

# LendIt Fintech



Welcome to the Fintech One-on-One Podcast, Episode No. 363. This is your host, Peter Renton, Chairman and Co-Founder of LendIt Fintech.

(music)

Before we get started, I want to talk about the 10th Annual LendIt Fintech USA event. We are so excited to be back in the financial capital of the world, New York City, in-person, on May 25th and 26th. It feels like fintech is on fire right now with so much change happening and we'll be distilling all that for you at New York's biggest fintech event of the year. We have our best line-up of keynote speakers ever with leaders from many of the most successful fintechs and incumbent banks. This is shaping up to be our biggest event ever as sponsorship support is off the charts. You know, you need to be there so find out more and register at [lendit.com](https://lendit.com).

**Peter Renton:** Today on the show, we are doing something a little bit different although it is something we do around this time every year. It's the LendIt Fintech USA preview show, I've got my colleagues, Bo Brustkern and Todd Anderson joining me today, we are going to go over the different components of the show. We know that thousands of you are going to be descending on New York, May 25th and 26th, as I said in my little ad blurb intro there, we like to go through this because it's important I think to get a little bit of some context and help you get the most out of the show by talking about all the different components that we have.

It's not just a show with sponsors, it's not just a show with content, it's a show with all kinds of different components, we talk about each of those in some depth and we also talk about the re-brand. If you've been paying very close attention, you're going to get a sneak peek at the LendIt Fintech re-brand that is going to be coming that we're actually going to be revealing when you're at the show so more on that and much more. It was a fascinating conversation, hope you enjoy the show.

Alright, welcome back to the show, guys.

**Bo Brustkern:** Thank you, Peter.

**Todd Anderson:** Thanks, Peter.

**Peter:** Okay. So, Todd and Bo. Todd, why don't we start as a quick intro before we get right into it.

**Todd:** Sure, thanks, Peter. Chief Content Officer, Todd Anderson, really excited to be back on the show to talk about our upcoming USA in-person 2022 event.

**Peter:** Yes, indeed. And, Bo, quick intro.

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**Bo:** Sure. Bo Brustkern, Co-Founder and CEO.

**Peter:** Okay. With that, let's just get right into it. As Todd just mentioned, we are back to in-person events and we are back in New York, financial capital of the world, super excited to coming back to New York, it's been.....we were supposed to have our 2020 event in New York and obviously that didn't pan out as we expected, but now, we are back with a vengeance. What do you guys think back to in-person?

**Bo:** Exciting, Peter. I mean, I've been to a number of events this spring and late winter and it just feels like everyone is so ready to see each other again and for so many meeting for the first time there's just this crown support for in-person events which we've always sworn by as being a really differentiated way to conduct business and learn and gather the community, but man, it feels like the community, they're all believers now.

**Todd:** I think we found out that, you know, the last couple of years that the virtual experience has a place, but it just does not replicate the in-person experience from a show floor for content experience, like there's just the energy that you get when going to an event, that doesn't even come close to a virtual experience. There's something you can get out of it, you can have a conversation, you can make real connection, you can, you know, make a business connection at a virtual event, but there's so many different elements that accidentally happen at in-person events that it's impossible to replicate.

And just talking through what we do, which is Peter and I are focused primarily on, you know, the content side of things, there's a huge excitement from speakers that you can just hear when talking to them in emails, like exclamation points are jumping off the page, I mean, there's a difference, especially now being the first time in a couple of years. There's just this real difference to being in the same venue, in the same room and feeding off one another. You know, I think we're not only excited, our community is excited, but I think, overall, events themselves are just seeing this big resurgence that maybe we didn't expect this fast.

**Bo:** No, not at all. I do want to add one other thing that you just sparked in me, Todd. During the pandemic, we tried so hard to bring the best of what we knew about in-person events to the virtual world and I think we did a great job at a difficult job. Now, we turn the page and we're trying to bring the best of what we learned in the virtual format into the in-person format so we can really build off both experiences and both, like you said, are very valid, but super excited to be in-person.

**Peter:** Yeah. That excitement I can feel building just when I'm talking to people. I'm talking to, you know, speakers every single day and there is just this excitement. People are looking forward to, you know, shaking people's hands and getting back to face-to-face meetings and face-to-face learning and there's going to be nothing else like that, I'm feeling the buzz building that will be palpable during the two days of the event.

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So, I want to touch on the themes that we're seeing because obviously fintech has changed a lot since our last event which was a year ago, over a year ago now which we did virtually and clearly, we've seen this explosion of Web3 and crypto and I think the event is going to really I think define some of the biggest pieces that are happening there. You know, the regulatory piece along with that is huge, there's so much talk about there, we've got the data and fraud is another thing that's really.....you're going to see it talked about, all these things. You know, what we do when we put an event together, we don't actually decide what's the theme going to be and put everything into those themes, we kind of see what bubbles up and what are the things that people want to talk about, what's the things that are being covered in the news and I feel like fintech has really evolved a lot in the least 12 months.

You know, I'm super excited about really bringing everybody together and seeing what the questions are, seeing what the speakers talk about, seeing some of the hot topics, the themes that kind of weave their way throughout the event because every event has that.

Firstly, let's just break down the event for everybody who's listening because we know we are going to have thousands of people that are going to be descending on New York soon and part of the reason for doing the show is to help people kind of navigate what is a large event.

So, first I'll just mention the location, we are at the Javits Center in New York, it's really the only convention center in New York City and it's pretty accessible as there's a subway line that runs right close to it, it's walking distance to several of the hotels as well. Bo, why don't you sort of.....once you get inside the Javits Center, tell us a little bit about what you see and then where people go, particularly like the Expo Floor which is sort of the hub for much of the event.

**Bo:** Our events really are built around that Expo Floor in so many ways and you're not going to be able to miss it, it will be right in front of you as you walk in, it's the largest floor we've ever had with more sponsors than we've ever had. As of today, it's 246 sponsors and exhibitors and the participation rate is fantastic. As we alluded to before, the excitement is palpable and it'll be very high energy, we'll talk a little bit more about why in just a minute.

**Peter:** Okay. Todd, I did touch on some of the themes, but what are you looking at as far as.... can you explain sort of what the content is going to look like.

**Todd:** Along with the obviously buzzing Expo Floor, we have our content which is something that we've always been known for and quite proud of and so when coming to the event there's a few different ways that you can intake the content. First is the Keynote Hall and so each day, we'll kick off with keynotes, right after lunch we'll come back with keynotes which is some of the biggest names that we have in fintech, but there's also our tracks which is where we get a bit deeper. There's more content on the tracks than there is on the keynote stage and so you'll be

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able to take what you listen to and heard on the keynote stage and dive a bit deeper by going to our tracks.

And then, the Expo Floor also features content, there'll be surprise meetups, there'll be our Demo or Innovation Hub Theater which will also feature our startup competition, PitchIt. There'll be something we call Inspiration Point which will be kind of a mix of Q&As and podcasts so wherever you are at the event, not only can you visit a sponsor, visit a booth, take in a coffee or whatever beverage you might want, but you can also take in content. And so, it will kind of permeate throughout the different areas of the event and so, like Bo said, a lot more to come throughout the show here that we'll describe, but there is content in almost every facet of the event that we produce.

**Peter:** And the other thing that we focus on and have focused on for many years is the networking piece, I mean, there's no longer.... you no longer have to rely on just chance meetings at these events to meet people you want, we really go out of our way to make networking front and center. So, Bo, why don't you explain how the networking works.

**Bo:** Yeah. It's one of the biggest attractions and one of the highest rated aspects of our conferences year-after-year, event-after-event is our speed dating Networking Sessions which take place right smack in the middle of the Expo Floor and is responsible for some of that energy that we feel when we enter the Floor. There will literally be thousands and thousands of meetings between the best of the best, we have the banks, we have the fintechs and the leaders in crypto all converging in this one space to network, So, it's really exciting, it's back and we think it's going to be, again, the highlight of the show.

**Peter:** Right, right. So, if you're listening to this and you haven't filled out your Brella profile, hit pause, go do it right now and do that because it's really going to be....you're going to get the most out of this event if you fill out your Brella profile and really try and not just reach out to meetings, but it allows people to reach out to you as well and that is a really key piece. With that, we sort of have a super charged sort of networking program we call our VIP Program. Todd, why don't you explain what's involved there?

**Todd:** Sure. And just to highlight what Peter was just saying about Brellas as well is take a couple of minutes and fill it out the correct way, don't just zip through it. The more thoughtful you are, the better the potential matches that will come your way so don't alright, I'll just zip, zip, zip, look at the selections and make sure you choose the one that you think fits best with who you are as well as the types of companies and people that you want to meet while at the event.

Speaking of meeting, you know, the VIP Meetings is something that we've done for many, many years now and it's an area of our event that, especially our sponsors and those that have opted into these really, really special meetings, say probably after Brella is arguably the top highlight of the event, they're very curated, we have an entire VIP team that helps get these meetings

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together, they help find the right people for the people that are looking to meet the VIPs and we spend a lot of time getting the right people at the event from these big banks, big investment firms. I mean, it's not just hey, come anyone, come all, it's really what are the types of people that we want and why and so our team, especially Danielle, take a lot of time in bringing this program together and it's, you know, arguably the highlight of the event for a lot of our sponsors.

**Peter:** And, of course, we aren't all about just work and no play. There are parties that are going to be happening and fun things going on throughout the two days of the events. Bo, you want to give us some of the things that are happening?

**Bo:** Yeah, for sure. Our party planners have been on overdrive as we've expected big numbers at this event and so we have a couple of things that I want to touch on. Pre-Event Socials, so the event is happening on Wednesday and Thursday, the main event for our USA show. Before that, we have a New York City Walking Tour, we've got a bunch of folks that will be going to the Orioles versus Yankees, Todd will not be there, he's a huge Mets fan, we have a Mixology classes going on, a walking tour of Hudson Yards and the High Line, a Broadway show and my favorite, group workouts. The sign-ups are live right now and that'll be a really fun way to do some more networking, really just enjoy each other's company and have some of those spontaneous, creative collisions that we're famous for.

In terms of the larger scale parties, VIP Kick-Off parties sponsored by Oculus is always a huge hit and then we've got the Day One Wrap Party which is open to everyone, it's actually in the Javits Center, it's taking place in their new Pavilion which is just gorgeous and it's going to be a huge hit, I think a lot of people are going to be there. That one is sponsored by BHG Financial which we're really excited about and then there's Day One After Party, it's a VIP Party and it's sponsored by Pinwheel. So, we've got a ton going on, not to mention all the private events that are just sort of spinning up around this ecosystem. I think our attendees will be invited to not just our parties, but also those that the community is putting together so it's going to be great fun.

**Todd:** And last, but not least, we always have, during the event, our Women in Fintech.....

**Peter:** Oh yes, of course.

**Todd:**.....which is sponsored by Deloitte, I believe this may be the second or third time sponsoring it and so, you know, for many, many years now, Joy, our President, Joy Schwartz, has presided over our Women in Fintech Program and it continues to get better with not only the audience, but with our special guests. So, you know, that event, while not technically I guess a party, it's still a special event that you should check out if you're interested.

**Bo:** Yeah, something to celebrate for sure.

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**Peter:** It is indeed and the Women in Fintech event is not just for women, obviously, it's going to be primarily women there, but you have to be a supporter of Women in Fintech to attend those events.

So, let's talk about the agenda, I mean, Todd and I have been working on how many, hundreds of hours we've put in over the last six months, but many. The agenda has come together really well, we have some of the biggest names in fintech as our keynote speakers, we're kicking it off with the Opening Keynote is the CEO and Co-Founder of Chime, Chris Britt, speaking at LendIt Fintech for the first time, we're really excited to have him.

We've got the CEO and Co-Founder of Nubank so we got the largest digital bank in this country and then we've got the largest digital bank in the world which is Nubank, based in Brazil operating really only in Latin America at this stage, but he is flying up David Velez, flying up from Brazil to New York to speak at the show, actually on Day Two, super excited about that. And we also have so many great keynotes, I'm not going to go through every single one, but let's maybe.....let's talk about our favorite keynotes because I just mentioned Chris Britt, I'm also looking forward to Dave Girouard, who's the CEO and Co-Founder of Upstart, he will talk about AI. So, Todd, what about you, what are the favorite keynotes that you're looking forward to?

**Todd:** You mentioned one of them which is David Velez of Nubank, you know, Nubank is not only the largest digital bank in the world, I mean, you take a look at what they've done in terms of access for people that were outside of the financial system and it really does speak to not only David and the Co-Founder's vision, but they've just become a huge, huge success story in Brazil first and they've moved to other markets now, I believe Mexico and a couple of others, but hearing directly from him and he'll be interviewed by Nigel Morris.

Another one that I'm super excited about is why every bank needs a crypto strategy and so we're going to have the CEO, Alan Lane, of Silvergate Bank, Alan's going to talk about some of the stuff that went behind the acquisition of some of the assets from whether it be Diem or whatever they ended up naming themselves at Facebook, it went through a few different iterations.

And then finally, I think the others one that I'm excited about is we are going to have someone from Meta join us, Catherine Porter, so it's the first time that we'll have someone from Meta or Facebook, as you all might know them and they'll be talking about money movement and a lot of different things that they'll working on.

So, you know, we have big tech, fintech and then traditional banks all kind of converging on the keynote stage talking about the latest that's taking place in not only financial services but fintech and crypto as well.

**Peter:** Okay. Bo, who are you looking forward to on the keynote stage?

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**Bo:** I don't think it'll be a surprise to either of you, but I'm a sucker for Mike Cagney, he is...so the reason I love him is because, he's from Figure, of course, to me he speaks like he comes from traditional finance which he does, he has built massively successful fintech and he has and now he has thrown himself into the world of more fintech, but really embedded in the blockchain. So, for me, he sort of embodies the entire journey that we're all on and he's very eloquent, energetic and super, super thoughtful about his craft and when he delivers it on stage it's always...I think it's always a must see, I'm going to go with Cagney.

**Peter:** Okay, okay. So then, obviously we go beyond the keynote stage. We have six concurrent tracks running each day. Todd, why don't you take us through what we're actually covering there.

**Todd:** The first thing to mention which I'm personally very proud of, I think Peter is as well, is that all 12 tracks, six each day are sponsored and I think it's a pretty, you know, important feat that we've gotten there. You know, the tracks is really where the majority of the content takes place and so if you want to learn more about consumer, you go to the tracks; financial health, go to the tracks; embedded finance, small business fintech, investing, real-time payments, digital banking, Web 3, I mean, all of these topics are being covered in great detail throughout the course of the two days. So, yes, you get very, very interesting keynotes, forward looking keynotes, thoughtful keynotes as Bo said about Mike.

But if you want to dig deeper, the tracks is really where you want to be, you get to ask questions of our speakers, you get to get involved and you get to hear from arguably some of the top names in fintech, yes, some of our keynotes are the biggest names, but the tracks are just filled with people that are super knowledgeable about all the various subjects that I was just running through and, you know, it really gives the audience a chance to best understand how they can improve parts of their business, aspects of what they do on an everyday basis. It's a really great area for people to really go and learn and for the fintech novice, there's a lot of stuff, they don't just dive right into the deep end of the pool, in many ways they do, but there's also things that you could sit-in on if you're a bit earlier in your journey so lots of great, great content.

**Peter:** Okay. And then also new this year, we have what we're calling the Cryptonexus Workshops. Bo, why don't you take us through what that is all about?

**Bo:** I think I would start by saying we recognize the value that the blockchain and crypto and Web 3 will bring to financial services and we also recognize that this is not an easy world to step into. You've probably all heard that term "falling down the rabbit hole," it's a challenging place to dive into, especially now with the proliferation of protocols and applications that ride on these protocols.

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So, we built a workshop and it's a one-day intensive, it is designed for traditional financial executives, fintech executives and government and regulators to spend the day with us, learn everything there is to know, that's wrong, not everything, so sort of go from being curious about what's going on to being confident about what's going on and your ability to enter that world and do business in it. So, really excited about it, it's taking place on Monday and Tuesday preceding the event, it's a very limited workshop, there's only going to be 50 students per, but we're pretty excited about this new program and we think it's going to have a real impact.

**Peter:** It's important to note that this is...if you're a beginner and you read the crypto and you can't make head nor tail of it, this is where you go. It's not quite one-on-one instruction, but it's close to it. There'll be multiple instructors in this room who will be able to answer questions, I expect people who have very little knowledge of what's going on so it's a great opportunity for people to go from a novice to really being confident and understanding what's going on because there's a huge gulf, it feels like when you have the Web3 kind of crypto fanboys and you've got the traditional financial services people and they just, you know, oftentimes they're at odds with each other because they just don't get it, they don't get where each other's coming from.

This is a way for the traditional financial services people to really help understand what's going on and, of course, the Web3 people come to the event and will be learning about what actually traditional financial services and where fintech innovation is actually happening and can embrace Web3.

Anyway, before we wrap, I want to talk about somebody that's been in the works for a long time and let's just tell it what it is, it's a re-brand, we're doing a re-brand. Bo, why don't you give us a little bit of explanation here about what's going on.

**Bo:** As you know, Peter, we were founded in 2013, we called ourselves LendIt because we're all about the online lending world, peer-to-peer lending and later, we added the word "fintech" to that name because we've broadened our umbrella years prior and we're really covering so much more than that and now we find ourselves with an ever expanding definition of what fintech means which to us means innovation in financial services. So, of course, that includes Web 3 and crypto and everything else all the way out to the community banks and what they're doing to innovate. So, we decided that it was log overdue, but it was time really make a big change and so at the opening of our conference, as you walk into the doors, you will not be walking into a LendIt Conference, you will be walking into a Fintech Nexus Conference.

**Peter:** Fintech Nexus, okay and Todd, what are your thoughts on it?

**Todd:** I mean, it reflects where we are in terms of our journey and to be honest, we've moved in the way that the market moves. Part of go back to what you said originally, Peter, you know, part of the reason that we don't set themes and then bucket our event to those themes are fintech and Web 3 and banking and financial services is moving way too fast for us to say, here are the



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themes, six to eight months out and here's the event and how we're going to fit things to those. We need to be flexible and the new brands really reflects that in a significantly better way than just adding fintech to it, a name that has value. I think we all agree that the LendIt name has value, but Fintech Nexus is really... the idea behind it is bringing the various pieces of the new financial system which we are helping to cover bring it together.

**Peter:** Indeed. We chose Nexus because really it's all about connecting people, bringing people together, being the center of things and that's kind of what we are here at Fintech Nexus. You've heard the reveal, the reveal is officially taking place on May 19th which is six days before the event kicks off. If you're listening to this before then, congratulations, you've had a sneak peek and you're ahead of the game.

So anyway, as we wrap, we are going to be selling tickets right up to game time so if you decide on Tuesday morning, May 25th, you do really do need to go to LendIt...Fintech Nexus, it is gong to take a little while to get used to that, but if you decide I want to go to Fintech Nexus, you can roll on down to the Javits Center, buy your ticket and get in the door, no problem whatsoever. So, with that, thank you Todd, thank you, Bo, if you do see us wandering around in the Javits Center, please come up and say hi.

Okay, thanks, guys.

**Bo:** Thank you, Peter.

**Todd:** Thanks, Peter.

**Peter:** So, there you have it, lendit.com, if you want to get a ticket, as i said you can buy a ticket anytime up until the last moment. So, I look forward to seeing as many of you there as possible. I'm going to have a very busy couple of days, I'm moderating several sessions and I'm also going to be shepherding the keynote stage, particularly on Day One, but if you see me, please come up and say hi, I'd like to talk to as many podcast listeners as I can.

So, with that, I very much appreciate you listening and I'll catch you next time. Bye.

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