THE FMH COLLECTIVE









EVENT REPORT · 4TH EDITION

Fintech Marketing SummerCon 2026

30 June 2026 · The Trampery, London

The authentic imposter

The fintech marketer's 2026 playbook

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The day in a nutshell

On 30 June 2026, the UK's fintech marketing community packed back into The Trampery in London for the 4th edition of The FMH's flagship SummerCon. Across a single day, 20+ speakers from Thunes, Selina, Caxton, Allica Bank, Titanbay, Demand Genius, Banking Circle, Stoa, Zopa, OpenPayd, FF News, ClearBank, Dojo AI, Nuvei, OakNorth, Paymentology, Light, Perk+, Paysecure, YuLife and BR-DGE took the stage, backed by 7 partners including Rosely Group and Dojo AI.

If 2025 was about outmanoeuvring the giants, 2026 was about staying honest while you do it. The day's throughline showed up again and again, from the opening TED talk to the final fireside: AI has commoditised the floor of marketing execution, meaning the drafting, the summarising and the campaign-launching. What's left standing above that floor is the stuff AI can't fake: proprietary context, real customer trust, and a brand narrative that's honest about the fact that it keeps changing.

4th
edition

20+
speakers

21
brands on stage

7
partners



ON THE PROGRAMME

03 TED TALK
The authentic imposter: Why your brand narrative should change

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Humanising fintech: Why stories beat features

05 PULSE TALK
Why your AI visibility metrics are misleading you

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"Never mind the (Marketing) Bollocks, let's get some sales in! (not a circle jerk session)"

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12 FIRESIDE CHAT
The things we don't say out loud: An honest conversation about what makes fintech marketing hard

The authentic imposter: Why your brand narrative should change



Mathieu X. Limousi, CMO at Thunes, opened SummerCon with a talk that started, unusually, with a photo of himself looking nothing like the polished exec on stage. It was a deliberate move: the version of him that landed his best job, marketing and communications for cross-border payments company dLocal during its unicorn and IPO years, looked exactly like that dishevelled castaway, not the person presenting today.

His point: **neither people nor brands have one single, static, authentic self**, and if your business hasn't visibly evolved in the last three years, you're either falling behind the market or lying to yourself. He used Thunes' own history as proof: nine brand identities in nine years, evolving from disruptor, to scale-up talking to institutional investors, to today's enterprise-grade partner to Visa, Mastercard, Ripple and Circle.

> *"Don't build a smaller supertanker, build a faster boat" thinking runs through last year's SummerCon too. This year's twist: the boat has to keep changing shape, and telling the truth about why.*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Brand identity should evolve with the business, not sit fixed.** Every major growth stage (disruptor, scale-up, enterprise leader) demands a different narrative, audience and tone, and treating that as inconsistency rather than growth is the real risk.

02 **Use visual anchors to borrow trust.** Thunes' logo deliberately echoes a globally trusted news brand's typography; colour choices (green over the traditional fintech blue) do quiet psychological work too.

03 **Borrowed credibility works both ways.** Partnering visibly with Swift, Mastercard, Ripple and Circle lends Thunes their decades of trust, while Thunes brings agility and innovation back.

04 **Trust lives with the humans, not the press release.** A frontline customer service call, tracking down a woman's missing payment while her children went hungry, did more for brand trust than any campaign. Corporate scripts don't survive contact with real crises.

05 **Trust is forged in fire.** When a past employer was publicly accused of money laundering, the instinct to hide and issue a sterile legal statement was the wrong one. Owning the narrative and being transparent about what went wrong is what rebuilds trust. Silence just lets the public invent a worse version of the truth.

Humanising fintech: Why stories beat features



Moderated by Con Franklin, Director at Rosely Group, this panel brought together Henry Vaughan (VP Growth, Selina), Pamela-Louise Chick (Marketing Director, Caxton), Georgie Burks (Head of Marketing, Allica Bank) and Danielle Wilde (Marketing Lead, Titanbay) to dig into the tension every fintech marketer knows well: product teams want the interest rate and the feature list front and centre; marketers know customers buy outcomes, not specs.

The panel opened with a quick audience gut-check: almost no hands went up for “recall an ad because of the interest rate it offered”; plenty went up for “recall an ad because of the story it told.” That gap was the session in miniature.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Customers buy outcomes, not features.** Caxton’s travel card customers care less about the FX rate itself than whether their holiday goes smoothly; parents choosing a kids’ account care about safely managing their child’s money, not the card’s finish.

02 **B2B is just as emotional as B2C.** Allica’s established-business customers are often as attached to their company as a parent is to a child, so treating B2B storytelling as purely rational misses the point entirely.

03 **Brand personality wins where product parity exists.** Allica’s sponsorship of the World Stone Skimming Championships and Bog Snorkelling Day isn’t random quirkiness; it’s a deliberate signal that “we go where the big banks won’t,” aimed squarely at overlooked SME communities.

04 **Bring the customer into the room, literally.** Selina’s own panellist admitted the industry’s biggest failure is talking about customer obsession while rarely actually including customers in product and strategy discussions.

05 **Influencer marketing in fintech needs patience and compliance from day one.** Panellists were split on effectiveness, but agreed that credible, long-term ambassador relationships beat one-off posts, and that compliance sign-off has to be built into the plan from the start, not bolted on after.

Why your AI visibility metrics are misleading you



Tom Rudnai, Founder of Demand Genius, returned to SummerCon with new research into how brands actually show up in AI answers, and a warning that most "AI visibility" dashboards are measuring the wrong thing entirely.

Demand Genius simulated dozens of realistic conversational paths (starting from a deliberately generic prompt like "How do companies modernise their marketing operations?") leading to a final buying recommendation. The brands mentioned stayed constant across almost every path. But the **actual recommendation forked sharply depending on how the conversation was framed earlier on**: a split invisible to any dashboard that only tracks mentions.

100%
of paths mentioned both Salesforce and HubSpot

60%
ended recommending Salesforce first

40%
ended recommending HubSpot first

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Being mentioned isn't the same as being recommended.** Standard AI visibility dashboards log every brand mention as a win, even when the model is quietly steering the user toward a competitor.

02 **Context and memory shape the outcome, not just the final prompt.** The conversation that leads up to a purchase question biases the model's answer, so track the path, not just the destination.

03 **Generic prompt trackers simulate the average buyer, not your buyer.** Niche categories and specific ICPs need custom-built conversational simulations, segmented by persona and requirement.

04 **Track sentiment and reasoning, not just frequency.** Understanding *why* AI recommends or hesitates on your brand matters more than counting how often your name comes up.

05 **The real leverage is removing objections, not chasing mentions.** If AI is telling prospects your integrations are weak or your support is slow, that's the same objection showing up on sales calls. Fix the substance, not the SEO.

Culture eats strategy: How fintech brands are winning on community, not campaigns



Gaya Ananda (Global Head, Banking Circle), Mike Saraswat (CEO & co-Founder, Stoa), Lucas Germanos (VP of Communications, Zopa) and Toni Gregory (Brand & Content Lead, OpenPayd) tackled a question every fintech eventually has to answer: what does "community" actually mean when your business models range from consumer banking to B2B infrastructure serving a few hundred licensed institutions?

Zopa's Lucas Germanos used the launch of the bank's Biscuit current account as a case study in hardwiring culture into a product decision: even the name involved genuinely difficult conversations about how playful a regulated financial brand is allowed to be. Banking Circle's Gaya Ananda pointed out that despite 12 years in business, deliberate community-building only started two years ago, after years of fragmented conference-floor relationships. Stoa's Mike Saraswat, still in the early, product-market-fit stage, described shipping a feature within 12 hours of a single piece of blunt customer feedback.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Trust is the new cultural currency**, particularly for regulated fintechs: behavioural and purchase intent both start with how a company shows up in the market long before a sales conversation happens.

02 **"Community" means different things to different business models.** For consumer brands it's belonging; for infrastructure players like Banking Circle it's the connective tissue between engineers, compliance and the CEO; for niche B2B, it's a smaller, deliberately curated group over sheer reach.

03 **A zero-ego, fail-fast culture shows up in speed.** Stoa's willingness to ship a requested feature in 12 hours, and Zopa's discipline about revisiting pricing every six months based on customer feedback, are culture made visible.

04 **Build your own bespoke community KPI.** Generic engagement metrics only go so far. Stoa tracks "organic second pot" openings as a signal of trust; Banking Circle tracks how many clients now volunteer to go on camera (three, three years ago; twenty this year).

05 **Ownership of culture scales differently by maturity.** A single senior owner (a CMO or comms director checking in regularly) works well for larger, more complex organisations; smaller teams do better embedding it horizontally, provided leadership models it visibly from day one.

“Never mind the (Marketing) Bollocks, let’s get some sales in! (not a circle jerk session)”



Ali Paterson of FF News brought his trademark energy (and a running joke about being recognised as the world’s second-tallest person in the room) to a talk about what actually converts attention into pipeline: not audience size, but buying signals.

His example of “mesothelioma” as one of the world’s most expensive keywords, driven almost entirely by lawyers chasing a niche lawsuit, made the point vividly: a tiny, hyper-relevant audience with real intent beats a huge, generic one every time. FF News’s own approach pairs vendor interviews with customer interviews (“Spots”), stunt content like haircut and tattoo interviews to lower people’s guard on camera, and both horizontal and vertical cuts of everything, because desktop and mobile feeds behave completely differently.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 Audience size is a vanity metric; buying-signal-qualified audience is what matters. Knowing exactly who’s engaging, and why, beats a bigger, vaguer number every time.

02 Pair vendor and customer interviews for credibility that’s hard to fake with AI. Third-party validation from real customers carries more weight than brand-produced claims alone.

03 Unconventional formats build trust fast. Interviewing people mid-haircut or mid-tattoo gets past the usual PR guardedness and produces content people actually want to watch.

04 Record long, edit hard. Capture far more footage than you’ll use. It’s easy to cut down, nearly impossible to pad out.

05 Plan for both formats. Mobile feeds want vertical video; desktop still wants horizontal, and a single cut won’t serve either audience well.



No PMM? No problem: Building the product marketing system your team doesn't have



Hector GHF, Product Marketing Lead at ClearBank, tackled the question on a lot of leaders' minds this year: with AI able to draft one-pagers, sales copy and launch plans, do you still need to hire a product marketer? His answer: you don't need the headcount to do the execution any more, but you desperately need the craft.

He shared a working GTM operating system built from a stack of purpose-built agents: one that categorises launches into tiers (flagship, second-tier, cosmetic) so effort scales to impact; a competitive intelligence agent that synthesises trusted sources and flags uncertain claims for human review; a "brand code" agent that acts as the single source of truth for voice, ICP and positioning; and a compliance-aware agent built specifically for regulated environments like fintech.

> *The world won't disappear. It just requires sharper taste and a stronger point of view.*

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **AI can replace PMM execution, not PMM judgement.** The craft is in problem-framing: why this launch, why now, why this angle, not the copy itself.

02 **"Average intelligence" is now table stakes.** Every team has access to roughly the same AI capability; the differentiator is what you build on top of that baseline.

03 **Categorise launches by tier so effort matches impact.** A flagship, market-moving launch deserves a different workflow to a minor feature tweak, and that triage can be automated.

04 **Build a living "brand code."** A single, AI-readable document of voice, ICP, pillars and proof points should anchor every other AI-assisted output, from sales enablement to campaign briefs.

05 **Keep a human in the loop, always, especially in regulated fintech.** Tag AI outputs by confidence (certain, likely, estimate) so humans know exactly what still needs a second look before it reaches a customer or a compliance officer.

Smarter silos are still silos



Duarte Garrido (Co-founder & CEO) and Luke Costley-White (Founding Growth Sensei), both of Dojo AI, opened with an audience poll: how many minutes a day does your team spend just explaining context to AI tools? Most hands went up at "more than 30 minutes." They called this the **"briefing tax"**, and argued it's the hidden cost quietly undermining most teams' AI adoption.

Their argument: marketing has already solved data, and largely solved insight (AI now turns almost any dataset into a summary). The new, genuinely valuable gap is **context**, but even context decays if it's static. What actually creates an edge is what they call **"the loop"**: live competitive data, live first-party channel performance, revenue pattern-recognition, and real customer/market listening, all continuously feeding back into the same system, rather than a one-off snapshot report.

They illustrated this with a real example from a financial services client, Morningstar: a campaign management tool recommended pausing a campaign for a high cost-per-acquisition. The real issue wasn't the message or the audience; it was that the tool was capturing the wrong search intent entirely. Once the context was corrected to reflect what customers were actually saying on Reddit and LinkedIn, high-value conversions nearly tripled.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Every AI tool "went to the same school."** Without your proprietary context, your output and your competitor's start to look identical.

02 **The "briefing tax" is a real, unmeasured cost.** Teams are losing significant time daily just re-explaining who they are and what they do to their AI tools.

03 **Static context decays.** A single snapshot report has no memory and doesn't learn. Real intelligence requires a continuous loop of data, insight, context and action.

04 **Context errors get expensive fast.** One financial brand's paid campaign was quietly targeting the wrong search intent; correcting it against real customer language nearly tripled high-value conversions.

05 **AI raises the floor; your ceiling is proprietary context and people.** Execution is being commoditised across the board. What stays scarce, and valuable, is your own market reality and the people who understand it.

Brief received, creative approved, but nobody noticed: Why fintech creatives often fail at execution



Moderated by our own advisor and product marketing consultant **Leo Burger**, the panel brought together **Alex Bucur (Head of Brand & Content, Nuvei)** and **Elisei Sergevnin (Marketing Exec, OakNorth)** to unpack why a great creative brief so often arrives at market watered down beyond recognition.

OakNorth's Elisei Sergevnin was candid about compliance being the single biggest constraint on personal-savings copy: often little more than a rate and a link. Nuvei's Alex Bucur offered the session's best line for the problem of internal committees: **"a camel is a horse designed by committee."** Her fix has been to keep the approval group as small as possible and get senior buy-in early, pointing to Nuvei's Ryan Reynolds campaign ("we don't send rockets into space") as proof that humour, run through a tight, trusted loop, still lands.

The conversation also covered where AI fits: both panellists use it heavily for volume (OakNorth is an AI-native, lean marketing team), but both were wary of "outsourcing the brain" to sycophantic tools, and both have started splitting their websites into human-readable and LLM-readable content hubs to serve GEO strategy without losing brand voice for actual customers.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Committee-driven creative dilutes to the lowest common denominator.** Keep the approval group as small as possible and win senior buy-in early, rather than seeking consensus from every stakeholder.

02 **Compliance is a forcing function, not just a blocker.** Heavily regulated copy pushes marketers to develop sharper internal-pitching skills and find creativity within tight constraints.

03 **Humour and authenticity still travel further than product features**, provided it's tied back to brand purpose rather than chasing a passing trend.

04 **AI tools are sycophantic by default.** Both panellists actively push back on flattering AI outputs rather than trusting them, and use AI mainly to reclaim time for creative judgement, not to replace it.

05 **Split content for humans and for LLMs.** Separate, purpose-built content hubs for organic AI discovery (GEO) versus real customer engagement helped both brands improve LLM visibility without diluting their actual brand voice.

Bets, pivots and parking lots: What fintech marketers are actually doing in 2026



Nadia Benaissa (Global Head, Paymentology), Luke Richardson (VP Marketing, Light), Rachel O'Callaghan (Head of Brand, Perk+) and Jessica Rhodes (Marketing Director, Paysecure) closed out the panel programme with a refreshingly unfiltered look at what's actually landing on fintech marketers' desks this year: the bets that paid off, the pivots forced by tighter budgets and shifting AI tooling, and the ideas that quietly ended up in the parking lot.





The things we don't say out loud: An honest conversation about what makes fintech marketing hard



Lauren Berkemeyer, CMO at YuLife, joined Helen Owen, VP Marketing at BR-DGE, for a closing fireside that cut through the polished-LinkedIn version of marketing leadership. Lauren's route into fintech was anything but conventional: from journalism (helping launch the Wall Street Journal's US operations) and an earlier career in insurance, to building YuLife's mission of "insurance that inspires life" over the last six years.

On the CMO role itself, her core argument was blunt: **not enough marketers understand the full business.** Her own credibility with YuLife's CRO came from arriving within two months of each other and doing the unglamorous work of learning each other's numbers, rather than assuming trust would follow from good campaigns alone. She was equally candid about having left a previous role over irreconcilable misalignment with new sales leadership, a reminder that marketing-sales trust has to be earned, not assumed.

> *We don't talk enough about what doesn't work.*
>
> **Lauren Berkemeyer**

She also shared two small, sharp examples of building internal trust: turning a Trustpilot case study into a moment her whole team, not just marketing, could be proud of (right down to the CEO of Trustpilot reaching out unprompted), and renaming a Slack channel from a generic "wins" feed to one that credited the marketing-attributed leads behind each deal, after realising the team's contribution was quietly going unrecognised.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

01 **Marketers need fluency in the business's numbers, not just marketing metrics,** to earn genuine credibility with sales, finance and product leadership.

02 **Trust with sales leadership is built through shared numbers and informal time together,** not just campaign reporting.

03 **Turn earned wins into visible moments for the whole team,** not just marketing. A data scientist's confidence on a panel, or a customer case study, can become a career highlight for the person behind it.

04 **Credit revenue wins with attribution and story,** not just a number in a shared channel. Marketing's contribution to a deal is easy to talk over if nobody tells that part of the story.

05 **Don't chase job titles.** Chase businesses, missions and people worth building something with; adaptability outlasts a fixed career plan.

GALLERY

Moments from the day







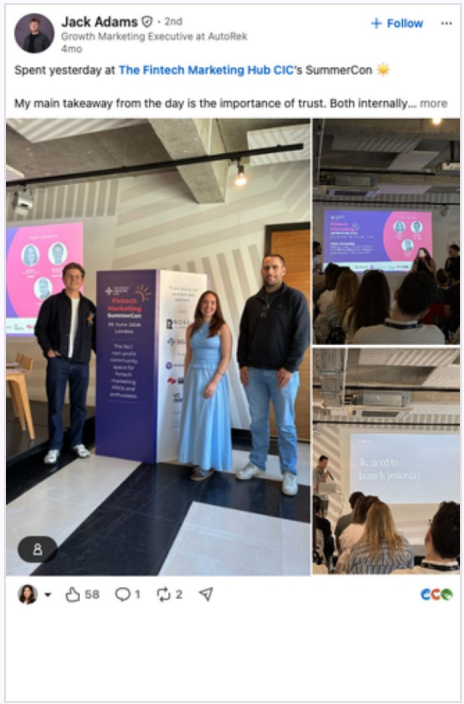


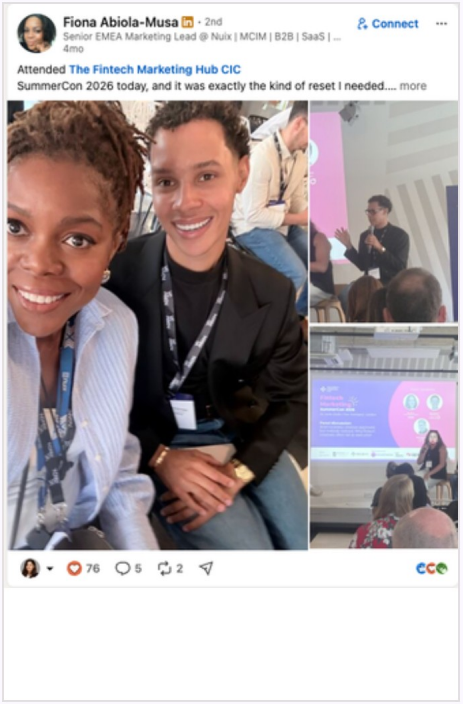


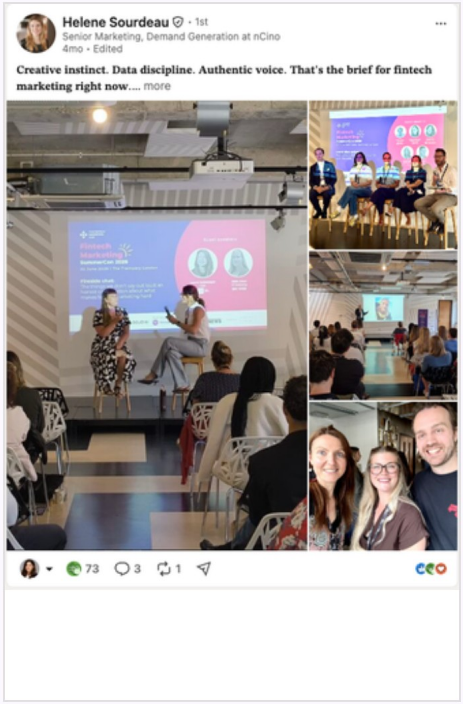


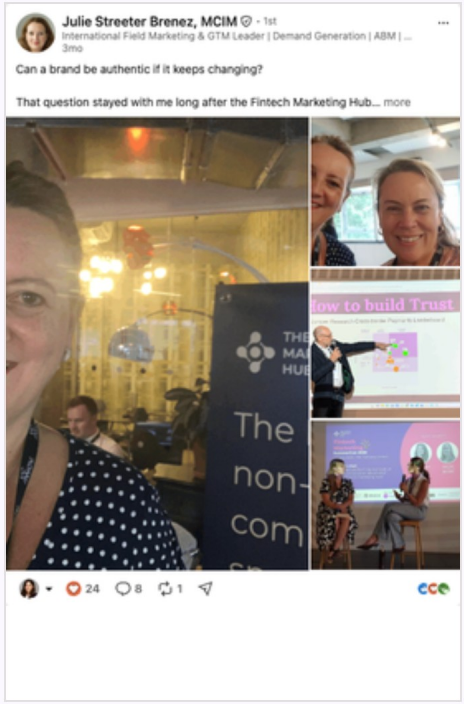












ATTENDEE VOICES

Just a few words from our attendees...

Wrapping up 2026

By the final fireside, one thread ran clean through the entire day, from Mathieu Limousi's opening TED talk to Dojo AI's floor-and-ceiling analogy to Lauren Berkemeyer's closing honesty: **AI has commoditised the floor of marketing execution.** What's left standing above it, and what every session kept circling back to, is the stuff that can't be automated: proprietary context, real customer trust, and a brand narrative that's honest enough to admit it keeps changing.

Huge thanks to our sponsors and supporters, and to every speaker who showed up willing to say the quiet part out loud. See you next time...



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