

## Convenience Distribution Marketplace Virtual 2021 Delivers



Convenience  
Distribution  
MARKETPLACE  
VIRTUAL

**FEBRUARY 19, 2021** – The only national conference and trade show dedicated to convenience wholesalers, CDA's Convenience Distribution Marketplace Virtual, was held Feb. 15-17, 2021, and provided attendees with a number of insightful and inspiring keynotes and sessions, along with networking and business building with the top trading partners and suppliers of the nation's convenience products distributors.

"This year's Marketplace was completely different than anything we've done in the past. It was gratifying to see all the input from our members in shaping it, merged with the legwork by the

incredibly talented CDA staff put into action," said Kimberly Bolin, CDA president and CEO. "We miss being with our members in person, but were pleased to present Marketplace through a user-friendly, easy-to-navigate virtual platform. There were also lighthearted activities woven in, like having Rob Ferre, a charismatic and energetic host, add excitement and fun to the serious side of conducting the business at hand."

"Despite the complete redesign of Marketplace due to the pandemic coupled with the inclement weather across the country, there were a record number of people registered," said Bolin. "We were fortunate to be able to provide high-quality keynotes, education sessions and a virtual trade show that attendees could experience in the safety of their homes or offices."

This year's lineup included Mary Kelly, CEO of Productive Leaders, who was back by popular demand with her Opening Keynote, "Knowledge is Power: Using this Economic Outlook to Your Advantage," followed by Jim Pancero's Education Session, "Six Things You Can Do to Gain a Competitive Edge." Marketplace also featured a Business Keynote from Ken Gronbach, president of KGC Direct, on demographic forecasting titled, "Demography is Destiny: What it Means for Your Business."

CDA stepped up its attention to the opportunities in foodservice through the "Focus on Foodservice" session that included valuable insights from industry veterans Shawn Burcham, founder/CEO, PFSbrands; Devin Fogleman, director of sales, convenience channel, Dot Foods; Bill Henry, senior director, national accounts and industry relations-convenience, Kellogg Co.; and Kellie Janssen, president, Henry's Foods, Inc., who revealed how to benefit from today's business climate while successfully addressing its challenges.

The "Focus on Foodservice" was part of CDA's commitment to its members and the opportunities in foodservice regardless of where a company is in their foodservice journey. CDA's Industry Outlook Survey reported that 56% of members surveyed plan to expand their foodservice operations in 2021. Respondents also reported that it is the most challenging part of their businesses, so CDA has committed to support its members to turn that challenge into opportunity.

In his eye-opening Diversity and Inclusion Keynote, Dr. Jermaine Davis provided essential information on leadership and sensitivity training with his presentation, "Leading with an Inclusive Lens to Achieve Organizational Synergy." The session was thought provoking and drove introspection, no matter where one is in business or life. Dr. Jermaine recognized that there is leadership within every person.

The latest information on federal, state and local tobacco regulations was shared by NATO's Tom Briant, as he provided details vital to those in the industry. In addition, Marketplace attendees received the latest updates on the evolving CBD industry from Don Burke of Management Science Associates, including trends and new developments.

Marketplace's Sponsor Sessions provided distributor attendees with the most recent company-specific updates, while Supplier Showcases connected distributors with the industry's top suppliers and solutions providers. Attendees also had the opportunity to participate in The Game, a fun competition that drove participation. Closing out the event was the Grand Prize Giveaway, featuring an all-inclusive trip to Los Cabos, Mexico.

"Marketplace Virtual was a hit! The keynotes and education sessions were practical and tactical, and the supplier insights provided relevant and timely updates and information," said 2021 CDA Chair John Prickette, Grocery Supply Co. "A big thank you to CDA sponsors that have allowed the association to once again deliver a meaningful industry event."

Mark your calendars now for Convenience Distribution Marketplace 2022, Feb. 7-9 at the JW Marriott Tampa Water Street, Tampa, FL.

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**About CDA:**

The Convenience Distribution Association (CDA) is the trade organization working on behalf of convenience product distributors in the United States. Its distributor members represent more than \$102 billion in U.S. convenience product sales, serving a wide variety of small retail formats. Associate members include leading convenience product manufacturers, brokers, retailers, suppliers, and others allied to the industry. For more information visit: [www.cdaweb.net](http://www.cdaweb.net).

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