

TRACK 3: TELLING OUR STORY

301 Building Trust-Based Relationships for Bottom-Line Impact

June 12, 10:15 – 11:45 am

Northstar Room

Melissa Goodson, Marketing and Communications Manager, Valley Natural Foods

Valley Natural Foods has been a trusted source of local and organic products for over 36 years. Education has been the cornerstone to success in building trust across the co-op's audiences, from employees to consumers. Now more than ever, shoppers are concerned about what's in their food. During this presentation, we will walk through a plan to ensure that consumers understand your co-op's value proposition and the role of transparency in the co-op culture. Staff and consumer education, as well as marketing and the management team's role in building trust, will be highlighted.

302 Cooperative Advantage in Action: How P6 Co-ops Measure and Demonstrate Their Impact

June 12, 1:30 – 3 pm

Northstar Room

Moderator: Aaron Reser, National Director, Principle (P6) Cooperative Trade Movement. Panelists: Jan Rasikas, General Manager, Viroqua Food Co-op, and Nick Seeberger, Co-op Operations Manager, Seward Community Co-op

Co-ops have an important role to play in building local and regional food systems and promoting equitable relationships throughout supply chains. The co-op edge relies on skilled storytelling, communicating to customers that co-ops are living models of community-based economy and the best place to find the values-driven product selection they are seeking. Co-ops keep the edge sharp by ensuring those stories reflect authentic action. This key to differentiating co-ops from competitors is a one-two punch: 1. crafting the message, and 2. living it. During this session, learn about P6, a story-telling tool to champion local producers, identify and promote cooperative producers, and celebrate your co-op's important community role.

303 It's Not That Hard – Making Social Media Your Biggest Brand Advocate

June 12, 3:30 – 5 pm

Cinnabar Room

Holly Fearing, President of the Board of Directors for Willy Street Grocery Co-op, and Michael Ogden, Co-Founder of For3, LLC

Using social media more effectively can boost your co-op's brand and marketing efforts, member engagement and education, and presence as a leader in your community. And it doesn't take insane amounts of time or effort. The trick is how to do it right for your co-op! During this session, we'll review essential social media tactics and strategies to help your co-op connect genuinely with your audiences. Then, we'll examine how your co-op's story can best be told through digital channels. You already have a beautiful story that members and potential members are eager to hear — let social media amplify it!

304 Transparency: Treating Members as Owners

June 13, 10:30 am - Noon

Northstar Room

Mark Goehring, CDS Consulting Co-op

What does it look like to treat members as owners? How can we effectively share information that makes it easy to see our complex market conditions and criteria used in decision-making? How can transparency and the co-op's relationship with its owners be a strategic advantage? We'll explore a range of examples and consider ways to help owners understand the co-op and its strategic direction.

305 Breaking Through the Walls Without Collapsing the Co-op: Board/GM Strategic Leadership

June 13, 2 – 3:30 pm

Northstar Room

Art Sherwood, CDS Consulting Co-op

How can our cooperative boards and GMs break through the walls that limit excellence in strategic leadership without collapsing what we've built? Food co-ops have experienced amazing success, yet, their challenges have never been greater. It's time for high-quality collaboration and strategic leadership among the board and managers. During this session, explore break-through ideas to collaboratively envision the future, create and enact strategy, identify and address weak performance, and use third-party assessments — all without collapsing the cooperative house!