

Ep #24: Networking for Business



Full Episode Transcript

With Your Host

Stacey Boehman

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Ep #24: Networking for Business

Welcome to the *Make Money as a Life Coach*® podcast where sales expert and master coach Stacey Boehman teaches you how to make your first 2K, 20K, and 200K using her proven formula.

Hey lovies. Welcome to episode 24. Today we're going to dive into networking for business. I get so many questions about networking so I wanted to do an entire podcast really diving into how I network and let you know the way that I think about it.

But first, I want to give a shout-out to my client Kristin. Kristin posted in our 2K for 2K community. She said, "Ladies, a little celebration and some encouragement if you, like me, have been at this coaching thing a while and haven't been able to make the money you wanted to. I have officially made more money in three months since I joined 2K than I made all last year or the year before, or the three years before that.

Here's how I broke through and am looking to four times what I made last year. I totally believe I can do it because if others can do it, so can I. I just listened to Stacey, listened to the advice she gives other people. She's done this, she knows sales, she knows how to make money. Don't question the process. I watched all of the 2K modules and took notes and then watched them again and took more notes.

When there's something I get stuck on, I find the module and watch it again and take notes. I ask for help when I need it, but first I try to figure it out myself by asking what's the simplest way to think about this. If it aligns with what I'm learning here from Stacey, I do that. And if it doesn't work, I go to learn something. Failure equals good news. And I don't let one day go by that I'm not thinking thoughts that I want to think about my business. That's it.

It's not about the things I thought I needed to have in place in order to make money. I didn't need to fix my website and it's not good. I didn't run Facebook ads, I don't know how to "launch," I don't even "really" have a solid niche. And I'm obviously doing fine without one. I don't have a social

[Make Money as a Life Coach](#)®, a podcast with Stacey Boehman

Ep #24: Networking for Business

media schedule or spent much time creating content. I just constantly connect, build relationships, show up 100% as myself and follow the sales process when the consults show up and they do keep showing up. Keep it simple. Follow what Stacey says and just believe."

Kristin, you are such an example of what's possible and I had to read this entire thing out loud because I want you guys to hear this. Business is so much simpler than we make it and we use a lot of stuff. The ads, the website, niche drama. We just use all of that as an excuse to not go out and meet people and tell them who we are and what we do and position ourselves in a way to be able to make offers to people, to go out there and make offers.

And so I just love this idea of you hearing it from someone else saying hey, this is what I did. I just went through the process, I followed the modules, I went through them again. I reach out for help when I need it. I spent time consciously thinking about what I want to think about in my business and I just show up consistently and build relationships.

Guys, that's all it takes to make money as a life coach truly, and Kristin is an example of that being possible. So speaking of her success with building relationships and networking and showing up and being genuine and authentic, let's talk about networking for business. Are y'all ready? I am super excited about this.

I'm excited about a lot of stuff, but I'm definitely excited to talk about this because I think this is what we're really going to talk about today. When I say we're going to be talking about networking, what I mean and I really mean is we're just going to talk about how not to be a weirdo. Because that's really the bar, my friends. It's actually set super low.

If you can not be a weirdo, you will be successful at networking. I built my entire business with networking. Yet, here's what I want to say that might shock you guys and make you go, wait, what? Well then why do I want to spend all this time doing this? I signed very few clients from networking. So

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Ep #24: Networking for Business

that's the first thing that we're going to talk about today is truly understanding the intention of networking.

I networked in Facebook groups, I networked all over the country at live networking events, like in person. And seriously, here is what I can tell you. There are a lot of normal humans being very big weirdos at networking events. Why? Because of all the drama we have when interacting with other humans. It's like we learn it in school and then we forget how to do it as adults. It's the craziest thing.

And then add the fact that you're there trying to sell something, it's bad. It's real bad. So we're there, we're trying to make connections. Half the time my clients don't even understand why they're supposed to be there and what they're actually doing and then you have all this doubt about the thing you're selling and then all this doubt about you as a person and what to say and how to present yourself and how to position your business and how not to look stupid.

So instead of being at the networking event with other people, you spend the afternoon in your head. It's like party for two in my head. You're not really having conversations with other people. You're just having them with yourself, and that's if you make it out of your house. Because many of you don't even make it out of the house because when you look at all the thoughts you're having behind yourself and your offer and networking events themselves, it's not a pretty picture.

Most often when people do get themselves out of the house, the reason they get themselves out of the house is because they're excited about going, thinking about potential customers being there and they're excited for a sale. So either way, enter weirdo mode.

So let's just first circle back around to what is the intention of networking because I think about it in a way that really serves me. I think about it as a chance to meet myself as who I want to be. I get to introduce myself and

Ep #24: Networking for Business

engage with people as who I'm becoming. Not who I've been. This is why I tell you to meet as many people as possible, tell them you're a life coach.

This is all about you changing your identity. The people that you meet early on, they're not going to be your ideal clients. You probably don't even know who your ideal client is, and definitely not enough to call them in with expert level copy directly speaking to them like you're in their head, and you're definitely not just going to find them hanging out in Facebook groups all talking about how they want to hire a coach.

That's not going to happen. You have to develop that. So in the beginning, this is the thought I had. I want to be ready when I do meet my ideal client. I want to be showing up as the coach I want to be. I want to be able to say confidently and believe myself that I am a coach, and I want to be able to explain with ease and confidence exactly what it is I do.

I want to have answered a thousand questions about what a coach is and how I work with my clients and how people do or don't get results in life. I want to be the expert when I do come across someone who is actively an ideal person for me to work with. I want to be the expert.

So until then, I knew I needed lots of practice. And I just think it's so convenient that there are meet-ups and networking events and Facebook groups where you can do just that. Practice being a coach. You can practice saying who you are and what you do and explain the process of coaching. So for me, off to those events and those Facebook groups I went to practice.

Notice that my goal there wasn't to sell people coaching and try and find my ideal clients like so many of you are deciding a networking event is or isn't valuable based on whether your ideal client is there. And yes, of course if you can find groups where your ideal clients are there, great. But like, that's not the only reason to go. Some of you just need to practice what you're going to need to say to your ideal clients.

[Make Money as a Life Coach®](#), a podcast with Stacey Boehman

Ep #24: Networking for Business

You need people that - and I love when you don't know, like it's not your ideal client. This is another reason why I love this. When it's not your ideal client, you have zero pressure. You're not forcing in your brain when you do find your ideal client, if you're not practiced and you're not confident, your brain is going to be like, oh my god, I don't want to blow it, oh my god, this is the perfect client, she's the most amazing person in the world.

And you're going to freak yourself out. So you want to go with people where there's like, no expectation of really signing a client because then you're going to be bold, you're going to be willing to play around with it. Like, I used to go to these events where I knew none of these people were my ideal client and there would be 200 people there.

We'd be going around round tables and I would just know that my goal was to be just as creative as possible with how I explained coaching, and there was no pressure because I knew that none of those people were my ideal client. So I got to play and experiment with being who I wanted to be and saying different things and seeing what worked and seeing how to position myself and that's what I want you all to do.

I knew early on that the best way to find my ideal client was to be their ideal coach. And that's what I had to work on. Now, some of y'all might be like, oh yeah, that sounds easy. But remember, although you're practicing being you, the you you want to be, the new you, you're still also the old you at the same time. The one who gets super tongue-tied explaining what a coach is and does.

One question can throw you for a loop. You stumble on your words, you don't know what to say yet. You're still the one who's super insecure and maybe up until you decided to become a coach, you've been a super introvert your whole life. Maybe you've got that to layer on top of it like me.

So in order to practice being who you want to be, the coach who calls in all these clients, you also have to overcome a ton of your own shit to get to that point. So it's going to be awkward at first. It's not going to be as easy

[Make Money as a Life Coach®](#), a podcast with Stacey Boehman

Ep #24: Networking for Business

as you might think it's going to be. And you also are probably going to come off as a little bit of a weirdo in the beginning and that's totally okay.

I'm going to help you not be one, but also just be willing to be one because I think everyone at those events is all going through the same thing. Everyone that's at the networking event, and the difference is going to be you'll have the edge because you're going to be aware that this is happening. And it feels worse when you're aware, but it will also help you grow faster. It's a trade.

So just dive in and be willing for things to get messy for a while. Make allowance for the stumbling and the intense mind drama and self-questioning that will take place, and then if you keep at it, practicing being who you want to be and explaining what it is to work with a coach and how you help people, eventually you will get better and better and have less and less mind drama and pretty soon, you'll be the most confident, strongest energy in the room because you will be so confident from all of this practice that you've given yourself and all the times you've let yourself fail in front of people that it doesn't even really matter.

I remember going to this networking event. It was two hours away in a bigger city than mine. So I drove two hours to go to this networking event. Again, it was like, 250 people. It was kind of like a speed networking event, sort of, but you basically had an open networking event at the beginning, so I would work through and talk to as many people as possible, and then you had round tables and everyone would spend three minutes talking about what they do, who their ideal client is, what they're looking for.

Again, I knew none of these people were my ideal clients really. There might have been a couple people there, but here's what I did. I would always position myself in some capacity to go as last if possible, to not be the first person speaking. And I would listen to what they were all saying and kind of watch their behavior and just listen to their thinking.

Ep #24: Networking for Business

And then I would try to get as creative as possible to position myself as a way to be appealing, to be offering the results that I thought they might be looking for. And it really wasn't - this is what's a fine line. It really wasn't in an effort to try to sell them. It was in an effort to get really good at being able to explain what a coaching does in the way that the person in front of me needs to hear it. Off the cuff, without any practice, impromptu.

So that if I'm later at a coffee date and I meet my ideal person, clients aren't going to ask you questions the same way every time. They're going to get really creative in how they ask because they're all individual people, whereas we try to create this elevator pitch. I hate that shit. It's not really effective because depending on how the person asks or the circumstance that you're in, like the social setting you're in or how long you have, it's going to be different.

And so I wanted to put myself - this kind of blows my mind when I think about it. Like, from where I am, I can't believe those were my thoughts at the beginning of my business. For me, I just thought like, this is the best way to practice all of the things you can never account for, and if you can do that, your foundation of explaining coaching and even coaching your clients and offering things the way that people need to hear it - because I even do that with my coaching.

I practice explaining something, like I'll have one concept or truth and I'll practice explaining it 100 different ways so there's never a client I run into where I can't explain what it is that I want to teach them. It's this concept. I knew this very early on that I wanted to be able - never wanted to be caught off guard.

I just wanted to be able to explain it to 1000 different types of people exactly what it is a life coach is and how they help people get results, and be able to - it's just a whole 'nother level of skill when you can listen to someone speak and then position what it is that you offer as a coach. What a coach does in a way that intrigues them and excites them to ask you for more.

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Ep #24: Networking for Business

Again, I wasn't doing that in a creepy attempt to sell them. I was doing it in a way to learn how to captivate people in coaching. How can I hook them and get them interested to inspire them into action to ask me more about it and ask me more about it and think about it and look me up. Not because I wanted to sell them because they weren't even my ideal clients. They weren't the people I was even looking to help.

But because if I could figure it out with them, I could definitely figure it out with my ideal people. And I got really good at it and that's why my copy is so good to this day. It's why my podcast is so good to this day. It's why I'm such a good coach to this day. Truly, networking events were a strategic way that I could get in front of people and grow in presenting myself as a coach and presenting coaching.

Another really great story is the same networking event, they had sponsors and I remember seeing a coach get up there and speak one year and I was like, I could do a way better job than her, which is now not maybe the nicest thought, but I was like, I really genuinely believed because I had the model, that I had so much better content and ways to help people. And so I was like, I'm going to be that person and I'm going to speak on stage next year.

So the next year rolled around and I spent \$800 sponsoring that networking event, and then what's really ridiculous when I think back to it is I actually hired my coach for a two-day intense VIP where I got her for 12 hours a day, both days in a row and we just hammered out what I was going to say at the networking event. We branded my entire business, which actually was I think, one of the things that really propelled me.

But we had banners and I created this huge table layout and I had hot pink champagne glasses stacked up upside down and gold chocolate balls hanging from them, and I had this banner that had photos of me and all my clients stacked up where it looked like I had been doing it for years. And then I invited all of my clients to come and I had like, eight people there.

Ep #24: Networking for Business

And so what's fascinating is I got to speak. People were like, lining up to hug me. They were just so blown away by what I offered. I didn't sign any clients from that event. There's a reason I'm telling you this story. But after this event, who I became in showing up to that event because at the time, sponsoring an event for 250 - what I would have considered, which is so funny again, as grown ass adults who actually have real businesses.

That was my thought. Or they're in corporate America. I'm going to go speak in front of them and talk about my business, and at the time I had a program called Diva Business School, and I'm going to go up and do that and to speak in front of that many people and to show up and have a booth and be a top sponsor and I created a networking event actually the day before and using my own brain.

Nobody was telling me to do this. I want to just make this also clear is some of you think where do I get the playbook on that? This was all my own - I tell you guys to inspire yourself into action enough that you're compelled to go out and take action and then trust whatever ideas you have come up. This was one of my ideas.

So again, I didn't sign any clients from it. I met like, a ton of people for coffee afterwards, but here's what happened. Something shifted inside of me deeply. Like, really deeply. And I got to practice a ton of consults with that event and who I ended up becoming was the person that two months later was going to sign 16 clients back to back and end my year with \$150,000 cash in the bank.

That's what it means to go be at these networking events and showing up and putting yourself in front of people as who you want to be. I also did a ton of speed networking events because again, I think it's a great way to quickly practice who you are and what you do. Speed networking events, you have like, 60 seconds. Can you captivate someone's attention in 60 seconds?

Ep #24: Networking for Business

This is a great question ask yourself and a great skill to go out and practice. So by now, you might be picking up that networking events are not ever for selling. They're for positioning. They're for positioning yourself to yourself. Growing your own belief, and other people as an expert in your area of focus or as a coach or as someone who works with clients.

So the next intention that I think is super important to hold when it comes to networking events is what sells, and that's service. Service sells. So I think people sniff out someone trying to sell something right away. I think it's super obvious if that's why you've come and I also think it's super important to know that no one goes to buy at a networking event.

So it's almost like imagine if you were selling at a Christmas party at your house. No one showed up to buy anything. So if you had - let's just say this. Let's say that you host a Christmas party and you invite all these people and all of a sudden in the middle of a cocktail hour you start pulling out Stella & Dot jewelry and you're like, also, I'm selling shit here today, hope you're interested, great Christmas gifts.

It's weird. It makes people feel very uncomfortable. And so I think a lot of people think that networking events is a place where people go to buy and it's not, and that's what makes it weird when you go to sell is it's not a place where people ever intend to go buy. I actually had the leader of this networking event, the 200-person one that I went to ask this question to a group of the 200 people right before we started. He said who here - raise your hand if you have something to sell and everybody raised their hand.

And then he said okay, now raise your hand if you're here to buy something. One person out of approximately 200, 250 people raised their hand. So if everyone is there focused on themselves and selling, I want you to think about who is there listening, genuinely engaging and building relationships? No one.

But that person can be you and it will make you the most memorable person in the room. We remember the person who took the time to be

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Ep #24: Networking for Business

genuine and listen and ask great questions. We remember the person who wasn't just trying to sell. So when you go to networking events, practice serving. Practice listening. Be engaged and present. Go to as many of them as you can to where you're no longer in your head thinking about you and what you're going to say and go. Think about them.

Spend time after you go to an event writing down all the thoughts that you had that caused you drama and coach yourself on them. Use it as a way to bring up all your shit so you know what to work on. So many of you come to me and you're like, I don't even know what I should be working on, what should I be working on? Probably all your thoughts that make you a weirdo when you're at a networking event. That's a good start.

Trust me, you want to have the biggest impact and influence on the people that you just met, be genuine. Be interested, be focused on them, be focused on creative comfort to be around you. When you're selling, or when you're in tons of mind drama, you're not creating comfort to be around you.

So this is also a skill you want to develop. Comfort for people to be around you. And again, not necessarily for the people that you're going to meet at the event but for the person you want to become who not only meets your ideal client but brings them in organically. It's their idea to do business with you, their idea to do a consult and to ask for help because of the comfort you present around them.

The one networking event where I did sign a client, I went to this event. I had to get over a ton of mind drama to get there because I didn't have business cards and then I made them at like Staples. They do a couple hour turnaround. They don't look great. I don't even think I had a logo. Maybe I did, but I just like, had them, cut them. They did not look professional at all but I took them.

It was like, torrential downpour rain that day all day. It was a miserable day. I'd never been to this networking event. On top of it, it was like, young

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Ep #24: Networking for Business

professionals that were like, my age and they were all in this networking group where they network all the time together so they all knew each other and I was going to be like, a fish out of water.

So it was all this drama to get myself to go, and then of course my brain was telling me what's the point, doesn't matter anyway, it's all this energy, you're going to drive 40 minutes away downtown to this event, it's going to take all this time, I'm an introvert, I'd rather just stay in my house, it's going to be for nothing. All this stuff.

So I had to overcome a ton of stuff just to get in my car, and then I get there, I meet this girl networking. I don't try to sell her. I had her my business card. I let her do most of the talking. She follows up with me, and what's so funny is now when we talk about it, the reason she followed up with me is because she was in recruiting and she heard that I was a coach and so she figured I would have a ton of referrals for her for her recruiting job.

So then she asked to meet for coffee and we met for coffee and again, I just showed up as like, who I wanted to be. The person that was - at this point, I had been networking a lot so I really did have a lot more confidence around networking and just meeting people out for coffee.

She was not my first person I met out for coffee. She was probably my 20th person I met out for coffee and the 20th person that I had conversations with and talked about being a coach with, and none of those people had really been super interested and I didn't anticipate she was going to be either. But I had gotten really comfortable about talking about what coaching is and all of a sudden, something shifted.

The energy shifted and all of a sudden she started asking me questions and she started getting more and more curious, and all of a sudden it was like, just like, pulling information out of me and then pretty soon she's like, well how much would it be to work with you? How do I hire you?

[Make Money as a Life Coach®](#), a podcast with Stacey Boehman

Ep #24: Networking for Business

And I remember I have this strong opinion of not telling people the price ahead of time but at the time I was just like, you know what, it would be awkward not to and we're just having this normal conversation so I told her how much my prices were and she was like, I really want to do a consult with you.

So we set up a consult, like not at that coffee meeting but a separate consult. She ended up signing and becoming a client of mine, and then helped her create a coaching business that's bringing in \$500,000 a year. So you just never know. You might be thinking that seems like a lot of work, and it is, but the rewards, the benefit is who you become and the type of people that you meet and the situations you put yourself in and then being - what is the value of being ready for your most successful client that's ever going to come to you?

You know, I think about that and I'm like, that day, what if I hadn't shown up? She's one of my most successful clients. What's the value of finding that person? Are you willing to do all that work? And some of you might say no. You might realize like, I'm not willing to go to 20 networking events or 100 networking events. I'm not willing to go meet all those people for coffee and do all that legwork just to start signing clients.

But I will tell you, it is the foundation of my business and how I got so good so quickly is I put a ton of legwork in in the beginning and now I just reap the benefits of that four years later. And for most entrepreneurs that come to me, if you don't have a background in networking, marketing, sales, business, this is where you have to start.

If you have me a room full of brand-new entrepreneurs, I would tell you that 90% of the people in that room, maybe 98% of the people in that room, their biggest issue is going to be they don't understand how to interact with other humans. They don't understand how to build relationships and network with people, and that will be their biggest issue with growing their business is they're not a people person yet, they don't know how to work in

Ep #24: Networking for Business

a room, they don't know how to work a referral and get people referring people to them organically.

They don't know how to position themselves without being sales-y. They don't know those people skills. That is the downfall of most people when they start their business and you almost feel entitled to not have to learn it. But you do have to learn it because whether it's meeting people organically in your business and doing organic marketing or whether you find this out when you're doing paid marketing and you're just getting a ton of people on consults, if you haven't mastered this, just interacting with other people and building relationships, you won't be able to build a relationship fast enough once you get on the phone with potential clients on consults.

Because really, if you think about it, consults are almost building relationships, right? So you have to be really good at making really good first impressions. You have to be really good at positioning yourself as an expert right away. You have to be really good at building relationships quickly, and I think that's what you learn at networking events too.

I think you just speed everything up versus if you haven't learned that and you're just doing paid marketing or whatever, you're getting people on the phone on consults, you're not going to close them and you're going to miss out on a ton of money. You have to start becoming the coach before you are the coach. Practice being that person first.

So the more people you meet, the more you get to practice being a coach, explaining what coaching is and does, what result it creates, talking about your niche or how you help people get results if you don't have one. Presenting yourself for opportunities. Selling yourself, serving others, and this is a good one; solving problems.

The more people you meet, the more you get to practice solving problems. Even if you don't solve them for them right then and there, I would solve them in my brain. I would hear someone talk about a problem and I would

Ep #24: Networking for Business

totally solve it in my brain. It got me really good at like, breaking apart what people were saying, which is another thing that happens on consults.

You get a ton of that is people are like, I just really struggled to listen to her and then figure out how to piece together what her biggest problems were and then present it back to her in a way where it seemed like I understood it more than she understood it herself, and then be able to also explain what the solution is.

That is the biggest thing people struggle with on consults. It's what I teach in the 2K and I did a lot of practicing on that. Just listening to people out talking, and then figuring out their problem in my brain and then figuring out what the solution would be. And of course, not sharing with them at all, but just practicing problem solving. Listening to people talk. It's a great way to do that.

So that you're not on a consult caught completely clueless on how to do this stuff, and then you lose the customer. So I just used to go and listen to all the thoughts that people were giving me and just problem solve in my head. I would practice coaching; I would practice listening. There are just truly so many skills you can develop at networking events.

And they're just such a great place to do it. You can have fun doing it at the same time. Here's what I want to offer. This is kind of one of the last thoughts I want to leave you with is that you develop none of these skills if you don't go and you have to develop them then. If you think you don't have time for networking and it's just this whole waste of time, then what you have to do is develop them during consults if you get people on the phone.

So you either have to practice it online or when you get people on the phone and the problem is it's going to take you so much longer. And the other thing I want to just say in closing is that everything I've said here in this podcast today - I've talked a lot about in-person networking but it can be applied to online networking.

[Make Money as a Life Coach®](#), a podcast with Stacey Boehman

Ep #24: Networking for Business

People get so caught up on this. We get emails all the time from you, my listeners, asking if you can still do the 2K for 2K if you can't attend actual live networking events, like if you live in some super remote place. Of course, you can. We'll keep emphasizing that unless you live somewhere very remote like Antarctica and the population isn't five people, you really do have the ability to get yourself to live events and it is a game-changer.

And even then, if you do live in Antarctica, you could go visit places that do have people and get in front of them. Like, it's an option. You could go to vacation in New York, and while you're in New York, hit up five networking events. You could do that if you wanted to. I'm not saying you need to fly from Antarctica to New York just to go to networking events, so don't get in all the drama.

I'm just saying that you can figure out any problem if you have a desire to figure it out. I traveled all over the country with my full-time job and I would always find someone I could meet up, even if it was just a friend or someone I met on Facebook or through a Facebook group or through a coaching group, or I would find a meet-up or a networking - anything. I would always meet someone out in person for something every place I went.

It's possible. You could do that if you wanted to and I hope that this podcast gave you a really good foundation for why you would want to do that. Why you become and what it does for you and how it actually speeds up the process for you in your business. So I want to leave you with these thoughts to take into your networking. I want you to answer these for yourself this week.

What's the conversation in your head that keeps you from being present? Coach yourself on that or get coached on it. What do you want the conversation to be? So what is it that keeps you from being present and what do you want it to be to get you into presence. Who are you now when you go to networking events? What is all the inner dialogue that you think about yourself? What do you think other people will think of you?

[Make Money as a Life Coach®](#), a podcast with Stacey Boehman

Ep #24: Networking for Business

That's a great way to figure that out is who are you now, what do you think other people think of you because that's really what you think of yourself. And who do you want to be when you're there? And just know that you get to decide. They won't know any different. To them, it will be who you have always been. A coach.

Alright, have an amazing week, and next week we're going to talk about building relationships. Like, what do you do after you actually connect with people at networking events, how do you move that relationship forward for your business? Alright, I'll see you next week.

Hey, if you are ready to make money as a life coach, I want to invite you to join my 2K for 2K program where you're going to make your first \$2000, the hardest part, and then \$200,000 using my proven formula. It's risk-free. You either make your 2K or I give you your 2K back. Just head over to www.staceyboehman.com/2kfor2k. We'll see you inside.