

TECH CONNECT™

Powered by the Minnesota Technology Association

Conference overview • May 5, 2022

8:00 am Arrivals/Expo Opens

8:30 am **Welcome** by **Jeff Tollefson, President & CEO, Minnesota Technology Association**



Special address by **Mayor Melvin Carter, City of St. Paul**

Mayor Carter will share how the city of Saint Paul is committed to a tech-forward future.

Opening Keynote: Fjord Trends 2022 – A New Fabric of Life

Martha Cotton • Managing Director and Fjord Global Co-Lead, Accenture

Fjord Trends 2022 collectively tell a story of people and their relationships with the planet, technology, brands, and each other. A unique set of challenges and opportunities arose for businesses in 2021, including supply chain issues, explosive new technologies, dramatic evolutions in people's view of themselves and their priorities, and the realization that we can no longer behave as though people were separate from nature.

In her keynote, Martha will examine the changes thrust upon us, the innovations we've seen emerge, and set out how we move forward from here.



10:00 am Expo Open

10:15 am **Choice of Breakouts - 40 minutes each**

• **Automated Machine Learning: Are You the Next Citizen Data Scientist?**

Presented by Kyle Jourdan, Qlik

Automated machine learning (AutoML) is changing the way organizations approach machine learning and data science. Minnesota companies, regardless of size and industry have the ability to become AI-driven enterprises with automated machine learning and no code. Kyle will cover:

- Common automated machine learning use cases
- How automated machine learning enables more employees to take part in AI initiatives while making existing data science teams more productive
- Concrete action items to evaluate your organization's readiness

• **Think Like a Jazz Musician**

Presented by Ty Hollins, ProCircular

You want your GRC Program to feel more like Jazz rather than Classical music. The jazz musician's capability to improvise, take risks, adapt to change, and forge new ground are the exact skills we all need to develop in our current economy of bureaucratic sameness. This session will explore Governance, Risk, and Compliance and its synchronization and interrelation with business objectives.

• **Building a Bright Future Through Technology Transformation at Xcel Energy**

Presented by Tawnya Fiedler, Theresa Dolezal, Marcus Johansson, Jill Rodning, Megan Scheller, and Scott Siebert, Xcel Energy

Xcel Energy is transforming its employee and customer experiences through innovation and new technologies. How is Xcel Energy leveraging cutting edge technologies to push beyond the traditional utility service model and deliver 100% carbon-free electricity by 2050? Join leaders from Xcel Energy's technology team for a panel discussion on how digital, customer and advanced grid technologies are helping build the future of energy in the context of Xcel Energy's bold mission to deliver safe, clean and reliable energy services at a competitive price. Bring questions on technology transformation and an appetite to learn about your part in building our energy future!

• **5G Wireless: Changing the World Around Us**

Presented by Josh Forsythe, Verizon

The only constant in wireless networking has been change. 3G wireless brought the internet to phones, 4G added apps and real-time video, and 5G is ready to build on all of the progress from the past. Have you ever wondered what exactly 5G means, or why you should care? The session will define 5G, explain network evolution at a high level, and talk about how 5G wireless is about to change the world we live in!

• **Conversational AI Fabric - How it is Changing the Future of Application Experience**

Presented by Ashish Shrivastava, 3M

3M is applying digital technologies not just to its products but also to transform its business processes. Come and join this breakout session to experience the key trends in Conversational AI/NLP and how 3M is applying them. The future of interaction between machines and computer applications will be less UI-driven and more text and voice-based. In fact, we are heading towards a new UI design paradigm which is called "Zero UI" or screen-less future. In the Metaverse, humans and other objects will be able to communicate with each other in natural language and one of the biggest contributing factors to that will be Natural language processing (NLP). Natural Language Processing (NLP) is the fastest growing technology in AI/ML space. Especially last 2 to 3 years have seen dramatic improvements in this area and business applications of this technology are growing faster than ever.

Tech Talent Discussion Room: Tech Inclusion Alliance

Conversation Leader: Caroline Karanja, Minnesota Technology Association

Join us as we discuss how to support talent from new tech skills pathways such as bootcamps and certificate programs into our organizations. In this session we'll discuss and ideate on inclusive strategies around interviewing, onboarding and growing technologists who are newer in their careers in tech.

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Mid morning sessions & Mid-Day Keynote

10:55 am

Expo Open

11:20 am

Choice of Breakouts - 40 minutes each

• The Cutting Edge of Quantum Computing in Healthcare

Presented by **Matthew Versaggi, Optum**

This is an exploration of Quantum Computing in the Healthcare space and what Optum has been doing in this area. We will examine what makes QC special, security implications, patents, the educational process, hackathons, external notable developments and other notable developments in the QC healthcare space of interest.

• The State of ESG: Where Technology is Improving Outcomes

Presented by **Jenna Harvey, Appian**

ESG is quickly becoming an imperative for organizations across industries, especially with emerging SEC regulations. Navigating the data and process complexities to effectively monitor performance, target improvement areas, and report out to key constituents is a challenge today. Organizations must look toward new approaches and technologies to effectively manage ESG programs, including sustainability and corporate responsibility initiatives.

Join this interactive breakout session with your peers to discuss impact areas across priorities within ESG. Walk away with actionable insights and ideas to bring back and leverage in your organization.

• Having 'Data Management' as the New Utility

Presented by **Tom Rieger, Snowflake**

Like that meter on the side of your home, paying for data management is now charged by the second. Paying for what you really use. Scaling up on-demand. Zero administration and tuning. Scaling back immediately. Suspending use all together and not lose any data. This session will review how truly easy it is today to go from zero-to-infinity-and-back using born-cloud technologies.

• Burning Down the Backlog

Presented by **John Ferguson, OutSystems**

Many companies have embarked on a digital transformation within their organization but still struggle with meeting the demand of the business in the form of the application backlog. In our session, you can learn how large enterprises are completing the last mile of their digital transformation by building applications that matter not just to their business but to their end-users. Join this session to learn:

- Completing the last mile of digital transformation
- Burning down the ever-growing application backlog
- Accelerating developer productivity with low-code/no-code techniques

• Designing Meaningfully: Just Because You Can, Doesn't Mean You Should

Presented by **Keith Senkowski, Thrivent**

The modern digital space is a complicated interplay of organizational ideals and the customer's reality. Of conscious innovation warring with unconscious conservation. It is a heady mix that often leads us to scramble to create without pausing to figure out if we should even be going down that path. In this talk, Keith will share how Thrivent is tackling this question through Human Centered Design.

Tech Talent Discussion Room: Moving the Needle on CS Education in Minnesota

Conversation Leaders: **Katie McClelland, Minnesota Technology Association** and **Amy Roberts, Code.org**

Minnesota currently lags the rest of the country in providing access to foundational computer science programs at the K-12 level, impacting the number of Minnesotans earning four-year degrees in computer science and availability of skilled tech talent in the state. Join this session to hear about how other states have expanded access to computer science, and what Minnesota can do to get out of last place.

12:00
noon

LUNCH

12:30 pm

Mid-Day Keynote: Business as Unusual

How to Future-Proof Your Business in Transformational Times

Jack Uldrich • Global Futurist, Speaker, Author

The pandemic has catapulted the world into a future of deep change. In this engaging, provocative, and insightful keynote session, acclaimed global futurist and best-selling author Jack Uldrich will not only discuss how Coronavirus is transforming the world of tomorrow, he explains why it is accelerating many of the trends that were already at work prior to the pandemic.

History reminds us that great crises produce great change—as well as great opportunities. To take advantage of these extraordinary opportunities, businesses must position themselves now to operate in a world where “business as unusual” is the new “usual.” This session will help leaders leverage ten “unconventional” techniques to succeed in today’s—and tomorrow’s—transformational times.



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Mid afternoon sessions

1:15 pm

Choice of Breakouts - 40 minutes each

• Using Analytics in a Disrupted Supply Chain

Presented by Erika Johnson and Carly Knopick, Land O'Lakes

Hear from Land O'Lakes on how they are using analytics in a disrupted agriculture and food supply chain to manage costs and satisfy customer demand. Erika and Carly will share with you the recipe used to help build and deliver important tools and insights to support multiple business units and supply chain functions over the past two years. The recipe for delivering this capability required one part collaboration, one part agility, a lot of development work along with a few healthy dashes of innovation and grit.

• Enabling the Future of Work

Presented by Zach Brand, Virteva/Crossfuze

Since even before the pandemic, Virteva, a world-class Microsoft Partner, has been enabling organizations and their people to do their best work. By transforming their collaboration, productivity, and security capabilities, organizations can embrace and be successful in the future of work. Zach will cover:

- Mini case studies on how other organizations have solved the future of work
- Lessons learned on ensuring a successful transition
- Education on how to save on budget with Microsoft licenses you are (likely) already paying for

• Lessons in Shifting to a Product and Agile Centric Culture

Presented by Creg Schumann, Turnberry Solutions and Peter Lutz, Optum

Doing Agile is not the same as being Agile. Agile transformation starts with a cultural mindset that is measured not in just burndown metrics and velocity, but actual product and business value delivered (outcomes over outputs). For Optum Health, actual product and business value delivered translates into improving people's lives.

Learn from Peter Lutz, CIO, Optum Health, and Creg Schumann, Agile Enterprise Principal, Turnberry Solutions, who partnered on an Agile Product and Teams Transformation. Peter and Creg will share what they had ideally wanted to do, what really happened, and what they ultimately should have started with - delivering products people love, faster. They will provide insights along their roadmap on how Optum nurtured a growth culture and compatible operating model to improve employee satisfaction, customer outcomes, cycle-time & throughput, and funding management. They'll also dive into some of the delivery methods, organizational design, funding changes, and product management practices they adopted to help transform to a culture of delivery.

• Technology and Transportation: How MnDOT Uses Technology to Manage Traffic

Presented by Brian Kary and Garrett Schreiner, Minnesota Department of Transportation

The Minnesota Department of Transportation uses intelligent transportation systems to manage traffic and provide traveler information. The systems deployed by MnDOT include traffic cameras, ramp metering, Dynamic Message Signs, and E-ZPass Express Lanes. These systems are controlled from the Regional Transportation Management Center in Roseville, MN and are connected via an extensive fiber optic network. MnDOT provides traveler information to the motoring public with the 511 Traveler Information system consisting of a website, phone system, and smartphone app. Learn more about these tools MnDOT currently has and what is being planned for the future.

• Not Just a Checkbox Anymore: InfoSec Policies that Drive Accountability and Security-Mindedness

Presented by Tina Meeker, Sleep Number

Security policies are a foundational requirement of any security program. Most of us have them, auditors review them, and we update them annually. That is a good start, but are your policies working for you in a way that advances your security program? A well-designed policy structure coupled with strategic communication, training, and processes will enable organizational clarity, gain executive buy-in, drive accountability, and even help advance security culture. Tina will share proven practices to help you take your policy design and operational practices to the next level (or build from scratch) based on her experience in this space for over 15 years across several organizations across various industries.

Tech Talent Discussion Room: Powering the Possible Thru Partnerships

Conversation Leaders: Ange Wang, Prime Digital Academy, with Shaina Abraham, Kowsar Mohamed, and Nardos Tesfalidet from the City of St. Paul, and Tammy Dickinson from the City of Minneapolis

As a leader, you recognize the importance of creating opportunities for your team to grow and contribute to your organizational goals. As a team member, you know what it takes to get the work done and more capacity would be helpful. How do we create opportunities, get more folks contributing to the work, and diversify the tech industry while doing so? Prime Digital Academy, Right Track and MSP Tech Hire leveraged their respective strengths and partnered to make it possible for you to add practically-trained, BIPOC career-launchers to your team - gaining their valuable perspective, empowering them to contribute to the work, and creating mentorship opportunities for you and your UX team to usher in the next generation of skilled practitioners!

We'll discuss how this partnership works, and invite further conversation by you on ways our tech community can partner to provide a launchpad for new UX researchers and designers!

1:55 pm

Expo Open (Closes 2:15 pm)

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Late afternoon sessions

2:15 pm **Choice of Breakouts - 40 minutes each**

• **Advancing Sustainable Compute Infrastructure**

Presented by Dave Perrill, Compute North

Join Dave Perrill, CEO and Co-Founder of Compute North, for a brief presentation and open discussion on the future of data center infrastructure. This session will dive into the opportunities surrounding the convergence of energy transition and accelerated computing. Compute North brings a unique combination of data center, energy, and technology expertise to meet the growing demand for purpose-built infrastructure solutions. Dave will provide insight into how Compute North develops sustainable, cost-effective infrastructure for clients in blockchain, cryptocurrency mining, machine learning, artificial intelligence and more.

• **Translating Research to Solve Problems**

Presented by Amy Kircher, DrPH, Allison Hubel, PhD, Jesse Erdmann, and Abdennour Abbas, University of Minnesota

Catalyzing solutions for complex global challenges requires curiosity and collaboration. At the University of Minnesota, we are problem-solving for these complex challenges to create academic, societal, and economic impacts that advance science and provides benefit to individuals, organizations, and nations. We are creating a place-based innovation ecosystem where researchers from academia and industry partner with governments and our communities to find innovative solutions. This session will feature the University of Minnesota's strategies to drive innovation impact and share transformational research and technology.

• **Cloud Security and Risks of Working in the Cloud**

Presented by Matthew Kissel, RSM

Organizations transition data and systems to the cloud to gain efficiencies and cost savings but related IT risks and compliance obligations are often not fully understood or addressed. It is important for organizations to evaluate, develop and implement comprehensive cloud policies, procedures and controls to address those risks. As organizations handle sensitive information and must meet stringent regulatory compliance requirements, it is important for organizations that transition to the various cloud environments to identify, mitigate and manage those risks. Is your organization effectively and holistically managing your cloud IT risk?

• **Simplifying the Complex - Receive Orders From Anywhere**

Presented by Brent Shiely, Best Buy

Learn how Best Buy has made it possible where partners (Amazon, Samsung, Instacart, and hundreds more) are able to browse the assortment, get personalized product availability for their customer, submit orders and receive order status - all while owning the user experience.

• **Tech Talent Discussion Room: Competency over Credentials: Rethinking How We Hire for Tech Jobs**

Conversation Leaders: Angie Brekke and Tara Wyborny, Genesis10 (Dev10 Program)

Digital transformation is about more than technology; it's about people—the creative, innovative, adaptive tech talent who implement technology. Tech leaders are facing the most challenging hiring environment of their careers. Adding only 5% to the tech talent pool, universities alone cannot solve the problem. A business' digital future depends on developing the next generation of skills—closing the gap between talent supply and demand. Join us to learn about creative alternatives that will empower you to hire differently, with confidence.

2:55 pm **Break**

3:00 pm **Closing Session**

Executive Roundtable: Accelerating Digital Success in 2022 & Beyond

Executive Panelists:

- **Teddy Bekele, SVP and CTO, Land O'Lakes**
- **Julie Durham, CTO, UnitedHealthcare**
- **Amy Hutsell, VP, Strategic Planning & Digital Operations, Thomson Reuters**
- **Jake Krings, Vice President - Marketing & Merchandise Engineering, Target Corporation**

Conversation facilitated by Jeff Tollefson, President & CEO, Minnesota Technology Association

In this closing session, Jeff Tollefson will facilitate an executive panel discussion with technology leaders from Optum, Land O'Lakes, Target, and Thomson Reuters on the challenges and opportunities that lie before us as a tech community. A broad spectrum of topics will be covered, from how companies are leveraging technology tools and platforms to power digital transformations, to how organizations are accessing, developing, and retaining the talent needed to successfully drive these initiatives, and more.



4:00 pm



Cinco de Mayo Happy Hour



5:00 pm

Conference concludes