

Concurrent Event

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FOOD
BUSINESS FORUM

An initiative by
RetailME

UAE
RESTAURANTS
GROUP



FOOD
Service Forum

In association with
RetailME

September 15, 2026 📍 JW Marriott Hotel Marina, Dubai

BE IN THE ROOM
As The Industry Meets To Reimagine The
**Blueprint for the
Next Food Economy**

#BlueprintOpens

The day begins.

REGISTER NOW

www.foodbusinessforum.me

#TheAllianceBlueprint

UAERG opens the day it co-builds with IMAGES RetailME



**Amit
Nayak**

Vice Chairman
UAERG

UAE
RESTAURANTS
GROUP



#SettingTheBlueprint

The keynote that sets the tone for the day ahead



**Abdulla Habib
AlMulla**

Chairman / Co-founder and Managing Director
UAERG / Home Bakery

UAE
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GROUP



Home Bakery

#TheOpportunityBlueprint

Tourism, and what it means for where this region's food economy grows next



**Ahmad
Ahli**

Director of Tourism Activities Monitoring
Dubai Economy and Tourism

دبي
للاقتصاد والسياحة
Economy and Tourism

#BlueprintBriefing

A sponsored keynote from Odoo's regional F&B team



**Misbah
Al Khadem**

Regional Manager
Mid Market & Corporate - F&B Expert
Odoo

odoo

Open Source Integrated Business Application Suite

#TheBlueprintBehindTheKitchen

*Foodservice CEOs on building resilient businesses beyond the plate:
leadership, talent and profitability*

WHAT'S IN THE BLUEPRINT

- ✓ How expansion strategy, talent and profitability determine which foodservice brands actually endure
- ✓ Building organisations resilient enough to thrive in the next food economy
- ✓ Four pillars in focus: leadership, resilience, customer relevance, sustainable growth
- ✓ Setting the tone for the masterclasses that follow later in the day



Andy Cuthbert

Advisor to UAERG

President of the World Association of Chefs Societies (Worldchefs), Past President & Coordinator of the Emirates Culinary Guild, and General Manager of Jumeirah Emirates Towers and Madinat Jumeirah C&I, Jumeirah Hospitality

UAE
RESTAURANTS
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WORLD
ASSOCIATION
OF CHEFS
SOCIETIES



Nadine Benchaffai

Partner & Co-Founder
FabFood Co

Fab Food Co

Homegrown Restaurant Group



Rania Saied

Chief Executive Officer
Arabian Hospitality



Emirati Hospitality Experience



Yunib Siddiqui

CEO & Owner
Jones The Grocer

jones
the grocer

Gourmet Food For Everyday Living



Moderator

Dr. Tapan Vaidya

Treasurer & Executive Board Member / Group CEO
UAERG / Papa Johns

UAE
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**PAPA
JOHNS**

#BlueprintBehindTheBasket

Grocery CEOs on the leadership decisions, across sourcing, merchandising and technology, driving resilient growth

WHAT'S IN THE BLUEPRINT

- ✓ How sourcing, merchandising, logistics, technology and customer engagement are being reimagined for resilient growth
- ✓ The leadership choices shaping the future of food and grocery retail
- ✓ Four pillars in focus: resilience, innovation, operational excellence, customer trust



Abbas Khan

Chief Executive Officer
Grand Hypermarkets
UAE & Saudi Arabia



Hypermarket Chain



Bejoy Thomas Pulickel

Chief Executive Officer
Safeer Market



Supermarket & Hypermarket Chain



Majed Al Tahan

Founder & CEO / Co-Founder & CEO
IACO / Danube Online



Ecommerce Grocery Platform



Mark Mortimer-Davies

Chief Executive Officer
Choithrams



Supermarket Chain



Mohamed Al Hashemi

Chief Executive Officer
Union Coop



Supermarket Chain



Mussaab Aboud

Chief Executive Officer
Grandiose & Grandiose Catering



Supermarket Chain



Ali Shahid

Partner
Kearney



Research Consultant

#NetworkingLuncheon

Event Split in Two Tracks



#TheOmnichannelBlueprint

How grocery leaders are empowering frontline teams to deliver one seamless experience online, in-store and on demand

WHAT'S IN THE BLUEPRINT

- ✓ How grocery leaders are redesigning operations and empowering store teams
- ✓ Building agile workforces that deliver consistency across every touchpoint
- ✓ Four pillars in focus: omnichannel execution, frontline empowerment, operational agility, customer trust



Chang Sup Shin

CEO and Founder
1004 Gourmet

1004
GOURMET

Specialty Grocery Chain



Florian HÜthmair

President
Everyday Goods, GMG

GMG

Diversified Food & Grocery Retail



Ismail Hafez

Co-founder & Chief Operating Officer
Rabbit

 **Rabbit**

Quick Commerce Grocery Retailer



Mohamed Sekkina

Regional Manager MENA
talabat mart

talabat mart

Online Grocery Platform



Raed Hafez

Chief Executive Officer
elGrocer by Smiles
(part of e& Group)

 **smiles**

Online Grocery Delivery



Rose Carbajo

Operations Director
Grandiose

 **Grandiose**

Supermarket Chain



Moderator

Rupak Sircar

Partner and Head Consumer Products
& Services, Middle East
Stanton Chase

STANTON CHASE

Leadership Consultant

#TheBlueprintOnTheShelf

How sourcing, forecasting and cold chain decisions shape freshness, trust and profitable grocery growth

WHAT'S IN THE BLUEPRINT

- ✓ How sourcing, ingredient integrity, demand forecasting and cold chain management shape customer trust
- ✓ Building resilient supply ecosystems that deliver freshness and profitable growth
- ✓ Four pillars in focus: sourcing, forecasting, operational excellence, consumer trust



Ahmad El Masri

Head of Omnichannel
Barakat

Barakat

Fresh Grocery Network



Ashwin Nayanar

Co-Founder
VOCCA Chocolatier

VOCCA
CHOCOLATIER

Artisanal Chocolates & More



Jimmy El-Hajj

Co-founder & COO
PawPots

PAW POTS

Give Back The Love

Pet Nutrition



Rod Maxfield

Group Head of Marketing &
Head of UAE Distribution
Choithrams

Choithrams
full of goodness

Supermarket Chain



Moderator

Nader Amiri

General Partner
Homegrown Ventures

Homegrown

Startup Investment Management

#TheReturnVisitBlueprint

Price may drive the first purchase, but trust, relevance and consistency determine whether shoppers return

WHAT'S IN THE BLUEPRINT

- ✓ How leaders are using customer data, retail media, loyalty ecosystems and personalisation to build lasting preference
- ✓ Creating deeper engagement while protecting margins
- ✓ Four pillars in focus: customer insight, loyalty, personalisation, value



Ashwinii Khataavate

Founder, CBO & Chief Purpose Officer
Rootz Organics



Healthy Online Grocery



Mahmoud Abduljalel

Head of Supermarket Chain
TIGER Group



Hypermarket Chain



Mohamed Suliman

Chief Executive Officer
Geant Libya



Supermarket Chain



Mohammad Khateeb

E-commerce & Marketing Lead
Emirates Cooperative Society



Grocery Cooperative Chain



Suhail Aryathodi

Retail Head
TAYN Roastery
(Bettergrow Holding)



Roastery Concept Retail



Umesh Chopra

Market Intelligence Manager
Sharjah Cooperative Society



Hypermarket Chain



Lito German

Managing Director
The Hub Trading
A member of the Sharjah Coop Group



Hypermarket Chain

#BlueprintForAnIntelligentAisle

How sourcing, forecasting, store design and digital integration are reshaping what grocery becomes next

WHAT'S IN THE BLUEPRINT

- ✓ How decisions on sourcing, forecasting, store design and digital integration will define trust and relevance
- ✓ A clear lens on what grocery must become, not just what it sells



Dr. Lenish Kannan

Chief Information Officer

Nesto Group
Western International Group



Supermarket Chain



Marcin Piekarczyk

Director Digital & Technology

Grandiose



Supermarket Chain



Pravin Rai

Co-founder and CEO

QuickKart



Everyday Freshness Retail



Vishal Kapil

Group Chief Technology & Information Officer

Mair Group



Supermarket Chain



Moderator

Akshay Jayaprakasan

Associate Partner | MEA

Redseer



Research Consultant

Track 2

#ResilienceMasterclass

The assumptions behind building and scaling a food service brand are being rewritten this year. This masterclass looks at how the region's most successful operators are creating brands with real staying power, growth grounded in financial discipline, and cultures built to perform under pressure.



George Kunnappally

Managing Director
Nando's UAE

Restaurant Chain



Naved Nasir

Founder
Khadak

Iconic Indian Fine Dining Restaurant

KHADAK

#CultureMasterclass

Sustainable growth in food service comes down to the team behind it. This masterclass looks at how leading brands are moving beyond recruitment toward retention, capability building and a culture people actually choose to stay for, at a moment when nationalisation is reshaping the workforce.



Betül Yalçın Emlek

Chief People Officer
Yum! Brands

Global Restaurant Franchisor

Yum!



Melitsa Mizrahi

Chief People Officer
Papa John's

QSR Food Service

PAPA JOHN'S
Better Ingredients. Better Pizza.

#LoyaltyMasterclass

Delivery is now a structural part of food service, and loyalty programmes are only getting more sophisticated. This masterclass looks at how leading operators are using technology, delivery and customer intelligence to earn the return visit in a market where customers have more choices than ever.



Julianne Holt-Kailihiwa

CEO & Co-Founder
Sumo Sushi & Bento

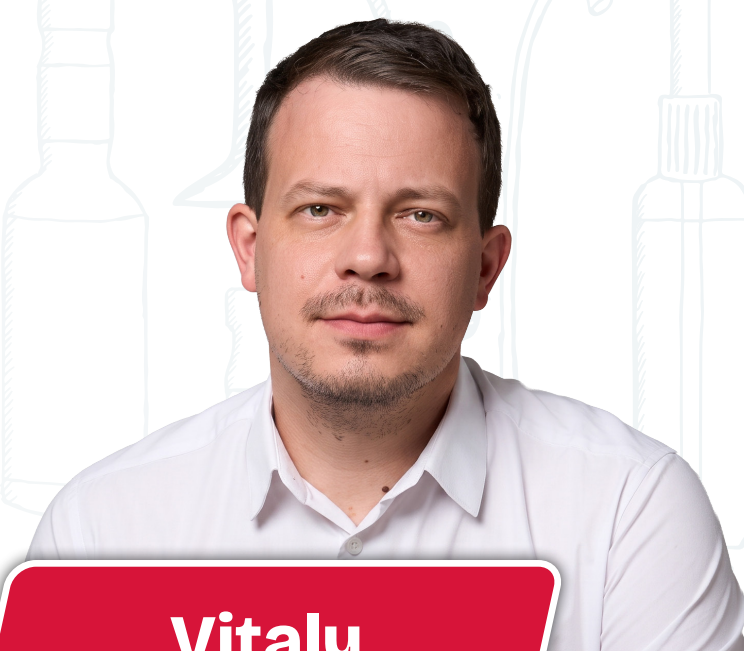
Legendary Japanese Concept Restaurant



Karim Chaanine

Chief Marketing Officer
Papa Johns

QSR Food Service



Vitaly Kolesnikov

Chief Executive Officer
Drinkit MENA at Dodo Brands

Digital-first coffee shop chain



#SourcingMasterclass

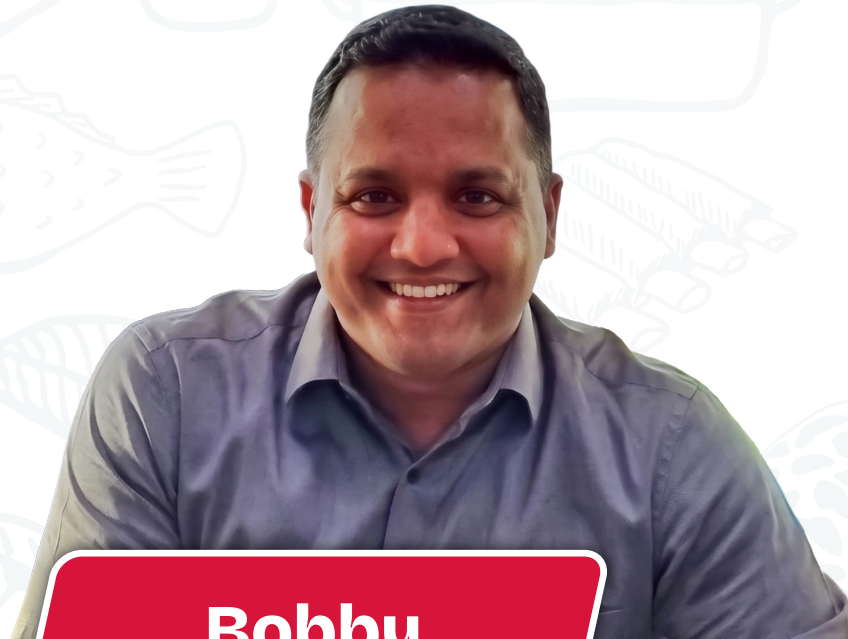
This masterclass looks at how leading food service operators are building sourcing strategies that hold up under real cost, regulatory and geopolitical pressure, treating sustainability as a genuine growth lever backed by real supply chain discipline.



Andreas L Borgmann

Founder and CEO
Kcal

Healthy Eating concept



Bobby Krishna

Senior Food Safety Specialist
Dubai Municipality (Food Safety Department)

Government Entity



Marlis Dsouza

Sales and Marketing Manager
Fresh on Table

Fresh Local Food Supplier



#CertificationCeremony

Acknowledgement for those who showed up. Honouring those who led the room.

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