manager,  
Canteen of Coastal  
California Inc

**ALLIED MEMBER OF THE YEAR**



**John Hickey**  
Co-Founder,  
Tech 2 Success

## 2020 NAMA INDUSTRY AWARD WINNERS



**INDUSTRY PERSON OF THE YEAR**

**Nicky Gacos**  
Owner, Colorado Café Associates

**COFFEE LEGEND OF THE YEAR**



**Barbara Russell**  
Vice President of  
Sales and Marketing,  
Holiday House  
Distributing

**OPERATOR OF THE YEAR**



**Craig Kushner**  
President,  
Monumental Markets

**ALLIED MEMBER OF THE YEAR**



**Greg Garson**  
Vice President of Sales,  
Vendors Exchange  
International

# TRENDS

## Impacting Convenience Services

By Si Rawls, Partner & Co-Founder, OCS Brands

**A**s our industry continues to evolve from being locked into a food service box and becomes more and more of a retail-focused industry, it's critical that all of the stakeholders of the industry (operators, distributors, manufacturers and brokers) understand the needs and wants of today's consumer. Spoiler alert: These needs and wants are not what they were just two years ago, and COVID-19 has only accelerated what was already happening.

All of us in convenience services are dependent upon one thing: people being at work, right? Not exactly ... what we're really dependent on is that no matter the number of people in each account, we are capturing every single possible sale. The only way to do this is through specialization. One-size-fits-all planograms in machines and markets is a thing of the past for operators. Maximizing manufacturer rebates is right behind it. Successful operators over the next few years will become selling organizations that understand trends, data and technology. Further, they will leverage these core competencies to become flexible immediately at every single account.

What trends do we need to be aware of?

- 1. Who** — By 2025, Millennials will make up 75% of the global workforce.
- 2. Where** — Online. Amazon went from \$11.6 billion to \$21.33 billion from 2019 to 2020. Eighty-five percent of potential customers conduct online research before calling. What does your online presence look like? Are you dealing with actual experts in web design, graphic arts or review managers?

- 3. What** — If you knew the #2 selling snack cake on Amazon and #1 selling item in the healthy bar category for all multi-unit outlets, would they both be in every machine and market that you have? Research for yourself and obtain brick/mortar and online sales data from your suppliers to help you with buying decisions.
- 4. How** — Specialization and connecting the dots. We all know who the customer is, we know they're on your website and we know what they want because the data tells us.

Our industry has come so far in the last decade thanks to data, and we're not done yet. The fact that we can see real time sales remotely and can pre-kit against known numbers is incredible, but it does not increase sales. Understanding and implementing the trends listed above will help our industry continue to grow into a more retail-focused entity. 🐦



*If you would like to learn more about anything here and/or how OCS Brands can help you with your business, please feel free to contact Si Rawls at [si.rawls@ocsbrands.com](mailto:si.rawls@ocsbrands.com).*







# NAMA Fly-In ONE VOICE Advocacy Summit

## Convenience Services Returns to Washington In Person

There is still time to register for NAMA's 2021 Fly-In & Advocacy Summit — Nov. 16-17!

Like all events over the last 18 months, the fly-in will be different this year. But it is more important than ever before to reconnect in person with lawmakers, regulators and nonprofit advocacy organizations to discuss both timely and transformative federal issues.

## Unique Perspectives

Attendees are set to hear from a slate of experts on the important issues impacting convenience services. Through a series of panel discussions, Tuesday's advocacy summit will deliver keen insights into the challenges faced in day-to-day operations.

From supply chain disruptions, labor issues and the coin currency shortage, NAMA members will have the opportunity to engage with decision makers, gain a new understanding of issues and share their stories of real-world impacts.

## Political Insights

Tuesday caps off with a special guest speaker during the annual fly-in dinner.

Guests will hear candid takes on the current state of the political system and predictions for future political outcomes as Washington gears up for the 2022 midterm elections.

## Bringing Convenience Services to Life

The fly-in wraps up on Wednesday as the industry takes to Capitol Hill — meeting with members of Congress and staff. This year's meetings will navigate the new security and health and safety measures in place on Capitol Hill. Nevertheless, NAMA and attendees will take the opportunity to thank lawmakers for their assistance for the industry during the pandemic, share their story and provide real-life business challenges and barriers to full rebound.

Attendees will also educate lawmakers on NAMA's Public Health Commitment, formally announced shortly before the pandemic and other important issues impacting the industry's recovery.



**NOV. 16-17, 2021**

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*Registration opens in December*

— [thenamashow.org](https://thenamashow.org) —

# 5 Key Takeaways from Education Sessions

At The NAMA Show and Coffee Tea & Water — Together In 2021

Together in 2021 featured more than 30 hours of educational content designed to inspire, inform and promote collaboration.

Here's a snapshot of five highlights from some of the insightful sessions.

## 1. Many micro market operations

**haven't achieved their fullest potential**

Conquering the New Micro Market Frontier

With Joe Hessling, CEO, 365 Retail Markets; Greg McCall, Chief Revenue Officer, Five Star Food Service; Steve Orlando, President & CBDO, Fixturelight

## 2. Avoid risk of litigation by documenting everything

An Interactive Legal Workshop on Liability and HR Issues Facing Employers Today

With Heather Bailey, Attorney, SmithAmundsen

## 3. A leadership transition can

**be an opportunity to increase business value**

Passing the Torch: Preparing the Next Generation of Leaders

With Louis Baresh, Sales Manager, Executive Refreshments; Mike Hoeft, VP of Sales — Western Zone, BUNN; Jim Brinton, CEO, Avanti Markets

## 4. Attract talent by building your brand reputation

These Are My People:

Hiring Trends That Bring the Best to Your Business

With Tammy Stokes, VP of Refreshment Services, Five Star Food Service; Steven Vosika, Recruiter, Five Star Food Service

## 5. Focus on your core audience

Profiting from Big Data:

Key Insights from an Analysis of One Million Vending Consumers

With Paresh Patel, CEO and Founder, PayRange



Don't miss out on the insights and context! For a limited time, these session recordings and more are available at [namanow.org/events/thenamashow21/viewing2021education](https://namanow.org/events/thenamashow21/viewing2021education)







## Avanti Markets has made it even easier to deliver for your customers.

The recently introduced SimpliGet solution from Avanti Markets makes the next trend in convenience services accessible to almost any Operator. That trend, of course, is the ability for consumers to order ahead and have what they want delivered, when they want it.

This innovative remote ordering solution will help Operators expand their business opportunities by offering fresh, local and convenient order-ahead options for their customer locations. Operators can set their menus and available delivery windows, and when a consumer places an order, the Operator kitchen (or kitchen partner) receives all the information needed to create and deliver the order.

Operators can further enhance client relationships by offering delivery options that suit the needs of the location. Delivering to

an office lobby? Operators can set up one or multiple SimpliGet Lockers for a contactless, seamless delivery experience. The delivery driver scans the kitchen ticket, places the order in the locker cubby and closes the door.

Another application for SimpliGet is to utilize it as an order ahead option for an onsite cafeteria, where orders are prepared and left for pick up in a designated area, reducing lines and crowding in common areas.

Meanwhile, the consumer receives a text message and email notifying them their order has been delivered and is ready to be

retrieved, which saves them time as well as the hassle of venturing out to get a meal. What's better is that consumers can enjoy the benefits of other common food delivery services, but without the fees and tips typically built into those applications.

While the obvious business application in our industry will be to offer fresh and customized meal options delivered right to the consumer, Operators can also begin to think beyond refreshment services. And when you do that, the possibilities for SimpliGet really are endless.






*I'm Jamie Guadagnino*

*President of Vistar Arizona*  
Vistar

*WIN, NAMA Executive Development Graduate*



***How did you get into the convenience services industry?*** In the summer of 2000, I was contacted by a former co-worker of mine who asked if I would be interested in interviewing with this amazing company she had been working for called VSA (now Vistar). Now, 21 years later, we are both still with that same amazing company, still love the industry, the work we do and all the wonderful people we have the pleasure of working with.

***Give us an overview of your role and key responsibilities.*** I am responsible for overseeing the day-to-day operations of Vistar's Arizona distribution center. I am very fortunate to work with an incredibly talented team here in Arizona. From our warehouse personnel, to our courteous drivers, not to mention our professional, responsive sales and customer service representatives.

***What do you believe are the biggest challenges you face in your business?*** In our current environment, hiring is at the top of our list as a constant, daily challenge.

Our Human Resources department works tirelessly to try to stay ahead of the curve, but it has certainly caused us to have to think more creatively, advertise our strengths as an employer and continue to be hyper focused on retention as well. We work in an exciting and rewarding industry, and this is a great company that offers a lot of support and opportunity, so I believe we're doing better than most and we'll all come out of this stronger.

***What are the greatest opportunities?*** Over the last year, supply chain has been strained across almost all categories and segments. Pivoting and trying to find available items whenever possible has been a key opportunity and strategy for Vistar and the customers we serve. Long term, I know technology has been a big focus of our leadership team as well as expanding our footprint in this expansive convenience industry. We are always looking to learn, grow and enhance our level of service, and I am beyond excited to see where this will take us.

***How has COVID-19 impacted your life and business? (i.e., Did your company pivot in a unique way? Is there something special you accomplished during this time? What lessons have you learned?)*** For all the unfavorable outcomes and challenges COVID-19 has presented, it has taught me a few

things as well. Personally, being able to be with my family and friends again after months of isolation makes me appreciate our time together that much more. Professionally, the lessons are still coming. Staying positive and learning to get comfortable with the uncomfortable is a daily challenge. Now more than ever, I am so thankful for Vistar's leadership. Their support and guidance through this unpredictable time has been invaluable.

***Moving forward, what are your personal/professional goals?*** In my personal life right now, my husband and I are a few short years away from being empty nesters. We are all about creating as many memories with our two boys as we can before they set out on their own personal and professional adventures. Professionally, as more and more businesses are ramping up, and offices are opening back up at such a rapid pace, we are focused on providing the best service possible to our customers. Their success is our success, and we want to use all the tools available to us to ensure that we are helping them thrive in the best of times, as well as in the most challenging of times.

***Tell us about the most memorable work experience you have had.*** I think one of the best experiences I've had was the opportunity to participate in the 2012 NAMA Executive Development Program

at Michigan State. I learned so much, had an opportunity to network with a lot of influential industry partners and as intense as it was, we still managed to have a really great time in the process.

*What is one thing — either industry-related or not — you learned in the last month?* I'm currently reading "The Upskilling Imperative" and learning about the importance of "upskilling" or skills development in the workplace. It states that 51% of associates will leave jobs that don't provide adequate training ... but the delivery method is just as key as the content. Learning should be presented as an opportunity for development, and it should be accessible to everyone in the organization. If done properly, it improves engagement and will help our associates embrace change and be more adaptable for the new unforeseeable skills needed for the future. Great book!

## ***"Be accountable; a mistake not learned from is an opportunity wasted."***

*What advice would you offer young people starting their careers in this industry?* Don't continue to do things the way they've always been done, or the way we taught you. It's okay to question us, challenge our logic and use your big, youthful brain to bring us some ideas on how to get the job done better and more efficiently ... I am all ears.

*What is a favorite piece of advice you have received that has helped you in your professional career?* Be accountable; a mistake not learned from is an opportunity wasted. Someone gave me this nugget of knowledge about 20 years ago, and I use it all the time.

*As a Women in the Industry (WIN) member, in your own words, what is the value of participating in group?* The networking and collaboration in this group has been the most rewarding aspect of it. I have met women from across the industry, across the country and from all different backgrounds. I've made some great friends in the process as well.

*What is something about you (a fun fact) that not many people know?* This maybe the most difficult question of all ... I grew up in England, I LOVE music and going to see live music, but tragically I have an absolutely horrible singing voice. I also have two big, beautiful Labradors named Bowie and Murphy who I enjoy spending time with almost as much as my human family. 🐾

# Welcome! TO OUR NEWEST MEMBERS

Covenant Vending, LLC

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Questions? Contact NAMA's Membership Department at  
888.337.8363 or [members@namanow.org](mailto:members@namanow.org).

\* This list includes companies that became members between August 1, 2021 – October 22, 2021



# HELLO

*I'm Allison Krupp*

*Business Development Manager — International  
365 Retail Markets*

*Bachelor's Degree in communications  
& event management from Central Michigan University  
Membership Chair of ELN, and worked very closely with NAMA team  
members on all 365 Sponsored events like the Fly-In, CTW and  
The NAMA Show until my roll change in 2020.*



**How did you get into the convenience services industry?** I found the convenience services industry through working for 365 Retail Markets, which was more like a “tech startup” at the time. I started off as a sales admin doing data entry, but once I learned more about what the industry is and the many facets of it, I immediately began working toward growing within the company, learning about our products and services and involving myself in the industry more and more.

**Give us an overview of your role and key responsibilities.** My current role at 365 is to focus on the growth and development of our international business. I work closely with our many distributors, operators and partners overseas — making sure that they stay well-informed and have whatever they need to grow their own businesses. I develop new processes and procedures for our internal teams to make sure that we are scalable during such massive growth. I also assist with research and

strategy behind current and potential expansion opportunities globally.

**What are the skills you use most in your career?** I have to say that communication, attention to detail and organization are the skills I use every minute of the day. It is very important in my roll to make sure that everyone is “in the loop” — from all of our internal teams to our external partners in all 14 countries . . . and growing. It can be a lot to manage, as every country and department is different, which makes organization and attention to detail that much more important.

**What do you believe are the biggest challenges you face in your business?** The biggest challenge has to be our rapid growth. Like I stated before, I started in this industry with a smaller technology company with big dreams. The dreams have amazingly become reality, being the global industry leaders! Growing pains are bound to come with such quick expansion, but great new team members, and a bigger and better sense of community has also come with it.

**What are the greatest opportunities?** The greatest opportunity, in my opinion, is being able to help the industry overseas

grow their businesses through unattended retail and convenience services. This is a newer concept to our international counterparts, as they have had their focus on vending and coffee (which they have done an excellent job of perfecting). However, there is a growing need to expand their offerings to fit with the changing demands of the consumer. I'm just really happy to be here to help with that.

**How has COVID-19 impacted your life and business? (i.e., Did your company pivot in a unique way? Is there something special you accomplished during this time? What lessons have you learned?)** I am very lucky to say that 365 was able to experience growth during COVID-19. At 365, we had so many solutions in the works, or already in our product line up, that helped the convenience services industry pivot to a more touchless and unattended environment. I believe that COVID-19 made these solutions more valuable and in-demand for our customers to be able to provide a safe environment for their clients in such uncertain times.

**Moving forward, what are your personal/professional goals?** I'm very passionate about our industry, and the technology behind the success of so

***“It is great to see a new generation of leaders come together, utilize each other’s insight and knowledge of the industry, and to be able to learn from one another to be able to serve our communities better.”***

many operators. My goal is to continue to help connect operators to the technology that serves them and their customers best, making unattended retail technology accessible for all operators globally.

***Tell us about the most memorable work experience you’ve had.*** I was fortunate enough to be able to go to Italy for the European Vending Association’s 25<sup>th</sup> General Assembly in 2019. Operators from all over Europe spoke about their businesses and their needs, and I was able to see first-hand the actual breadth of this industry. It definitely gave me a better perspective that I continue to utilize today.

***What’s one thing — either industry-related or not — you learned in the last month?*** This past week I was fortunate enough to go all over the UK to visit with some of our operators and partners and to attend an event with many of the industry leaders that are based there. After over a year of Zoom meetings and many emails back and forth,

finally being able to meet these people in person was amazing! Especially after having spent so much time with them virtually, it made it that much sweeter. I learned that you can communicate as much as you want, using whatever avenue you wish to use, but a face-to-face meeting with a nice, firm handshake is the most important to really be able to connect with one another.

***What advice would you offer young people starting their careers in this industry?*** I would tell them two things: 1) Spend as much time as you can learning as much as you can about what the convenience service industry is and what we do here. Having a solid base of knowledge will help you more than you know. 2) There are a ton of amazing mentors within this industry that are happy and excited to be able to help you learn and grow. Find a good one and learn from them.

***What’s a favorite piece of advice you’ve received that has helped you***

***in your professional career?*** One of my favorite professors at Central Michigan University, Tim Otteman, used to ingrain two simple mottos into his student’s heads — “K.I.S.S.” (keep it simple, stupid) and “It’s all about who you know.”

***As an Emerging Leaders Network (ELN) member, in your own words, what is the value of participating in group?***

I love being a part of a group that is so passionate about our industry, like I am. It is great to see a new generation of leaders come together, utilize each other’s insight and knowledge of the industry and to be able to learn from one another to serve our communities better. I value my ELN membership so much.

***What’s something about you (a fun fact) that not many people know?*** My brother-in-law, James, is known for his notorious fail on Wheel of Fortune. Look up “Pointed Desert” on YouTube — you won’t regret it! 🍷

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