



Breaking away from the flock: foodservice pros learn strategies for success in a commoditized market, May 1

FIA's spring Symposium was a rousing success: *Overcoming Commoditization: From Food and Equipment to Human Resources*

How can you overcome the natural market progression towards "commoditization," when products and services become defined solely on price? At FIA's second Symposium, May 1 in Atlantic City, 93 foodservice pros gathered to take on the issue.

This thought-provoking, one-day program allowed participants to take a look at this critical issue and create new ideas and insights to develop real solutions. This will have an enormous impact not only on the foodservice industry but every business – particularly in a difficult economic environment. The speakers and moderators allowed all attendees to gain perspective on how to use resources, expertise and communication style to steer their companies and the industry toward a healthier financial future.

Keynote speaker was Tom Snyder, former CEO of the consulting firm Huthwaite and author of *Escaping the Price-Driven Sale: How World Class Sellers Create Extraordinary Profit*. Snyder outlined strategies to position products and services to *drive sales by delivering value*.



Kathy Gillen, President of Foodservice Coaching Group, followed up with a discussion of communication styles and relationship management.

Gillen has since made available to FIA members a report, "Breaking through the Commodity Barrier," an [overview](#) with real-world ideas and solutions for success in commoditized markets.

The symposium's afternoon session was led by Michael Colburn and Mary Esther Treat of Ideas Well Done. This interactive session was designed to open minds about new, creative ways to make innovation and value part of the fabric of "business as usual."

A comprehensive [reading list](#) was developed to accompany the program – even if you missed the symposium, you will want to take a look at the wealth of information here.

An event whitepaper is being developed in collaboration with a business graduate student of Villanova University and will be made available in July.

[View photos from the event.](#)

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