

2025 AGENDA



HEY SPRINGBOARDERS,

We're thrilled by the incredible response to this year's Springboard Conference—your enthusiasm, feedback, and social media buzz helped earn Springboard the #2 ranking among franchise events in Entrepreneur magazine's September issue. Thank you for being part of this growing community.

In a conference world defined by skimpification, we remain committed to delivering an experiential, high-end, and fun event that attracts the brightest minds and boldest innovators in franchising.

This year, Brad and I teamed up with partner Ryan Hicks and an exceptional Advisory Board to set our best-in-class fighting strategy. Together, we've transformed our SpringboardU Franchise Education sessions into dynamic "boxing matches" and debates tackling today's most critical issues.

When it comes to AI, we'll go beyond the hype—showcasing real use cases where franchisors are already using AI to boost development, operations, and efficiency. Expect a candid look at the Wild West of AI's legal landscape, the risks, and the guardrails emerging to define best practices.

Every Springboard session has been rewritten with one goal in mind: to give emerging franchisors practical, actionable insights—not war stories. You'll walk away with strategies you can put into play immediately.

Springboard is also your go-to education hub for franchise sales compliance. Join us for SpringboardU on Wednesday from 3-5PM. ►

And don't miss our Springboard Bash! We're closing out the evening with a knockout performance by The Sugarhill Gang.

We're honored to be in your corner as you grow your franchise and look forward to an unforgettable event.

See you ringside,

Lane and Brad

WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 15

2:00-6:00PM Registration

SPRINGBOARDU

Scan your barcode at each legal session to track participation!

3:00-3:55PM

FRANCHISE SALES COMPLIANCE 101:

The FTC Sanctioned Match—Go the Distance Without Getting DQ'd

Speakers: Joseph Brooks Attorney, FisherZucker; Bobby Brennan Managing Director, Front Street Equity Partner; Anthony Sutter General Counsel, ResiBrands

Franchise sales can feel like stepping into the ring – one wrong move and you're down for the count. This session is designed to give franchisors, sales teams, and development executives the footwork and fundamentals needed to compete without getting hit with penalties.

We'll cover the basic rules of the fight, including the Federal Trade Commission's Franchise Rule, state registration requirements, and the common punches (and low blows) that catch brands off guard. Using real-world sparring scenarios, you'll learn how to:

- Keep your sales jabs sharp without straying outside the FDD.
- Throw Item 19 punches correctly – and block misrepresentation claims.
- Protect yourself when working with brokers and cornermen (consultants).
- Recognize the warning bells before the referee (regulators) calls foul.

Whether you're stepping into the compliance ring for the first time or just need a refresher on your stance, this session will equip you with the guardrails to stay in the fight and keep winning rounds without losing on technicalities.

4:05-5:00PM

FRANCHISE SALES COMPLIANCE 201:

Prize Fights and Big Purses, Rookie Mistakes Which Prevent A Rise To the Top

Speakers: Drew Chalfant COO, FranDevCo; Brian Alas Managing Director, Boxwood Partners; JoyAnn Kenny Partner, FisherZucker

Selling your franchise isn't a sparring match – it's the championship fight. In the ring of M&A, private equity firms and platform companies pull no punches, and due diligence is where the gloves come off. This panel of seasoned franchise and legal professionals will walk you through how buyers evaluate brands, uncover risks, and decide whether to pay top dollar, recast the deal, or walk away entirely. Through good, bad, and ugly case studies, you'll see how well-run systems sail through due diligence, while poorly managed ones take knockout blows. Expect practical, pragmatic insights on the invasive process, deal-killing red flags, and what you can do today to protect your valuation tomorrow. Step into this session ready to learn how to keep your brand standing strong when it's time to go the distance.

6:30-9:30PM

Welcome Reception at City Winery sponsored by Franchise Ninja



THURSDAY, OCTOBER 16

7:00-8:00AM Breakfast sponsored by ITI Smart Solutions

8:00-8:45AM Welcome to Springboard

Opening remarks from **Constant Contact** and the **Franchisors.com** team.

Welcome Video sponsored by Franmastery

LOOK OUT BELOW!

Dave Liniger is gonna be droppin' some knowledge.



8:45-9:30AM

Keynote sponsored by **Franfund®**

Resilience, Leadership, and Building Through Adversity

Moderator: Adam Contos *Partner, Area 15 Ventures, LLC*

Speaker: Dave Liniger *Founder and Chairman, Re/Max*

Franchising is not for the faint of heart. Few people embody this truth better than Dave Liniger, founder of RE/MAX, a man who built one of the world's most iconic real estate brands while staring down challenges that would break most entrepreneurs.

From government audits to mafia threats, from combat tours in Vietnam to full-contact karate and NASCAR racing—Liniger's story is one of unyielding resilience, leadership, and a belief that “everybody wins” when franchisors truly support their franchisees.

In this rare keynote, facilitated by his longtime mentee and former RE/MAX President Adam Contos, Dave will share uncut lessons in grit, growth, and leadership that emerging franchisors can immediately apply as they navigate the first 5-10 years of brand building.

This is not theory. This is battlefield wisdom from a franchising legend.

9:30-9:45AM

Break sponsored by **Franchise Business Review**



9:45-10:30AM

Boxing Match 1: Man vs. Machine—The Intelligence Showdown

Boxers: Brynn Spencer *CEO Consumer Fusion*; Scott Abbott *CEO of Five Star Painting*; Steven Montgomery *CEO ResiBrands*; Shane Evans *CEO Heights Wellness Retreats*; Kris Stuart *CEO Bloomin Blinds*

Welcome to the ring. In the left corner: real-world experience, gut instinct, and human connection. **In the right corner:** machine learning, automation, and scalable speed.

This isn't a trend—it's a transformation. From franchise development to field support, today's top contenders aren't just dabbling in AI—they're mastering it.

Get ringside for a no-holds-barred bout as franchise leaders reveal the tools, wins, and knockout blows of AI in action. Hear where the machines delivered – and where the human touch threw the winning punch.

10:30-11:15AM

Boxing Match 2: FSO vs. ORGANIC

Boxers: Carey Gille *CEO Franchise Fastlane*; Nick Sheehan *Co-Founder & Managing Partner, REP'M Group*; Red Boswell *IFGP & FranchiseWire, President*; Josh Wall *COO, Unleashed Brands*; Tom Wood *President & CEO, Floor Coverings International*; Meg Roberts *CEO, Head To Toe Brands*; David Mesa *CFE, President-Franchise Division, Ballard Brands*

In the left corner: Internal Team Titans. This team will argue that the best brand growth comes from within, where stakeholders are already equipped with brand passion, institutional knowledge, aligned incentives, and adherence to their long-term brand vision. With an internal playbook that works, why relinquish control to others?

In the right corner: Outsourcing Specialists. This team will claim outside expertise is better, having done this 100's of times in the past by utilizing the right relationships to drive fast, healthy growth. When you have access to proven processes, fresh perspectives, and scalable muscle, why train a rookie when you can easily hire a champion?

These fighting teams will go head-to-head, debating one burning question: Which strategy builds franchise growth healthier, faster, and more profitably for both Zees and Zors?



The Corner Crew: Building the Operations Team to Ramp Up

Moderator: Brian Luciani *Chief Growth Officer, SMB Franchising*

Speakers: Kristy Mailloux *Partner, Three20 Capital Group*; Marty Ferrill *President, Philly Pretzel Factory*; Chris Brady *Co-Founder, Timber Pizza Company*; Stephen P. Smith *Founder & CEO, HOTWORX Franchising Corporation*

Even the best fighters can't win without a strong corner. Behind every franchise expansion is an operations team that keeps the system conditioned, disciplined, and ready for the next round. This panel will show why operations isn't just support. It's the cornerman, trainer, and strategist all in one, fueling faster ramp-up and sustainable growth. Learn how great ops leadership speeds onboarding, sharpens performance, and builds a culture that goes the distance. From training and tech to supplier partners in your corner, discover how to assemble the powerhouse team that keeps your franchise fighting fit.

Avoiding Legal Confrontations:

Finding Consensus Before Strapping on the Gloves

Moderator: Lane Fisher *Attorney, FisherZucker*

Speakers: Elena Sullivan, *Managing Member, Endereza Law, PLLC*; Frank Reino *Partner, FisherZucker*; Ryan Combe *Managing Partner, Cornerstone Franchise Partners*

Franchise relationships don't break overnight, they fray quietly in the corners, long before the gloves come off. This session equips franchisors with the tools to recognize early warning signs, de-escalate tension, and build systems that encourage collaboration over confrontation.

We'll explore real-world strategies to keep your fighters aligned and out of the courtroom, from structured communication rhythms and franchise advisory councils to third-party mediation techniques, innovative problem-solving frameworks, and knowing when to bring in a referee before it's too late.

Perfect for franchisor executives, legal counsel, and operations leaders, this program will help you reduce legal exposure, preserve brand equity, and turn potential conflicts into opportunities for consensus. Because in franchising, the best wins are the ones you never have to fight for.

Unifying Data, Marketing & Ops for the Championship Round

Moderator: Gabriella Ferrara *Vice President of Strategic Sales, Scorpion*

Speakers: Ben Fox *CXO, Five Star Franchising*; Charles Keyser *President, Keyser Enterprises*; Adam Terranova *Senior Director of Marketing, Authority Brands*; Sharon Villegas *Chief Revenue Officer, Re-Bath LLC*

Discover how data-driven strategies act as your jabs - precise, consistent signals that build momentum - and how integrated marketing and operations teams deliver the knockout counter-punch that turns insights into impact. We'll explore how shared metrics, aligned processes and real-time feedback loops transform internal silos into a cohesive ring team.

Know Your Why: Avoiding the TKO

Moderator: Josh Wall *Chief Operating Officer, Unleashed Brands*

Speakers: Shannon Wilburn *Executive Director and Franchise Coach, SMB Franchise Advisors*; Jason Parker *Co-Founder & Co-CEO, K9 Resorts Daycare & Luxury Hotel*; John Teza *President and CEO, Hand and Stone Massage and Facial Spa*; Steve White *CEO, PuroClean*

As a founder, your personal "why" is the cornerstone of your brand's identity and long term success. But in the fast paced world of franchising, it's easy to get caught in the weeds and lose sight of your original purpose. This candid, founder to founder panel will explore how identifying and staying anchored to your "why" can guide strategic decisions, shape culture, and fuel sustainable growth.

Our panel of experienced franchisor founders will share how clarity of purpose helped them scale their brands thoughtfully, by knowing when to lean in, when to let go, and how to surround themselves with the right people. Whether you are refining your role, thinking about succession, or looking to scale with intention, this session will give you both the inspiration and the practical insights to grow a brand that reflects your values and vision.

Franchise Founder's Wake Up Call:

How to Avoid the Financial Stumbles that Could Lead to the TKO

Moderator: Erik Van Horn *Co-Founder, Front Street Equity Partners*

Speakers: Sherri Seiber *President, FranFund*; Carrie Evans *Chief Development Officer, Dine Growth Group*; Todd Recknagel *Managing Partner, Three20 Capital Group*

Most franchise failures don't happen because of the concept they happen because founders miscalculate. They overestimate growth, underestimate capital, and build projections on hope instead of evidence. The result? Flawed financial models, underfunded launches, and strategies that look good on paper but collapse in practice. In this panel, franchise leaders and funding experts pull back the curtain on the mistakes that quietly kill emerging brands, from unrealistic planning to shaky financial structures. Together, they'll share the practical fixes and hard-won lessons that separate sustainable franchises from those destined for the graveyard. This conversation could be the difference between scaling smart and failing fast.

Internal vs External Costs for Fran Dev

Moderator: Don Taranelli *Exec Vice President of Franchise Development, Franchise Fastlane*

Speakers: Alex Samios, *Chief Growth Officer & Partner, Dogtopia*; Tyler Altenhofen *Co-Founder and Chief Growth Officer, Franchise Sidekick*; Jeff Wall *CEO, Handyman Connection*; JT Thiessen *Partner and Chief Growth Officer, BrandONE*

Budgeting for responsible franchise growth starts with knowing which fight you're in. Behind every emerging brand lies a brutal balancing act. Do you build your corner crew in-house or bring in outside firepower? Should you rely on your own team or tap into a specialized one?

Once your entourage is walking you to the ring, it's time to finalize your fight plan. When the bell rings, you've got new decisions to make. Do you bob and weave your way to growth with tried-and-true internal strategies like digital organics, or do you punch hard with the combined power and backing of outsourced development and consultant networks? Keep in mind that whatever strategy you adopt, cost will always be a crucial factor. Emerging brands can't afford to bleed capital.

In this high-impact session our panelists will break down the real numbers, reveal the blind spots, and discuss the strategic tradeoffs of internal teams versus outsourced solutions. This session will show you how to stop bleeding cash, start landing strategic punches, and win the growth war without getting counted out early.

Train Smarter: Practical AI Use Cases from the Field

Moderator: Raphael Rajan *Co-Founder & CEO, EZee Assist*

Speakers: Mike O'Driscoll *President & COO, Homefront Brands*; Sean Quinn *CEO, All Point Retail*; Brian Beers *Multi-Unit Franchisee Midas & That 1 Painting*; Roger Martin *CEO, Rock Box Fitness*

AI isn't just a buzzword—it's a tool that today's most forward-thinking franchisors are actively using to improve operations, marketing, development, and support. In this action-oriented panel, three innovative franchise leaders share how they're leveraging artificial intelligence in the real world—not in theory—to work smarter, grow faster, and empower their teams.

From automating repetitive tasks to improving lead quality, optimizing unit-level performance, and enhancing franchisee support, this session offers an inside look at practical, tested use cases from the field.

Whether you're just beginning to explore AI or already experimenting with tools like ChatGPT, this panel will leave you with tangible ideas, inspiration, and clarity on where to start—or where to go next.



12:30-1:30PM

Private Equity Update: A Championship Lunch

sponsored by **Citrin Cooperman**

Moderator: Alicia Miller Managing Director, Emergent Growth Advisors

Speakers: Ashish Seth Founder & Managing Director, Harrington Park Advisors; Adam McKean Managing Director, Levine Leichtman Capital Partners; Phil Piro Partner, Princeton Equity Group; Patrick Galleher Managing Partner, Boxwood Partners; Grant Marcks Partner, Origination, Riverside Company; Paul Altero Founder, Bubbakoo's Burritos

After a brief pause in early 2025, M&A dealmaking in the franchise sector is back in full swing! Join us for lunch and hear this experienced group dealmakers provide their perspective on recent M&A trends, deals, and valuations. Also joining the conversation is a founder who recently sold his business. (Did that founder use a banker? No, he did not.) And remember, today's PE buyers are tomorrow's sellers. How do professional investors themselves prepare assets for the scrutiny of a sale process? What are the learnings for founders approaching their first transaction? It's sure to be a spicy conversation with three advisors, three PE firms, and one founder on stage together. We'll break down what's happening in the market and provide you with actionable takeaways to create maximum enterprise value and brand longevity in your own business.

1:45-2:35PM Second Round of Workshops

Scaling from 1 to 100 Units: The True Cost of a Title Shot

Moderator: Gary Occhiogrosso Franchisor, Franchise Growth Solutions, LLC

Speakers: Jeff Dudan CEO, HomeFront Brands; Josh Skolnick Founder, Horse Power Brands; Sam Ballas Founder and CEO, East Coast Wings and Grill; Josh Halpern CEO, Big Chicken

Everyone wants to be a champion, but few know what it actually takes to get to the top. This session is your ringside pass to the real costs of scaling a franchise from a local contender to a national heavyweight. You'll hear from franchisors who have gone the distance. Some did it with an in-house team, while others used an outside manager.

This session breaks down the real costs of growing your brand from a founder-led fighter to a professionally scaled franchise system. You'll walk through the startup investment needed to franchise, when to hire key corner crew members, what to expect in legal, marketing, and sales spend, and at what stages of growth you will need to reinvest in your ops, tech, and support teams.

Whether you're still training out of your first gym or you're a franchisor looking to scale the right way, this panel will give you the financial roadmap and ideal timing so you can avoid costly mistakes and grow with championship confidence.

This session you will hear from franchisors who have done it. Some have done it with in-house franchise sales, others by using a FSO. This session breaks down the real costs of growing your brand from founder-led to a professionally scaled franchise system. You'll walk through the startup investment needed to franchise, when to hire key team members, what to expect in legal, marketing, and sales spend, and at what stages of growth you will to reinvest in ops, tech, and support.

Whether you're still operating corporate locations or you're a franchisor looking to scale the right way, this panel will give you the financial roadmap, and the ideal timing, so you can avoid costly mistakes and grow with confidence.

Growing with Multi-Unit Champions

Moderator: Laura Michaels Editor In Chief, Franchise Times

Speakers: Gary Robins President, The G&C Robins Company; Scott Williams CEO, Batteries Plus; Todd Evans Chief Development Officer The Franchise Group; Jerry Akers President, Sharpness Inc.

Franchisee profitability is under pressure – and staffing is the choke point. From hiring and retention to scheduling and team leadership, getting it wrong—and learn exactly how franchisors can help more Zees build teams that stay, show up, and drive results. Walk away with a playbook you can immediately implement across your system.

Winning the Fight for Attention:

Franchise Development Messaging That Stands Out

Moderator: Abby Fogel CFE, VP Brand Management & Communications, Unleashed Brands

Speakers: Brooke Budke Witse CEO, The Momentum Brands; Carli Showmaker Principal, Showmaker Productions; Kim Collier Chief Development Officer, Ducklings Early Learning Centers; Kim Hanson CEO, Learning RX

Franchise development marketing is a different fight than consumer marketing—and your message needs to connect with a very different audience. In this session, panelists will share tips on how to craft messaging that speaks directly to potential franchisees by making them the center of the story. Learn how to position your brand as the guide, highlight the path to ownership, and create marketing assets that inspire the right candidates to see themselves in your brand's future.

Local Lead Gen:

Local Heavyweight Delivering Knockout Leads on Home Turf

Moderator: Jam Hashmi CEO, ClickTecs

Speakers: Don Allen COO, Zoom Room; Brian Gross President, Bach to Rock; Ashley Mitchell Vice President of Marketing, East Coast Wings and Grill; Thomas Scott CEO, Home Run Franchises

Step into the ring where “local is the new national”. This session hones in on how franchisors and franchisees can land heavy punches in local lead gen by treating each zip code like its own big-league bout. Discover how to mobilize hyper-local SEO, geo-targeted ads and grassroots marketing alongside brand level playbook to ensure franchisees are never on the ropes when it comes to lead volume. We'll cover winning strategies to deliver a steady left jab of national visibility, then bring in the knockout right hook through localized campaigns and community engagement. Learn how to create round-after-round of consistent, territory-specific success for every franchisee.

Balancing Policy, Protection & Possibility:

Crafting AI Guardrails That Empower Franchisees

Moderator: Mike Chachula Chief Information Officer, Propelled Brands

Speakers: Mark Montini CEO, QC Kinetix; Mike Hartel CEO, Cabinet IQ; Halle O'Neill Chief Marketing Officer, Momentum Brands

In an era where artificial intelligence can supercharge growth—or expose brands to new risks—striking the right balance between innovation and oversight is critical. This interactive session will guide franchise leaders through the end-to-end process of designing, implementing, and communicating AI usage policies at the brand level. You'll walk away with concrete frameworks, real-world examples, and actionable strategies to keep your brand's data secure, your voice consistent, and your franchisees both empowered and accountable.

2:45-3:45PM

An Interactive Working Session with David Barr

Speaker: David Barr Chairman, PMTD Restaurants LLC

3:45-4:00PM

Break sponsored by **Gusto**

4:00-5:00PM

Roundtables

4 points that the facilitator has at the table (biggest wins, challenges, etc)

6:30-9:00PM 2300 Arena

Springboard Bash sponsored by **Harrington Park Advisors**



9:00-10:15PM

Sponsored by
Entrepreneur®
& **Scorpion**

FRIDAY, OCTOBER 17

7:00-8:00AM Breakfast sponsored by Out of the Box Technology

8:00-8:30AM Opening remarks from the Franchisors.com team.

THE FUTURE WON'T WAIT!

8:30-9:15AM

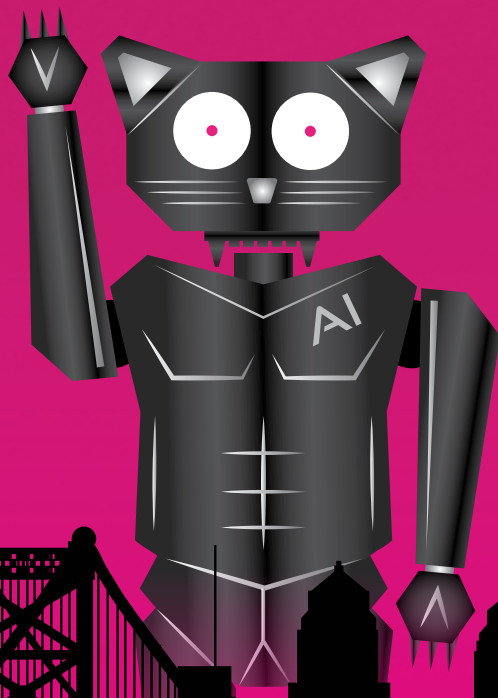
Keynote sponsored by Allpoint

AI at Springboard 2025:

Speaker: Dan Monaghan Founder, Clear Summit Group

An overview of what's happening in AI today through the lens of franchising - how are franchisors using it in corporate operations (lead gen, FD, marketing, operations, etc.), within their franchise systems to optimize franchisee unit economics, and in the customer experience. Then we'd take a look at what the next number of years ahead look like in AI and other related technologies.

9:15-9:30AM Break sponsored by Enspire for Enterprise



9:30-10:15AM

Boxing Match 3: Ring of ROI—Marketing's Fiercest Face-Offs

Boxers: Maddi Zook Fractional VP of Marketing Skyhawks, Multi-Unit Franchisee Threshold Brands; Abby Lee Executive Vice President, Marketing, Communications, & Events, Re/Max; Heather McLeod Founder, Woofie's - Columbia; Juliet Diiorio Chief Revenue Officer, Threshold Brands

Step into the ring where the toughest marketing questions get answered head-on. This high-energy, debate-style session breaks down the strategic battles every franchisor faces when building a scalable, data-first marketing function that's aligned with operations and built for franchisee success.

Main Event: Agency vs. Internal—Which model truly delivers stronger ROI at scale?

Co-Main: Budgeting vs. Data—Should marketing or operations own the spend, tracking, and accountability?

Undercard: Mandated vs. Recommended Monthly Spend—How much control should franchisors have over local investment?

Wildcard Bout: The National Ad Fund—Transparency, trust, and the eternal question: Where does it really go? Description: Structuring a Scalable Marketing Function That's Data-First, Operationally Aligned, and Franchisee-Focused

10:15-11:00AM

Boxing Match 4: REGIONAL vs. NATIONAL GROWTH

Boxers: Brad Fishman CEO, Fishman PR; Jeff Herr Managing Partner, Front Street Equity Partners; Jesse Keyser CEO, Keyser Enterprises; Tim Courtney CFE, VP Franchise Development, PuroClean; Kelly Roddy CEO, WOWorks

Ops vs. Sales: The Territory Takedown

When it comes to market expansion, are we selling for short-term wins or building for sustainable growth? This bout dives into the tension between pushing multi-unit packages versus strategically pacing development. From over-promised support to the realities of operational execution, we'll unpack the risks and rewards of aggressive sales.

Expect candid discussion on:

3-Pack Sales vs. Strategic Growth

Which drives healthier system performance?

Franchisee Support Capacity

Can your infrastructure keep pace with your sales?

Area Reps & Territory Growth

Who should control the path forward, and how?

It's a classic clash of vision and reality—what sells on paper may not always scale in practice.



11:10AM-12:00PM Third Round of Workshops

Ideal Candidate Profile: Finding Your Heavyweight Contenders

Moderator: Mark Jameson *Chief Development Officer, Propelled Brands*

Speakers: John Lancaster *Vice President Franchise Development, Choice Hotels International*; Jason Olsen *Founder & CEO, IMAGE Studios*; Brigham Dallas *Founder, Hello Sugar*; Larisa Walega *CFE, Chief Growth Officer, Ziebart*

Every great franchise system wins or loses based on who's in its corner. The wrong candidates drain energy and stall momentum; the right ones fuel culture, profitability, and long-term growth. In this high-impact panel, experts will show franchisors how to build their "fighter's profile". Learn all about the traits, motivations, and mindset that make a franchisee a true contender, and considerations for the right candidate, and when to say no!

AI-Powered RevOps: Aligning Your Corner for Revenue Growth

Moderator: Adam Waid *CEO, Voxie*

Speakers: Mike Hartel *Founder and CEO, Cabinet IQ*; Reed Nyffeler *CEO, Signal*; Jonathan Barnett *CEO, Oxi Fresh*; Tony Hulbert *CEO, HorsePower Brands*

AI is changing the way franchisors think about growth. In this session, franchise leaders will share how they are using AI to connect marketing and operations in new ways that directly drive revenue. From smarter targeting and lead generation to operational efficiencies that increase unit-level performance, you'll learn practical approaches that create measurable business impact. Walk away with fresh ideas, proven use cases, and a roadmap to put AI to work in your system today.

The GEO Uppercut: Preparing Your Brand for FranDev's New Era

Moderator: Zack Fishman *Chief Growth Officer, Fishman PR*

Speakers: Scott Snyder *CEO, Bad Ass Coffee of Hawaii*; Albert Hermans *Chief Development Officer, Floor Coverings International*; Eric Simon *Chief Development Officer, Xponential Fitness*; Steve Corps *Chief Growth Officer, WOWorks*

It's no secret: franchise development marketers have been on the ropes the past few years. Instead of clicking on a link in a Google search, society has shifted to a new reality: not even clicking at all. In this session, our panelists will give you the knockout moves to keep your FranDev marketing game stinging like a bee, no matter how your candidates are searching.

12:10-1:10PM

Franchise Icons: A Champion's Lunch Panel

Moderator: Lane Fisher *Attorney, Fisher Zucker*

Speakers: Mike Manzo *Retired COO, Jersey Mike's*; Charlie Chase *President & CEO, FirstService Brands*; Chris Dull *President & CEO, Freddy's Frozen Custard & Steakburger*

Pull up a chair and join us for an unfiltered ringside chat with three leaders who've built, scaled, and trained some of the most admired systems in franchising.

1:20-2:10PM Fourth Round of Workshops

From Golden Gloves to the Big Leagues: Training Startup Franchisors to Go Pro

Moderator: Michael Iannuzzi *Partner & Franchise Practice Leader, Citron Cooperman*

Speakers: Neal Courtney *Partner CEO, Cookie Cutters Haircuts For Kids*; Stephanie Knepp *CEO Sit Still Kids*; Mitch Cohen *Multi-Unit Franchisee, Sola Salons and Jersey Mike's/Partner, Performax Franchisee Advisors*

Every new franchisor steps into the ring with energy and ambition—but without the right training regime, early wins can turn into quick knockouts. In this session, hear from franchisors who've gone the distance and leveled up from rookies to pros. Learn how to build the fundamentals, avoid rookie mistakes, and develop the skills and stamina to compete—and win—on the main stage of franchising.

Intelligent Interactions:

AI Tech Transforming Franchise Customer Experience

Moderator: Patti Rother *Fractional Chief Development, Head to Toe Brands*

Speakers: Lincoln Crutchfield *Client Relations, Nessit*; Christian Manzano *Marketing Director, The Learning Experience*; Michael Schatzberg *Co-Founder & Managing Partner, Branded Hospitality*; Kyle Hillman *Senior Franchise Support Coach, Bin There Dump That*

AI is transforming the way franchises connect with and serve their fans, creating smarter, more personalized interactions at every touchpoint. In this session, franchise leaders will share practical examples of how AI tools are driving higher satisfaction, loyalty, and revenue by enhancing the fan experience. You'll walk away with clear use cases and actionable ideas to improve customer engagement in your own system, ensuring every person in the crowd leaves feeling like a champion.

Consumer Marketing in 2025: Standing Out in the Ring

Moderator: Elyse Lupin *President, Elysium Marketing Group*

Speakers: James Kapnick *CEO, 4Ever Young*; Chris Ives *CEO, Bubbakoos Burritos*; Doug Flaig *CEO, Stratus Building Solutions*; Josh Cohen, *Founder, The Junkluggers*

With AI training every fighter is giving every brand access to a polished jab, paid media, and personalized footwork but, the real challenge isn't showing up for the bout—it's standing out in the ring.

In this session, we'll explore why brand differentiation is more essential than ever in 2025 and how your franchise can avoid blending into the ropes. We'll learn how evolving consumer behaviors—like AI-assisted scouting, faster decision-making, and increased skepticism—demand a clear, memorable, and emotionally resonant brand presence that can land a knockout punch.

Partnering with Franchise Brokers: Your Corner Crew for the Fight

Moderator: Sung Ohm *President & CEO, FranDevCo*

Speakers: Aaron Harper *CEO, Rolling Suds*; Kim Daly *Founder & CEO, The Zee Suite*; Doug Schadle *CEO, Rhino 7 Franchising*; Jen Cain *Chief Sales Officer Sequel Brands*

Franchise brokers are the essential corner crew you need in your fight for growth. They're the seasoned trainers and managers who scout, vet, and guide prospective fighters (franchisees) right to your ring. They have the network and the know-how to find candidates who are not just ready to fight but are ready to win with your brand.

In this session, we'll teach you how to build a championship partnership with brokers. You'll learn how to get their buy-in, get on their radar, and get in their playbook as a brand they want to represent. This isn't just about leads; it's about finding the right fighters who will go the distance and help your brand hoist the belt.

2:15-3:00PM

How to Self-Fund Your Franchise Brand:

Training for Growth Without Giving Away Your Corner Closing Session

Moderator: Dawn Kane *CEO, Hot Dish Advertising*

Speakers: Dan DiZio *CEO and Co-Founder, Philly Soft Pretzel Factory*; Penny Rehling *President, The Spice and Tea Exchange*

Every fighter needs fuel to step into the ring, and for franchise founders, that means capital. But not everyone is ready to take on heavy investors or debt. This session packs practical strategies for going the distance by self-funding your system – keeping control in your corner while building momentum and training a fighting force that can deliver round after round. Learn how to stay in command of the match and position your brand for a title shot at sustainable, long-term growth.

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Springboard Awards presented throughout the program are sponsored by **Thryv**

THANK YOU TO OUR HOSTS



2025 SPRINGBOARD ADVISORY BOARD

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COO, Unleashed Brands

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FranDevCo*

Shane Evans
CEO, Heights Wellness Retreats

Gabriella Ferrara
*Vice President of Strategic Sales,
Scorpion*

Lane Fisher
Attorney, FisherZucker

Brad Fishman
CEO, Fishman PR

Abby Fogel
*VP Brand Management &
Communications, Unleashed Brands*

Brynn Gibbs
CEO, Consumer Fusion

Carey Gille
CEO, Franchise Fastlane

Aaron Harper
CEO, Rolling Sud

Ryan Hicks
*Managing Partner,
Franchise Supplier Network*

Steven Montgomery
CEO, ResiBrand

Maddie Zook
*Fractional VP of Marketing, Skyhawks &
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