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## Innovation Conversation Answers, “What’s the Future?” at GMDC GM16 Marketing Conference

**COLORADO SPRINGS, Colo., June 13, 2016** –Saturday’s Global Market Development Center GM16 business session featured an “Innovation Conversation” – a dialogue that explored the fast-changing, technology-driven retail landscape and how it affects businesses and consumers.

“Nontraditional competition is affecting every part of the industry,” said presenter Kevin Coupe, author of “Retail Rules! 52 Ways to Achieve Retail Success,” a guidebook for competing effectively and efficiently on Main Street. “Companies need to innovate from the inside out—if they’re not trying to disrupt from within, they won’t be able to compete.”

For more than 14 years, Coupe has had his own website – [www.MorningNewsBeat.com](http://www.MorningNewsBeat.com) – providing business news in context, and analysis with attitude to 35,000+ subscribers. During the session, he also spoke to what he describes as “disintermediation.”

“Brands have a fantastic opportunity to directly connect with the consumer richly engage retailers with consumer data,” said co-presenter Tom Furphy, former Amazon.com vice president of consumables and originator of AmazonFresh, who contributed via pre-recorded video. “But, if the retailer causes friction to connecting the consumer to what they want, manufacturers can bypass the retailer and sell directly to the consumer.”

Furphy, currently serves as CEO and managing director of Consumer Equity Partners — a venture capital and development firm in Seattle, WA, that works with top retailers and manufacturers.

Additional insights of the “Innovation Conversation” included the continually growing demand for an engaging in-store experience as well as product differentiation. The conversation also turned to what the presenters termed the “Amazon Flywheel,” or the deliberate, synergistic way that Amazon is making it easier for customers to buy products through innovative online frictionless services.

“Amazon is always thinking of ways to do things better and thinking like a start-up,” said Furphy. “The Amazon model of today won’t be their driver in 10 years — they’re already thinking beyond their current technology for ways to make buying easier for customers.”

Coupe concluded the session by commending GMDC on continuing to drive innovation to the forefront of the industry. New initiatives including GMDC’s B2B Video Exchanges, Retail

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Tomorrow Advisory Board and CART technology solutions portal help equip members with tools that fuel growth and creativity.

The business session was hosted by GMDC and sponsored by Big Time Products. The conference takes place in Orlando through June 14. The next GMDC conference, HBW16, will be held Sept. 28-Oct. 2, 2016 in San Antonio, Texas. For more, visit <https://www.gmdc.org/conferences/2016-hbw-conference>.

## About GMDC

Global Market Development Center (GMDC) energizes members and the marketplace by advancing a culture of Connect-Collaborate-Create-Commerce. As the leading GM and HBW trade association, GMDC is dedicated to serving its ecosystem of more than 600 General Merchandise and Health Beauty Wellness retailers, wholesalers, suppliers and service/solution member companies by enabling consumer-facing innovation and retail reimaged. GMDC's combined member volume represents more than 125,000 retail outlets and more than \$500 billion in sales. To learn more, visit [www.gmdc.org](http://www.gmdc.org).

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