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## Founder Fireside Chat

[John Kobs](#) - CEO & Co-Founder, Apartment List

[Chris Erikson](#) - COO & Co-Founder, Apartment List

[Molly Shiels](#) - Senior Producer, CNN, Moderator

### Key Takeaways

- Good companies build strong business by addressing real pain points that people experience in their everyday lives. There are many pain points that renters experience today in the rental process, from filling out multiple applications to paying deposits with antiquated checks.
- The trend of convenience is growing across numerous categories. With Uber, you can now call a car with the tap of a button. With Amazon, you can order paper towels in one click. There is a huge opportunity to bring this speed and expediency to the rental experience through technology.
- The speed at which you can test and prove (or disprove) the riskiest assumptions you are making in business is core to success. The ability to iterate quickly is what has made Apartment List successful.

## The Rental Market in the 21st Century

[Igor Popov](#) - Chief Economist, Apartment List

### Session Description

Renters of the next thirty years will be very different from renters of the past thirty. An interplay of changing technology, culture, and demographics are already shaping the rental market of the 21st century. Today, renters are living more flexible lifestyles and blurring the lines between home, work, and neighborhood. Meanwhile, households are finding new ways to navigate vanishing urban affordability. Igor Popov, Apartment List's Chief Economist, broke down these trends and what they mean for the multifamily industry.

### Key Takeaways

- New groups of renters are emerging. Over the past decade, more than 1.75M new high-income households (incomes of \$100K+ annually) have become renters. Also, demand for renting single-family homes has grown by 40% since 2000.
- Flexibility is taking center stage in our lives. According to a recent Gallup poll, 54% of workers would switch jobs if employers offered flexible working hours. Also the share of workers who have telecommuted has increased by more than 4x since 1995.
- The 20th century trend of suburbanization has reversed. Modern renters are desiring proximity to the things they care about most. We've seen high earning and college educated renters moving closer to city centers.
- Millennials are not nomadic. Many assume millennials are switching jobs and moving more than previous generations. However, research shows millennials are moving less frequently compared to previous generations and are more likely to have longer job tenures with employers.
- Data is an important tool to satisfy increasingly flexible and diverse demand in the rental marketplace. It provides the ability to make real-time predictions, to see new variables, and to enable greater trust.



## Embracing and Evolving the Flexible Economy with TaskRabbit & Uber

[Diana Rothschild](#) - Head of Strategic Partnerships, TaskRabbit

[Kate Parker](#) - Head of Global Brand & Strategic Initiatives, Uber

[Dana Geisler](#) - VP of Sales (West), Apartment List

### Session Description

Younger generations and renters alike are modernizing and living more flexible lifestyles: from discarding standard gym memberships and cutting the cord on Cable TV, to moving cross country and ride sharing. Renters are looking for flexibility, experiences, and an increased level of personalization within their daily lives. TaskRabbit and Uber discussed how companies are shifting to accommodate and support the new expectations on both sides of the marketplace.

### Key Takeaways

- Demand drives the flexible economy, and new technologies are powering it. New data continues to become available to help understand and navigate the varying needs of specific personas. Doing so enables businesses to recognize and service unmet needs.
- People want to spend their dollars with companies that are aligned with their values. Social impact initiatives help with employee and customer retention, as well as user engagement.
- The flexible economy is growing rapidly. The multifamily industry has the opportunity to go beyond selling a home with four walls, a bathroom, and a kitchen to create more comprehensive and personalized living experiences for renters.

## An Inside Look At The Marijuana Industry With Eaze

[Pete Fishman](#) - Chief Strategy Officer, Eaze

### Session Description

We heard an inside scoop of what's happening in the marijuana industry and how it will affect renters, property managers and communities alike. How should you embrace the changes? What do you need to do to prepare? Eaze's Chief Strategy Officer shared his perspective on what the multifamily industry might not be talking about today, but is sure to dominate the conversation of tomorrow.

### Key Takeaways

- Today's marijuana user is very different from the stereotypical smoker. New age consumers are working professionals and parents, and often skew towards higher-income individuals.
- Cannabis is becoming legalized in more and more places, with some form of cannabis being legal in 47 of 50 states. Many high-profile politicians on both sides have come out in support of loosening laws around cannabis. Property managers should be forward thinking, and consider how their rental policies will reflect changing times.
- Due to the fact that cannabis is not legal in most public places, the majority of usage will take place within one's home.



## Apartment List Product Update

[Mckenzie Lock](#) - VP of Product, Apartment List

[Debbie Sorkin](#) - Director of Design, Apartment List

### Session Description

The Apartment List Product team shared an update on what we've learned from renters in 2018, alongside our plans for 2019 and beyond. We gave an inside look at the key challenges we're seeing in the rental marketplace, alongside data and consumer insights around what informs this knowledge, and a look ahead at what we're committed to solving together in the years to come.

### Key Takeaways

- There are different personas of renters, defined by a person's urgency around intent to rent. Understanding a renter's persona can help marketers know how to interact with them to see them convert into a lease.
  - Life-changers are those moving due to some life transition and are the most engaged on Apartment List.
  - Escapers are people with high urgency around moving, and who are motivated by price, and want to move quickly.
  - Hobbyists are browsers who don't feel a strong urgency to move and are looking for the perfect new home.
- Renters are looking for timely communication and answers to their questions. Apartment List has found that when a property responds to a renter's question within 24 hours, the renter is nearly 25% more likely to sign a lease with that property. Also, we've found that 50% of renter messages go unanswered. This is a tremendous opportunity for property communities to stand out.
- Mobile web is becoming an even more important medium for renters. Google introduced the concept of micro-moments (I want-to-know, I want-to-do, I want-to-buy moments) in 2015, which have become the new norm in media consumption. We're seeing this take hold in the rentals space, with Mobile Web usage on Apartment List growing 3x as fast as desktop usage from 2016-2018.
- Apartment List wants clients to be involved in the product development process, and we encourage our clients to provide feedback and insights.



## Transforming Pet Parenting with Technology and Wag!

[Hilary Schneider](#) - CEO, Wag!

### Session Description

It's no surprise that pets play a large and growing role in their owners' lives, but did you know it is a top consideration for how renters choose where and how they'll live? Wag!'s CEO shared how the pet care industry is being transformed with the advent of smart technology for your furry friends, alongside her big and bold plans for Wag!'s future.

### Key Takeaways

- The demographics of dog owners are changing: millennials are the majority of pet owners, and 70% of dog owners live in an apartment. This shift towards young renters as pet parents is an important trend for the multifamily industry to adapt to, as more will become residents in their communities.
- Pet owners are no longer just looking for “pet-friendly” apartments. They want amenities and a community that is supportive of the relationships with their pets. They are looking for communities that provide services to help care for their “fur-baby” and that have vetted, trusted partners to care for their pet.
- Wag! regularly partners with multifamily communities around the U.S. They host “yappy hours” with community partners where residents can come see and play with puppies that are available for adoption.

## Building a Community, Not a Cult: How Peloton Shapes Microcultures

[Carolyn Tisch Blodgett](#) - SVP, Head of Global Brand Marketing

### Session Description

Learn from Peloton's global marketing leader about how she leveraged brand strategy, consumer insights and integrated marketing to evolve the early stage company from 15% brand awareness to over 65% in two and a half years. This unicorn business has transformed the face of fitness and built a microcultural phenomenon for workout junkies and novices alike. Together, we explored how the multifamily industry can bring the microculture magic to your communities

### Key Takeaways

- The best form of marketing is when a customer buys into your business and evangelizes your product for you. Peloton's marketing efforts became massively more efficient when the community took an active role in promoting the company. Once a member had a Peloton, it changed their life, and they couldn't wait to talk about it.
- The Multifamily industry is inherently built on community through the residents who all live together. If the industry can leverage these communities by creating meaningful experiences that bring people together, their residents can become a powerful marketing asset.
- As your community scales, you have to figure out how to maintain the original feel of the community. To do this, you have to create a sense of intimacy and authenticity. Every business has to figure out how to stay true to their origins of the community as grows.



## Influence through Design Panel with Campaign & Havenly

[Lee Mayer](#) - CEO, Havenly

[Brad Sewell](#) - CEO, Campaign

[Mindy Himmel](#) - Regional VP of Sales, Apartment List, Moderator

### Session Description

Potential tenants enter a property with the optimism and possibility that it could be their next home. Design plays a huge role in helping visualize what day-to-day life will be like and ultimately influence the yes or no decisions they make when it comes to choosing their home. These talented design founders and CEOs provided tips and tricks for entrepreneurship and design.

### Key Takeaways

- When building your business, try to create the best product for the most people, with the least cost.
- Marketing professionals shouldn't be afraid to think outside of the traditional frameworks. Large multifamily units typically reflect modern design. This caters to specific personalities, but might turn someone off who is looking for something cozier.
- It's vital to design for more than just the primary purpose of a product or service. You must also anticipate other use cases and potential ways that people will ask your product/service to adapt to their lives.

## Building an Enduring Brand with Koto

[James Greenfield](#) - Creative Director & Co-Founder, Koto

[Jowey Roden](#) - Creative Director & Co-Founder, Koto

### Session Description

Any brand can look good, but in today's crowded market only those that can make – and keep – an authentic emotional connection with customers will truly thrive. Koto was established on the belief that good design and powerful ideas can create a lasting emotional experience between a brand and its audiences. Leaning into experience building brands for Airbnb, Sonos, Paypal and many others, Koto introduced the importance of archetypes, strategy and values when building a business of the future.

### Key Takeaways

- Companies that have invested in creating a meaningful brand have outperformed on the stock market by 206% over the last 10 years - defining and investing in your brand can have an outsized impact.
- To stand out in a crowded marketplace, you must have a unique point of view and hold it close to who you are as a company.
- Invest in your brand function like you invest in your sales team. Here are 5 things you can do now:
  - (1) Find your personality, using archetypes to understand the company and leaders you have.
  - (2) Use a framework, digging into your culture, products and services, and reputation. Ultimately, your culture creates a product that drives a reputation.
  - (3) Have a criteria for success, identifying how you are credible, distinctive, relevant, and inspiring.
  - (4) Tell the right story, using your channels in a thoughtful way.
  - (5) Hire experts, as all investments require expertise to maximize potential.



## The Art of Storytelling with Hint Water

[Kara Goldin](#) - CEO & Founder, Hint Water

### Session Description

Stories provide context and often the meaning for life, work, and relationships. That's because stories have characters and/or plots that readers can relate to and see themselves in. Storytelling has become an increasingly relevant marketing tactic due to people's desire for authentic connections - in life and as a consumer. Drawing on examples from her experience launching Hint, founder and CEO, Kara Goldin, deconstructed her approach to how she crafts narratives that people can relate to, and inspires the people around her to take action.

### Key Takeaways

- Finding what you're passionate about and identifying the pain points in your personal life can help others, and ultimately make a significant change.
- Great storytelling is an important strategy for creating differentiation in a competitive space. The beverage space is one of the most competitive industries on the planet. Hint Water has been able to stand out and garner significant attention by telling the story behind the story of its products.
- Today's consumers are looking for products and services that have meaning behind them, in addition to the functional value that is delivered. They are demanding insights into the decisions you make, which means you have to be able to respond to questions and criticisms, and provide more explanation behind the decisions you make.

## Creating a World We All Want to Live In with Haben Girma

[Haben Girma](#) - Disability Rights Lawyer, Author & Speaker

### Session Description

Business, now more than ever, are in a better position than governments and nonprofits to solve the toughest problems we face. But doing so requires bringing people and communities together. In an intimate interview with Haben Girma, the first deaf-blind graduate of Harvard Law School, we explored how to create truly equal opportunities within the multifamily industry. People with disabilities represent the largest minority group, numbering one billion worldwide. Reaching a group of this scale creates value for everyone, improves the experience for both disabled and non-disabled people, and facilitates further innovation.

### Key Takeaways

- People with disabilities represent the largest minority in the world. Improving accessibility means reaching a large, untapped audience. Data suggests that the disability market is worth 8 trillion dollars.
- About 60% of deaf people can't find employment - many are talented and highly educated with graduate degrees. The [Job Accommodation Network](#) is a resource that helps match employers with future employees that have disabilities.
- Be thoughtful about how words that are overused can lose their meaning. In Haben's case, she has found the word "inspirational" has often become synonymous with pity. Take a moment to think about how you truly feel, and what you mean, and communicate that sentiment.