

PTTOW!NXT

FUTURE FORUM

CHANGING THE GAME: EXPERIENTIAL & LIVE EVENTS REIMAGINED

Our first PTTOW! Next Future Forum of 2024 brings forward 4 badass PTTOW! mentors all who understand the power of experiential and live events to ignite fandom. With the Super Bowl's wake just fading into the rear-view mirror, we'll explore why brands step up in unexpected ways to engage consumers IRL.

Featured Mentors:

Sarah Moore // SVP, Marketing // **MGM Resorts International**

Phylicia Fant // Head of Music Industry and Culture Collaborations // **Amazon Music**

Josh Hackbarth // SVP, Franchise Development // **Warner Bros. Discovery**

Zack Weiner // Co-Founder & President // **Overtime**



SARAH MOORE *SVP, Marketing*

Sarah Moore is the Senior Vice President of Marketing at MGM Resorts International, where she oversees all global brand marketing, including brand strategy, creative and content, paid media investment, social marketing, and marketing operations. Additionally, she currently serves as a board member for the Nevada Ballet Theatre and has held numerous board positions previously, primarily in the arts & culture and animal welfare space. Sarah is a Cannes Lions award-winning marketer and a brand strategy nerd at heart. She splits her time between Las Vegas and Boston with her husband, two daughters, and two dogs.



PHYLICIA FANT *Head of Music Industry and Culture Collaborations*

Phylicia Fant is renowned throughout the entertainment industry as a trusted leader, esteemed executive, and public relations/marketing visionary. But even more importantly, she is a conduit of culture. Fant consistently and strategically connects artists to brands, media, film/television opportunities and philanthropic causes. In her role as Head of Music Industry and Culture Collaborations at Amazon Music, she transforms global synergy into commercial opportunities while prioritizing meaningful cultural moments.

Since joining Amazon Music in February 2022, Fant has succeeded in connecting Amazon Music to Culture via culture collaborations, partnerships, and industry events. These successes included HBCU Homecoming sponsorships, Grammy Roundtables, Beyonce's Club Renaissance Merch Popup, and talent collaboration with the likes of Lucky Daye, Usher, Jon Batiste, NBA Young Boy, Andra Day, Keke Palmer, and Omar Apollo.

Fant was educated at Spelman College in Atlanta, GA and in 2018 achieved an Executive Education Certificate from the prestigious Harvard Business School.



JOSH HACKBARTH *SVP, Franchise Development*



Josh is currently the Senior Vice President of Franchise Development for the DC, Animation and Live Action portfolios at Warner Bros. Discovery. In this role, Josh drives long-term content and franchise plans and day-to-day fan engagement for such iconic properties as Batman, Superman, Looney Tunes, Scooby-Doo and Lord of the Rings. In his six years at Warner Bros, Josh has also successfully championed franchise, consumer products and marketing strategy for enterprise-level initiatives such as Bugs Bunny's 80th, Space Jam: A New Legacy, and the Friends 25th Reunion. In addition to this role, Josh also leads the studio's development, launch and operations into the emerging NFT/web3 space.

Previously, Josh built his experience across entertainment, retail and technology with leadership positions at DreamWorks Animation, Amazon, GE and 3M. Josh holds a bachelor's in Management Information Systems from Minnesota State University and an M.B.A. from the University of Minnesota.

ZACK WEINER *Co-Founder & President*



OVERTIME

Zack Weiner is the Co-founder and President of Overtime with over 75 million social media followers and 2 billion video views each month.

He also co-created OTE (Overtime Elite), a professional basketball league featuring top 17-20-year-old domestic and international players. He currently serves on the board of directors of OTE and Overtime.

Prior to founding Overtime, Weiner was the CEO and Founder of The Sports Quotient which he started at the University of Pennsylvania. He was also a 3x Ivy League Chess Champion.

Weiner graduated from the University of Pennsylvania with a bachelor's degree in economics and mathematics.



KEY LEARNINGS

Sarah

1. BUILD A FOUNDATION THROUGH IDENTITY

- Live experiences are fundamental to a brand's identity and overall business model.
- Focus on providing live experiences and fostering a sense of community and overall connectivity.
 - Utilize loyalty programs as a connective piece in influencing B2B interactions.
 - Use data to create more meaningful consumer experiences and adopt emerging technology.
- Everyone must continue aiming for authentic omni channel presence over the next five years.

2. KNOWING WHERE YOU FIT

- When it comes to Vegas, strive for third place amongst consumer priority.
 - First place is the major event itself (ex. NFL Super Bowl or F1 Grand Prix) and second place is the destination, Las Vegas.
- Emphasize the overall experience to ensure the target audience feels connected to the brand, regardless of whether or not they're attending said major event.
- It's easy to convince stakeholders that live events and experiential activities are a priority for major events but it's a lot trickier for smaller activations. ROI is a key consideration.

3. VETTING PARTNERSHIPS THROUGH BRAND VALUES

- Be prescriptive about community involvement and ensure partnerships align with community values.
- Establish clear brand guidelines for events and activations. Then continue to determine department ownership (PR, Marketing, Agency, etc.) based on those brand guidelines and objectives.
- For MGM, the main objective when partnering with philanthropic organizations is to improve communities that employees are already a part of and employees' lives in general.
- Implement a strict influencer strategy based on brand identity, reach, and network quality.

Phylicia

1. WHAT'S THE NARRATIVE?

- Tailor event teams by solely focusing on what narrative everyone is aiming to achieve.
 - Employ those who understand the community and can create authentic activations based around their past experiences.
- When it comes to influencers, "influence" isn't the best indicator of efficiency - it's trust.
 - Think of "people as media"; focus on superfans and community influencers to create organic, authentic engagement and increase event impact.

KEY LEARNINGS

Phylicia (Continued)

2. SEEING ≠ BELIEVING

- It can be challenging when convincing stakeholders of the value of live events - especially when there aren't always tangible metrics when it comes to culture, real-time engagement, and community-building.
- Continue to emphasize the importance of events. Industry events can seem like a "party" at surface level but underneath there is real trust building and relationship fostering going on.
- Continue to prioritize brand relevance over overt branding. This will ultimately garner trust with communities and gatekeepers.

3. TRUST & CONNECTIVITY

- "For Amazon Music, connectivity allows for our audience to actually feel like they're connected to their favorite artist. Without events and this immersive idea, it's difficult to connect those dots".
- Leverage events and partnerships to engage and activate more niche demographics.
- Utilizing QR codes and event collaborations will drive app downloads and increase user engagement.
 - Focus on aligning with the right artists and communities that already speak the language of the demographic that you're trying to reach.

Josh

1. "ME" VS. "WE"

- Simply put, live events are opportunities to bring communities and fandom together.
 - "It's not really that fun to dress up in a bat suit and sit in your living room alone but it is incredibly fun to cosplay with a bunch of other fans together".
- Focus on creating immersive experiences that appeal to existing fans and attract new audiences, emphasizing the importance of everyday fan connection.
- Prioritize working with those who understand the all in-house properties (ex. somebody that understands all the cartoons that Bugs Bunny has ever been in). It can't just be a learned skill, it must be embedded in one's DNA.

2. NO MORE LOGO SLAPS

- Times have changed, there's a shift away from the traditional "logo slap" and towards impactful partnerships that resonate with the target audience.
- Focus on the source of data impressions, whether it be known, owned, earned, shared or paid media.
 - Invest a little bit upfront to get the community talking and ultimately sharing online. Afterwards, activate paid media to drive a specific transaction.
 - It's extremely difficult to convince people what the direct ROI is on a live event. Our job is to migrate that conversation away from that and show the halo effect that these types of things can have.

Josh (Continued)

3. BRAND IDENTITY = NORTH STAR

- There needs to be a buffer between “doing what you should” and “doing what you can”.
 - There’s a constant of incredible agencies and amazing concepts being pitched to the studio but they are disconnected from WB’s brand that it doesn’t check out.
- Influencer selection should be based on their alignment with the brand rather than just their reach, aiming for authentic endorsements.
 - Focus on leveraging influencers and earned media to amplify brand messaging and create buzz around live events.

TRIVIA MOMENT

QUESTION:

Experiential & event sponsorship is the fastest growing marketing channel, what is the projected total US spend for 2024?

CORRECT ANSWER

The industry prediction is that this channel spend will go to 46bn dollars in 2024.

POLL



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THE REPLAY?**

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