

Everything You Need to Know About Licensing Leadership Summit 2020

With the business of brand licensing changing rapidly, and with so many factors determining an IP's success at retail, it is more important than ever that executives fine tune their strategies. This conference is where you find the senior-level insight that will inform those new directions. Come for the learning, stay for the networking.

by PATRICIA DELUCA

THE LICENSING LEADERSHIP SUMMIT makes its highly-anticipated return March 16-17, bringing together the industry's best and brightest at the New York Hilton Midtown in New York City. The executive-level conference and networking event will examine the evolution of the licensing industry by focusing on subversive strategies, emerging categories and retail and consumer trends.

The Summit returns after a two-year hiatus. Nearly 300 notable executives attended the 2018 conference, and of those attendees, 54 percent were executive level, with a global audience of leaders from as many as 15 countries including Brazil, Canada, the U.K. and Mexico.

"The Licensing Leadership Summit is uniquely pro-

grammed for C-level licensing decision-makers seeking insights for the year before attending Licensing Expo in May," says Steven Ekstract, brand director, Global Licensing Group, Informa Markets. "The Licensing Leadership Summit provides an opportunity for these key executives to gain important insights while networking and sharing ideas with their peers from the licensing business."

The Licensing Leadership Summit will present a comprehensive program that covers four industry-led tracks: "Driving Growth Through Brand Strategy and Licensing" and "Capturing the Consumer" will be explored on March 16; and "Retail, E-Commerce and Tech" and "The Future" will be covered on March 17.



GENE SIMMONS, Singer, songwriter, record producer, entrepreneur, actor, author and TV personality

Headlining the conference is multi-hyphenate entertainer and business legend Gene Simmons, who has more than four decades of experience building his personal brand. In the keynote session, “Gene Simmons: Creating a Brand,” the music legend will share the secrets to his success and the blueprint for the future of his epic empire.

“The taste of the public changes, but even that is not written in stone,” says Simmons. “‘Star Wars’ is still here, Marvel is still here, KISS is still here, and they’re all getting bigger and bigger, which bolsters the idea that very few brands stand the test of time. All the weak brands, as in nature, become extinct.”

Other keynotes include insight into how to prepare for what’s to come on the e-commerce horizon. Netflix’s Michelle King, and author of the new book *The Fix*, will look at the problem of inclusivity in the workplace and how diversity across the spectrum can

foster not only creativity but growth; Dr. Wes Wang, scientist, J Patton, will uncover how utilizing scannable forensic security technology can solve counterfeiting issues, in “Revolutionizing Brand Protection;” and leading market research and analysis organization, The NPD Group, will look at the tough problem fragmentation in the content space and how licensors and licensees need to do to reach their target. On day two, in addition to Gene Simmons, Max Luthy, director, trends and insights, TrendWatching, will dive headfirst into four trends reshaping the consumer landscape in 2020 and the coming decade.

Announced speakers represent the licensing industry’s reach across a variety of sectors, including entertainment, gaming, sports, retail, manufacturing and much more. Executives from companies including Beanstalk, Funko, Google, NFLPA, ViacomCBS Consumer Products, Trevco, Zynga, Museum of Modern Art, Dependable Solutions, Brand Central, OpSec, FlowHaven, pocket.watch and more are confirmed to speak at The Summit.

Also slated are those moving the needle in the digital content and marketing space.

Ryan’s World, helmed by YouTube’s No. 1 content creator Ryan Kaji, is a retail phenomenon, having found success at Walmart, Target and other major retailers

thanks to the 34.8 billion YouTube views he’s driven. Hear from Ryan’s father and manager, Shion Guan, and pocket.watch, the entertainment studio and extension agency behind the brand.

Also on the Licensing Leadership Summit agenda is Stevin John, a.k.a. Blippi, the children’s YouTube star who racks up more than 500 million monthly views, as he talks with Hollywood talent agency UTA about the new frontier of digitally native talent.

“Like all business, licensing is constantly evolving,” says Anna Knight, vice president, Global Licensing Group, Informa Markets. “The Licensing Leadership Summit presents forward-looking content from best-in-class global trendsetters to arm C-level executives with the information they need to lead through this evolution, shape their businesses accordingly and win greater brand awareness and consumer spend. It is an unmissable and intimate two-day event for the top players from manufacturing, retail, brands and agents from across the globe.”

The topics covered at the Summit will reflect the evolution and potential of the consumer products business, with an emphasis on licensing strategies, emerging categories, business innovation, retail and consumer trends and thought leadership.

“It’s a shopping battlefield out there,” says Michael Stone, chairman and co-founder, Beanstalk. “Licensors and licensees must be aware that the transformation of retail involves more than a balancing act between e-commerce and brick-and-mortar. Licensing strategies today must consider how consumers purchase products and determine which are relevant for their particular licensing program because where and how consumers shop is where licensed products can be offered for sale.”

E-commerce is evolving the face of retail as we know it. But are you keeping up with the speed of change? Google Shopping’s John Kennard and Trevco’s Trevor George will explore that very topic, offering strategies to bring your retail strategy into the new decade.

“Licensees traditionally focus on product development, manufacturing/sourcing and fulfillment,” says Trevor George, chief executive officer, Trevco. “They typically don’t have advanced e-commerce and advertising departments. So, who is going to spend the dollars on advertising the product? And if licensees don’t know how, when are they going to figure it out?”

In short, if you want to keep up with retail and licensing trends, the Licensing Leadership Summit is a must-attend event.

For more information about the Licensing Leadership Summit or to buy your ticket, visit LicensingLeadershipSummit.com. As a loyal reader of *License Global*, please use the code LLS20DISCFAM to receive \$200 off your ticket. ©

CAN'T-MISS TOPICS AT LICENSING LEADERSHIP SUMMIT

Monday, March 16

KEYNOTE

Title TBD

Speaker: Michelle King, Director of Inclusion, **Netflix**, and author of the new book, **The Fix**

KEYNOTE

Revolutionizing Brand Protection

Dr. Wes Wang, scientist, shares a new technology available to licensors, licensees and retailers. The technology provides the licensing supply chain with the ability to protect revenue and the consumer without changing anything.

Speaker: Dr. Wes Wang, scientist, **J Patton**

KEYNOTE

Content: The Next Big Global Disrupter

Today's U.S. consumers are spending an average of 70 hours per week on various forms of entertainment. The entertainment they're consuming and the amount of money they're spending vary, but one thing is clear: while the entertainment ecosystem is expanding, the amount of time consumers have in any given week is not. And with the advancements in technology, a truly global consumer market, and increasing competition, it's isn't difficult to see how these factors can put a strain on companies across the entertainment spectrum, leading to shifts in licensing models and fragmentation that can dilute the power of your brand. This session will offer insight into what it means for consumers with access to so much content, how to manage it, and ways to capitalize on it in both retail and licensing.

Speaker: Juli Lennett, vice president, industry advisor, toys, **NPD**

Different By Design: MoMA's Modern Approach to Licensing

In an ever-evolving retail climate, innovation and resourcefulness are central to licensing success. This session will look at MoMA's unique "different by design" approach to licensing, including how close collaboration with the Museum's curatorial team and retail channels support the growth of global product and retail store licensing initiatives. We'll also look at the challenges inherent in building a commercial enterprise within a non-profit environment and how MoMA manages complexities related to branding and intellectual property in the art world.

Speaker: Robin Sayetta, associate director, licensing and partnerships, business development, retail, **Museum of Modern Art**

Launching New IP in the Digital Age

Consumer consumption behaviors are changing at a dramatic pace. Both the content and retail landscapes are shifting, providing unique challenges and exciting opportunities for consumer product lines. With an inundation of content, paired with diversified consumption and new purchasing options, companies are challenged to create "breakthrough" properties.

Once the bullseye, linear TV (while still an important part of the equation) is no longer enough to secure retail placement of a consumer product. There is no "one thing" that can guarantee success. SVOD is not enough on its own to breakthrough. AVOD needs multiple formats and a daily feed of content to stay relevant. The consumer experience has become increasingly complex with various platforms that need to be considered.

The magic comes when content with compelling storylines and engaging characters is produced and optimized for the experience within each unique platform. In the toy world, that also means leveraging across platforms with unique content that has a play pattern organically built in. Content themes that are trending culturally, such as zombies or battling, also gain traction for children's consumption and products.

Speaker: Susie Lecker, executive vice president, global licensing, **Spin Master**

The Athlete Influencer Difference

Social media marketing has brought fans closer to the game and given them access to its athletes. These athletes are IPs IRL and have the ability to shape consumer sentiment. This presentation will examine how athlete influencers leverage their reach and platforms to market products and brand partnerships.

Speaker: Terése Whitehead, senior manager, sponsorships and operations, player services, **NFLPA**

How Games Ate the Licensing World

Speaker: Chris Petrovic, senior vice president and head of corporate strategy, M&A and business development, **Zynga**

Digital Talent: The Future

In this session You Tube Star Blippi (Stevin John) will be joined by Hollywood Talent Agency UTA that has been in the forefront of representing new, digitally native talent to explore the future of both kids entertainment as well as digitally native celebrity licensing.

Speakers: Greg Goodfried, head, digital talent, **UTA**; Sid Kaufman, licensing agent, **UTA**; and Stevin John, aka Blippi, YouTube star

The Art of the Drop: Elevating Your Brand Through Licensing

Speaker: David Stark, **Artestar**

Influencers: Are They Delivering on Their Brand Promise?

Speakers: Stone Newman, chief revenue officer, **pocket.watch**, and Shion Guan, Ryan's dad and manager, **Ryan's World**

Feeding the Fans: Elevating IP Through Branding Dining Experiences and More

Speakers: Veronica Hart, executive vice president, global franchise management, **CBS Consumer Products**, and Derek Berry, operating officer, **Saved by the Max**

Game On!: Betting on the Future of Esports

Speaker: Daniel Siegel, head of esports licensing, **Blizzard Entertainment**

Tuesday, March 17

KEYNOTE

Gene Simmons: Creating a Brand

Multi-hyphenate entertainer and entrepreneur Gene Simmons has been tantalizing and titillating fans for more than four decades. Simmons is the co-founder of KISS, America's No. 1 Gold Record award-winning group of all time, and is the brains behind the merchandise powerhouse that has driven more than \$1 billion in retail sales of licensed consumer products for brands ranging from Gene Simmons Family Jewels to Rock & Brews, Erebus Pictures, Simmons Records, LA KISS and more. He's also engineered collaborations with best-in-class partners such as Archie Comics, Coca-Cola, Hello Kitty, Visa, USPS, Indy Car Series and more. Simmons will speak candidly about the launch of his newest branding empire and the secrets to leveraging a brand when you're the star.

Speaker: Gene Simmons, singer, songwriter, record producer, entrepreneur, actor, author and TV personality

KEYNOTE

Find Opportunity in the Overwhelm: Key Trends in Consumerism

Maxwell Luthy, director, trends and insights at the global intelligence firm TrendWatching will dive headfirst into four of the key trends reshaping the consumer landscape in 2020 and the coming decade. From counterintuitive new opportunities within wellness, to the radical new strategies unlocked by esports, to the real-time personalization of physical products - these trends will rewrite the rules of the licensing industry.

Speaker: Max Luthy, director, trends and insights, **TrendWatching**

New Directions at Retail

Speakers: Lauren Wilner, chief merchandising officer, **Now/With**; Stephanie Wissink, managing director, **Jefferies**; and Yoav Shargil, senior director, e-commerce.

Moderator: Maura Regan, president, **Licensing International**

I Want it Now!: Using the Fan to Expand Distribution

Over the past few years, Funko has jumped into acquisition mode, acquiring three very different companies and expanding their digital footprint by using Pop! as an entertainment platform.

Speaker: Lauren Winarski, senior manager, brand and licensing, **Funko**

Get Your Money's Worth: Why Auditing Is Paramount

Speaker: Marty Malysz, president, **Dependable Rights**

How Marketplaces like Google and Amazon Are Changing E-Retail's Future

Google and Amazon changed the way consumers shop and interact with brands. In this session, hear how they plan to evolve their e-retail approach and the industry's future.

Speakers: Trevor George, chief executive officer, **Trevco**, and John Kennard, strategic partnerships, **Google Shopping**

How Fashion Collabs Can Build a Brand

Speaker: Jose Castro, senior vice president, softlines and global fashion collaborations, **ViacomCBS Consumer Products**

Outside the Norm: Cannabis Is Good (and Smart!) Business

Speaker: Drake Sutton-Shearer, chief executive officer and founder, **Future State Brands**

Finding Your Future in DTC

The world of retail is changing, and finding a path to the consumer is evolving. With 50 years of brand equity, Sesame Workshop, the non-profit educational organization behind "Sesame Street" has found the sweet spot in harnessing its iconic appeal while collaborating with relevant, like-minded brands. In this session, learn how "Sesame Street" took their collaborations to the next level by partnering with the direct-to-retail apparel brand Bombas to drive incremental revenue for both companies while sharing a commitment to bring awareness to the issues of family homelessness.

Speakers: Gabriela Arenas, vice president, consumer products, **Sesame Workshop**, and Emily Hoffstetter, head of staff, vice president of business development and communications, **Bombas**

Using an Analog Tool in a Digital Age to Entangle with Consumers

Michael Stone will share his wit and wisdom on the accelerated pace of change in the consumer shopping journey. Learn how marketing to consumers in a way that will engage them and bond them to a brand will drive purchasing in an increasingly complex ecosystem in our connected world. Stone will share his thoughts on where brand licensing is headed as well as in areas such as digitally native brands, influencers, esports and cannabis, among others.

Speaker: Michael Stone, chairman and co-founder, **Beanstalk**

The New Streaming Giants: The Future of SVOD

Take a deep dive into the new and upcoming entrants in the streaming wars. We will examine the revenue models, content offering, and value propositions of several platforms. With data from NPD's Subscription Video Track combined with consumer surveys, we will assess whether the gold standard - time spent - is changing on the Big 3 as these new players premiere

Speaker: Kathi Chandler-Payatt, executive director, media entertainment industry analyst, media entertainment, **The NPD Group**

*For the full agenda with times and detailed speaker information, visit LicensingLeadershipSummit.com. Session lineup is subject to change.