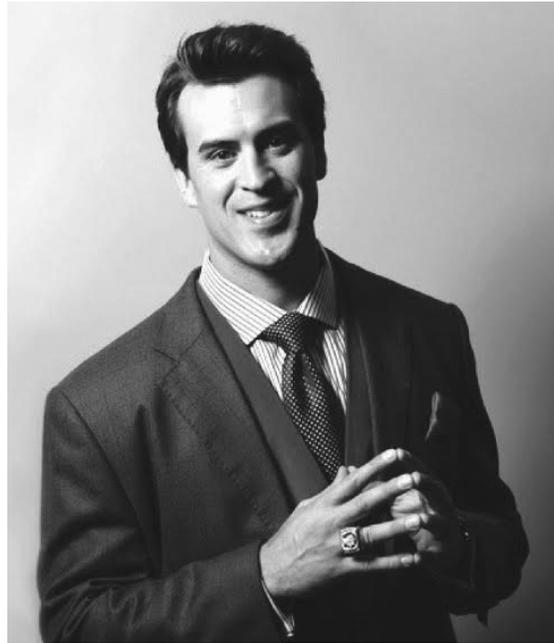


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**2019 MMBA Annual Conference**  
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# MUNICIPAL LIQUOR STORE

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## ON THE COVER

The 2019 MMBA Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, April 27–Tuesday, April 30, at Arrowwood Resort, in Alexandria.

Super Bowl Champion Ben Utecht will be the featured speaker.

### According to Ben:

*On February 7th 2007, I stepped onto the Super Bowl field and into a Hall of Fame huddle with my teammates and our head coach Tony Dungy. We became a world-class offense by creating a culture fueled by four foundational principles that allowed each player to reach his greatest potential for the benefit of the team in a highly stressful and competitive environment.*

*Like the 2006-2007 Colts, you too can realize your greatest success potential, in life and business, through the perfect practice of “The 4 Ls.”*

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# MMBA President's Message



**CHRIS ARONLD**  
*President*

Networking/communication, politics, negotiation, and research -- these are all things we have to do in our jobs. Oh yeah, let's not forget manage people!

It's hard to believe January and February are gone and Legislative Day is behind us.

It was nice seeing a lot of my friends in the industry. I didn't have much time to talk, but it was still nice to see them.

One of the things I got out of my Capital experience was that House and State members really want and need to hear from their constituents to help them form their opinion on our issues.

For those who attended, I hope you took time to send a thank you email to your legislators for their time.

Again this year we had a snowstorm, so some of you have an excuse for not attending. For the rest of you just remember, if you didn't show up you can't complain about the outcome. I think we have a responsibility to our cities as managers, department heads or even as employees. It is simple to email your legislators to let them know your opinion on the issues at hand. All you have to do is go to the website [www.mnsmart.org](http://www.mnsmart.org) and "Take Action!"

It's amazing how fast time flies, the older I get. This May I will have 20 years of service for the City of Bagley. At the end of April, I will be starting my 10th year managing Bagley Liquor and complete my first term on the board of directors.

We all work in an industry that is ever changing. Change is the only constant

in life and we can either embrace it or stay behind. If we choose the later, we are not bettering ourselves or our operations. These operations can be on sales, off sales, a distributorship, a wholesaler or even a manufacturer.

MMBA members have a huge advantage in responding to change - the willingness and ability to work together for the mutual goal of increasing profitability.

One of the best ways to connect is attending the MMBA educational and networking events throughout the year.

While I strongly encourage you to attend these events, remember MMBA is only a phone call away, and we are more than happy to "Help You Succeed".

A good friend once told me, "If you surround yourself with successful people, you too will be successful."

I'm glad for the opportunity to serve on the MMBA board, because working together we are not just successful, we are a powerful force in our industry.

Through MMBA, we are able to better serve our communities as well.

I hope to see all of you at the annual conference the end of April.



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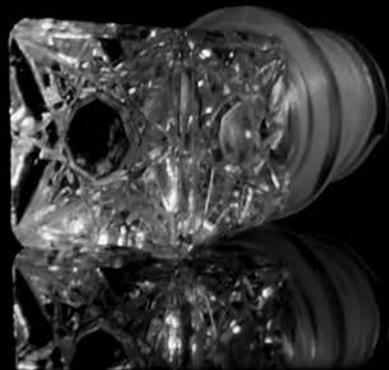
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# **2019 MMBA Annual Conference**



The 2019 MMBA Annual Conference will be held on Saturday, April 27 – Tuesday, April 30, at Arrowwood Resort, in Alexandria, Minnesota.

## **Super Bowl Champion Ben Utecht: The Champion's Way**

*From Ben: On February 7th 2007, I stepped onto the Super Bowl field and into a Hall of Fame huddle with my teammates, including Peyton Manning and our head coach Tony Dungy. We became a world-class offense by creating a culture of champion leadership and dynamic communication. This culture was fueled by four foundational principles that together allowed each player to reach his greatest potential for the benefit of the team in a highly stressful and competitive environment.*

*After football, I began to realize these championship principles were the backbone for off-the-field success as well. "The 4 Ls" are foundational in both life and business. The culture our team created around these principles earned us the greatest reward in the game of football, a Super Bowl championship. Like the 2006-2007 Colts, you too can realize your greatest success potential, in life and business, through the perfect practice of "The 4 Ls."*

## **Reaching Your BIG Goals Every Day**

As a retail leader, it's easy to spend your time putting out fires and lose sight of big goals that will truly change your store's performance. Gain hands-on advice for tackling big challenges everyday with the store team you have in place.

Achievable goal setting, effective delegation and tracking progress will come alive in this session. Come prepared with your annual commitments and leave with a real plan to achieve them.

PLUS, all attendees will receive a copy of the new book *RETAIL The Second-Oldest Profession; 7 Timeless Principles to WIN in Retail Today*.

## **Defining Great Customer Service**

Ask any retailer about their competitive advantage and you will often hear, "We have great customer service." Ask what that means and many will have a hard time with details.

This seminar will focus on specific customer service elements currently utilized in the industry.

## **Succeeding in the 2019 Competitive Environment**

2019 MMBA Facility Award entries will be presented to inspire and educate attendees on successful initiatives from operations around the state.

## **Bad Signage Leads to Big Customer Frustrations**

It is well established on-premise signage plays a major role in driving customer traffic to brick and mortar businesses and informing customers and prospective customers about commercial offerings. Moreover, it is widely understood signage does so by attracting attention, identifying businesses, conveying general impressions and specific information.

But signs that are too small or unclear can cause businesses to lose immediate sales and potential customers,

Learn how to determine the best type of signage for your business and ways to utilize these valuable assets.

## **The Business of Bars: Perfectly Served Drinks (Concurrent Session)**

Getting the serve right is paramount to maximizing sales, generating profit and customer satisfaction.

Learn the steps of building a perfectly served drink to build trust, ensure your consumers will be back for more and will get you positive recommendations. Learn how to determine which serves are driving the most profit in your bar and how over pouring and spillages not only affects your bar's profits but can also result in poor quality drinks and customer dissatisfaction.

## **Bar Success Stories and Package Store Success Stories (Concurrent Sessions)**

Examine current industry trends, issues and successful ways to increase profitability.

## **Effectively & Safely Merchandising Small Sizes (Concurrent Session)**

Small sizes are traditionally positioned behind the counter for perceived security and priced for impulse purchasing.

However, since small sizes are a growing category this session will explore considerations for taking a new approach to these items.

## **Bitters are Back!**

Bitters have been called *the defining ingredient that makes a cocktail a cocktail, and not just another alcohol beverage*. Others call bitters *the spice rack of the cocktail world*.

The boom in cocktail culture has seen resurgence in the use of bitters, from the old standbys to new creations.

Learn more about this mysterious elixir and the wonderful effect it can have on customer experiences.

**There will also be great educational tasting dinners, an alcohol awareness training, Vendor Showcase and time to have fun and develop relationships with other attendees & industry representatives.**

# BREWED THE HARD WAY



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## **2019 MMBA Conference Schedule of Events (Subject to Change)**

### **Saturday, April 27**

- Noon – 6:00 PM = Registration Hosted by Anheuser Busch
- 11:45 PM– 12:45 PM = Beer Tasting Lunch Hosted by Kona Beer
- 1:00 PM – 2:30 PM = *Succeeding in the 2019 Competitive Environment*
- 3:00 PM – 4:30 PM = *Bitters are Back!*
- 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM = Cocktail Hour
- 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM = Dinner Served Family Style with Palm Bay Wines

### **Sunday, April 28**

- 8:00 AM – 1:00 PM = Registration
- 8:30 AM – 10:00 AM = *Alcohol Awareness Training*
- 10:00 AM – 1:00 PM = Brunch & Vendor Showcase
- 1:15 PM – 2:15 PM = *Bar Success Stories*
- 1:15 PM – 2:15 PM = *Package Store Success Stories*
- 2:30 PM – 3:45 PM = *Bad Signage Leads to Big Customer Frustrations*
- 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM = *The Business of Bars: Perfectly Served Drinks*
- 4:00 PM – 5:30 PM = *Effectively & Safely Merchandising Small Sizes*
- 6:30 PM – 7:30 PM = Cocktails
- 7:30 PM – 9:00 PM = Around the World Dinner with Trincherero
- 9:00 PM – 11:30 PM = Casino Night with Shiner's Beer

### **Monday, April 29**

- 7:00 AM – 8:15 AM = Breakfast
- 8:30 AM – 9:45 AM = Super Bowl Champion *Ben Utecht: The Champion's Way*
- 10:00 AM – 11:30 AM = *Reaching Your BIG Goals Every Day*
- Noon – 1:00 PM = Lunch hosted by Schell's
- 1:15 PM – 2:15 PM = *Defining Great Customer Service*
- 3:00 PM – 5:00 PM = Relationship Building with MillerCoors
- 6:00 PM – 7:00 PM = Cocktail Hour
- 7:00 PM – 8:30 PM = Torres Spanish Themed Dinner with Ste. Michelle Wine Estates
- 8:30 PM – 9:30 PM = Awards

### **Tuesday, April 30**

- 7:00 AM – 8:30 AM = Breakfast
- 9:00 AM – 11:00 AM = *MMBA Annual Meeting, Elections, Awards & Industry Discussions*

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**Minnesota Municipal Beverage Association Annual Conference  
April 27 – April 30, 2019  
Arrowwood Resort – Alexandria, Minnesota**

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\_\_\_\_\_ Saturday Dinner (\$30.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sunday Brunch (\$20.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Sunday Dinner (\$30.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Monday Breakfast (\$15.00)

\_\_\_\_\_ Monday Lunch (\$20.00)

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# Improve Your Business By Emulating Amazon's Innovation Practices

By Robert B. Tucker, Forbes

With Amazon edging towards becoming the world's first trillion-dollar company, fresh attention is being paid to the factors that could derail its growth. The company slowed a bit this quarter, sending the stock down eleven percent.

Nevertheless, this downtick should not distract from the reality that Amazon has emerged as the new model of innovation effectiveness. They are something new in the innovation realm. They have moved so fast for so long, implemented so many new product, process and business model innovations, that their playbook is suddenly the standard by which every company must measure itself against, or get left behind.

Amazon is the new model going forward.

Through trial and error, booms and busts, Amazon has evolved a set of guiding principles and cultural practices to keep its growth machine humming. These involve delighting customers, crushing competitors one by one, hollowing out retail sectors, and disrupting industry after industry, from bookselling to online retailing to personal electronics, and from web services and software to healthcare and beyond.

In reviewing the company's rise from a converted Seattle garage in 1994, I've gone looking for the practices responsible for Amazon's incredible success.

Here are five that stand out:

## 1. Amazon Drives Innovation from the Top

Surveys show that 79 percent of senior leaders consider innovation as one of their top three priorities. Yet day-to-day, what often consumes senior management's attention is the "delivery

engine," rather than the "discovery engine." Not at Amazon.

Founder and CEO Jeff Bezos has figured out how to spend the bulk of his calendar on innovation. He delegates to trusted lieutenants the implementation of ideas. Bezos spends most of his time examining how the world will look three, five and 10 years out. He is focused on baking on results for the third quarter two years from now. He sees his job as identifying and refining the *Innovation Roadmap* that will take the company from where it is today to where he wills it to be in the future, on time and on schedule.

## 2. Amazon Thinks of Ideas as Assets

Most companies think of their assets as being things like their plants, equipment, and yes, their people. Amazon also

places an asset value on ideas. Bezos is the ideator in chief. His zest for unconventional concepts, for enabling technologies, and for better ways of operating, is infectious. "I could fill this whiteboard in an hour with 100 ideas," Bezos boasted to one interviewer, and there is little reason to doubt him.

Bezos believes that a continuous stream of ideas is what fuels growth. He sees his function as creating the cultural alignment to value and respect ideas at all levels, and act with a sense of urgency to speed their implementation. Bezos sees his role as channeling this "opportunity mindset" to every individual, department, business unit, and outpost.

Like a coach drilling his team on the fundamentals, Bezos reminds his people of the simple principles that have made

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the company great.

Three maxims have been there from the beginning: *think longer term, obsess over the customer, and be willing to invent*. They are as relevant today as ever. And while Bezos has toned down the red meat competitive rhetoric, behind the scenes he's said to be every bit the hungry hunter who once coined the phrase, "Your margin is my opportunity."

In recent months, Bezos has admitted that he is concerned about creeping complacency. Thus his renewed emphasis on "Day 1 Thinking"—the full throttle attack mode of the startup it once was. Asked what Day 2 might look like, he almost seemed to be thinking of Sears, one of many companies he has vanquished. He defined Day 2 as: "stasis, followed by irrelevance, followed by excruciating decline and death."

"The outside world can push you into Day 2 if you won't or can't embrace powerful trends quickly," he added. "If you fight them, you're fighting the future. Embrace them and you have a tailwind."

### **3. Move First, Experiment Constantly, and Fail Fast**

With zero background in hardware, Amazon waded bravely into electronic devices with its Kindle e-reader in 2007. Everyone advised against it. Numerous setbacks and hurdles cropped up. But Kindle proved a game-changer and a confidence builder. From this wildly-successful foray, the company realized it could learn new skills if it was willing to assault assumptions.

Amazon went on to pioneer the smart speaker category with Echo, and its Alexa device has 30,000 skills, mostly from third-party developers, who are building more applications all the time. Competitors are scrambling to catch-up.

Amazon values experiments. A lot. Its website is a giant petri dish, experimenting constantly with pricing a/b tests, customization trials, recommendation algorithms and more. Amazon uses its hometown as a test market to gain consumer insights and feedback, and work out the kinks in new business models, before expanding or quietly killing off ideas that don't have promise to scale.

To observe how it prototypes and debugs new physical concepts, Seattle is the place to visit.

You'll want to explore Amazon Go, the company's new automated convenience stores, which are pioneering the use of artificial intelligence and an array of overhead video cameras to revolutionize convenience store retailing. Next, head over to the Bitter Lake neighborhood, where you'll find an Amazon storefront just opened so customers can pick up and return packages. Driving around, you're bound to come across an AmazonFresh delivery truck, the result of five years of testing in the razor-thin margin grocery business. And be sure to pop into Amazon's first physical bookstore, which opened in Seattle in 2015, and is now expanding nationwide.

Amazon's willingness to move first, to test, and yes to fail (witness Amazon Fire the firm's disastrous foray into smartphones) have transformed it into not just an online retailer, but a movie studio, a hardware company, a grocer, or a web services provider – but an idea factory. The key is monetization.

While Google and other firms spend billions researching artificial intelligence and machine learning, Amazon is interested in monetizing artificial intelligence and applying it in every aspect of the organization. Amazonians are on the lookout for AI applications they can place inside products, use to enhance services, and install in physical locations. The company will often invent something or develop some new capability for its own needs, only to find that it can monetize that invention for others.

### **4. Amazon Practices Data-Driven, Customer-Led Innovation**

Amazon not only pioneers new devices and business models, but it also pioneers new approaches to the practice of innovation itself. One example might be called "data-driven, customer-led innovation."

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Apple wunderkind Steve Jobs never used focus groups or surveys to unearth consumer insights or tell him he was on the right track. Instead, he used an informed intuition to dream up “insanely great products” that consumers love. Summarizing this approach, he famously remarked: “It’s not our customers’ job to tell us what they will want next— that’s our job.”

Amazon has a different take. They operate from the belief that you can listen to customers through the data. They believe that if you’re simulating and building models and milking the data, you can let customers lead you to insanely great offerings by divining what the data suggests they will want before they even see it.

“We let customers steer us,” said Jeff Wilke, at the New Work Summit in Half Moon Bay, California. “We try to invent something they would love.”

### 5. Amazon Promulgates a Clear-Thinking, Risk-Taking Culture

At Amazon, going along to get along

is not a virtue. Heated debates often break out over what to measure. Creative tension, rather than laid-back harmoniousness, is believed to spur the best thinking.

“There’s an incredible amount of challenging [each other],” one former market researcher told *Forbes* contributor George Anders. “You want to have absolute certainty about what you are saying. If you can stand a barrage of questions, then you have [probably] picked the right metric. But you’d better have your stuff together.”

At many companies, would-be innovators must garner dozens of yeses before pursuing an idea. A single “no” can derail. At Amazon, no single manager has the right to kill an idea. The company is structured such that hundreds of managers can green-light an idea, at least to the next stage of development.

At Amazon, a high potential idea must meet three criteria: it must be original and not “me too.” It must be scalable. And it must have the potential to

produce a significant return on capital.

The company constantly experiments with new thinking methods.

One example, introduced by Bezos, is known loosely as The Narrative. Before making decisions on high-investment initiatives, senior team meetings start with a period of silent reading of a memo that Bezos has commissioned. Bezos is particular about how the [up to] six-page narrative is composed. “It must have topic sentences, verbs, and clear thinking throughout,” Bezos insists. Then, he and his senior team convene and pour over the memo for up to 30 minutes, scribbling questions, preparing for an oral discussion of the merits of the idea.

“For new employees, it’s a strange initial experience,” Bezos admits. “They’re just not accustomed to sitting silently in a room doing study hall with a bunch of executives.” Strange yes, but powerful as well.

And just one more way in which Amazon innovates how it innovates.

## **2019 Monday Conference Dinner is Spanish Theme!**

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Bull

Charo

Zorro

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2018 Kentucky Derby Theme

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# Fun Alcohol Quiz

By Betty Stein for The News-Sentinel

My daughter and I were talking about — what else — the weather, and she mentioned a tropical paradise. She went from there to Hawaii and came up with the idea for this column: How about alcoholic beverages? They keep people warm, don't they?

So that's what this is about. Every question has a connection with an alcoholic drink or alcohol.

1. Who wrote the immortal words "Candy is dandy, but liquor is quicker"?
2. The novel "Catcher in the Rye" is back in the news. Who wrote that gem?
3. What is the drink we associate with the Kentucky Derby? (No, not Four Roses!)
4. What is a sommelier?
5. You use it to securely wrap a gift, it's manufactured by 3M and it's a transparent adhesive tape. What is it?
6. What do we call the tall, slender glass usually reserved for Champagne? (OK, so it's also a musical instrument.)
7. It's a breed of a large, heavy draft horse with heavily feathered legs and is associated with a popular American beer. Its name?
8. Which Scottish poet wrote "Comin' Thro' the Rye"?
9. It was successful first on television's "Playhouse 90" and then hugely successful as a movie starring Jack Lemon back in 1962. The title song was great, too. What is the title?
10. Its name also is used for a very helpful household tool. Name the drink.

11. A Belorussian who is Caucasian shares this name with an alcoholic beverage. What's the name?

12. It's also a girl's name, but she doesn't have salt around her edges. What's the drink?

13. What is Martini & Rossi?

14. Why is the real Champagne always capitalized?

15. Why has news person Elizabeth Vargas been in the news very recently?

16. It's a drink often associated with brunch. It consists of orange juice and Champagne and is also the name of a tree with colorful flowers. Its name, please.

17. It's a lovely song from Cole Porter's "Anything Goes," which fits into this quiz. You'll get a kick out of being right.

18. It is a city in Israel, principal city of the Negev, and goes back to ancient times. It lends part of its name to this quiz.

19. It was a wildly popular song back in the big band days, and then Spike Jones took hold of it with a hilarious version.

20. A lovely Viennese waltz is "Wine, Women and Song." Name the composer.

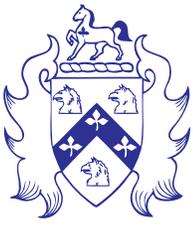
There you have it. A bonus? You want a bonus? OK: Who starred in "Cocktail," a film about a charming, flashy bartender?

*Answers: 1. Ogden Nash; 2. J.D. Salinger; 3. Mint julep; 4. A wine steward; someone really knowledgeable about wines; 5. Scotch tape; 6. Flute; 7. Clydesdale; 8. Robert Burns; 9. "Days of Wine and Roses"; 10. Screwdriver; 11. White Russian; 12. La Margarita; 13. an Italian alcoholic beverage company specializing in vermouth and wine; 14. Champagne is a region of France; 15. She announced she had become addicted to alcohol and is now a member of Alcoholics Anonymous; 16. Mimosa; 17. "I Get No Kick from Champagne"; 18. Beersheba; 19. "Cocktails for Two"; 20. Johann Strauss Jr.*

Bonus: Tom Cruise

*Managers  
are often  
uncomfortable  
discussing  
performance  
weaknesses  
directly with  
employees*

*Men tend to use  
talk to emphasize  
status, while  
women generally  
use it to create  
connection*



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