SPEAKERS & SESSIONS

TUESDAY, JANUARY 12

ALL TIMES, LOCATIONS, SPEAKERS AND SESSIONS SUBJECT TO CHANGE

Appleton Beer Factory McFleshman's

KEYNOTE PRESENTATION

From Then to Now: A Brewer's Perspective (9:00 am - 10:00 am; Beer Hall)

Speaker: Kirby Nelson – Wisconsin Brewing Company

Session Description: From the early days of craft beer to where the industry stands today, Kirby Nelson shares stories, experiences, and perspectives from his own journey through the ever-changing world of brewing. With decades of experience and plenty of stories along the way, he'll reflect on the evolution of craft beer, building brands, navigating industry changes, and what lies ahead.

BREWERY & PRODUCTION TRACK

An Industry in Legal Limbo: Surveying the Federal and State Landscape for THC-Infused Products (10:05 am - 11:05 am; Prohibition Room)

Speakers: Jeff O'Brien; Rebecca Hart – Husch Blackwell

Session Description: An overview of the evolving federal and state legal landscape surrounding THC-infused beverages and products. Industry attorneys will explore current regulations, legal challenges, and what breweries and beverage businesses need to understand as this market continues to develop.

Women Shaping Wisconsin Beer: Creating a Strong, Supportive Craft Beer Community (Panel Discussion) (1:00 pm - 2:00 pm; Beer Hall)

Panelists: Dana La Vake - Indeed Brewing; Natty Duchesneau - New Barons; Lindsey Akersloot - Third Space; Tracy Converse - Boulder Junction; Erica Deanda-Reyna - Tumbled Rock Brewery

Notes and framework for Discussion

Session Description: How can breweries create an environment where women and non-binary professionals feel supported, valued, and encouraged to grow? This session will bring together voices from across Wisconsin's craft beer industry to share experiences, discuss challenges, and explore practical ways to support women in brewing, production, leadership, and beyond. From mentorship and career development to workplace culture and everyday allyship, the conversation will offer ideas for building a stronger, more inclusive industry.

Brewed by Humans, Powered by AI (2:10 pm - 3:10 pm; Upper Event Pub Room)

Speakers: Joe Carani – 3 Sheeps Brewing, Rob Gustafson – Vennture Brewing

Session Description: Explore how artificial intelligence is making its way into the brewing industry. This session will look at practical applications, emerging opportunities, and how breweries can begin using AI to support operations and improve efficiency.

TAPROOM, HOSPITALITY & SALES TRACK

Beyond the Beer: Creating Experiences That Bring People Back (10:05 am - 11:05 am; Beer Hall)

Panelists: Kyle Ciske - Ope! Brewing Company; Tim Goers & Becca Eickstead – G5 Brewing Company; Aaron Gilling - Stubborn Brothers Brewery; Trent Snyder - Bridge Up Brewing; *Young Blood - TBD*

Session Description: Hear how Wisconsin breweries are turning great beer into memorable experiences that drive growth, build community, and keep guests coming back. From hospitality and events to creative programming and new spaces, brewery owners share what's working, what they've learned, and practical ideas other breweries can put into action.

Notes and framework for discussion.

Loyalty That Lasts: Using POS, Memberships & Rewards to Grow Your Community (1:00 pm - 2:00 pm; Prohibition Room)

Speaker: Henry Schwartz - Toast (former MobCraft)

Session Description: How do breweries turn one-time visitors into loyal regulars? Explore practical ways to build lasting customer relationships through mug clubs, membership programs, events, loyalty initiatives, and community connections. Hear perspectives from both the brewery and technology sides of the industry, including how today's POS tools can help breweries strengthen relationships and give people more reasons to come back.

Building a Community, Not Just Customers: Creating Teams That Thrive (2:10 pm - 3:10 pm; Prohibition Room)

Speakers: Dheren Stewart, Shallece Peters - St. Francis Brewery

Session Description: Every brewery faces staffing challenges. Learn about the ideas, systems, and culture-building efforts that help create stronger teams, improve employee retention, and build a workplace where people want to stay.