

The logo for i media, featuring the word "i media" in a white sans-serif font. The "i" is lowercase and has a red dot. The word "media" is lowercase. The logo is partially enclosed by a red circular line that starts at the top left and curves around the "i".

i media

• future of marketing summit
australia

24 - 26 August 2026



Day 1

Monday 24 August 2026



2026
Agenda

DAY 1 • MONDAY 24 AUGUST 2026

9:00am - 12:30pm • Hotel Lobby

Delegate Registration

Delegates will arrive at the hotel to register and check in ahead of the afternoon formalities.

i media

9:00am - 12:30pm • Pearls Bar

Welcome Lounge

Join us for some snacks and refreshments before a big day of networking.

12:30pm - 2:15pm • Horizon Room

Marketers-Only Lunch | What Does the Evolution of the Consumer Look Like?

AI and agents are changing not only how consumers discover and choose products, but also where those decisions happen. We're in the early stages of redefining the consumer journey, and any company that doesn't understand the consumer — or where to reach them — risks getting left behind as everything is supercharged to the speed of AI. Today's conversation explores what that means for brands, retail media networks and platforms, and how marketers can respond while keeping the consumer experience relevant, trusted and measurable.



Melanie Hoptman

Managing Director APAC, VP of Brands
LiveRamp

/LiveRamp



Allana Selden

Senior Enterprise Lead, E-Commerce, Fashion
Specialty Retail
Pinterest



/LiveRamp



Jodie-Marie Preddy

Senior Digital Performance Manager
Specsavers

Specsavers

12:30pm - 2:15pm • Pearls Bar

Networkers Briefing Lunch

All networkers will be treated to a light lunch. Discover how to maximise your experience at iMedia, gain valuable insider tips, and ensure all your meetings are scheduled for Business Connect.

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2:15pm - 2:30pm • Ballroom

Marketers and Networkers Check-in

Marketers and Networkers, it's time to head to the Ballroom and find your table for your very first Business Connect meeting. We'll kick things off right after the Opening Keynote—so once you're seated, you're all set to start connecting without missing a beat and having to swap seats.

2:30pm - 2:45pm • Ballroom

Welcome & Opening Remarks

Join Helena Stylman and the iMedia team for a warm welcome. Helena will guide you through the top industry topics identified by our Advisory Board. This is a great chance to catch up on the latest trends and insights in the field.

i media



Yvonne Adele

Event Host and Official MC
iMedia



Helena Stylman

Managing Director ANZ
iMedia



Mark Jones

Advisory Board Chair
The Story Code Co.

2:45pm - 3:20pm • Ballroom

The Untapped Frontier of Modern Marketing and Customer Effectiveness

The digital industrial complex has overrun marketing - and when tools become strategy, the errors run deep. The contemporary challenge for today's leaders is to ask the more honest questions. Is transformation an island unto itself? Is our foundation of knowledge in place to ensure value? Where do markets, customers, and technology truly collide? This dinner keynote dismantles the most entrenched assumptions in CX and the costly seduction of corporate shortcuts, and explores one of marketing's great untapped opportunities. Practical, provocative, and grounded in evidence.



Aarron Spinley

Director
Field Bell Institute

DAY 1 • MONDAY 24 AUGUST 2026

● 3:20pm – 3:45pm • Ballroom

Keynote | The Evolution of the Marketer: Fortune Favours the Brave

In the era of machine-mediated commerce, “watching and waiting” is a death sentence. We have entered a landscape where LLMs dictate discovery, creating both a critical measurement blind spot (AI visibility that feels invisible to the CFO) and stagnation amidst the relentless pace of evolution.

The mandate has shifted. The modern marketer is no longer just a content creator or a brand strategist. This new era demands a professional who challenges the status quo and makes bold moves to align with the category-leading vendors defining the future. In this keynote, Profound and Partnerize move beyond vanity metrics to show you how to engineer your brand for the machine, monetise your AI-driven influence, and report on business impact against the backdrop of the AI paradigm.

During times of disruption, fortune favours the brave.



Georgia Hudson
Marketing Director, JAPAC
Partnerize

Partnerize



Josh Blyskal
Head of Special Projects
Profound

Profound

Partnerize

● 3:45pm – 4:50pm • Ballroom

Business Connect | Round 1

Hailed as one of the most rewarding parts of the summit, business connect involves 5 x 10 minute meetings designed to float topline objectives and explore synergies. Delegates are required to request and confirm these meetings prior to the summit.

● 4:50pm – 6:30pm

Free Time

Delegates can use this time to refresh, check-in with work and explore the surroundings.

● 6:30pm – 6:45pm

Pre Dinner Drinks

Network and mingle with delegates of the event ahead of the official welcome dinner.

● 6:45pm – 9:45pm • Ballroom

Welcome Dinner

The official Welcome Dinner & networking reception held on the first night is the perfect way to build relationships with key conference delegates, speakers, and sponsors in a more relaxed atmosphere.

Dinner Keynote | Marketing Rewired: Growth, Experience, and AI in a Destination Economy

Marketing is no longer just about demand generation — it's about driving sustainable growth, shaping global perception, and delivering end-to-end experiences in real time. Drawing on leading a globally competitive destination, Kim McConnie shares how macro pressures are redefining the CMO role, why the CMO must increasingly operate as a hybrid CMO-CTO, and how agentic AI and Generative Engine Optimisation (GEO) are changing how brands are discovered and chosen. Critically: how to combine brand and performance as a multiplier — and build the evidence boards actually act on.



Kim McConnie
Group Executive Marketing
Tourism and Events Queensland

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Day 2

Tuesday 25 August 2026

A nighttime photograph of an outdoor event. In the foreground, a large, shallow pool of water reflects the lights from the event. In the background, a large crowd of people is gathered on a paved area. Several large, square, light-colored umbrellas are open, providing shade. The scene is illuminated by warm, orange-toned lights, likely from the umbrellas and other event lighting. The background shows palm trees and other tropical vegetation.

2026
Agenda

DAY 2 • TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2026

6:00am - 8:40am • Terraces Restaurant

Breakfast

Day 2 begins with breakfast and barista coffee!

Epsilon®

8:40am - 8:50am • Ballroom

MC Opening Remarks



Yvonne Adele
Event Host and Official MC
iMedia

i media

9:50am - 10:50am • Ballroom

Business Connect | Round 2

Hailed as one of the most rewarding parts of the summit, business connect involves 5 x 10 minute meetings designed to float topline objectives and explore synergies. Delegates are required to request and confirm these meetings prior to the summit.

9:50am - 10:25am • Ballroom

Keynote | Building a Cultural Movement: How Pop Mart Turns Fans into Fanatics

Most brands chase customers. Pop Mart creates believers — and someone had to build the machine that does it, market by market. As AI homogenises creative output and attention becomes marketing's scarcest resource, Pop Mart has engineered one of the world's fastest-growing cultural phenomena through scarcity, community, and obsession -not media spend. Jeremy Lee, who built Pop Mart's presence from zero across 6 Southeast Asian markets and the Middle East, unpacks the operating mechanics behind the hype: how deliberate product drops, app-first experiences, and omnichannel rituals turn passive consumers into active evangelists — and how that playbook bends (or breaks) across radically different cultures and regulatory environments. The question for every CMO in the room: what would it take to make your brand this hard to ignore

POP MART



Jeremy Lee
Head of Middle East and South Asia
POP MART

10:25am - 10:45am • Ballroom

Quickfire | The Next Frontier: What's Already Being Said About Your Brand on Rednote

Chinese diaspora and Chinese tourists are one of Australia's most valuable audiences, yet most marketers have low visibility into how they actually discover and decide on brands. Enter rednote—a powerhouse platform boasting over 300 million monthly active users. For these consumers, rednote isn't just a social feed; it's an essential discovery engine and validation hub for real reviews before every purchase decision.

EternityX

In this exclusive session invited by EternityX, Winnie Lau (Regional Manager, Xiaohongshu Commercial Cross-Border) pulls back the curtain on authentic brand conversations shaping Chinese consumer choices. Using live examples from brands and categories in the room, discover what's already being said about your industry and why organic recommendations hold so much sway.

Delegates will walk away with a clear picture of their brand's current standing on rednote—and actionable insights on how to join the conversation on their own terms.



Winnie Lau
Regional Manager, Xiaohongshu Commercial Cross-Border
Xiaohongshu (RedNote)

10:45am - 11:35am • Hotel Lobby

Coffee & Morning Tea Break

Fuel up: Get your caffeine fix with barista coffee or tea, perfectly paired with a tempting selection of food.

Epsilon®

11:35am - 12:00pm

Breakout

Ballroom • I've Never Worked in Marketing. Neither Has Your AI.

Dennis Vroegop has never worked in marketing. He spent his career on the other side of the glass — building neural networks before “Attention Is All You Need” made AI fashionable. And he has a confession: the AI you're putting in front of your customers has never worked in marketing either. It doesn't respect your brand guidelines. It has no taste, no strategy, no fear of getting it wrong. It is an intern with infinite confidence — and most marketing teams have handed it the keys. In this session, Dennis hands a live AI a perfectly clear brand guide and lets you watch what happens. Then he shows you what engineers have known for fifty years: how to make an unreliable machine accountable — and what “done” actually means for AI in marketing.



Dennis Vroegop
Global Director of AI
New Orange

NEW ORANGE

Horizon Room • Two Brains Are Better Than One, Especially When One of Them Is Artificial

AI can now build the dashboard, draft the report and surface the trend before your coffee's cold. So what's actually left for the marketer? Cam Brands, founder of growth agency Brands Media, has a clear answer: everything that matters.

In this interview, Adam Stead sits down with Cam to unpack a methodology built on one idea: use AI to clear away the noise so human intuition can focus entirely on the calls a machine can't make. Reading a client. Reading a market. Knowing when the data is wrong.

This isn't a session about AI replacing marketers. It's about what marketing looks like once data is clean, information is fast and marketers are truly empowered to make a positive impact.



FUNNEL

Adam Stead
Director of APAC
Funnel



Cam Brands
Founder / Director
Brands Media

FUNNEL

12:05pm - 12:30pm

Breakout

Ballroom • Practical AI: Just Get Started with Agentic RAG

Most organisations don't have an “AI problem”—they have a data accessibility and trust problem. Valuable knowledge exists across documents, systems, and content platforms, but it remains difficult to find, trust, and use in day-to-day decisions.

This session focuses on how organisations are moving beyond experimentation by applying Agentic RAG (Retrieval-Augmented Generation) as a practical starting point for AI—delivering immediate value without requiring large-scale transformation or risky model training initiatives.

Rather than discussing AI in abstract terms, this session will show how teams can start small, prove value quickly, and scale safely.



John Menagh
Partner Manager ANZ
Progress Software

Progress®

Horizon Room • Scaling AI Content Without Losing Your Brand

As AI enables every team to create more content faster, the companies that stay on brand won't be the ones policing output, they'll be the ones who built brand governance into the system from the start.



Sarah Tilleke
Senior Solutions Consultant
Canva

Canva

DAY 2 • TUESDAY 25 AUGUST 2026

12:35pm – 12:45pm • Ballroom

Quickfire | Two Generational Shifts, at the Same Time: AI Search and AI Agents

Marketing is facing two generational shifts at the same time: how customers search, and how marketing teams operate. AI is no longer just a tool that helps marketers work faster; it is becoming an intelligent teammate capable of making decisions, taking action, and delivering outcomes. In this fast-paced session, Tony Van-Eyk, Managing Director APAC at Birdeye, shares new research across 16,240 locations on the gap between what a brand's AI visibility dashboard shows and what customers actually see. From the AI search blind spot to agentic execution, discover what every marketing leader needs to know, and what to actually do about it.



Sean Reddy

Senior Account Executive - Commercial/Enterprise
Birdeye

12:45pm – 1:10pm • Ballroom

Keynote | Checking my statement or my boundaries? The fine line of Card-Linked Loyalty

It's time to explore loyalty programs and how we as marketers must evolve from reactive tracking to predictive, value-driven engagement that fosters genuine customer loyalty. This shift emphasizes anticipating customer needs over merely rewarding past transactions.



This approach moves loyalty programs from margin-eroding discounts to influencing behaviour and creating seamless omnichannel experiences, while future loyalty strategies will leverage customer trust in spending data to serve value beyond transactions, preparing for innovations like tokens and passkeys.



Danielle Powell

Vice President, Product Management, Consumer
Acquisition & Engagement, Australasia
Mastercard

1:10pm – 5:00pm

Networking Activities

Sailing in Paradise
Brought to you by



Paint & Sip
Brought to you by



Go Karting
Brought to you by



5:00pm – 6:30pm

Free Time

6:30pm – 9:30pm

Poolside Reception

Join us for an evening of networking under the stars, featuring gourmet food stations and premium beverages designed to enhance your networking experience.





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Day 3

Wednesday 26 August 2026



media

Industry Panel



Michelle Rowling

Head of Marketing & Communications
Sydney Zoo



Nick Whitehead

Chief Marketing Officer
Serko



Gai Le Roy

Chief Executive Officer
IAB Australia



2026
Agenda

DAY 3 • WEDNESDAY 26 AUGUST 2026

6:00am – 8:40am • Terraces Restaurant

Breakfast

Day 3 begins with breakfast and barista coffee!

Epsilon®

8:45am – 9:00am • Ballroom

Opening Remarks



Yvonne Adele
Event Host and Official MC
iMedia

i media

9:00am – 9:35am • Ballroom

Keynote | Real Conversations: The Marketing Leader of the Future Has Two Jobs – AI and EQ

Marketing leaders are running more brands, more channels and leaner teams than the budget was ever built for. Most are doing it while quietly projecting that everything is fine. Here's the uncomfortable truth: in the next decade, a leader will need exactly two capabilities. One is AI. The other is EQ. Everyone at this summit is investing in the first. Almost no one is being trained in the second. Psychology thought leader Mitch Wallis argues the job of a marketing leader is no longer to be the best technician in the room. It's to be the person others feel safe around when the pressure is on. Drawing on his Real Conversations framework, trusted by KPMG, American Express, Lend Lease and 200+ companies on 4 continents, Mitch reveals the five instinctive habits that quietly fracture trust and engagement even when we mean well, and the connected-leadership behaviours that build retention, safety and performance under sustained pressure. You'll leave with the practical moves to lead not just a high-performing marketing team, but a genuinely human one.



Mitch Wallis
Psychology Thought Leader & Connection Expert

9:35am – 9:50am • Ballroom

Quickfire | Building loyalty is a science. We've cracked the behavioural code

Every brand has a loyalty program. Few have loyalty. With attention spread thinner than ever, building meaningful relationships with customers has never been harder. We assessed 60 loyalty programs to uncover the Human Truths that drive real loyalty. This reveals what the brands breaking through are doing differently. The latest chapter in Honeycomb Strategy's Digital Insights Series shares these findings and explores how integrated and paid programs are reshaping the landscape. Leave with the framework and tools you need to move your customer engagement forward.

Honeycomb



John Bevitt
Managing Director
Honeycomb Strategy

9:50am – 10:00am • Ballroom

Quickfire | Owning the Funnel with Out-of-Home

The biggest misconception in media planning is that OOH stops at the top of the funnel. The reality? It can do a lot more. In this session, we'll unpack how the right mix of traditional and programmatic OOH can influence every stage of the funnel - from awareness through to action, backed by a real world case study.

vistar media



Rebecca Pirrie
Group Sales Manager
Vistar Media

10:00am – 10:40am • Ballroom Foyer

Coffee & Morning Tea Break

Fuel up: Get your caffeine fix with barista coffee or tea, perfectly paired with a tempting selection of food.

Epsilon®

10:40am – 11:25am • Horizon Room

Networkers Only | Resilience Workshop

Real Capacity: How to Stay Steady When the Pressure Never Stops

Constant change. Back-to-back meetings. High-stakes conversations where the deal, the relationship or the reputation is on the line. In this room, the pressure rarely lets up, and it takes a toll long before burnout ever shows up on a performance review. Here's the reframe: resilience isn't a personality trait you either have or you don't. It's a system. And mental health isn't the absence of pressure, it's the capacity to return to balance. In this hands-on session, Mitch Wallis introduces Real Capacity and the five drivers of regulation, the levers that build a nervous system able to handle ambiguity, tolerate pressure and stay in the game: the stories you tell, the actions you take, the relationships you keep, the body you live in, and the something bigger you answer to. You'll learn from someone who has overcome a disease characterised by the inability to sit with uncertainty (OCD) and the tools he's used in his own life to become a master of 'living in the grey', including the one word that allowed him to be free from the shackles of debilitating ambiguity.



Mitch Wallis
Psychology Thought Leader & Connection Expert

10:40am - 11:25am

Marketers Only | Marketing Mastermind Roundtables

Join us for a series of dynamic roundtable discussions where collaboration leads to innovation. In these 50-minute sessions, you'll connect with industry peers to tackle common challenges, exchange success stories and explore cutting-edge strategies shaping the future of marketing. Forge meaningful connections, explore best practices, and become an integral part of the marketing community's evolution.

Roundtable Topics



Loyalty Beyond Discounts: Behavioural Science Approaches to Retention



Content Strategy When Attention Is Scarce and AI Floods the Market



From Visibility to Revenue: Proving Outcomes & Compensating Fairly in the AI Era



Rethinking Personalisation – Less Creepy, More Effective



Navigating Data Privacy While Delivering Personalised Experiences



Why Brand + Performance is the Answer!



The Trust Signal: Earning Credibility When Consumers Search, Compare & Validate

11:30am - 12:15pm • Ballroom

Industry Panel | The Future of Marketing Isn't Coming – It's Already Negotiating Your Relevance

As marketing accelerates through its most profound transformation in decades, CMOs are being asked to lead not just functionally — but strategically, technologically, and commercially across the enterprise. Looking toward 2030, this panel examines the forces already reshaping marketing today, and what CMOs must do now to remain relevant, credible, and impactful. Key tensions: marketing's ongoing enterprise credibility challenge; the CMO's evolving identity as a hybrid commercial-technology leader; what future consumers will demand from brands in terms of relevance, trust, and experience. This is not a speculative discussion about distant futures — it is a strategic examination of decisions that must be made in 2026.



Gai Le Roy
Chief Executive Officer
iAB Australia



Nick Whitehead
Chief Marketing Officer
Serko



Mark Jones
Advisory Board Chair
The Story Code Co.



Grace Eadie
Head of Marketing
Wesfarmers Health



Michelle Rowling
Head of Marketing and Sales
Sydney Zoo



12:15pm - 12:30pm • Ballroom

Closing Remarks/Ultimate Networker Prize

Be crowned the Ultimate networker and win a fabulous prize! This prestigious title will be awarded to one outstanding individual who has demonstrated exceptional networking skills using our iMedia app during the event by collecting Ultimate networking points.



Mark Jones
Advisory Board Chair
The Story Code Co.



Yvonne Adele
Event Host and Official MC
iMedia

12:30pm - 1:30pm • Terraces Restaurant

Close the loop lunch

