

# Thanx Reinvents the Restaurant Conference Format with the Launch of the Loyalty UNconference

SAN FRANCISCO, CA, UNITED STATES, May 5, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- [Thanx](#), the leading guest engagement platform for restaurants, introduced a bold alternative to traditional conferences with the inaugural Loyalty UNconference — an operator-first event made possible through sponsorship from Square, Dreambox, Klaviyo, and Attentive.



Held at the Global Ambassador Hotel in Scottsdale, Arizona, the Loyalty UNconference gathered senior marketing and digital leaders from brands including Fox Restaurant Concepts, Union Square Hospitality Group, Panda Restaurant Group, Capriotti's, Penn Station East Coast Subs, Sonny's BBQ, and more.

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*Zach Goldstein, CEO of Thanx.*

The conference was intentionally structured to break away from the traditional stand-and-present format, instead fostering meaningful dialogue among industry leaders. Attendees gathered in a U-shaped seating arrangement, designed to facilitate face-to-face conversations and ensure every voice had equal weight.

“I loved all the actionable ideas on improving profitability! I literally have five full pages of thoughts, ideas, and takeaways,” said Kim Lewis, CMO at Capriotti's Sandwich Shop.

Thanx CEO, Zach Goldstein opened the event by reframing loyalty — not as a program, but as a business outcome. “If loyalty isn't driving revenue, it's not a loyalty program. It's a money pit,” said Goldstein.

Emily Rugaber, VP of Marketing at Thanx, then outlined a battle tested framework for measuring loyalty impact—focusing on metrics that focus on incremental improvements from loyalty

initiatives, such as average monthly value (AMV), activation rate, and capture rate—challenging outdated vanity metrics such as app downloads and total member counts.

Restaurant executives shared examples of tangible business results they've achieved through outcome-driven loyalty strategies:

Velvet Taco shared that by weaving loyalty into every brand campaign, they boosted brand relevance and saw a 29% increase in guest frequency since 2023.

DIG detailed how shifting away from a dollars-off model and toward early access offers helped recover digital sales post-loyalty program relaunch, while improving engagement in first-party ordering channels.

Sonny's BBQ showed how loyalty tiers — named after their signature sauces — reduced birthday offer costs and fraud while increasing frequency and spend from their most loyal members. Their top tier visits 10x more often and spends 44% more per visit.

Eureka! demonstrated how a parallel whiskey club created high-value members who visit 5x more often and spend nearly 3x more than average loyalty participants. These guests gain access to bottle drops, tastings, and exclusive rewards.

Ruby's Diner shared how they relaunched loyalty with a campaign that drove a 21% increase in monthly customer value, a 6% lift in frequency, and a 14% increase in average check—all while staying true to their classic brand.

Hopdoddy shared how "Legend" tier perks—like dine-in early access to the Burger of the Month—help restaurant teams recognize and engage top guests. These tactics have driven top-tier guests to visit over twice as often as the average guest.

Additionally, a dedicated session focused on AI led by Thanx Chief Data Officer, Aaron Newton,



prompted attendees to rethink how their teams work. The conversation explored how emerging AI tools could shift the role of marketers from executors to editors, freeing up time for higher-value strategic work.

Thanx shared early thinking around how AI might support campaign planning, segmentation, and board reporting, while attendees debated the risks, opportunities, and ethics of adoption. For many, it was the first time AI felt genuinely relevant to the day-to-day demands of restaurant marketing.

The highlight of the event was the thoughtful dialogue and engagement from industry leaders, all centered around the tangible outcomes loyalty programs can drive.

Thanx's next Loyalty UNconference will take place November 12–13, 2025, in Las Vegas, immediately following the Restaurant Finance & Development Conference. Restaurant marketing and digital leaders interested in attending can learn more [here](#).

#### About Thanx

Thanx, Inc. ([www.thanx.com](http://www.thanx.com)) is the leading loyalty and guest engagement platform for restaurants. Thanx helps brands grow customer lifetime value with easy-to-use lifecycle marketing campaigns and automations, focusing customer loyalty tools on access, status, and personalization over rote discounts. Thanx's proprietary credit card tokenization technology drastically increases the volume and accuracy of purchase data, which sits at the core of our CRM and marketing automation suite of tools. Thanx was founded in 2011 and is headquartered in San Francisco, CA.

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