Welcomemat Announces Platinum Sponsorship and Keynote Education at NECA Vendor Showcase

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Atlanta, Ga - January 20, 2026 -
Welcomemat, a leading digital marketing agency specializing in the car wash industry, today announced its platinum sponsorship of the upcoming 1st Annual NECA Vendor Showcase taking place January 27, 2026, at Foxwoods Resort Casino in Mashantucket, Connecticut. The company's vice president, Jonathan Kierman, will deliver a keynote presentation addressing the rapidly evolving landscape of search technology and its impact on car wash operators nationwide.

The Northeast Carwash Association event, which brings together industry professionals, vendors, and service providers from across the region, will feature Kierman's presentation titled "Car Wash Marketing in 2026: Winning in the Era of SEO, AEO & Intelligent Search." The session is designed to help car wash operators navigate the fundamental shifts occurring in how customers discover and evaluate local businesses in an increasingly AI-driven digital environment.

As consumer search behavior undergoes unprecedented transformation, Kierman's presentation will address a critical challenge facing car wash operators: the limitations of traditional search engine optimization strategies in an era dominated by artificial intelligence, voice assistants, and answer engines. The session

will introduce attendees to Answer Engine Optimization, an emerging discipline that positions businesses to appear at the precise moment customers express purchase intent across multiple platforms and search modalities.

According to industry observers, the shift from traditional text-based search to conversational AI interfaces represents one of the most significant changes in digital marketing since the rise of mobile devices. Car wash operators who fail to adapt their visibility strategies risk becoming invisible to potential customers who increasingly rely on voice search, AI chatbots, and intelligent assistants to make purchasing decisions. Kierman's presentation aims to demystify these changes and provide actionable strategies that operators can implement immediately to maintain a competitive advantage.

The session will examine specific ways consumer behavior is evolving in the car wash sector, with particular attention to how AI-powered search platforms are reshaping the customer journey from initial awareness through final booking. Attendees will gain insight into the technical and strategic differences between traditional SEO approaches and the multi-platform visibility required in today's fragmented search landscape. The presentation will also explore how Google's continued integration of artificial intelligence into search results is fundamentally altering what it means to rank well for local service searches.

Beyond diagnosis of the current state of search technology, Kierman will provide a practical blueprint for building sustainable visibility across Google, AI-driven platforms, and emerging search channels. The framework presented will help operators understand how to structure their online presence to satisfy both traditional search algorithms and the new generation of answer engines that prioritize direct responses over lists of website links. Particular emphasis will be placed on strategies for building trust signals that resonate across multiple platforms simultaneously, ensuring that car wash businesses remain discoverable regardless of how or where customers choose to search.

The presentation comes at a pivotal moment for the car wash industry, as operators face mounting pressure to differentiate themselves in increasingly competitive markets while adapting to technological change that shows no signs of slowing. With voice-activated searches and AI assistant queries growing exponentially, the strategies that drove customer acquisition just two years ago are rapidly becoming obsolete. Kierman's session will help attendees understand not only what is changing but also why these changes matter for their specific business operations and how to respond strategically rather than reactively.

The Welcomemat platinum sponsorship of the NECA Vendor Showcase reflects the company's ongoing commitment to education and thought leadership within the car wash industry. By supporting professional development opportunities and sharing emerging best practices, the company aims to help operators across the Northeast region and beyond prepare for a marketing landscape that looks fundamentally different from anything the industry has previously experienced.

The 1st Annual NECA Vendor Showcase will take place at Foxwoods Resort Casino, located at 350 Trolley Line Boulevard in Mashantucket, Connecticut. The full-day event provides networking opportunities, vendor exhibitions, and educational sessions designed to help car wash professionals stay current with industry trends and technological innovations. Additional information about the event and registration details are available through the Northeast Carwash Association website at necarwash.org.

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Welcomemat is an Atlanta-based digital marketing platform providing data-driven solutions for car wash and automotive service operators, integrating digital ads, SEO, social media, email/SMS campaigns, and real-time performance tracking.

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