

## FutureFWD 2025: Over 200 Hospitality & F&B Leaders Converge in Kuala Lumpur to Shape Industry's Future

**Inaugural Conference by Saladplate.com (part of Informa Markets) Delivers High-Impact Programme on Sustainability, Technology, and Consumer Trends**



*FutureFWD – Hospitality, Food & Beverage event successfully held at EQ Kuala Lumpur | Photo Credit: Saladplate.com*

10 October 2025, Kuala Lumpur: More than 200 hospitality and food & beverage professionals gathered at the EQ Kuala Lumpur on September 25, 2025, for the inaugural FutureFWD – Hospitality, Food & Beverage conference. The day-long event, presented by Saladplate.com in partnership with Food & Hospitality Malaysia (FHM), brought together industry thought leaders, trailblazers, and innovators to explore the transformative forces shaping the global hospitality and F&B landscape.

*“What an incredible milestone for the Hospitality, Food & Beverage portfolio at Informa Markets -the inaugural FutureFWD conference by Saladplate.com has exceeded all expectations, bringing together over 200 industry professionals at EQ Kuala Lumpur for a seamlessly orchestrated day of high-impact conversations and presentations. The feedback has been outstanding, and we have successfully launched a brand-new conference format that has created meaningful dialogue around sustainability, technology, and consumer trends, facilitated valuable networking opportunities, and established FutureFWD as a must-attend industry event. This success has built strong momentum for our Singapore 2026 edition alongside FHA, where we'll expand to a 3-day conference and showcase format”* said **Ian Roberts, Vice President – Asia, Informa Markets**

### **Comprehensive Programme Addresses Critical Industry Challenges**

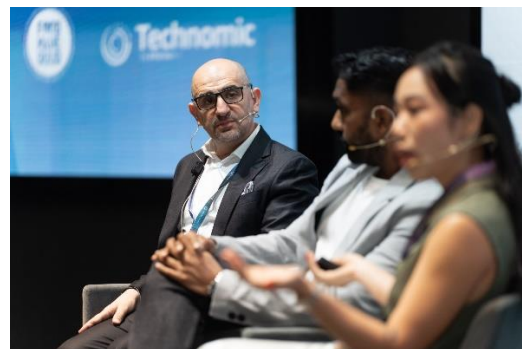
The conference featured diverse session formats including keynote presentations, panel discussions, sustainability-focused sessions, and success story presentations. Expert emcee and a key industry figure Debbie Yong, founder of Atypical Media and former Regional Editorial Director at the Michelin Guide, guided attendees through a seamlessly orchestrated program that challenged convention and sparked meaningful industry dialogue.



Debbie Yong (Founder, Atypical Media), emcee and moderator of the conference | Photo Credit: Saladplate.com

#### Sessions covered essential topics, including:

- **Business Reset Strategies** for adapting to market changes
- **Emerging Sustainability Practices** redefining operational excellence
- **Tech-Driven Innovations** powering new efficiencies and guest experiences
- **Shifting Consumer Behaviours** demanding adaptive, agile strategies
- **Hospitality Design Concepts** creating memorable and enduring impact



The conference featured six sessions with industry leaders sharing valuable insights | Photo Credits: Saladplate.com

**Sarissa Rodriguez-Schwartz, Co-Founder & CEO of SJS Group**, praised the event's impact: "What an incredible privilege it was to participate as a speaker at the FutureFWD Hospitality, Food & Beverage conference. Being part of this exceptional gathering of thought leaders who came together to explore the transformative forces reshaping our industry was truly inspiring. This high-impact conference brought together international perspectives on the most pressing topics facing hospitality and F&B today."



Panelists discuss 'The Great F&B Reset.' From left: Nicola Lee (Contributor at Tatler Asia and Singapore Business Times); Sarissa Rodriguez-Schwartz (CEO, SJS Hospitality Group); Stefanie Wijono (Deputy Director of Marketing & PR, The Union Group); Nicholas Ng (Founder, Food For Thought) | Photo Credit: Saladplate.com

**Kristian Olsen, Founder & Managing Director of Type A**, emphasised the strategic focus of discussions: "It was a privilege to share how content fuels both digital presence and word-of-mouth at FutureFWD. What stood out across the sessions was how leaders are moving beyond surface-level marketing to tackle both industry and audience shifts head-on."



Kristian Olsen, Managing Director of Type A, shared insights on how brands can evolve their marketing strategies | Photo Credit: Saladplate.com

### Research-Backed Expert Perspectives Drive Actionable Outcomes

**Jing Yong, Growth Director – Greater China at GlobalData**, delivered insights on how authenticity and heritage are reshaping menus, brand strategies, and consumer expectations across the region, reinforcing the need for brands to embrace local relevance while scaling experiences globally.

**Emma Maxwell**, leading restaurant interior designer and **Founder of Emma Maxwell Studio**, highlighted key takeaways from her panel:

- Loyalty is built through ritual and behaviour, not aesthetics alone
- Independent operators succeed by being fearless, and hotels must adopt that spirit

Maxwell noted: *"I was truly impressed by the calibre of discussion and the energy in the room. The programme was impeccably curated with breadth, depth, and rigour, featuring outstanding speakers addressing the most urgent industry challenges. It was a forum of rare substance, brilliantly executed in every detail."*



Conference speakers Jing Yong (Growth Director – Greater China, GlobalData PLC) and Emma Maxwell (Founder, Emma Maxwell Studio) sharing industry insights | Photo Credits: Saladplate.com

### Networking Opportunities Foster Industry Collaboration

Beyond formal sessions, FutureFWD 2025 provided extensive networking opportunities where delegates connected, collaborated, and exchanged ideas. Networking breaks facilitated conversations that extended session themes, fostering new partnerships and reinforcing the value of collective industry dialogue.

The conference concluded with optimism and urgency, acknowledging that while the hospitality and F&B industry faces significant challenges—including rapid technological change, sustainability pressures, and shifting consumer expectations—innovation and collaboration will drive future progress.

### FutureFWD Expands to Singapore at Food & Hospitality Asia (FHA) 2026

The next edition of FutureFWD will be launched as a 4-day conference and showcase alongside Food & Hospitality Asia (FHA) from 21 to 24 April 2026 at the Singapore EXPO.



Paving the way forward, **Indiana Forrest-Bisley, Event Director of FHA, Informa Markets**, said: “*The future of Hospitality and F&B will be shaped by those who can integrate technology with service excellence. FutureFWD Singapore, is FHA’s dedication to Technology in Hospitality, Foodservice, and Retail. This groundbreaking platform will bring together global innovators and ASEAN industry leaders to exchange ideas, explore cutting-edge solutions, and forge actionable pathways toward smarter, greener, and more resilient businesses. FutureFWD is about more than innovation — it’s about empowering our community to lead and thrive in a fast-changing world.*”

#### **Programme themes at FutureFWD Singapore in 2026**

FutureFWD Singapore will spotlight critical themes shaping the future of hospitality, foodservice, and retail. These programme pillars reflect the industry's most urgent challenges and opportunities:

- Sustainability initiatives as Business Imperative - tackling food waste management, embracing green hospitality practices and energy-efficient management
- Technology-powered solutions - addressing changing consumer behaviours and experiences
- Process optimisation and operational efficiency - through smart systems and automation
- Revenue growth opportunities – unlock growth through innovation and adaptation

#### **Industry Leaders Shaping the Future**

FutureFWD Singapore is fuelled by a stellar Steering Committee bringing together some of the country’s most influential leaders across technology, operation excellence, and hospitality innovation:

- Andrew Cameron, Founder & CEO, Enzyme Consulting
- Han Wei Chew, President, HITAS (Hospitality Information Technology Association Singapore)
- Ivan Ng, Chief Technology Officer, City Developments Limited
- Khang Nguyen Trieu, Founder and Fractional Chief Information Officer / Chief Technology Officer, The Way Forward
- Nigel Ngan, Digital Strategy Lead & Head, (Product Development – Food Services), FairPrice Group
- Wilmos Lee, Assistant Vice President, IT, Tunglok Group

Reflecting on the vision of FutureFWD Singapore, **Han Wei Chew, President of HITAS**, shared: “*My role as part of FutureFWD Steering Committee and as Head of the Hospitality IT Association Singapore is to bridge innovation with industry needs. Technology is no longer a back-end enabler — it is at the heart of how we drive service excellence, optimise energy use, reduce food waste, and create seamless guest journeys across Hospitality, Retail, and Food Services. Together, we can reimagine the way our industries serve and thrive in a digital-first economy.*”

Expanding on the success of the Kuala Lumpur edition, FutureFWD Singapore promises a richer, more dynamic experience — empowering attendees with actionable insights, tangible examples, and meaningful connections to fuel industry transformation. More information and updates are available at

<https://www.foodnhotelasia.com/futurefwd>

## **About Hospitality, Food & Beverage and Saladplate at Informa Markets**

Informa Markets' Hospitality, Food & Beverage portfolio includes a series of global in-person trade events and an online content and insights platform Saladplate, aimed at fostering business relationships, enabling learning, and enhancing trade opportunities for the industry. With several established events within the portfolio, such as Hotelex Shanghai, FHA, HOFEX, Fispal Food Service, and Abastur, the portfolio together offers an unparalleled audience reach across the world. Staging 35 live and digital events in major cities, including Shanghai, Hong Kong, Singapore, Ho Chi Minh City, Seoul, Kuala Lumpur, Mumbai, Bangkok, Sao Paulo, and Mexico City. Working alongside established industry partners, government bodies, and recognised professionals, the portfolio aims to bring companies, individuals, and the industry to the forefront of global business innovation by offering solutions and opportunities that meet today's business needs.

Since its launch in October 2023 with a renewed focus, Saladplate has reached over 600,000 industry professionals globally through its platform and hosts various products, focusing on unbiased news, content, and insights. Features on the platform include networking and learning events – Business Breakfast, country reports – Focus On Reports, a global supplier directory with over 35,000 suppliers listed and refreshed monthly, news articles, an e-magazine with an average monthly readership of over 45,000 professionals, and whitepapers and category reports

For more information, please visit [www.saladplate.com](http://www.saladplate.com)

## **About Informa Markets:**

Informa Markets creates platforms for industries and specialist markets to trade, innovate and grow. We provide marketplace participants around the globe with opportunities to engage, experience and do business through face-to-face exhibitions, targeted digital services and actionable data solutions. We connect buyers and sellers across more than a dozen global verticals, including Pharmaceuticals, Food, Medical Technology and Infrastructure. As the world's leading market-making company, we bring a diverse range of specialist markets to life, unlocking opportunities and helping them to thrive 365 days of the year.

For more information, please visit [www.informamarkets.com](http://www.informamarkets.com)

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