

## FINTECH ONE-ON-ONE PODCAST 295-LENDIT FINTECH USA 2021 PREVIEW

Welcome to a special edition of the Fintech One-on-One Podcast, Episode No. 295. This is your host, Peter Renton, Chairman and Co-Founder of LendIt Fintech.

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Today's episode is brought to you by LendIt Fintech USA, the world's largest fintech event dedicated to lending and digital banking. LendIt's flagship event is happening online this year on April 27th to 29th featuring many of the biggest names in fintech. We will have the CEOs of Afterpay, Figure, Brex, Varo, Dave, Finicity, just to name a few, as well as many leaders from traditional finance. LendIt's 2020 event was also held online with many people saying it was the best virtual event they'd ever attended. LendIt is setting the bar even higher in 2021, so join the fintech community at LendIt Fintech USA where you will meet the people who matter, learn from the experts and get business done. Sign-up today at [lendit.com/usa](https://lendit.com/usa).

**Peter Renton:** This is the LendIt Fintech USA preview show. My name is Peter Renton, Chairman and Co-Founder of LendIt Fintech. I've got the whole leadership team with me today to talk about our big show coming up in a few days. So, let's just kick it off with some short introductions. Bo, why don't you tell us what you do?

**Bo Brustkern:** Sure. My name is Bo Brustkern, I'm Co-Founder and CEO of LendIt Fintech.

**Peter:** Okay. And, Joy?

**Joy Schwartz:** Hello, I'm Joy Schwartz, President of LendIt Fintech.

**Peter:** And, Todd?

**Todd Anderson:** I am Chief Product Officer, Todd Anderson. As Peter would say sometimes, the great wall of content that you need to jump over. (laughter)

**Peter:** Indeed. So, this is the preview show. I want to talk about what to expect at LendIt Fintech USA this year, but before we do, just want to talk about some of the fintech trends which I expect will be sort of circulating throughout the event and, of course, we've got the crazy valuations that fintech companies are seeing right now. We just had Plaid recently go out with \$13.5 Billion, whether or not you think they're crazy, obviously, many smart people think they are not crazy, but they are certainly a lot bigger valuation than they were a while back.

We've got the SPAC craze, we'll certainly be doing several sessions on that, "buy now pay later" is probably the hottest vertical in all of fintech and we have multiple discussions on that as well, digital currencies, you can't seem to open up a publication these days without learning about digital currencies, you've got.... China's far along with theirs, Japan is doing something. The Fed is talking

about it, the Bank of England's talking about it, it's just a hot topic, we will be covering that, of course. And then we've got financial inequality, that's something that's a real hot topic and is....you know, we have dealt with it in the past, but what I found as we were putting the agenda together, there's a lot of people who want to talk about this issue this year so that's really going to be interesting to see.

That's just laying down some of the trends that you'll see. Now, I want open up to Joy and talk about, firstly, who comes to LendIt Fintech?

**Joy:** Thanks, Peter. Our audience has really, really been dynamic and it's been evolving a lot over the year, but I'd say, our audience is primarily composed of banks and credit unions, traditional financial institutions as well as digital institutions, investors as equity investors who are interested in both early stage fintechs as well as more established and the fintech community itself who's often coming just because they're looking to raise capital or they're looking to meet with financial institutions who can utilize their products and services.

One interesting note which has been pretty consistent over the past three years, our largest segment of our audience or rather the fastest growing segment of our audience continues to be the traditional financial institutions. So, in addition to all the digital innovators, we're seeing more and more traditional banks and credit unions who really acknowledge how critical fintech is to remaining relevant to our customers.

**Bo:** And I'd say, soon to be the largest as well. They're not just fastest growing, but soon to be the largest segment itself.

**Peter:** Indeed, indeed. Well, let's get to the details of the event so people who are listening can kind of, you know, help them navigate it. I mean, we've got a lot going on over the three days and we want to make....the whole purpose of this session is to really help people get the most out of the event, So, let's, firstly, talk about Brella and, Joy, do you want to just give us sort of a navigation around Brella and what's actually happening in there.

**Joy:** Sure. So, Brella is the hub of the event. In order to access LendIt Fintech USA, you need to log on to Brella so that's the most important pointer here. Do not wait until the last minute to log on, the platform that you use to register will then prompt you with a separate email that will include your Brella log-in details. So, once you have registered for the conference, you have not yet registered for Brella so please keep a lookout for those Brella log-in details, log-in and that is the first step.

There you will do all your one-to-one meeting, there you'll view the agenda, there you will view, you know, our showcase where you can see all of our amazing sponsors and exhibitors who, you know, have great services to offer you and there you'll access all the live and recorded content. So, most important point is log-in to Brella, it's pretty self-explanatory, but everything happens there during the event.

**Peter:** Okay. And then, of course, we have the content that Todd and I have been working on now for the past several months, why don't you give us a little bit of overview of that, Todd.

**Todd:** Oh, we've got enough content to make your head spin.

So, it's three days and it's content that suits all different types of people. You want to go to a Roundtable, in the mornings we'll have Roundtables; you want to see key note speakers, we'll have key note speakers from 11:00 to 12:00 Eastern each day; you want to go to Women in Fintech, that's during the lunch hour; PitchIt, we'll have in the morning of Day Three. There's content all over the agenda, you're not going to remember if off top of your head. So, to pick-up where Joy left off, sign-in to Brella, all you have to do in Brella is put marks on things, star it, make it your favorite, you'll get notifications on it.

The agenda is very, very complex, it's very big, but if you could highlight the things that speak to you, you'll get notified of them and you'll be able to go to those sessions. So, it's all different type sessions, but the days are key notes in the morning, lunch, tracks in the afternoon and then spliced in different parts of the day, you know, afternoon of Day One, there'll be something else; morning of Day Two, there'll be something else. So, make sure you use Brella to find the sessions that speak most to you and you'll be able to navigate the event in an efficient way.

**Peter:** Okay. So, let's talk about Networking. We know that a lot of people come to these events to network and I had multiple conversations with people out there after our last event, some people said that networking was more efficient and better virtually than it was in person, but tell us all about Networking, Bo.

**Bo:** Sure thing. Todd, you did introduce it when you mentioned the Roundtables. I mean, that is a big part of Networking too, something that we're introducing at this event that we haven't done before and I'm really excited to participate in those. The Networking that we are so well known for are the B2B speed dating which is one of the reasons we love Brella so much as the event platform. So, when you log-in and, again, you're doing this on your Mac, on your laptop, on your PC, not on mobile, one of the key things that you do right up front is create a profile of yourself, make a quick introduction of who you are, what you're seeking, what you're offering and then filling out some vital information so that matches can be made.

And then, you know, one of the pieces of advice I give to people is as much brilliant content as my colleagues have put on stage, don't over fill your time with content sessions, but allocate plenty of time for Networking and do the speed dating, do the quick intros and look to target 20 individuals that you would like to meet and speak to. You'll probably get anywhere from.... let's say seven to ten of those meetings will confirm and that's going to really enhance your experience. So, do that and, again, these are great meetings to have, they're quick and very efficient.

We found that in the video format, as you mentioned, Peter, they can be super efficient, right from a stage and do a one-on-one meeting. It's a video meeting which by now we're all pretty used to and we know how to conduct so really effective and we did receive extremely strongly positive feedback from sessions like these that we've had in the past.

**Peter:** Okay, okay. So, I want to talk about some of the special programs that we have going this year just beyond just the Content and the Networking. I know we've already touched on it, but we've talked about these Roundtables, the Breakout Rooms for the content every day, Todd, can you give us more color there?

**Todd:** Sure. So, think of breakfast table, dinner table, but without the food in front of everyone. Well, I guess you maybe can have food, if you'd like, but, essentially, it's off the record, really interactive exchange between you and the other participants at the Roundtable. There'll be a focus of the discussion, there'll be a LendIt Facilitator, myself, Peter, Bo, one of us will be in that room and really the essence of the Roundtable is for people to interact with one another without having to worry about, you know, is the camera on, do we have to say this publicly for a video that will be shared after.

It's just a really intimate exchange, everyone's on camera and it's meant to replicate that dinner table conversation. And so, we've had some success with this, you know, kind of different parts of the year and we wanted to make them a more core component of the event and that'll be happening each morning. So, from 9:00 to 10:00 Eastern, you'll see different Roundtables, sign up for the Roundtables and see which one speaks to you most.

**Peter:** Okay. And then, what about our Women in Fintech Program, Joy, what do we have planned for that this year?

**Joy:** Awesome. Well, the Women in Fintech Program is really the main activity that we're super enthusiastic about. Our Women in Fintech Power Hour will take place on Day One of the conference, the 27th, at 1:00 pm during lunchtime and super excited. We have TransUnion that's sponsoring that initiative for us this year and we're really bringing together the leading women from our community to, you know, maximize their relationship building. So, again, it's open to both women and non-women so anyone who's a supporter of Women in Fintech is welcome to participate so gentlemen, don't be shy.

You know, it's a great opportunity if you're looking to identify new business partners, if you're looking to, you know, start making new introductions as a new company, if you're looking for a mentor, you know, whatever you're looking for. There'll be an algorithm that will be helping to match the right people, the matches will be made based upon segmentation preferences and interest areas. Please join and support the women of our community and once again, a big thank you to TransUnion for making that happen.

**Peter:** And just so we're clear, these are very short, shorter than the Brella meetings. At Brella meetings, you organize directly, these are...we call it Networking Roulette, right, they're matched....how long are they, Joy?

**Joy:** So, so if you join us at the top of the hour, you'll participate in seven 7-minute spontaneous conversations. What I'd like to say, both for Women in Fintech Power Hour and also for Networking Roulette which is more general and spontaneous networking sessions, you know, you've got the one-to-one meetings which Bo talked about earlier where you do your research, identify who you think is a qualified lead for your company and schedule those meetings in advance.

Now, these Power Hour and Networking Roulette are more like those conversations that would happen when you're waiting in line for the bathroom, when you're waiting in line for the bar at happy hour, you never know who's standing to your right or left, it's fun and a little mysterious. So, you know, join the session, even you're running five minutes late you can join the session at any point and you'll find the log-in and the Networking session at the Brella app so you can register in advance and it'll sign you up for email reminders or you can just go in the agenda and sign up while it's happening and join in real-time. So, either is an option and I definitely encourage you to get involved and really just diversify your virtual event experience.

**Todd:** The technology for it is really, really cool. It's not your typical Zoom meeting, it's very slick so if you want something that's slightly different and spontaneous, do this, as Joy said.

**Bo:** Totally. It's especially great for introverts who aren't the first to sort of work the crowd in a bar, it sort of places you gently into a conversation and then withdraws you out of that conversation without any awkwardness whatsoever, I love it, I totally love it!

**Peter:** And we should keep in mind too there is....beyond the Women in Fintech Power Hour, we have other more general Networking Roulettes that's happening on other days of the event.

**Joy:** Exactly. We've got three so in total, we've got four Networking Roulette sessions so, you know, you've got a choice. Monday, Networking Roulette for the general public is going to be happening on April 27th at 10:00 am and then on Day Two and Day Three, it'll be happening at 1:00 pm so join one of them, join all of them, nut definitely.....again, do your homework and make sure you plan and allocate plenty of time for Networking.

**Peter:** Okay, So, let's talk about other new things we've got this year. We've got the Half-time Show this year and the Postgame Show. So, Bo, why don't you tell us about them.

**Bo:** If you're listening closely, you're probably on board with the idea that the LendIt Fintech team is very fond of innovation and in thinking hard about how do we really create a great experience for our community and the kinds of things that you've heard about already. So, the Roundtables that Todd talked about, the Networking Roulette format which we bring to Women in Fintech and the general audience along with the speed dating, the interactions that go on onstage, in the side bar, the Q&A functionality that we've had for years through Slido, this is a super interactive conference.

So, if you thought you were buying a ticket so you'd play it in the background and do nothing and just kind of listen passively, you're getting about 5/10% of the value that you could be so this is a conference for active participation. The Half-time Show, I would say, is one of the places where you can actually sit back and just check all as Peter and Todd and I sort of, you know, comment on what's been going on in the conference.

We think about this as a little bit like the commentators you might see at a half-time of a game and, hopefully, we'll have some fairly intelligent things to say. It'll be really fun for the three of us to come

together and provide that commentary because we play really well off each other and we all have different opinions and we all have different sort of things to say. So, as much as we know and love each other, we hardly ever really agree on anything so that should be fun.

And in the Postgame Show, there will be less TV, more radio. We're going to go on to Clubhouse and open up a room, they've already been scheduled so if you're in Clubhouse and you follow the One Fintech Club, which is LendIt's club on Clubhouse, you'll see right there that there are already rooms scheduled and these will be starting at 5:45 Eastern on Days One and Two and 5:00 Eastern on Day Three. So, that'll be.....of course, audience participation is always encouraged there and it'll be a little bit more of a de-brief, a what did we hear today, what surprised us and, of course, audio only format which Clubhouse is famous for.

**Peter:** Okay. So, let's move on to Content and rather than run through the whole agenda which would take another hour, we're not going to do that, let's just kick on some of the favorite pieces that you're looking for. So, Todd, I'll start with you, what are the sessions that you are mostly involved in?

**Todd:** I think the first session of the event is a pretty good one. It's the CEOs of Amount , Barclays, Barclays US Consumer Bank, that is, and the famous Nigel Morris. So, Adam Hughes, Denny Nealon, Nigel Morris, will kick-off the event, and they're talking about Point of Sale Finance so one of the things that is obviously taken off in the COVID era. We're also going to be hosting on Day Two the CEO of Equifax, Mark Begor and Mark's going to be talking about the Intersection of Commerce and Financial Services and kind of what happens next.

And then with one of the biggest trends in fintech the last couple of years, SPACs. We have Betsy Cohen, who I think has done nine SPACs and is on her tenth and then Steve McLaughlin who everyone knows from FT Partners, so they'll talk about kind of what's been going on in the SPAC market, you know, kind of what's happened in the last few months which has died down a little bit and kind of what does the future look like.

And then, we also have really just a lot of great sessions on the tracks; digital banking, consumer lending so, you know, no matter who you are in fintech, there's something for you at the event. And so, that's the way that Peter, myself, Bo, Joy, that's the way that we looked at to design the agenda...who can we speak to. And, if you're in fintech, if you're in digital banking, if you're a service provider, something's going to speak to you so take a look at the agenda, pick out your favorite sessions, I said some of mine, go find yours and now, I'll turn it over to Peter to give some of your favorites.

**Peter:** Okay, So, to me, I'm really looking forward to the CEO of Afterpay, he's new to our key note stage and Afterpay, obviously, is the "buy now pay later" behemoth coming out of Australia and I'll be talking with the CEO, Nick Molnar from Sydney, looking forward to that immensely. I think all the keynotes are just really going to be really engaging.

But, I want to give a quick plug, if I may, to the coming Green Wave of Fintech, I feel like...it's a brand new track for us this year, we're giving it a shot. I've spent a lot of time assembling what I hope will be

an engaging, an engaging agenda there and I think we've got some big names on that new track as well so check it out. Bo, what about you, what are you looking forward to?

**Bo:** I'm looking forward to.....you guys have put together such a great agenda, you give me more credit than I deserve and including me on the Content Team. I sometimes refer to me as that bit player, I don't even think I rank there, but well done, it is a great agenda, once again. The one-two punch on Day One that involves block chain and crypto currency has got my attention so there is going to be a session with Mike Cagney and Blythe Masters. I always love listening to Mike, he's super sharp and he's always pushing the envelope, he sort of founded a couple of new companies since the last time we talked to him so that's going to be really interesting.

Immediately following that, a lot of conversation with Caitlin Long from Avanti Financial so that's about 40 minutes of fire hose that I'm going to be drinking from and I'm pretty excited about that.

**Peter:** Okay. And, Joy, what are you looking forward to at the event?

**Joy:** I think for me, the area that I'm most excited about that is a brand new edition to the LendIt agenda is the coming Green Wave of Fintech. For a long time now it has discussed topics like financial health, financial inclusion, you know. At the end of the day, we're true believers that fintech exists in order to improve the lives of those around us and I think this is just another example of that and by incorporating this topic into the agenda....and I know this is something that Peter's also really passionate about, but this is definitely the new addition for 2021 that I'm most excited to listen to.

**Peter:** Okay. Good to get two plugs in for that. But before we close, we do need to talk about how people listening... how can they get the most out of the event. Bo, I know you've touched on some things, but why don't you just expand on that a little bit.

**Bo:** Sure. I just want to hammer on Networking. I think prioritizing Networking is really important and sometimes, it's the hardest thing to do, especially when we sign up for a virtual event like this is. It's easy to think passively about it and I think that is a mistake. You have blocked off time on your calendar, you have, you know, made this a priority, you've purchased a ticket or you've sponsored the event, now the work begins so do the work, do it in advance and line up meetings like I said before.

I'd shoot for, like I said, 20 new connections, securing ten. If you have that many 15-minute meetings over a three-day period and I'll point out that our Networking actually goes from Thursday to Thursday so it's outside the weekend, it's five days of potential networking. You can definitely afford 10/15-minute meetings in there and then make sure that you are jumping into those sessions that Peter and Todd have so thoughtfully crafted for you from the content side.

One other just element I would say is that it is important also to be responsive also to those that have requested meetings with you. If you don't have an interest in that meeting, it is polite to decline to it, it is important that you decline that meeting so that you free up that time for somebody to invite somebody else to have a meeting so do that. And then, I guess one other thing I'll say is, synchronize

it to your calendar. There is that option that you can subscribe to a feed that takes all of what you've built inside of Brella and places it on directly to your calendar so do go through that exercise as well.

**Peter:** Great, great. And, Joy, any other tips for people getting the most out of the event?

**Joy:** Yeah. So one, I totally echo what Bo said, you know, don't be passive, really, really schedule those meetings, but also block out time for the event on your calendar. It's really easy when you're participating in a virtual event to think that you're going to be able to get away with multi-tasking and you're going to leave the event platform and take some conference calls and then go back to the event platform and check your email, that really detracts from your experience.

So, I really, really, recommend that you review the agenda and identify which sessions you want to attend and block off time for the content that you're most eager to hear live and block off time for meetings and really.....put up an out of office, you know, so that you won't be interrupted by your colleagues and you won't forget and schedule outside meetings at that time. So, my biggest piece of advice is really going to change your approach to the event for the better.

**Peter:** Yeah. Good point because, you know, if you're to a physical event, people often mostly will put out an out-of-office on their emails so good idea to do it here to get the most out of it. Okay, so I'd love to get closing thoughts from all of you, as far as virtual events in general, why people should come to this virtual event. Todd, why don't you go first.

**Todd:** Oh, I'd say we have the best Networking, we have the best Content (laughs) and, over all, I think we have the best experience. To pick up on what Joy and Bo and Peter have said, well, we want you to block off the account that you cannot attend everything. So, it's impossible to attend every session, every meeting, things will overlap, you know, kind of repeat something Bo said, do the work beforehand.

If you look at the agenda, you pick the five sessions on Day One that talk to you, then you pick the Roundtable on Day Two, then you pick PitchIt on Day Three like find the things that first speak to you most, block them on your calendar and then begin to absorb other things, but find the things that are most important to you first because if you could find those, you will get value out of the conference. If you're just trying to hey, let me look at everything from 36,000 feet, see how many darts I can throw and how many meetings I can have and try to attend every single Content Session, I think you'll find yourself overwhelmed. Take time, do the work and you'll find yourself coming away from it with a lot of value.

**Peter:** Okay, Joy, what about you, closing thoughts, why should people attend.

**Joy:** I think my biggest takeaway recently is just the technology that we're using and just the craftsmanship that we have brought to executing virtual events is the best I've seen in the industry. So, not only are you going to experience amazing networking with innovative fintech decision makers, but you're going to do so in a really smooth and, you know, captivating way. So, I really kind of think of it

as LendIt has had to pivot, you know over the past year when we got lots of practice and this is like going to the movies on steroids.

**Peter:** (laughs) That's a great way to present it. (cross talking) Anyway, Bo, you have the last word here.

**Bo:** Peter gets the last word.

**Peter:** I'll get the last word.

**Bo:** I have the penultimate response. For a moment, I will just be a broken record and say we really deliver on Content and Networking full stop. I will say that I'm extraordinarily pleased with how the LendIt Fintech team has taken on this new challenge of delivering...not trying to deliver the same thing that we used to do in real life, but delivering an experience that is super high value.

For those of you that are familiar with Net Promoter Score, I say this often and perhaps you haven't heard this yourself, but last year, we had three large scale virtual events for Europe, for LatAm and for the USA and two of those events set records. We hit our highest NPS ever in the history of our company for a USA event and we hit our first highest for the LatAm event. Those are virtual events and the Net Promoter Score vis-a-vis in real life events of the past.

You know when Joy and Todd and Peter say, yeah, we're actually pretty good at this, I think you would agree that we are, you have experienced it yourself. The thing that will make it really worthwhile for you is putting in that work beforehand and making sure that you're not passive, but really actively involved in this event.

**Peter:** Okay. Indeed and this is actually going to be our ninth USA event and we have...I think we're getting better and better at it every year, personally, and we've had to adjust with the virtual world, but we have embraced it. We have really gone....I think when you're attending the event, we've actually upgraded from what we used last year. If you attended that event, we have upgraded to an even more professional set-up, it's more like watching, you know, CNN or ESPN than it is (inaudible) and I think that's something that really does set us apart. There's one other thing I want to say, I love the content, but it's literally impossible to see it all because there's things happening, particularly in the afternoon, so the tracks are at the exact same time.

So, most important thing is the Networking really is the key, you can go back and watch the content, everything's recorded, it'll all be on Brella, you can go back and watch it after the fact that we're going to have thousands of people gathering at one point in time. That won't happen again for quite some time so that's why we keep hammering away that Networking is really where the most value lies.

Okay, I think that's a wrap. Thank you, guys, and if you've listened this far then we will be seeing you next week at LendIt Fintech USA. Thank you very much.

**Bo:** Thanks, Peter, thanks everyone.

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**Peter:** Thank you very much for listening to this special edition of the Fintech One-on-One Podcast, very much appreciate it and hope to see all of you online at LendIt Fintech USA very soon, thanks. Bye.

Today's episode was brought to you by LendIt Fintech USA, the world's largest fintech event dedicated to lending and digital banking. LendIt's flagship event is happening online this year on April 27th to 29th featuring many of the biggest names in fintech We will have the CEOs of Afterpay, Figure, Breck's, Varo, Dave, Finicity, just to name a few, as well as many leaders from traditional finance. After a successful virtual event in 2020, LendIt is setting the bar even higher in 2021. So, join the fintech community at LendIt Fintech USA where you will meet the people who matter, learn from the experts and get business done. Sign up today at [lendit.com/usa](https://lendit.com/usa)

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