

★ ★ ★

Excellence in Pub & Bar Retailing Conference

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Headline Sponsor


ONE MOORGATE PLACE, LONDON EC2R 6EA ~ WEDNESDAY 14TH MAY 2025

Tickets are £295+VAT for operators, £345+VAT for suppliers.
20% discount for operators and suppliers who are Premium Club members.
Email: kai.kirkman@propelinfo.com to book places.

★ ★ ★ **SPEAKER SCHEDULE** ★ ★ ★

9.00am – 10.00am: Registration and coffee

10.00am-10.30am: Stephen Owens, managing director – pubs and restaurants at Christie & Co, sets the scene for the market, with an update on sector valuations, price expectations, market sentiment, who the buyers and sellers are, and what's in store for the year ahead.

10.30am – 11.00am: Mark Bentley, business development director at HDI, talks about the areas where the pub sector is and has been performing strongly and where the opportunities are for the sector to drive growth.

11.00am – 11.20am: Harry Gurney, co-founder of the Cat & Wickets Pub Company, with England cricketer Stuart Broad, discusses building the award-winning business, and how it is now looking to grow and become a "genuine multi-site operator".

11.20am – 11.40am: Public House Group founder Olivier van Themsche and finance director Tom McMahon, who operate the Pelican in Notting Hill, The Hero in Maida Vale and the Bull in Charlbury, the Cotswolds, on how two endangered British industries – pubs and farming – can survive by helping each other.

11.40am – 12.00pm: Chickpea Group founder Ethan Davids on balancing growing a wet-led vehicle, Great Boozers, which he founded with TV sandwich chef Max Halley in 2021, and expanding the company's pubs with room concept.

12.00pm – 1.00pm: Lunch

1.00pm – 1.25pm: Anna-Marie Mason, divisional director of Mitchells & Butlers Premium Division, discusses the evolution of the group's Vintage Inns, Premium Country Pubs and Miller & Carter brands, with a special focus on the resurgence of the latter steakhouse concept.

1.25pm – 1.50pm: Richard Colclough, co-founder of Paragon Group, the award-winning premium gastropub operator, talks about operating across multiple formats, and the development and potential of the company's Mediterranean all-day dining concept, Willow.

1.50pm – 2.15pm: Martin Wolstencroft, chief executive, and Laura Lewis, marketing director, of Arc Inspirations, the premium bar operator, talk about how the award-winning company strives to deliver an elevated experience across all areas of its business and how it plans to almost double its estate over the next five years.

2.15pm – 2.35pm: Gavin George, founder and former chief executive of Laine Pub Company, looks back on his nearly 30 years in the sector, what he learnt, his achievements and mistakes, and how he hopes to see the industry evolve.

2.35pm – 3.05pm: Coffee Break

3.05pm – 3.30pm: Simon Emeny, chief executive of Fuller's, talks to Mark Wingett about how the company is facing the challenge of appealing to an evolving consumer base, without compromising on its premium ethos.

3.30pm – 3.55pm: Chris Hill, managing director of Urban Pubs & Bars, joins Mark Wingett to discuss the ethos that has driven the award-winning business to become London's largest independent pub operator, producing record-breaking Ebitda and turnover performance.

3.55pm – 4.25pm: Sir Tim Martin, founder and chair of JD Wetherspoon, discusses how the company plans to double its sales to £4bn in the next ten years after passing the £2bn mark last year and why his business is a true melting pot of consumers.

4.25pm – 5.10pm: Charlie McVeigh non-executive director at the Revel Collective, Oisin Rogers, co-founder of The Devonshire, Joycelyn Neve, founder and managing director Seafood Pub Company, and Dominic Jacobs, managing director of JKS Pubs, talk about the challenge the sector faces in attracting new customers, ways in which the sector can go about evolving to do just that, and whether loyalty schemes can play a part.

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 **crunchtime**

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★ ★ ★ **PARALLEL SESSIONS** ★ ★ ★

10.00am–10.35am ~ Board Room

Crunchtime – future-proofing operations with strategies for cost control, consistency and growth: The pub industry is facing a period of rapid transformation. Guests are no longer visiting just for a pint – they expect more from their experience. At the same time, rising costs, slow technology adoption, and operational inefficiencies are putting pressure on margins. Join Scott Griffiths, enterprise executive for EMEA/APAC at Crunchtime, to explore how changing consumer behaviour is reshaping the industry, and what pub operators can do to stay ahead. Topics will include reducing waste through better ordering practices, driving consistency across multi-concept brands, and using technology like artificial intelligence to modernise operations. Whether you operate a single site or manage a national group, this session will provide actionable insights to help you navigate change, improve control, and future-proof your pub business.

10.40am–11.15am ~ Board Room

Airship – crafting the perfect value exchange: Take all your data on the same journey to drive up visit frequency and focus your customers to engage with you based on your key revenue occasions. In this session, Airship and Toggle founder and chief executive Dan Brookman will take you through live examples of how to quickly and easily identify and create customer journeys that can shift the dial on your CRM return on investment.

11.20am–11.55am ~ Board Room

Harri – the nine metrics you should be concerned about when benchmarking against other UK pubs and bars: Instead of the traditional “let’s just cut hours”, there are nine different metrics that operators should actually be measuring themselves against, and they all point towards greater profitability. Don’t miss this exclusive session led by commercial director Pete Willis on real industry benchmarking data. He’ll run through how to address rising labour percentages, inaccurate forecasting and open the table up for discussion. All attendees will receive a free benchmarking consultation after the event.

1.00pm–1.45pm ~ Board Room

Pepper – how technology adoption is giving pubs a competitive advantage: The Pepper team will discuss how pubs and bars are putting technology at the centre of their operations – not just as a nice-to-have but as a key part of the strategy to deliver a better guest experience. The team will talk about the importance of having an omnichannel mindset, thinking about how technology works for both your guests and your teams on the floor, because adoption only happens when it works for everyone. The focus will be on loyalty and order and pay, and how when they are aligned, they can drive real results – from increased visit frequency to smooth operations and stronger revenue.

1.50pm–2.35pm ~ Board Room

Joli – high-performing content on a tight budget: A panel discussion will explore how pubs and bars can harness the power of content creators and local influencers to drive real results with less effort. The panel will be hosted by Michael Radley, co-founder of Joli, the influencer marketing platform for hospitality, and he will be joined by two senior marketers from leading pub and Bbar operators for an inside look at what’s working right now. General managers and operations teams are already stretched thin focusing on P&L and delivering standout customer experiences, so giving them social media responsibility can be a distraction. That’s where content creators come in – offering a low-fuss, high-impact way to stay visible, relevant, and competitive online. And the cost can be as little as a few pints and a burger. The panel will share top tips and key insights, with focus on a recent case study where a single TikTok video brought in more than 840 covers and £45,000 in new revenue for a venue in London.

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3.10pm-3.45pm ~ Board Room

Sideways presents video-first compliance training – smarter training for pubs and bars: In this session, find out how video-based training can help your teams learn better, faster, for half the price. The training now includes level 3 food safety, delivered in seven hours, for free. The team will be joined for the session by Sierra McVey, people manager at Bubala, and Natalie Stanton, founder and director of The Safety Expert and an environmental health officer.

3.50pm-4.35pm ~ Board Room

Prestige Purchasing – get fit for 2026 by navigating the challenges and building resilience in the pub, bar and hospitality sector: This focused session, led by Prestige Purchasing chief executive Shaun Allen, will address the critical challenges facing the UK hospitality sector and provide actionable strategies for building a stronger and healthier future beyond 2025. Drawing on Prestige Purchasing's extensive experience since 1998, Allen will offer insightful perspectives and key takeaways for navigating the current landscape and positioning your business for success within a concise timeframe, looking at strategic areas such as cost management, operational efficiency through menu optimisation and streamlined processes, and supply chain resilience including navigating availability and cost pressures in food and beverage. Allen will also explain how these strategies can be extended to encompass all areas of spend and provide details of how Prestige helped to mitigate cost and delivered efficiencies and bottom-line improvement to a pub group. There will also be a question and answer period.

1.50pm-2.35pm ~ Members Room

Accurise – how outsourced accounting drives tangible business growth: Industry veteran Douglas Smillie – who started his career at My Kinda Town as international and franchise managing director and went on to found, invest or sit on the board of companies as diverse as Henry J Beans, Busaba, Tapas Revolution and Hummingbird Bakery – is joined by Rob Howard, chief executive of specialist hospitality accounting firm Accurise, whose 35 clients include the likes of Wingstop, Portobello Pub Co and Farmer J, to discuss the pros and cons of outsourcing part or all of the finance function and how outsourced accounting teams can drive genuine growth for pub and bar operators.

3.10pm-3.45pm ~ Members Room

Purple Story – unlocking performance: the strategic role of coaching in pub and bar excellence: In today's competitive hospitality landscape, operational coaching is not just a development tool – it's a strategic driver of enhanced performance, revenue growth, and sustained profitability. This focused, interactive session led by Warrick Hegarty, Purple storyteller and head of its coaching division, explores how targeted coaching interventions can unlock the full potential of your teams and operations. Gain actionable insights and practical techniques designed to elevate standards, empower leadership at all levels, and deliver measurable business outcomes across your pub and bar portfolio.

3.50pm-4.25pm ~ Members Room

Zero Carbon Forum – excellence in sustainability – a vision for net zero hospitality: What does it mean to be a sustainable hospitality operator and how can sustainability increase efficiency, brand strength, and business resilience? Join Zero Carbon Forum founder Mark Chapman and director Bob Gordon for a high-impact, practical session that brings the vision of net zero to life. This session is ideal for those looking to accelerate their progress with clarity and purpose, or businesses at the beginning of their journey. We'll share the latest benchmarks and trends from across the hospitality sector, helping you understand where the biggest emissions hotspots are and the proven levers for action. You'll learn how leading operators are using our practical tools and services to cut carbon, cut costs and build action-oriented brands that customers and employees love. You'll hear about effective strategies being used by members across the sector, from low-carbon fit-outs to switching to renewables. Whether you're looking to deepen your impact or you're just starting out, this session will help you see how decarbonisation can become a value driver, not a cost. Expect practical insights, real-world examples, and a clear path forward towards net zero.

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