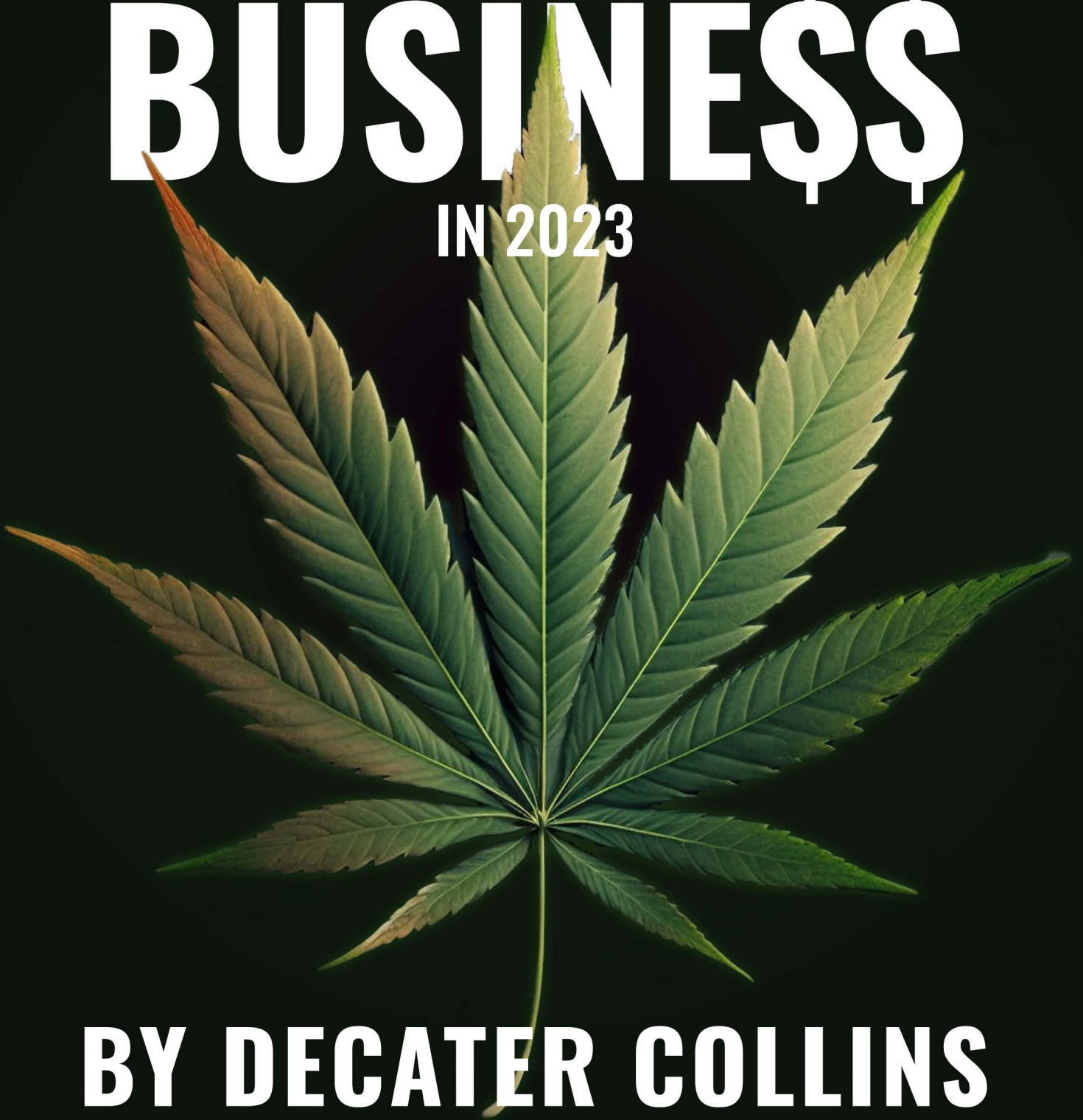


THE COMPLETE GUIDE TO MARKETING YOUR

# CANNABIS BUSINESS\$

IN 2023



BY DECATER COLLINS

CANNABIS MARKETING DONE RIGHT

# **The Complete Guide To Marketing Your Cannabis Business in 2023**

**By Decater Collins**

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## **Introduction**

The fact you are reading this guide means you are interested in cannabis marketing. Congratulations! I know from personal experience this sets you apart from the majority of cannabis business owners, who tend to pay scant attention to marketing and branding. The good news is this means there's a great deal of opportunity for owners and managers who commit to a well-conceived marketing plan and invest in their brand.

This guide is intended to help you better understand the principles of marketing and branding and how they can most effectively be applied to cannabis businesses. While this guide does not pretend to be comprehensive, it is a useful tool, both for complete marketing noobs, and those with marketing experience outside the cannabis industry.

This marketing overview will be especially useful for cannabis growers and processors, as well as dispensary owners in legal states throughout the US. Please note that this information offers general guidelines, rather than specific state-by-state rules and regulations, since these can change rapidly and may not be up to date by the time you are reading this. It's highly recommended that every cannabis business appoint a compliance officer whose job is to stay abreast of all local and national regulations.

I've tried to divide the content into easy to understand sections, so that you can skip around as you find most convenient. But I urge everyone to look at the chapter on how to formulate a marketing plan. Too many businesses (both inside and outside the cannabis industry) start investing in their marketing without taking the time to formulate a clear strategy, and end up wasting both time and money as the result. Don't let this happen to you.

Of course, if you have any questions, please feel free to reach out. You can find me on [Twitter](#) (if Twitter still exists!!!) and [Instagram](#), as well as via email at [doc@hoodcollective.com](mailto:doc@hoodcollective.com). The reason we founded The Hood Collective was to bring much needed marketing expertise to the cannabis industry, and help businesses just like yours succeed.

With that said, thanks for purchasing our 2022 Cannabis Marketing Guide. Good luck with your company and I wish you all the success!

# The State Of The Cannabis Industry

Legalization of recreational cannabis is less than a decade old, but already so much of the landscape has changed since weed first hit the shelves in Colorado and Washington. Every state has its own story, but one thing that's shared by individual state markets across the country is the extreme volatility that makes forecasting from year to year nearly impossible.

The Hood Collective has been in business for 5+ years and it is both amazing and tragic how many companies have come and gone in that time. For business owners, it must seem like the cards are stacked against you. You're forced to invest hundreds of thousands, if not millions of dollars, to get your business licensed and fully compliant, for a state market that is completely closed off from the rest of the country. Your business is liable for a huge tax burden, and traditional financial and banking services are largely off limits.

No wonder so many businesses fail in the first year.

For instance, Brian MacMahon, the founder of Expert DOJO, regularly works with technology startups in addition to cannabis companies. He predicts that cannabis startups will exceed the 97% failure rate found in the tech sector.

This scenario is already playing out in states across the country. After the first five years of legal cannabis, it was reported that nationwide, the failure rate had reached 70%. In Oregon, where there's no cap on state licenses, the fail rate has been particularly high, with the boom and bust cycles weeding out a majority of businesses over the last few years (multiple puns warning!). In Colorado, while there is no statewide cap, there are restrictions on the number of licensees in many counties and municipalities. This may explain the more benevolent fail rate of 40% after the first few years.

But no matter where you are located, starting a cannabis business is a huge gamble. With stiff competition, heavy regulation, and restricted markets, everything has to go just right for your company to survive its first five years. This makes it all the more stunning that so many business owners take such a lackadaisical approach to marketing.

As of this writing, recreational cannabis is legal in the following states:

Colorado  
Washington  
Alaska  
Oregon  
Washington, D.C.  
California  
Maine  
Massachusetts  
Nevada  
Michigan  
Vermont  
Guam  
Illinois  
Arizona  
Montana  
New Jersey  
New York

Virginia  
New Mexico  
Connecticut

It should be noted that recreational sales are not yet legal in all those states, as the regulated markets are still being developed in locations like Washington D.C. and New York.

Moreover, medical cannabis is currently legal in many more states:

Washington  
Oregon  
California  
Alaska  
Hawaii  
Nevada  
Utah  
Arizona  
Montana  
Colorado  
New Mexico  
North Dakota  
South Dakota  
Oklahoma  
Minnesota  
Missouri  
Arkansas  
Louisiana  
Mississippi  
Illinois  
Michigan  
Alabama  
Ohio  
Florida  
West Virginia  
Virginia  
Washington D.C.  
Maryland  
Delaware  
Pennsylvania  
New Jersey  
New York  
Connecticut  
Rhode Island  
Massachusetts  
Vermont  
New Hampshire  
Maine

Of course, the production of CBD and hemp has also been legalized at the federal level thanks to the 2018 Farm Bill. This legislation left regulation up to the individual states, meaning that some places still do not even allow CBD products to be sold. Of the remaining states, those that currently (as of this writing) allow CBD to be produced and sold include the following. The regulations vary by state, with some allowing CBD only for medical purposes, so it's important to know the specific statutes in your location:

Georgia  
Idaho  
Indiana  
Iowa  
Kentucky  
South Carolina  
Tennessee  
Wisconsin  
Wyoming



# Why Marketing Matters

Many businesses overlook marketing, but it is essential to businesses of all sizes. The average company spends 7% of its annual revenue on marketing. If you don't have a marketing budget, it's time to start planning one.

Marketing can help your business in a number of ways, including building brand awareness, boosting sales and increasing the value of your product. It can also help you learn more about your customers.

"Your brand is what people say about you when you're not in the room," says Jeff Bezos, CEO and founder of Amazon.com. Branding is essential for conveying what your company stands for and how you want customers to feel about your business.

How does marketing help improve your branding and why does this matter? By building relationships with customers, you can create trust, loyalty, and referrals. Trust influences purchasing decisions, loyalty influences repeat purchases, and referrals are another form of free advertising.

Branding also impacts your bottom line. A recent study by the Brand Finance Institute found that the value of a brand has a direct impact on a company's revenue growth. And because people are more likely to choose products they recognize over those they don't, brand recognition helps companies get customers through their doors or onto their website, whether they're B2B or B2C.

Another benefit of effective marketing is it will help increase your business's customer base, especially if you include a promotional call to action in your campaigns.

For example, you might promote a free trial period or a discount on a customer's first purchase. Make sure the offer is unique and only available through a marketing campaign, so you can track how many customers are responding.

You should also track the cost of your marketing campaign and compare it to any new sales generated. That way, you can see whether your marketing budget is delivering an acceptable return on investment (ROI).

Speaking of ROI, marketing may seem like a huge expense, but the truth is that companies that invest in premium branding and marketing actually end up making more money in the long run, especially compared with competitors that skimp on marketing.

Marketing can accomplish this kind of efficiency by making sure your company's message and brand are consistent across all channels, so you're not wasting money on duplicate efforts or mixed messages. An accomplished marketing agency can help you understand what kinds of advertising perform best and where — i.e., if you're spending money on billboards but no one is seeing them because they're located on roads people don't drive on very often, you'll know to reallocate those funds.

The goal of an effective marketing campaign is to make sure all employees are "on brand" and spreading the same message about your company's products or services. That way, customers won't receive different information about your company depending on who they talk to.

Whether you want to build your own online brand and sell your cannabis online, or you're looking to start a brick-and-mortar dispensary, the fact of the matter is that you need to get the word out. Without marketing, it doesn't matter how good your product is—it's not going to sell without people knowing it exists.

# **Why Marketing Matters In The Cannabis Industry**

Marketing is an essential part of any business, and it is especially important in the cannabis industry for several reasons.

First, the cannabis industry is highly regulated, which means that companies have to be very careful about how they promote their products. Marketing in the cannabis industry is restricted by laws and regulations that vary by state, and companies must follow strict guidelines when it comes to advertising and promoting their products. This can make it challenging for cannabis businesses to reach their target markets and stand out in the crowded marketplace.

Second, the cannabis industry is highly competitive, with many companies vying for market share. Marketing is crucial for cannabis businesses to differentiate themselves from the competition and communicate the unique value of their products to potential customers.

Third, the cannabis industry is still relatively new and many consumers are unfamiliar with the different products and brands. Marketing is an effective way for companies to educate consumers about the various types of cannabis products and their benefits, as well as to build brand awareness and loyalty.

Fourth, the cannabis industry is rapidly changing and evolving, with new products and trends emerging all the time. Marketing is a way for companies to stay current and relevant in the market and to keep up with changing consumer preferences.

Overall, marketing is an essential part of the success of any business, and it is especially important in the cannabis industry due to the unique challenges and opportunities that the industry presents. By developing a strong marketing strategy and implementing effective marketing tactics, cannabis businesses can effectively reach and engage their target markets, differentiate themselves from the competition, educate consumers, and stay current and relevant in a rapidly evolving industry.

# **Marketing 101: How to Create and Execute a Marketing Strategy for Your Business**

Whether you're a small business owner, or managing the marketing for a larger company, you can't afford to waste your marketing budget on ineffective campaigns. You need to be strategic about your marketing efforts in order to get the most bang for your buck.

Here's a crash course in marketing 101. We'll cover the basics of crafting a marketing strategy and give you some practical tips for execution. We'll also go over the basic terms that you need to know if you're brand new to marketing.

## **What Is a Marketing Strategy?**

Your marketing strategy is the roadmap that will guide your marketing efforts. It should be based on your business goals and objectives.

A marketing strategy is the plan that a company creates to effectively promote and sell its products or services to its target market. A marketing strategy includes a variety of tactics and activities, such as advertising, public relations, social media marketing, and content marketing, that are designed to reach and engage customers.

Your marketing strategy will answer the following questions:

Who is your target market?

What are your marketing goals?

What are your marketing objectives?

What marketing mix will you use? (more on this later)

What are your key marketing messages?

What is your budget?

What metric will you use to measure success?

## **What's The Difference Between Advertising And Marketing?**

So what do we mean by the terms advertising and marketing, in particular in the cannabis industry? Is there a meaningful difference between the two? At the most basic level, advertising is when you promote your products and services through paid advertising channels, such as television commercials or magazine ads. Marketing, on the other hand, is the action of promoting your business by a variety of means, whether paid or not. This means that advertising is one form of marketing.

So when we talk about cannabis marketing, that includes cannabis advertising. Of course, because the cannabis industry is so heavily regulated, and is still very illegal at the federal level, there are many traditional advertising channels that are not open to most cannabis businesses. You won't be seeing your neighborhood dispensary advertising during the Super Bowl, though maybe that time is not too far off in the future.

Marketing Terms You Need To Be Familiar With:

When you are just starting out in the marketing field, there are a lot of terms that you may not be familiar with. This can be overwhelming and make it difficult to understand what people are talking about. To help you out, we have compiled a list of essential marketing terms that you should know, with easy to understand definitions. By becoming familiar with these terms, you will be able to hold your own in conversations with experienced marketers and have a better understanding of the field as a whole.

### **A/B Testing**

A/B testing is a method of comparing two versions of a web page, ad, or app to see which one performs better. This can be done by splitting traffic between the two versions and measuring metrics such as conversion rate or click-through rate.

### **Above the Fold**

The phrase "above the fold" comes from the newspaper industry. In the days of print newspapers, the most important stories and headlines were placed "above the fold" on the front page, meaning they were visible to readers without having to flip the page over. This location was considered prime real estate because it was the first thing people saw when they picked up the paper. The phrase has been carried over to the digital age and is now used to refer to the portion of a webpage that is visible without having to scroll down.

### **AIDA**

AIDA stands for Attention, Interest, Desire, and Action. It's a model that's often used to define the steps required to create a successful marketing campaign.

### **Awareness**

The first stage of communication is awareness, during which the receiver becomes aware of the existence of a message and starts to process it.

### **Banner Ad**

A banner ad is a digital advertisement that appears on a web page. Banner ads are typically rectangular in shape and can be static or animated.

### **Big Data**

Big data refers to large datasets that can be used to uncover trends and patterns. This data can come from a variety of sources, such as social media, web analytics, and market research.

### **Blog**

A blog is a website or online platform where people can share their thoughts and opinions on a variety of topics. Blogs are typically written in an informal or personal style.

### **Brand Identity:**

A brand identity is the visual and verbal elements that a company uses to communicate its brand to consumers. These elements include the company's name, logo, color palette, and brand messaging.

### **Conversion Rate**

The conversion rate is the percentage of website visitors or marketing leads that take a desired action, such as making a purchase or filling out a form. A high conversion rate is an indication that a marketing campaign is effective at converting leads into customers.

### **CPA (Cost Per Action)**

CPA is a pricing model in which advertisers pay for each specified action that's taken by users, such as making a purchase or filling out a form.

### **CRM (Customer Relationship Management)**

A CRM is a system that's used to manage customer data and interactions. It helps businesses foster better relationships with their customers and improve customer retention.

### **CTA (Call-to-Action)**

A CTA is an instruction or message that encourages users to take a specific action, such as clicking a button or link.

### **Customer Journey**

The customer journey refers to the series of interactions and experiences that a customer has with a company or brand, from awareness to consideration to purchase and beyond.

### **Customer Personas**

Customer personas are fictional, representative characters that a company creates to help it understand and empathize with its target audience. Each persona represents a segment of the target market and is based on real data and research about that group.

### **Customer Segmentation**

Customer segmentation is the process of dividing a market into smaller groups of consumers who have similar needs and characteristics. Segmentation allows companies to tailor their marketing efforts to specific groups of consumers, rather than trying to appeal to the entire market.

### **Engagement**

Engagement refers to the extent to which a customer or user interacts with a company or brand's content, products, or services. Engagement is a way to measure the level of interest and involvement that a customer has with a brand. There are many different ways that companies can measure engagement, such as through social media likes and comments, website traffic, email open rates, and customer feedback.

### **Funnel**

A marketing funnel is a visual representation of the customer journey, from initial awareness to the final purchase decision. At each stage of the funnel, the number of potential customers decreases as some drop off and others move on to the next stage.

### **Growth Hacking**

Growth hacking is a process of rapid experimentation across marketing channels and product development to identify the most effective, efficient ways to grow a business. Growth hackers

use data and analytics to test and optimize marketing strategies in an effort to achieve sustainable and scalable growth.

### **Inbound Marketing**

Inbound marketing is a customer-centric approach to marketing that focuses on creating and distributing valuable, relevant, and consistent content to attract and retain a clearly defined audience. The goal of inbound marketing is to attract visitors, convert them into leads, and then close them into customers.

### **KPI (Key Performance Indicator)**

A KPI is a metric that's used to measure the success of a marketing campaign or initiative.

### **Landing Page**

A landing page is a standalone web page, created specifically for the purpose of a marketing or advertising campaign. The goal of a landing page is to convert website visitors into leads or customers.

### **Lead Generation**

Lead generation is the process of attracting and converting strangers and prospects into someone who has indicated interest in your company's product or service. This can be done through various marketing tactics, such as content marketing, social media marketing, and email marketing.

### **Local SEO**

Local SEO refers to the process of optimizing a business's online presence to increase its visibility for geographically-related searches. This includes optimizing a business's website, as well as its listing on directories such as Google My Business and Yelp, to make it more likely to appear when someone searches for businesses in a specific location.

### **LTV (Lifetime Value)**

LTV is a metric that represents the total value of a customer to a business over the course of their relationship.

### **Marketing Mix**

The marketing mix is the combination of elements that a company uses to market its products or services. The four main elements of the marketing mix are product, price, place, and promotion.

### **Noise**

Anything that interferes with the communication process and prevents the message from being accurately received and understood.

### **Outbound Marketing**

Outbound marketing is a traditional marketing approach that involves actively reaching out to customers through tactics such as cold calling, direct mail, and advertising. Outbound marketing is often used to interrupt consumers and draw their attention to a product or service.

**Positioning**

Positioning refers to the way a company differentiates its product or brand in the market and in the minds of consumers. A company's positioning strategy is based on the unique value it offers to its target market.

**ROI (Return on Investment)**

ROI is a measure of the efficiency of a marketing campaign or strategy. It is calculated by dividing the profit gained from the campaign by the cost of the campaign, and expressing the result as a percentage. ROI is an important metric for businesses to consider when evaluating the effectiveness of their marketing efforts, as it helps them determine the value that they are getting from their marketing campaigns. By calculating the ROI of different marketing strategies, businesses can make informed decisions about which tactics are most effective and allocate their resources accordingly.

**SEO**

SEO stands for "Search Engine Optimization." It is the practice of optimizing a website or webpage to improve its ranking in search engine results pages (SERPs) in order to increase the amount of organic traffic it receives. This is done by making changes to the website's content and structure to make it more attractive to search engines. The goal of SEO is to increase visibility and traffic to a website by improving its ranking in search engine results pages.

**Target Market**

A target market is a specific group of consumers that a company wants to reach with its marketing efforts. A target market is identified through market research and segmentation.

# How To Create a Marketing Plan

One of the biggest challenges facing a small- to medium-sized cannabis business is identifying what the best platforms and avenues are for advertising their products and services. When you don't have the budget to plaster your name, image, and content absolutely everywhere, it's imperative that you choose where and when to spend money wisely.

Before you actually start paying for ads and such, you should take the time to work out a cohesive strategy. Identify who your customers are, what's the best way to connect with them, and how best to frame your products and services in a way that they will be engaged.

What too many business owners do when they are just starting out (especially growers and sellers who have spent a long time on the black market) is spending a little bit of money here, some money there, without having a plan in place. While it's great to experiment and see what works, the reality is marketing yourself before you have a clear strategy is a great way to waste money.

As already mentioned, a marketing strategy is a plan that a company creates to effectively promote and sell its products or services to its target market. An effective marketing strategy is based on a deep understanding of the target market, a unique value proposition, and a well-planned mix of tactics and activities.

The first step in creating an effective marketing strategy is to define the target market. This involves conducting market research and segmentation to understand the needs, preferences, and behaviors of the target audience. For example, a company that sells eco-friendly cleaning products may identify its target market as health-conscious, environmentally-conscious consumers who are willing to pay a premium for natural products.

Once the target market has been defined, the next step is to develop a unique value proposition that clearly explains how the company's product or service meets the needs of the target market in a way that is better than the competition. This could be based on factors such as quality, price, convenience, or customer service. For example, the eco-friendly cleaning product company may differentiate itself by offering a wider selection of natural ingredients, a satisfaction guarantee, and a recycling program for used bottles.

The marketing mix, or the set of actions that the company will take to promote its product or service, is then determined. The four main pillars of the marketing mix are product, price, place, and promotion.

For the product, the company needs to consider factors such as the features and benefits of the product, the packaging, and any warranties or guarantees. The price of the product should be based on the value it provides to the customer and should be competitive with similar products in the market. The place, or distribution, of the product should be based on the preferences of the target market and could include online, brick and mortar stores, or a combination of both. Finally, the promotion of the product should be based on the preferences of the target market and could include advertising, public relations, social media marketing, and content marketing.

The final step in creating an effective marketing strategy is to establish performance metrics, or key performance indicators (KPIs), that will be used to measure the success of the marketing



efforts. These metrics could include things like website traffic, conversion rate, and customer retention rate. It is important to regularly review and adjust the marketing strategy as needed, based on the performance of the tactics and the evolving needs and preferences of the target market.

An effective marketing strategy is essential for a business to succeed in today's competitive market. By understanding the target market, developing a unique value proposition, and implementing a well-planned mix of tactics and activities, a company can effectively promote and sell its products or services and achieve sustainable growth.

## More About Value Proposition

I'd like to write some more about value proposition, because I think it lies at the heart of how a brand can compete in a highly volatile marketplace. Basically, every consumer, when making a purchasing decision, especially one involving a new brand or product, is asking of the company why is your product better than your competitors. You need to make that answer clear in the way you package your product and how you market it.

As I go into greater depth of how to identify and define your company's value proposition, I'll follow the same guidelines discussed above on how to create a marketing strategy, in order to emphasize the link between your strategy and your value proposition.

A business's value proposition is a statement that explains how a business's products or services will benefit its customers and how it differentiates from its competitors. Here are some ways a business can identify, define, and promote its value proposition:

**Identify the unique features of your product or service:** A business should identify the unique features of its products or services that are of most value to its customers.

**Understand your target market:** A business should understand its target market and what problems or needs its products or services can solve for them.

**Define your value proposition:** A business should use the information gathered above to define its value proposition in a clear and concise statement.

**Communicate your value proposition:** A business should communicate its value proposition in all of its marketing materials, including its website, social media profiles, and advertising campaigns.

**Test and improve:** A business should test its value proposition by seeing how it is received by its target market and make adjustments as needed.

**Use customer testimonials and case studies:** A business should use customer testimonials and case studies to demonstrate the value of its products or services to potential customers.

**Use metrics and analytics to measure success:** A business should use metrics and analytics to measure the success of its value proposition and make adjustments as needed.

**Continuously gather customer feedback:** A business should continuously gather customer feedback to ensure that it is meeting the needs of its target market.

By following these steps, a business can identify, define, and promote its value proposition in a way that resonates with its target market and helps it stand out from its competitors. To further illustrate the point, here are a few examples of how companies have defined and marketed their value proposition:

**Amazon:** Amazon's value proposition is to offer customers "Earth's biggest selection" of products at low prices, with fast shipping. They communicate this value proposition through

their website, advertising campaigns, and customer reviews. They also use their vast selection and competitive prices to differentiate themselves from other online retailers.

**Zappos:** Zappos' value proposition is to offer customers the best possible service, including free and fast shipping, free returns, and a 365-day return policy. They communicate this value proposition through their website, customer service and their social media campaigns. They are also known for their exceptional customer service.

**Tesla:** Tesla's value proposition is to offer electric cars with long ranges, cutting-edge technology, and sleek designs. They communicate this value proposition through their website, advertising campaigns, and showrooms, highlighting the benefits of electric cars, such as reduced environmental impact and lower operating costs.

**Dollar Shave Club:** Dollar Shave Club's value proposition is to offer men high-quality shaving products delivered straight to their door at an affordable price. They communicate this value proposition through their website, advertising campaigns and social media, emphasizing the convenience and cost savings of their subscription service.

**Patagonia:** Patagonia's value proposition is to produce high-quality outdoor clothing and gear while also promoting environmental sustainability. They communicate this value proposition through their website, advertising campaigns, and social media, highlighting the environmental benefits of their products and the company's commitment to sustainability.

These are just a few examples of how companies can define and communicate their value proposition in a clear and compelling way. By focusing on what sets them apart from their competitors and highlighting the benefits that their products or services can provide, these companies are able to attract and retain customers.

But since we're here to talk about cannabis, how about a few examples of how companies in the cannabis industry have successfully defined and communicated their value proposition:

**MedMen:** MedMen is a cannabis retail company that positions itself as a "premium" cannabis retailer. They communicate this value proposition through their sleek and modern store design, highly-trained staff, and high-quality products, emphasizing the shopping experience and the quality of their products.

**Canndescent:** Canndescent is a cannabis producer that positions itself as a "luxury" brand. They communicate this value proposition through their high-end packaging and branding, as well as their focus on small-batch, hand-crafted products. They also emphasize the quality of their products, the experience of using their products, and the lifestyle of their target market.

**Flow Kana:** Flow Kana is a cannabis distributor that positions itself as a "sustainably-grown" cannabis company. They communicate this value proposition through their focus on sustainable farming practices and their partnerships with small, independent farmers, emphasizing the environmental and social benefits of their products.

**Dixie Brands:** Dixie Brands is a cannabis-infused products manufacturer that positions itself as a "trusted" brand. They communicate this value proposition through their wide range of products, consistency and quality, and their compliance to the regulations and guidelines of the cannabis industry, emphasizing the safety and reliability of their products.

**Green Growth Brands:** Green Growth Brands is a cannabis company that positions itself as a "wellness" brand. They communicate this value proposition through their focus on products that promote wellness and self-care, such as topicals and bath products, emphasizing the health benefits of cannabis use.

These are just a few examples of how companies in the cannabis industry can define and communicate their value proposition in a way that resonates with their target market. By highlighting the unique features, quality and benefits of their products, these companies are able to differentiate themselves from competitors and attract customers.

# **The Challenges Of Marketing Cannabis**

The cannabis industry is growing rapidly, but marketing it comes with a unique set of challenges. One of the biggest challenges is the fact that cannabis is still illegal at the federal level in the United States, which means that many traditional forms of advertising, such as television and radio, are off-limits. Additionally, cannabis businesses are not able to deduct their business expenses on their taxes, which makes it harder to compete with other businesses that are able to do so.

Another major challenge is the lack of consumer data available for the cannabis industry. Because cannabis is still illegal at the federal level, many companies are not able to collect consumer data, which makes it difficult to target specific demographics and understand consumer behavior. Additionally, many cannabis consumers are hesitant to share their personal information with cannabis companies, which further limits the amount of data that is available.

Another obstacle is the lack of understanding among the general public about cannabis and its potential benefits. Many people still associate cannabis with negative stereotypes, such as laziness and drug addiction, which can make it difficult to market the product to a broader audience. Additionally, the lack of education about the different types of cannabis products and their uses can make it difficult for businesses to communicate the value of their products to potential customers.

In addition to these challenges, cannabis businesses also face stricter regulations than other businesses. Many states have strict rules about how cannabis can be marketed, such as not allowing the use of cartoon characters or other imagery that might appeal to children. Every state is different, and some are more lenient, while others have a long list of very specific rules that licensed operators must follow. These restrictions can make it difficult for businesses to create effective marketing campaigns. Make sure that you or someone on your team is always up-to-date on your state and local regulations and ensure that you are following the rules at all times, because the penalties for failing to stick to the rules can be expensive.

But the most common reason I hear from business owners hesitant to invest in any real way in marketing is that, unlike traditional businesses, it's not possible to write off marketing as a business expense when you're selling cannabis products. It's likely that as long as cannabis is listed as a Schedule I drug, companies in the cannabis industry can't take advantage of many common tax deductions, including deductions for marketing and advertising expenses.

I agree this is lousy. But it's a hurdle that is shared by every cannabis licensed business, and so it doesn't change anything fundamental about the necessity of marketing. If you think you can (or must) get away without a real marketing budget, then the reality is you're going to be outcompeted by companies that do make the investment, of both time and money, in their branding and advertising.

So stop complaining and start marketing.

# The Impact Of The IRS Code 280E On Cannabis Companies

The federal government's classification of cannabis as a Schedule I drug puts significant restrictions on the industry. One of the most significant of these restrictions is Internal Revenue Code Section 280E. Essentially, Section 280E disallows cannabis companies from deducting most business expenses from their taxes. This means that cannabis companies are taxed at a much higher rate than other businesses.

Let's take a look at how Section 280E impacts cannabis companies and what you can do about it.

## What Does Schedule I Mean?

Schedule I drugs are those that have been determined to have a high potential for abuse and no accepted medical use. Examples of Schedule I drugs include heroin, LSD, and ecstasy. These drugs are considered to be the most dangerous and are tightly regulated by the government.

However, cannabis is also listed as Schedule I in the United States, meaning that it too is considered to have a high potential for abuse and no accepted medical use. This classification has been controversial ever since it was first enacted in 1970, and there have been many efforts to change it. It leaves many experts wondering why cannabis is still listed as a Schedule I drug.

Some people argue that cannabis does have proven medical uses and that it should be reclassified as a schedule II or III drug. Others say that the potential for abuse is not as high as other schedule I drugs like heroin or LSD. Ultimately, the decision on whether to keep cannabis as a Schedule I drug is up to the federal government, and it does not seem likely that the classification will change in the immediate future.

## What is IRS Code 280E?

IRS Code 280E is a section of the US tax code that prohibits businesses from deducting expenses related to the sale of illegal drugs. This includes costs like advertising, rent, and employee salaries. The purpose of this code is to discourage drug trafficking by making it more difficult for illegal drug dealers to operate.

Code 280E was enacted in 1982 in response to the growing problem of drug trafficking in the United States. Since then, it has been a controversial provision of the tax code, with some arguing it unfairly targets legal businesses that sell marijuana and other drugs. Others argue it is an essential tool in the fight against illegal drug trafficking.

This has especially become an issue since states first began legalizing recreational cannabis in the last decade. Currently, the Internal Revenue Code 280E specifically prohibits any business from deducting "any amount for expenses incurred in carrying on any trade or business" if the trade or business "consists of trafficking in controlled substances ... which is prohibited by Federal law."

Because marijuana is still classified as a Schedule I drug under the Controlled Substances Act, businesses that sell it cannot deduct their business expenses from their taxes. This often puts them at a disadvantage compared to other businesses, who can deduct their expenses. Some have

argued that this unfair tax treatment creates a financial incentive for drug dealers to stay involved in the illegal market, rather than switch to the legal market.

In recent years, however, some have argued that 280E disproportionately impacts legal marijuana businesses, which are already struggling because they are constricted from selling across state borders and have highly taxed and regulated businesses with a great deal of overhead.

### **How does 280E impede cannabis companies from marketing their products?**

There are a number of specific ways that 280E impedes cannabis companies from marketing their products. For one, it prohibits them from deducting advertising expenses, which can be a significant cost for businesses. Additionally, it limits their ability to sponsor events and engage in other forms of marketing that would be beneficial for their business. As a result of these restrictions, cannabis companies often have to get creative in the ways they market their products.

Katye Maxon-Landis, a cannabis accountant with Indiva Advisors, has said that she advises her cannabis clients to do their best to limit any expense that isn't inventory related, since inventory is the only expense they can legally deduct. "Businesses subject to Sec. 280E should look to Sec. 471 to determine the proper inventory capitalization and valuation methods, allocation of expenses, and their impact on cost of goods sold."

This obviously makes it very difficult to enact and carry out an effective marketing and branding strategy as a cannabis company, since most marketing efforts are going to require a meaningful investment, and unlike most other businesses, you aren't able to use marketing costs as a tax right off. This is one of the primary reasons why cannabis marketing is not developing along with other aspects of the industry.

### **Other Challenges Facing Cannabis Companies Marketing Their Products**

As the cannabis industry continues to grow, so do the challenges faced by companies marketing their products. In addition to the restrictions placed on advertising by the federal government, cannabis companies must also navigate a complex web of state and local laws.

Compliance is always a top concern for any business, but it is especially crucial for cannabis companies. A misstep in advertising could result in a fine or even a license revocation. Given the high stakes, it is essential that cannabis companies work with experienced marketing partners who can help them navigate the ever-changing landscape.

In addition to the compliance challenges, cannabis companies also face the same marketing challenges as any other business. They must find ways to stand out in a crowded marketplace and reach their target consumers. However, the unique nature of the cannabis industry presents its own set of challenges. For example, many social media platforms will penalize accounts for cannabis companies with shadow bans or outright deletion. (See more in the social media section.)

### **How Cannabis Companies Can Mitigate The Impact Of 280E On Their Business**

280E is a significant hurdle for cannabis companies in what is already a highly competitive industry. It has been shown that 280E can raise a company's tax bill by 30% or more. This makes it extremely difficult for cannabis companies to survive.

There are a few ways that cannabis companies can mitigate the impact of 280E on their business. One way is to carefully track all of your expenses and allocate them accordingly. This includes everything from office supplies and rent to employee salaries and marketing costs. One of the biggest benefits of tracking your expenses is that it can help you save money. By knowing where your money is going, you can make adjustments to your budget and cut out unnecessary expenses. This can free up more money to reinvest in your business and help it grow. If you're not already tracking your company's expenses, now is the time to start.

Another factor that must be considered is your business structure. Your business structure has a big impact on your tax liability. For example, sole proprietorships have the lowest tax liability, while S-Corporations have the highest. This is because sole proprietorships are taxed as personal income, while S-Corporations are taxed as business income. Of course, there are many other factors that go into determining your tax liability, such as the type of business you have, your location, and your revenue. But your business structure is one of the most important factors. So if you're looking to lower your taxes, it's worth considering how your business is structured.

Remember, while the impact of 280E is significant, it doesn't have to be fatal for cannabis companies. Although it's unfair that legal cannabis companies are taxed so heavily, it's a level playing field within the industry, so all of your competitors are facing the same obstacles. The best advice I can give any prospective cannabis entrepreneur is to create an extremely conservative business plan that makes your branding and marketing a priority. That way you'll be able to outpace the competition in boom times and in bust.



# **How Much Should You Be Budgeting For Cannabis Marketing?**

Cannabis businesses are quickly learning that in order to stay ahead of the competition, they need to be putting a fair amount of money into marketing. But with such a new and rapidly growing industry, it can be tough to figure out exactly how much you should be budgeting and where you should be spending that money. Here we will outline some basic cannabis marketing tips and give you a few pointers on how to allocate your marketing budget.

Cannabis advertising is still in its infancy, so there are many grey areas when it comes to what's acceptable and what's not. However, that doesn't mean that businesses shouldn't be preparing for future regulation changes. And it also is no reason to throw up your hands and ignore marketing altogether. Those companies that invest in their brand and create a strategic marketing approach will be the ones that connect with their customers and earn loyalty and recognition in the marketplace, which will be invaluable assets no matter what the future brings.

## **The First Step Is Defining Your Goals**

Before you can create a marketing budget, you need to first determine your business's goals. What do you want to achieve with your marketing efforts? Increased brand awareness? More website traffic? Greater customer engagement? Once you know what your goals are, you can then start allocating funds to the various channels that will help you reach them.

For example, if you want to generate more website traffic, you might allocate more funds to online advertising or search engine optimization. If you want to increase brand awareness, you might invest in social media marketing or content creation. Determining your goals is essential in helping you focus on the tactics and strategies that are most likely to help you meet your objectives.

## **The Rule Of Thumb When It Comes To Marketing Budgets**

There is no one-size-fits-all answer to this question, as the amount you should spend on marketing will vary depending on your industry, business model, and other factors. However, a good rule of thumb is to allocate somewhere between 8 and 12 percent of your revenue to marketing.

This will allow you to allocate enough funds to effectively market your business, while still leaving room for other important expenses such as employee salaries, rent, and product development. And remember that you should always adjust your marketing budget as needed, depending on how your business is performing.

It should be noted that this figure is for companies selling directly to consumers. For businesses that are primarily B2B, such as cannabis services companies or farms that sell flower through dispensaries, that figure might be lower, as low as 2-5 percent of your revenue. This number is also targeted at companies in their first five years of operation. Over time, that number will be likely to decrease over time, hopefully as your revenue grows and your brand becomes better established.

Obviously, these numbers are drawn from businesses across every industry and may not address the specifics of the cannabis industry. But there should be several important takeaways

as you develop your own marketing strategy. Number one, when you're just starting out, it's imperative that you invest heavily in your marketing, and that you figure the cost into your business plan from the outset. This should be obvious, but a failure to account for marketing in the early going is probably the biggest mistake I see on a regular basis.

Second, farms and producers that sell through dispensaries are in a unique situation. Because the legal cannabis market is so new, and so many customers are either unfamiliar with cannabis altogether or are used to the legacy market in which there was really very little choice, there is a huge dependency on budtenders and dispensaries to educate them on what products are most desirable. This means that your real customer may be the dispensary, rather than the end consumer. This can impact both your marketing strategy and how you budget for it.

This bleeds into the next important realization, which is that because the cannabis market is so new, we're still in the process of figuring out what business models are most effective, what the consumer will respond to, and more. The hard and fast rules of traditional marketing will not necessarily apply to cannabis. This means ideally, you should be creative, try a bunch of different things, and see what works and what doesn't. Of course, for many new businesses, every penny counts, so you won't have this luxury of experimentation. In this case, you'll want to plan and research carefully and figure out an approach that seems likely to work, but don't just assume that what works for a traditional business will work for you.

Ultimately, while the specifics of your marketing plan and the exact percentage of your budget you choose to invest in marketing can vary, if you fail to take marketing seriously and put your money where your mouth is, then you're setting yourself up for failure.

### **Tactics To Stay Within Your Marketing Budget**

One of the most important aspects of staying within your marketing budget is creating and adhering to a main budget. This budget should be made up of smaller, more manageable budgets that you can keep track of and adjust as needed. This could include things like social media, website design and development, online advertising, and so on. Within each of these categories, you can then create more specific budgets that fit your needs.

Within your main budget, it's important to consider your overall marketing goals and allocate funds accordingly. For example, if you want to focus on increasing website traffic, allocate more money toward digital ads. Or, if you're looking to improve brand awareness, put more money into PR and content marketing.

An important way to stay within your marketing budget is to assign a specific amount to each campaign in advance. This will help you to avoid overspending on any one campaign and will force you to be more strategic in your spending. Additionally, it's important to track your ROI closely so that you can determine which campaigns are the most successful and allocate more money to those in the future (see more on marketing ROI below).

Another keyword in marketing is FREE. There are a number of marketing tactics that can be used at little or no cost. Researching and leveraging these tactics is essential for small businesses that want to compete with larger companies.

Some low-cost marketing tactics include using social media, content marketing, and email marketing. These tactics can be very effective when used correctly, and they don't require a lot of money to get started. Additionally, businesses can use competitively priced marketing vendors to help with their marketing efforts. This can be a huge money saver when compared with trying to do everything in-house. You may think that hiring a professional marketing agency is

expensive, but when you compare it to the cost of hiring your own marketing lead, or trying to do everything yourself, you'll find working with an agency on a part-time basis can be much more cost effective.

It also helps to avoid having to pay twice for something. A lot of new businesses balk at the cost of a fully functional website or professional logo design, and so they turn to a budget option. It usually isn't long before they realize they should have invested in the professional to begin with, and now they need to spend more to fix the problem than if they had just made the investment to begin with.

At the end of the day, it's essential that before you start spending money on marketing, you have a plan, and you have a reasonable idea of how that plan can be successful. Then keep track of where you spend your money, figure out how effective each approach is, and when you don't get the results you were hoping for, be ready with a plan B.

# What About Cannabis Branding?

No matter what type of business you have, branding is one most important elements of your marketing strategy. In fact, it should be the first thing you consider. Your brand is the face of your company, what people will associate with you when they think about what you do and how you compare with your competitors. Having a brand that helps you stand out is invaluable, especially in the cannabis space where everything is so new and fluid.

When setting out to establish a new brand, whether at the very start of your company's inception, or when considering a rebrand, the number one goal is to ensure that your customers will recognize your products, or in the case of a services company, will remember your reputation. An effective branding campaign will increase sales and add value to your overall business. When it comes time to seek new investors or sell your company, having a well recognized brand with a strong and loyal customer base is one of the most valuable things you can have.

A lot of different elements go into a good brand. Of course, your logo, your company colors, your typefaces, and your overall aesthetic are a big part of your brand. But it's also the values you project out into the world. If you're a dispensary, having well-trained, friendly budtenders that make people feel comfortable is an aspect of your brand, just like having non-responsive budtenders who offer ill-informed advice and seem uninterested in serving your customers might also reflect strongly (in a heavily negative way) on how people view your store.

Having a strong brand makes all of the above marketing and advertising strategies easier to pull off successfully. If on the other hand your brand identity is unclear, contradictory, or non-existent, it will be significantly harder to have an impact in the heavily crowded cannabis marketplace.

Before you start down the path of cannabis advertising and marketing, it's highly recommended that you take the time to establish your brand. Understanding your company and how you want to project your image makes it so much easier to craft effective market strategies. It helps you identify your desired customers and craft messaging that will resonate with them while ringing true to who you are as a company.

Plus, when your customers have a clear impression of what values you stand for, it becomes much less work to form a meaningful connection. While establishing a brand can seem daunting at the beginning, taking the time to decide what type of brand you want to have is a great place to start.

## What Is Cannabis Branding?

Cannabis branding is the practice of creating a unique name, identity, and/or story around a cannabis product or company in order to differentiate it from others in the industry. A successful cannabis branding strategy can help a business attract and retain customers, as well as set itself apart from the competition.

Cannabis branding is one of the most complex and misunderstood branding niches in the world. Because cannabis is federally illegal in the United States, companies in the cannabis industry have to take several extra precautions to ensure that their brand doesn't fall afoul of the law.

This has led to a great deal of creativity in the cannabis branding world, as companies try to find ways to toe the line between legality and edginess. Some common themes in cannabis branding are naturalism, minimalism, and a focus on the positive effects of the drug.

There is no one-size-fits-all answer for branding, as the best approach for your company will vary depending on your place in the industry, the types of products or services you are offering, and your target audience. When done correctly, a strong identity will ensure your branding is consistent across all platforms. Your website, social media accounts, and marketing materials should all be using the same fonts, colors, and messaging. This will help create a unified brand identity that your customers will recognize and trust.

And before you get started on your branding, it's essential that you know who your audience is. This will allow you to target your audience accurately. It's not about guessing or taking a stab in the dark. You need to have a good understanding of not only who they are, but what they want, need and desire. Only then will you be able to create messaging that resonates with them.

## **Elements Of A Successful Cannabis Brand**

There are many elements to a successful cannabis brand. Above all, the most important factor is trust. Consumers need to trust that the product they're buying is safe and will deliver the desired effect. They also need to trust the brand's values and mission.

This starts with a strong and effective branding strategy. The logo, name, and overall look and feel of the product and packaging should be consistent and reflect the company's values. The tone of voice and messaging must be on point, too. Cannabis companies can be fun and playful, or serious and professional, but they must always be consistent. And remember that you must maintain the same level of professionalism at every possible customer touchpoint. One hastily composed social media post can undo months or even years of hard work forming a positive relationship with your audience.

A lot depends on establishing your brand voice. This is the personality that you give your company. It's the way you talk to your customers, the words you choose, and the attitude you put behind them. Developing your brand's voice is one of the most important things you can do for your company. It helps customers connect with your brand, establishes trust, and makes you stand out from the competition.

Think of your favorite brands. If I mention a company like Nike, Apple, or Old Spice, a very clear image of who they are and what they represent as a company comes to mind. The same is true in the cannabis industry. In fact, because the cannabis space is so new, there is a tremendous opportunity for new brands to establish themselves quickly. Decide what you want your voice to be, how you want to be viewed by your customers, and then invest in creating an aesthetic, from your logo, to your brand colors, to your social media presence, that supports this overarching vision.

## **Cannabis Branding Do's And Don'ts**

Cannabis branding is a tricky business. You want to make sure that you don't offend customers, but you also want to make a statement. How do you find the right balance? And what are the dos and don'ts of cannabis branding?

To answer these questions, we first need to take a look at what makes a successful cannabis brand. There are a few key factors:

1) The brand needs to be authentic. It needs to reflect the values of the company and the people who work there. The company must believe in its mission and have a commitment to achieving it. The stakeholders need to feel invested in the company and make an emotional connection with its goals.

The brand not only needs to be authentic to make consumers connect with it emotionally but being authentic is pivotal for brands if they want to endure a long life. A study done by Harvard Business School found that over a 20-year span fewer than 90 companies said their brand name was purely original, which indicates that authenticity encourages long-term brand building.

2) Your brand has to be meaningful – great brands are built on purpose. Without purpose, businesses cannot create an emotional conversation with stakeholders (customers), and any acquisition through marketing would be short-lived.

A brand with meaning is a brand that people can connect with on a deeper level. It's a brand that people feel good about supporting. And it's a brand that people are loyal to.

3) Your brand needs to be consistent in its messaging and design. Consistency is key when it comes to branding. Your customers need to be able to recognize your brand immediately, and they need to know what to expect from you.

If your brand is all over the place, your customers will be confused and they won't know what to expect. But if your brand is consistent, your customers will know what to expect and they will be more likely to buy from you.

So with all of that in mind, let's look at some key do's and don'ts for creating a successful cannabis brand.

### **Do your research**

Cannabis is a rapidly growing industry, and brands are popping up left and right. But before diving in headfirst, it's important to do your research.

Creating a cannabis brand is not as simple as coming up with a clever name and cool logo (although those are important, too). You need to understand the legal landscape, the competition, and most importantly, your target audience.

Research is the first step in creating a cannabis brand because it will help you make informed decisions about everything from your business structure to your marketing strategy. By taking the time to understand the industry and your place in it, you'll be able to make informed decisions about your brand.

On the other hand, creating a cannabis brand without doing any research is like driving with your eyes closed – you're bound to crash and burn. So take the time to do your homework before you launch your brand, and you'll be on your way to success.

### **Don't be afraid to be different**

Differentiation is key in any industry, but it can be especially important in the world of cannabis. Your company's brand is what sets you apart from your competitors and makes you recognizable to your target audience.

There are a lot of ways to differentiate your brand, but one of the most effective is to create a distinct visual identity. Your logo, color scheme, and overall design should be unique and reflect your company's personality. But this is just the beginning.

Another key aspect of your brand's identity that needs to be all your own is your tone of voice. Your tone of voice is a clear differentiator for your brand. It's how you communicate your brand's personality, and it helps you stand out from your competitors.

A strong, consistent tone of voice will make your brand more memorable, and it will help you build trust with your audience. When your tone of voice is on point, people will know what to expect from your brand, and they'll be more likely to do business with you.

To create a strong tone of voice for your brand, start by defining your brand's personality. The language you use on your website, in your marketing materials, and in your social media posts can have a big impact on how your brand is perceived. If you want to come across as a high-end, professional brand, use language that is polished and sophisticated. On the other hand, if you want to project a more laid-back, approachable image, use language that is more conversational.

Of course, this is not a hard-and-fast rule; there are always exceptions. But in general, the language you use should be aligned with the overall tone and personality of your brand. Remember, don't be afraid to be different from your competition. Embrace your company's uniqueness and use it to your advantage.

### **Do create a brand style guide**

A brand style guide is a document that outlines the specific visual elements that should be used to represent your cannabis company. Your brand style guide should include information on your company logo, color palette, typefaces, and other design elements. It should also provide guidance on how to use your brand assets in different situations, such as mixing typography with photography.

Having a brand style guide is important for several reasons. First, it helps to ensure that your branding is consistent across all touchpoints. This is critical for building trust with your audience and establishing a recognizable brand identity.

Second, a brand style guide can help to streamline your internal communications and design processes. By having a clear set of guidelines to reference, you can save time and avoid costly mistakes.

If you don't have a brand style guide, the problems that can arise are numerous. It's more likely that your marketing materials will look unprofessional, your website will be inconsistent, and your overall brand will be weakened.

The bottom line: a brand style guide should be created early on in the life of a company, and it should be updated regularly. I'll write more later on about how to create an effective style guide for your cannabis business.

### **Don't forget your customers**

The most common branding mistake is ignoring your customers. Creating a brand strategy starts with understanding your customer's point of view. What does your customer want? What does your customer need? What does your customer care about?

Your customer's point of view should be the foundation of your brand strategy. Once you understand your customer, you can start to build a brand that meets their needs and wants. Too many companies approach their branding and marketing from the point of view of what they want their audience to know, instead of focusing on what the potential customer actually wants.

If you focus on the latter, you'll be amazed at how much more effectively you can communicate your message and attract long term customers.

### **Do make sure everyone is on the same page**

It is essential that your whole team is in agreement with your company's branding. Your brand is what makes your company recognizable and sets you apart from your competition. If your team is not on the same page, it will be difficult to maintain a consistent brand identity.

Your team should be involved in the branding process from the beginning. This way, everyone will have a say in how the brand is developed and will be more likely to buy into it. Once the brand is established, it is important to keep everyone on the team updated on any changes. This will help to ensure that everyone is using the same voice, the same style, and the same messaging.

If you're not consistent in your brand messaging, people will get confused about what your brand is about. Your messaging will be all over the place, and you'll likely lose customers as a result. Being consistent in your brand messaging is essential if you want to build a strong, recognizable brand.

### **Don't neglect your website and online presence**

When it comes to launching a new cannabis brand, your website and online presence are just as important as your brick-and-mortar location. In fact, in today's digital age, they may even be more important.

Your website is often the first interaction potential customers will have with your brand. It's your chance to make a good impression and give them a taste of what your brand is all about. Likewise, your social media channels are a great way to connect with customers and create a community around your brand.

Unfortunately, many cannabis brands neglect their website and online presence, thinking that they are of secondary importance. But whether you are a farm, a dispensary, or a B2B service provider, your digital brand is only going to grow in importance over time.

Branding is essential for any business, and that is especially true for cannabis businesses. Next, let's look at how to create an effective cannabis style guide that will make it easier to put all of the above into practice.



# How To Create A Cannabis Brand Style Guide

As the cannabis industry matures and moves towards federal legalization, an increasing number of entrepreneurs are looking to get involved. But with a crowded market and ever-changing regulations, how do you go about developing a successful cannabis brand.

The first step is to do your homework. Research the industry, your target market, and the competition. Once you have a clear understanding of the landscape, you can start to develop your brand strategy. This will include everything from your branding and marketing to your product line-up and company culture.

Next, you'll need to come up with a logo. When it comes to marketing, your logo is one of your most important assets. It's the first thing people see, and it sets the tone for your brand. A great logo can help you attract new customers and solidify your brand's identity.

A cannabis logo needs to be eye-catching and memorable. It should also be representative of your company's values and mission. Here are a few tips to help you create a killer cannabis logo:

Keep it simple. A complex logo will be difficult to reproduce and may be confusing to customers.

Really think through your brand colors. These will most likely be developed as part of your logo, and the colors you choose will go a long way towards establishing the style and tone of your brand

Use modern typography. It's amazing how a poorly selected font can ruin a website or brand.

In order to really ensure your brand is on point, you need a style guide. This visual document will outline your brand's voice, tone, and visuals. A style guide is what makes it possible to maintain consistency across all of your marketing materials.

There are a few key things to keep in mind when [creating a style guide](#) for your cannabis company. First, make sure to include specific guidelines for logo usage, color palette, typefaces, and writing style. You'll also want to outline specific rules for photography and video, including what kind of images you'd like to use, what color backgrounds should be seen in products shots, and more.

Basically, the more detailed you can be with your style guide, the more your brand will resonate with your audience.

## Mistakes To Avoid When Branding Your Cannabis Company

When creating a cannabis brand, it's important to avoid making common mistakes. The first things we see a lot is companies not doing their research. This is perhaps the most important mistake, as it can lead to all sorts of problems down the road. Make sure you know everything there is to know about the cannabis industry, your customers, and your competitors before starting your brand.

Another mistake is focusing too much on the typical stoner stereotypes. If your brand relies too much on stereotypes, it will likely turn off a large portion of the population. Keep in mind that not everyone who uses cannabis is a 'stoner' or identifies that way. Forward-looking

cannabis brands want to reach new customers, among the cannabis curious, rather than limit themselves to the heaviest consumers.

Also, be sure to do your research to make sure your branding is compliant with state and local regulations. For example, most states have a policy that strictly forbids marketing to minors. What does this regulation look like in your state? Is an animated pot leaf something that might set off alarm bells? It's essential that you make sure all marketing and advertising is in compliance with state regulations to avoid (often costly) problems down the road.

Instead of saving money by hiring a cheap designer, invest in a professional logo design from a reputable firm. We are constantly getting asked why our design services are so expensive. Prospective clients will point out they can get a logo design online for less than \$50. That's certainly true, but then you will be stuck with a \$50 logo. Cheap logos will always look cheap, and customers will be able to tell that you didn't invest in a good logo. What does that say about your products?

## **The Future Of Cannabis Branding**

What does the future hold for cannabis branding? How can businesses make sure their brands stand out in a crowded and ever-changing market? Here are a few things to keep in mind.

First, many companies are moving towards a minimalist, modern aesthetic. This sleek and sophisticated look is appealing to customers and conveys a sense of professionalism and legitimacy.

Another trend in cannabis graphic design is the use of natural elements. While incorporating a pot leaf into your logo may be considered cliché, many brands are using images of plants and flowers in their designs, as well as earthy tones and muted colors, to evoke the natural origins of their products.

Finally, after the last couple years we've suffered through, people are looking for optimism. In a market that is often associated with gritty and dark visuals, some brands are beginning to experiment with brighter, more optimistic designs. While this can take many forms, and might even involve a more vintage look, or the natural outdoorsy tone mentioned above, think about a brand style that can offer a breath of fresh air.

# Creating An Effective Cannabis Website

Creating an effective website for your business is crucial in today's digital age, as it serves as the primary point of contact between your business and potential customers. A well-designed and optimized website can help to attract new customers, increase sales, and improve your business's online presence. In this section, I will discuss the key elements that are necessary for creating an effective website for your business.

First and foremost, your website should have clear and compelling content that accurately reflects your business and its offerings. The content should be easy to read and understand, and should be written in a language that is appropriate for your target audience. It's important to ensure that the information on your website is up-to-date and relevant, and to regularly update it with new content and features.

Secondly, the design of your website should be user-friendly, with a clean and intuitive layout that makes it easy for users to navigate and find the information they need. The design should be visually appealing, but it should also be easy to use and easy to understand. A good design can help create a positive first impression, and to make it more likely that users will stay on your website for longer.

In today's digital age, more and more people are accessing the internet on mobile devices, so it's essential that your website is optimized for mobile viewing. A mobile-responsive design ensures that your website will look and function correctly on all devices, regardless of screen size. This will help to improve the user experience, and make it more likely that users will return to your website in the future.

Search engine optimization (SEO) is another essential aspect of creating an effective website. SEO involves optimizing your website so that it can be easily found by potential customers through search engines such as Google, Bing, etc. This can be achieved through the use of relevant keywords, meta tags, and other techniques. By optimizing your website for search engines, you can increase the visibility of your website and make it more likely that potential customers will find it.

Strong calls to action (CTA) are also important in creating an effective website. CTAs are buttons or links that encourage users to take the next step, such as contacting your business, making a purchase, or signing up for a newsletter. CTAs should be clear and prominent, and should be placed in strategic locations on your website.

In addition to the above, using high-quality images and videos can help to make your website more engaging and visually appealing. Images and videos can help to break up large blocks of text, and can be used to showcase your products or services in a more interesting and dynamic way.

It's also important to make it easy for customers to contact you by providing clear contact information, including your phone number, email address, and physical address. This will help to build trust and make it more likely that customers will feel comfortable doing business with you.

Security is also an important aspect to consider when creating an effective website. Your website should be secure to ensure customer's data is protected and to gain customer trust. This can be done by using SSL Certificates, encryption, and other security measures.

Finally, your website should load quickly, as users tend to leave slow-loading websites. This can be achieved by optimizing images, minifying code, and using a content delivery network (CDN).

Creating an effective website for your business is essential in today's digital age. A well-designed and optimized website can help to attract new customers, increase sales, and improve your business's online presence.

### **The Unique Challenges For Cannabis Websites**

Cannabis businesses face unique challenges when creating their websites, due to the complex and ever-changing legal landscape surrounding the cannabis industry. Some of these challenges include:

**Compliance with state and federal laws:** Cannabis is still illegal at the federal level, and the laws and regulations surrounding the cannabis industry vary greatly from state to state. It's important for cannabis businesses to ensure that their websites comply with all applicable state and federal laws, and to stay up to date with any changes to these laws.

**Limited advertising options:** Many traditional advertising channels, such as Google and Facebook, have restrictions on cannabis-related advertising, making it more difficult for cannabis businesses to reach potential customers through these channels.

**Payment processing:** Many payment processors and financial institutions are hesitant to work with cannabis businesses due to the federal prohibition of cannabis, making it difficult for these businesses to accept credit card payments and other forms of electronic payment on their websites.

**Age verification:** Many states require that cannabis dispensaries verify the age of customers before allowing them to purchase products on their website. This can be a difficult process, and businesses need to ensure that they have a robust and secure age verification system in place.

**SEO:** SEO is a challenge for the cannabis industry, due to the fact that the industry is still in its infancy, and the legal landscape is constantly changing. Cannabis businesses need to be mindful of the keywords and phrases they use, as well as the legal restrictions that may affect their SEO efforts.

**Security concerns:** Due to the sensitive nature of the products and services offered by cannabis businesses, it's important to ensure that their website is secure and that customer data is protected. This can include implementing SSL certificates and encryption to protect customer information.

**Content restrictions:** Many states have strict guidelines on what can be advertised, and what type of content can be shown on cannabis-related websites. This can make it difficult for cannabis businesses to create engaging and informative websites that accurately reflect their products and services.

To overcome these challenges, cannabis businesses should work with experienced web developers and legal professionals to ensure that their websites comply with all applicable laws

and regulations. Additionally, they should explore alternative advertising channels, such as social media influencer marketing and email marketing.

## **Website Options For Dispensaries That Need Online Sales**

Cannabis dispensaries that need to build an online store for in-store pick up or home delivery have a few platform options to choose from. These platforms provide a comprehensive solution that can help dispensaries to manage their online store, inventory, orders, and customer data, making it easier to run their business effectively.

It's important to note that traditional e-commerce platforms such as Shopify and WooCommerce do not support cannabis businesses. These platforms have strict policies against the sale of cannabis, and they may suspend or terminate the accounts of businesses that violate these policies. This is because cannabis is still illegal at the federal level, and these platforms do not want to risk running afoul of federal laws or regulations.

Additionally, traditional e-commerce platforms may not have the necessary features or capabilities to handle the unique requirements of cannabis businesses, such as age verification, inventory management, and compliance with state and federal laws. Therefore, cannabis businesses need to use specialized platforms that are specifically designed for their industry, such as Dutchie, Proteus, and others, which are compliant with all the laws and regulations required for cannabis businesses.

One popular platform option for cannabis dispensaries is Dutchie. Dutchie is a leading e-commerce platform that provides dispensaries with a user-friendly and customizable website. They provide a variety of features such as age verification, inventory management, and order processing. Dutchie also provides a mobile application that allows customers to order products from the dispensary, and schedule pick up or delivery. Additionally, Dutchie offers a platform that allows dispensaries to track sales, inventory, and customer data in real-time, and to generate reports for compliance and analytics purposes.

Another platform option for cannabis dispensaries is Proteus. Proteus is a web-based platform that offers dispensaries a comprehensive solution for managing their online store, inventory, and customer data. They provide a user-friendly website, which is customizable and responsive to mobile devices. Proteus also allows dispensaries to track sales, inventory, and customer data in real-time, and to generate reports for compliance and analytics purposes. They also offer age verification and support home delivery, curbside pickup and in-store pickup options.

There are also other platforms such as Leafly, Greenbits, and Flowhub that are dedicated to cannabis dispensaries. Each of these platforms has its own unique features and benefits, and dispensaries should evaluate each one to determine which platform is the best fit for their business.

Cannabis dispensaries have a variety of platform options to choose from when building an online store for in-store pick up or home delivery. Dispensaries should evaluate each platform to determine which one is the best fit for their business, taking into account their specific needs, such as compliance, inventory management, and customer data management.

# What Types Of Cannabis Marketing Are Relevant In 2022?

So let's talk about the specific types of marketing and advertising that are most relevant to cannabis businesses. For what I hope are obvious reasons, we won't be discussing commercial ad buys, radio spots, or (for the most part) PPC advertisements. Bear in mind that not all businesses in the cannabis space are created equal. There's a huge difference between a licensed cannabis producer or retailer and an ancillary business, such as an accountant or a marketing company.

That's not to mention hemp and CBD. Whereas cannabis is a Schedule I drug at the federal level, hemp (cannabis plants with less than .3 percent THC) is now federally protected thanks to the 2018 Farm Bill. This means there's a grey area for many hemp and CBD products. It also means policies and enforcement around hemp and CBD are spotty at best, and there's no telling what is permissible from any moment to the next.

With that said, the following are the most popular forms of advertising and marketing for cannabis companies:

**Digital Ad Buys**

**Print Ad Buys**

**SEO**

**Content Marketing**

**Email marketing**

**SMS Advertising + Geofencing**

**Out-Of-Home Advertising**

**Event Marketing**

**Paid Search + Social**

**Cannabis Branding**

Let's take each one in turn, and explain what they are and what types of businesses will most benefit from them.

## Cannabis Marketing Option #1: Digital Ad Buys

When we think about advertising for a small business in the 21st century, online banner ads and digital display ads will probably be near the top of the list, especially in the cannabis industry. But there are two significant barriers that must be considered before you launch a digital ad campaign.

First, in most states, there are rules in place that restrict licensed cannabis businesses from marketing themselves in a way that might appeal to minors. This usually includes wording that you cannot advertise in any kind of content or format that might include a significant audience of people under 18 or 21. While this would obviously forbid advertising on websites for Nickelodeon or the Cartoon Network, there's a lot of gray area as to how this standard should be applied and enforced.

If you have a compliance officer on your team, it's their job to mitigate risk, and they will probably advise you to be extremely cautious about advertising through any web portal that might be interpreted as appealing to an underage audience. Complicating the matter is that many digital ad networks will populate across a myriad of websites, so it would be imperative that you have some control over where your specific ads show up, and preferably the ability to target specific age groups.

On the other end of the spectrum, the most popular digital advertising platforms are closed off to cannabis companies anyway. For most small (and medium and large for that matter) businesses, the go-to choice is Google when it comes to serving up digital ads across the internet. Google doesn't allow cannabis companies to advertise on their display platform, nor does the Facebook Audience Network, so the options become severely limited.

Therefore, cannabis companies that want to run digital ad campaigns have two options. They can secure the services of a programmatic advertising platform that caters directly to cannabis companies (two specific examples include [MediaJel](#) and [Safe-Reach](#)), who will populate your ads using targeting data to help reach your potential customers in a more effective manner while ensuring that your ads are legal and compliant. Or, they can advertise directly on cannabis specific platforms. These can include weed directories (WeedMaps, Leafly) or cannabis magazines (Dope, Grow).

While digital ad buys can be extremely effective in terms of allowing cannabis companies to reach targeted audiences and actually achieving a good ROI, it's also easy to waste a lot of money without seeing any appreciable results, or worse yet, not knowing whether the amount you spent was worth it. Digital ad buys have a major advantage in that they allow for excellent, in-depth analytics regarding who has seen the ads and how effective they were at achieving the desired results. But if you're a cannabis business owner who doesn't have a degree in marketing or data analytics, then you can often feel like you are being bombarded by meaningless numbers with no way of understanding what it all means.

The best way to avoid this is to go in with a plan, and to partner with a company that is transparent and takes the time to explain exactly what they are doing, how to connect the dots between the amount that's being spent and how it's impacting your bottom line. This is a lot easier said than done. So while there are tremendous opportunities that come with digital ad buys, it's not the best option for the inexperienced.

What cannabis businesses can most benefit from digital advertising? Companies with a specific geographic region, and with a specific desired outcome (either an increase in sales or foot traffic, for example). If that sounds like dispensaries and online product retailers, you'd be correct. Digital ad buys especially make sense for dispensaries that are able to take online orders, making it much easier to keep track of an ad's effectiveness. Digital ad buys also make sense for CBD and hemp retailers who have a national footprint, as there are more options open to you when it comes to programmatic advertising. But you would be best served having a full time marketing person on your staff who understands digital marketing before you jump in.



## **Cannabis Marketing Option #2: Print Ad Buys**

When it comes to print ad buys, many cannabis marketers encounter a Catch-22. They want to target consumers who may be cannabis curious or casual consumers, but the main option that will accept ad buys for cannabis companies are the dedicated cannabis magazines, that tend to appeal to the most dedicated consumers. What's not to like about marketing directly to the heaviest weed consumers? Well, all of your competition is going to be targeting the same small subset of consumers, meaning you really need to have a strong grasp on your branding and value proposition if you want to be noticed.

Another hurdle when it comes to advertising in print publications is that when compared to digital marketing, there's a dearth of reliable information regarding how effective your ads are. You have no idea how many people have even seen your ad, let alone how many took action because they saw it. With digital advertising, you know exactly how many times your ad was served up, and how many people clicked on it, and how many of those clicks led to a desired outcome, such as a sale or email signup. With print advertising, you get none of that information, which is why the magazine industry is in such dire straits.

But if you do want to directly reach cannabis consumers, weed-specific publications are one of the best options. Magazine ads are a great way to accentuate your brand and get your name out there, especially if you stick to the most prominent publications. Of course, running ads in a premium magazine can be expensive, not to mention the cost of designing the ad, so for many smaller cannabis businesses, this option is out of reach.

A cheaper option is to target boutique publications. These are usually local magazines that are distributed in a specific state or city. The audiences are smaller, so ads are cheaper. And you've likely noticed that a lot of the ads that run in these publications are simply not very good. In this environment, it doesn't take a lot of investment to stand out in a positive way.

Just keep in mind that even if these ads are working, it's hard to know for sure. One growing trend to overcome this obstacle is to include a QR code in your ad, that will allow readers to directly link to your website simply by pointing their phone at your ad. This will allow you to directly track an ad's effectiveness, in particular if you use different QR codes for different ad runs.

Print ad buys make the most sense for companies that have a monthly marketing budget and who are specifically interested in boosting or reinforcing their brand image. Individual farms or dispensaries should probably look elsewhere, but dispensary chains or vertically integrated growers and retailers can effectively rely on magazine ads to build name recognition in their region.

## Cannabis Marketing Channel #3: Search Engine Optimization

Everybody talks about SEO but very few people are doing it right. Your web designer probably talked about making your website SEO friendly. You're probably getting bombarded by people talking about keywords and metadata and SERP results. There are all kinds of people willing to tell you how they are going to help you rank better on Google to increase your organic reach. It all likely sounds fantastic and extremely confusing.

Here's the truth about cannabis SEO: It's extremely hard to do well. And it's extremely important, because it's one of the most reliable options for advertising a cannabis business while there's still so much ambiguity at the federal level as to what's allowed and what isn't allowed in cannabis advertising. Both these things can be true at the same time.

That means you want to be extremely discerning about who you partner with, not only for your SEO specifically, but everything that is SEO adjacent, such as blog writing, web design, social media, and more.

Here's the conundrum. In order to have effective SEO, you need to be showing up on the first page of first returns. That means at most ten businesses are going to be first page ranking of any given keyword. And Google has gotten very good at learning how to interpret searcher intent and returning sites that are both highly relevant and highly respected. So you're competing against the biggest names in your industry, most of whom probably have a huge head start in establishing themselves in the cannabis space. And while the difference between ranking number 1 and number 2 is significant in terms of traffic, the difference between ranking on the first page and second page is like competing for customers in Times Square when your store location is on the moon.

SEO is a brute force problem. The more time, effort, and money you put into it, the more results you'll get back. If you're competing for the first page of a popular term like Seattle Dispensary, it's going to be extremely hard and require a concentrated effort with significant financial investment. But you can bet the payoff will be worth it. That's why it's so competitive.

And the good news that a lot of companies aren't investing in SEO, or they are going about it the wrong way. That means there are opportunities for the cannabis companies that approach it in the right way.

First, let's take a look at keywords. If you only focus on the most popular keywords, you're going to have a tough go of it. Instead, concentrate on ranking for less popular keywords that won't be as competitive, and therefore easier to gain traction in. Take a broad approach, especially in the beginning, and look at keywords that your more well-established competitors may be ignoring because by themselves, these keywords aren't worth much. But in the aggregate, they can quickly add up, and over time, the effort will also help your ranking in more lucrative keywords you eventually want to target.

For instance, go ahead and check out [Cannabis Event Photography](#). Guess who ranks number one. Yours truly! This was one of the first keywords we ranked number one in. Of course, not a lot of people are searching for Cannabis Event Photography, but when they do, the first business they see is The Hood Collective. And we can point to a lot of other similar keywords, such as Cannabis Event Videographer and Cannabis Video Production, that we have focused on and now rank first page on.

This has allowed us to relatively quickly increase our search ranking for more lucrative terms, such as Cannabis Graphic Design, Cannabis Product Photography, and Cannabis SEO Marketing. But this begs the question: how to increase your ranking in the first place?

I'm going to make this very easy for you. There are two main aspects to SEO. First of all, effective SEO is based on content marketing. High quality, relevant content on your website that is regularly updated and added to is how the Google algorithm knows what your site is about and how it judges how worthy your site is of attention. Google wants to know that you are an authority on the subject. If someone is searching for information about CBD for instance, the more pages and blog posts you have that discuss various aspects of CBD (without being repetitive), the more of an authority they will judge you to be.

This means, the more content you have, the better your SEO. See below for our tips concerning how to approach content marketing for your cannabis business.

The other important aspect of SEO is how many links are pointing to your website. Google assumes, correctly, that the more links you have coming in, the more of an authority you are on the topic. Of course, these links need to be from relevant websites and pages. Spammy links won't work, as Google has long ago been able to figure out the difference. So while it might be tempting to purchase link packages from some of the companies that offer to build links to your website, the reality is there's no quick fix to this problem.

This means that link building is largely out of your hands, other than to generate content that people will view as valuable and want to link to (again, see below). What you can do (and what should definitely be a part of your overall marketing strategy) is looking for partners in the industry that have complementary businesses or services and might be interested in doing blog exchanges or co-sponsor an event with you. If you're a farm, look to create marketing partnerships with the dispensaries where you sell your products. Likewise, a dispensary should be working with all the farms it sources from to help build up its digital reputation. It can be as simple as reaching out to your peers in the industry and saying you'll include a link on your website to them if they reciprocate.

Thinking even bigger, do whatever you can to get digital stories or positive reviews about your business. This may be hard in the beginning, but as you put more effort into your branding and creating a reputation in the industry, the easier it's going to be to get the kinds of relevant links that will build up your SEO. The best strategy is to incorporate this kind of thinking into all of your marketing, so that you are focused on the kind of brand building and partnerships that will bear fruit in a number of different ways.

There's one last thing with regards to SEO you need to keep in mind. If you have a physical location that is visited by customers on a regular basis (ie a dispensary or cafe) then you **MUST** be focused on local SEO. This is a specific form of SEO that is tied to your geographic location and is particularly relevant when someone is doing a search for local services. The most common example is someone searching on their phone for "dispensary near me." There are a lot of actions you can be taking to boost your SEO, starting with hiring us to perform a Local SEO blast.

The bottom line is that no matter what kind of cannabis business you are, if you have a website, you will want to invest heavily in cannabis SEO.

## **Cannabis Marketing Option #4: Content Marketing**

In pretty much every industry, more and more companies are turning to content marketing as a core part of their marketing strategy. While a big reason for this has to do with SEO (as explained above) it is far from the only benefit of creating great content. It is becoming increasingly attractive to use meaningful, high value content to create a lasting connection with your customers. Whether this is via regular posting to social media, in depth educational content, entertaining or funny memes, or an all of the above approach, content shifts the focus away from trying to convince potential customers to pay attention to you, towards a more customer-centric paradigm where the goal is to grab as much of your audience's attention as possible.

That's what people mean when they talk about the attention economy. Your customers only have so much time to spend, and the more of that time they spend interacting with your content, the deeper the bonds are.

Now that's all well and good if you're a content company, such as Warner Brothers or ESPN. But why would a cannabis company invest in creating content?

One reason is there's a huge need for high quality educational and informative content in the cannabis space. Cannabis has lived in the shadows for so many years that many people still have a negative opinion of the plant and its consumers. Even people who are lifelong consumers cling to outdated and incorrect information and stereotypes about cannabis. The most obvious is the extremely prevalent belief in the Indica/Sativa dichotomy, which research is starting to disprove, but which is still readily promoted in dispensaries around the country.

In such an environment, brands that invest in educating their customers will have a leg up over the competition. Not only will you have the opportunity to create brand loyalty, but you'll be able to reach entirely new segments of the consumer base. Or better yet, create new segments that weren't even part of the consumer base previously because of hesitation or a lack of reliable, trustworthy information. This kind of content will benefit pretty much any kind of cannabis business, but is obviously extremely beneficial to companies that deal with CBD, medical marijuana, lifestyle products, and the like.

B2B businesses, on the other hand, will want to focus on educating their customers about the types of services they provide. Again, there is a real knowledge gap in the industry because of the legacy of the black market. In this case, it's because cannabis growers and sellers never had the ability to run a legal business out in the open, and so they may not be familiar with basic business principles and concepts, particularly when it comes to accounting, payroll, compliance, law, human resources, and yes, marketing. Businesses that offer these services can build trust and attract customers by taking the trouble to answer questions and provide useful information, whether via social media or a blog.

So what kind of content is best for content marketing? There's no one answer to this question. The primary categories revolve around written content, video, and infographics. If you can manage to combine all three, even better. The main thing to keep in mind is that you should develop a strategy around how you will disseminate that content. The best, most exciting, most valuable video or blog post in the world is useless if nobody sees it. That means an integral aspect of any content marketing strategy is how to get your content in front of the right people, ie your prospective customers.

## **Cannabis Marketing Option #5: Email Marketing**

Email marketing, while popular in many other industries, is an often overlooked option for cannabis organizations. This is likely to change, as more and more business owners realize the tremendous benefit of having an active, thriving list of potential customers who have chosen to opt in to receive your communications.

The first thing that needs to be stated is that we strongly discourage companies from simply purchasing an email list. I'm sure your inbox is filled with people looking to sell you their 'valuable' list of cannabis contacts. You probably get annoyed by such emails, which is exactly why you should not purchase said list, as the vast majority of people on it have no interest in what you have to say, or sell, to them. The only exception is for businesses that are invested in direct sales, who are comfortable with conducting high volume cold calls. In that case, you may be able to profit from having a high-quality list of cannabis contacts in a new market, such as a state that has recently come online.

For most businesses, email marketing starts with convincing your customers, website visitors, or people curious about your company to opt-in to your mailing list. It might be possible to incentivize people to do so, with discounts or some kind of free giveaway. Others rely on cleverly placed Call-To-Actions on their website. However you do it, getting your customers to sign up for your mailing list is only half the battle.

Anyone who has run a mailing list knows that one of the biggest issues is attrition. Invariably, some people will opt out again as soon as the first message hits their inbox. This is to be expected. But it puts a major onus on you and your content creator(s) to generate meaningful, relevant messages that your followers will actually want to receive. Many of the same principles apply that we discussed with regards to content marketing.

While it's tempting to blast out an email every time you have something you want to share, you should always consider your mailing list from the perspective of your customers first. What value are you providing them when you hit send? If you aren't giving them a reason to read your messages, at best they'll just let your email go unread. At worst, they'll unsubscribe and stop buying your products.

On the plus side, direct email marketing is one of the best ways to circumvent all of the restrictions placed on cannabis marketing. You aren't restricted by rules like you are on social media, and you can promote your sales and specials without fear of repercussion. The kinds of images or promotions that aren't allowed on banner ads or in magazines are fair game.

What types of businesses can make best use of email marketing? Pretty much any type of cannabis business, but any company that is selling products or services, whether in a B2B or B2C capacity, should definitely explore email marketing. All you'll need to do is find a mail platform that is tolerant of cannabis (Hint: MailChimp is not cannabis friendly, but there are plenty of options out there that are). Whichever one you chose, it should be a platform that doesn't charge out of the gate, but only starts asking for a fee when you reach a certain threshold in terms of your subscriber base.

One growing platform is Substack, which even makes it easy to monetize your actual mailing list. With Substack, you can charge a monthly subscription fee for people to receive your emails. Obviously, this will only apply to educational companies or advocacy organizations that are providing extremely rich content or using their mailing list as a way to raise funds.

## Cannabis Marketing Option #6: SMS And Geofencing

The future is mobile. We've been hearing it for years, but the future is now. I can probably cram some more cliches into this paragraph, but I think you get the point. If you need a little bit more convincing, here's some data on the growth of mobile in recent years:

**As of 2019, there were nearly 270 million active mobile users, and almost 450 million wireless mobile subscribers in the United States.**

**In 2021, 84% of all Americans (280 million) used their phones to access the internet, with that number to increase by ten million by 2025.**

With that in mind, it's no wonder that mobile advertising and SMS advertising are crucial to any forward-looking cannabis marketing strategy. But the state of SMS advertising is still very much in its infancy, and as mobile users yourselves, you probably know how annoying it can be to receive intrusive, unwanted notifications on your phone that you haven't opted in for. That's why it's important to tread carefully in this space.

First of all, no matter what kind of cannabis business you are, you need to ensure that your website is mobile friendly. In fact, when we design websites, our first consideration is always mobile, and desktop design is second. Fortunately, the Wix platform we build most of our websites on is extremely mobile friendly and makes it easy to build a website that will look good on any device. But we make sure any websites we build in WordPress perform just as well, if not better, on mobile.

When it comes to SMS marketing, the approach should be similar to email marketing, with a focus on creating an opt in list of customers that have agreed to receive your content. You should respect your customers and strive to always serve them highly valuable content that will be useful for them. When done correctly, SMS marketing can boost customer loyalty and encourage repeat business.

Geofencing is a new kind of digital marketing that relies on a virtual fence that is put in place around a physical location. Whenever a consumer enters that space, an action is triggered, such as a notification being sent to their phone. The technology depends on GPS or RFID location data. The action that gets triggered is up to you. Possibilities include collecting data, serving up an ad, offering a reminder, and more.

One of the most common ways to utilize geofencing technology is via a dedicated mobile app, but it's not required. Remember, if you are targeting mobile users with geofencing ads, privacy can be a big concern, so don't be overly aggressive or intrusive. There are a number of companies you can work with for geofencing, with Sprout being one of the best known examples.

While SMS and geofencing marketing won't be for every cannabis business, if you are a dispensary, it is definitely something to look into.

## **Cannabis Marketing Option #7: OOH**

OOH stands for Out-Of-Home advertising. In the cannabis industry, this basically means billboards. Of course, depending on the state you're based in, it may also include ads on taxi cabs, buses, public benches, and more. Or, you may not be allowed to advertise cannabis on any of the above.

With so many traditional advertising channels, such as television and radio spots, off limits to cannabis businesses, OOH is a huge category in places where it is allowed. For instance, here in Oregon, cannabis billboards can be seen pretty much everywhere, from alongside major interstates to downtown Portland.

If OOH advertising is allowed in your location, there are some additional guidelines you'll need to follow (even if it isn't specifically spelled out in your state code). Be very careful to make sure that the location you're posting isn't near a school, park, or other place frequented by minors. Absolutely don't depict consumption anywhere in your ad, and don't make any kind of health claims or statements about the efficacy of your products, especially as it pertains to medical issues. And make sure to add your state's required disclaimer so that it's in plain view.

This may all be spelled out by the advertising company that owns the billboards, but it may not, especially if you're located in a more rural area where commerce tends to be less regulated.

Another thing to bear in mind when using OOH advertising, in particular billboards, is that you'll want to design an ad specifically to be seen from a distance. There shouldn't be a lot of detail or fine print (other than the disclaimer) and one bold image should be enough. Absolutely do not simply reproduce an ad you've created for digital or print and think it will work just as well on a billboard or the side of a bus. These are completely different media and need to be treated as such. Partner with a graphic designer who understands the demands of creating billboard ads.

Other than that, the most important thing to pay attention to is ROI. It's tough to measure exactly how effective cannabis billboard advertising is. Some companies prefer to mention a specific URL on their OOH ad, so they can track how many people visit their website. Another option is to have your customers fill out a survey and ask where they heard about you, with a billboard as one of the options. This is a great way to learn more about your customers and to gain more data on the efficacy of your advertising, but it can also be viewed as an annoying chore and should only be used in the right circumstances.

If nothing else, keep track of your sales before and after the billboard is live. And then if you discontinue the ad, how do your sales react after it's gone? While this kind of information is not to be treated as gospel, it does help you have some idea if you're seeing any benefits from your OOH advertising.

When it comes to OOH advertising, for the most part, it's particularly tied to location. If you're a dispensary with a billboard nearby, it probably makes a lot of sense to advertise on it. Or if you're a product manufacturer or farm who has products for sale in that dispensary, that billboard has a lot of value for you compared to other billboards. But before advertising on prime real estate near a dispensary, check in with them first to make sure they are ok with it. They may even be willing to split the cost if you run a promotion that highlights both your products and their dispensary.

## **Cannabis Marketing Option #8: Event Marketing**

While event marketing could refer to the marketing of an event or series of events, in this case we're talking about the practice of marketing your cannabis business at or during an event. This can be as simple buying a ticket to a local trade show and walking from booth to booth handing out business cards. This can be a way to connect with lots of cannabis businesses in a short period of time, and is a great place to start when you're an up and coming B2B company.

But there's a certain measure of authority that is automatically inferred upon businesses that have a dedicated booth at a cannabis event. This might be participating in a vendor day at a local dispensary you sell your goods in (and in some cases you may be the only outside business presenting your products on a given day), or could be a national trade show like MJ Biz Con that brings prominent cannabis executives and celebrities together from all over the world. Depending on the scale of your business, either or both types of events may be appropriate for your consideration.

Taking event marketing one step further, you might consider sponsoring an event. This can have an even more profound effect on your branding and draw more attention, but make sure that your prospective customer base matches well with the event you are sponsoring. If you are a farm looking to get your weed into dispensaries around the state, you probably don't want to sponsor an event that's targeting hemp farmers and ancillary businesses. While this is an obvious example, make sure you do your homework about an event and who will be attending before you agree to a sponsorship deal.

If you do choose to attend a trade show, either at a booth or as a sponsor, think about how you can leave an impression on attendees and draw people to your booth. This starts with investing in signage that is quality and on brand (not just a black and white print out with your company name on it). Another tried and true approach is to offer free swag. Everybody likes to get free stuff, but if you want your freebies to stand out with attendees, think beyond stickers or buttons. Give away something people will actually have a use for, whether it's stationary, t-shirts, or a grinder.

But the best event booths usually have some kind of interactive element. Giving away grinders or t-shirts can get expensive quickly, but if you have add a raffle or contest element to the giveaway, you can create engagement with people walking by and ensure that you won't have to buy hundreds of whatever your top prize is. Examples I've seen include spinning a wheel, trivia questions, rolling dice, or other games of chance. I've also seen booths with fun activities such as photo booths, or even a karaoke machine. Be creative, and make the event experience fun for everyone involved. It will definitely make it easier to leave a positive impression.

Another way to increase your visibility at a cannabis event is to get invited to be a speaker. Whether you are a grower, a retailer, a marketer, or other type of service provider, being able to lend your expertise as a keynote speaker or as a member of a panel is a great way to establish your thought leadership in the industry and generate positive word of mouth about your brand.

Along those same lines, when participating in a cannabis event, whether as a speaker, a sponsor, or by renting a booth, remember to leverage your involvement for future marketing endeavors. This means you might consider hiring a photographer or videographer to document your interactions with customers or your panel talk. This will allow you to amplify your participation and increase the value of your investment in the event.

This leads me to the latest trend in event marketing, which is experiential marketing. Also known as engagement marketing, an experiential approach to cannabis marketing is designed to



give your prospective customers a more immersive and intimate experience that will leave a more lasting impression. The most common example, related to events, is hosting your own event, such as a product launch party or 420 music show. Rather than participating in someone else's event, this gives you full control of the experience and ensures that attendees will directly connect your brand to the occasion.

There are many benefits to experiential marketing, including more personalized engagement, a deep bond with your customers, and increased sharability of your event and the potential to go viral. As just one possible example, if you are an edibles company that produces infused oils and condiments, you might consider hosting a cannabis cooking competition. Even if you need to make sure all the infusions are CBD based, it will be a memorable (and hopefully tasty) experience that will allow you to reach all new customers in a more authentic way.

## **Cannabis Marketing Option #9: Paid Search Or Paid Social**

Google and Facebook are the biggest names in digital advertising. Google Ad Words and the Facebook Audience Network (now the Meta Audience Network) are pretty much ubiquitous and you'd be hard pressed to find an owner of a small or medium sized business who doesn't have a deep understand of what they are and how they work. But in the cannabis industry, these two platform goliaths are pretty much off limits.

According to Google's ad policy, you're not allowed to create "ads for substances that alter mental state for the purpose of recreation or otherwise include 'highs'." The same goes for ads on Facebook and Instagram, though cannabis businesses are seeming to have more luck running ads on LinkedIn, and if you are a B2B company, then you should definitely be increasing your presence on LinkedIn, and perhaps even consider paid ads.

However, when it comes to CBD, there is much more of a gray area as to what is and what isn't allowed. This means you might be able to get away with marketing your CBD products on Google or Facebook. Or you might not. It really does seem like they make decisions on a case by case basis.

We won't get into all of the things you need to know about running a PPC campaign via search or social here, because in this ever-shifting environment, it's really difficult to advise anyone on best practices. But it is something that hemp and CBD businesses should look into, especially if you are looking to market at a national level.

# Dispensary Marketing Ideas: 10 Ways To Market Your Dispensary

As the legal cannabis industry continues to grow, dispensaries are popping up all over the place. If you're a dispensary owner, you may be wondering how you can make your business stand out in a sea of competition. And when it comes to cannabis marketing as a whole, dispensaries occupy a particular space that's different from other sectors, such as growers, processors, or professional service providers.

The good news is that there are a number of dispensary marketing ideas that can help you succeed. In this section, we're going to look at ten options that will help you attract new customers and grow your business.

## The Marketing Challenge Facing Cannabis Dispensaries

Cannabis dispensaries have a unique challenge when it comes to marketing their business. Unlike other types of businesses, they are not able to use traditional marketing channels such as television, radio, or print advertising. This is because most of these channels are regulated by the government and do not allow cannabis-related businesses to advertise.

Making matters worse, dispensaries in most states are faced with huge tax bills, only made worse by 280E, a federal law that makes it impossible for legal cannabis businesses to write off their marketing expenses. This is especially tough for single dispensaries that already have extremely low margins.

So how can cannabis dispensaries reach their target market? The answer is by getting creative with their marketing. There are a number of alternative channels that dispensaries can use to reach their audience. These include online advertising, word-of-mouth marketing, and event marketing.

By using these alternative channels, dispensaries can reach more customers and continue to grow their business, without breaking the bank.

## It All Starts With Your Dispensary Branding

In the cannabis industry, one of the most important investments a dispensary owner can make is in their branding. Branding can make or break a business in this industry, and with the right branding, a dispensary can become a top destination for customers.

Good branding will make a dispensary stand out from the competition and attract customers. It will also help build trust and loyalty among customers, which is essential for any business. dispensary owners should invest in good branding from the start, and it should be a top priority for their business.

There are many ways to approach branding for a dispensary, and the best approach will vary from business to business. But there are a few things that all successful dispensary brands have in common. They have a strong visual identity, they tell a story, and they connect with their customers.

And while it's best to have your brand identity established before opening, it's never too late to improve your brand presence. Learn more information on cannabis branding [here](#), or earlier in this book.

## **Create A Standout Website For Your Dispensary**

In recent years, the number of dispensaries has grown exponentially. This is good news for patients and customers who have greater access to medical and recreational marijuana. However, it also means that dispensaries must work hard to differentiate themselves from the competition.

One of the best ways to do this is to create a standout website. Your website is often the first impression potential customers will have of your dispensary. It's important to make sure that your website is well-designed, informative, and easy to navigate.

If you're not sure where to start, there are plenty of web design companies that specialize in creating websites for dispensaries. Investing in a good website is a worthwhile investment that will pay off in the long run. Remember, even if you are in a state that doesn't allow online sales or deliveries, your website will still be the first point of contact for many of your potential customers. Make sure to leave a good impression with professional cannabis web design.

## **The Power Of Word-Of-Mouth Marketing**

One powerful marketing tool that dispensaries can use is word-of-mouth marketing. According to a report by Nielsen, 92% of consumers say they trust recommendations from friends and family more than any other form of advertising. This makes word-of-mouth marketing one of the most effective marketing tools available, especially in the cannabis industry.

One way to boost word-of-mouth is to start a YouTube channel to talk about the industry, post educational videos, and show people how to consume cannabis products safely. Similar channels have been a huge success, and word-of-mouth marketing from happy customers helps dispensaries reach a wider audience.

Starting a YouTube channel is a great way to build trust and credibility with potential customers. By posting educational videos, your dispensary can position itself as a trusted source of information about the cannabis industry. And, when happy customers share your dispensary's videos with their friends, you'll be able to reach a much wider audience than you would have otherwise.

If you're a dispensary owner, consider starting a YouTube channel to take advantage of the power of word-of-mouth marketing.

## **Create A Strong Social Media Presence For Your Dispensary**

Cannabis dispensaries are increasingly turning to social media to reach potential customers and build their brands. In a highly competitive industry, a strong social media presence can give dispensaries a major advantage.

Social media provides an excellent way to connect with potential customers and create a strong relationship with them. By engaging with potential customers on social media, dispensaries can build trust and credibility. Additionally, social media provides an opportunity to educate potential customers about the products and services offered by the dispensary.

A strong social media presence can also help dispensaries to stand out from the competition. In a crowded marketplace, a dispensary that is active on social media and provides valuable content will be more likely to attract new customers.

If you are considering opening a cannabis dispensary, or if you already have a dispensary, it is essential to create a strong social media presence. Unfortunately, the social media platforms are mostly hostile towards cannabis content, making it difficult to gain traction. Check out our cannabis guides to succeeding on social media for [Instagram](#) and [TikTok](#).

### **Your Dispensary Should Develop A Customer Loyalty Program**

As the cannabis industry continues to grow, dispensaries are looking for ways to differentiate themselves from the competition. One way to do this is by developing a customer loyalty program.

A customer loyalty program is a great way to show your customers that you appreciate their business. It can also help you build a long-term relationship with your customers and keep them coming back to your dispensary. There are a few things to keep in mind when developing a customer loyalty program for your dispensary.

First, you need to decide what type of loyalty program you want to create. There are many different types of loyalty programs, so it's important to choose one that best fits your dispensary. You also need to decide what kind of rewards you want to offer your customers. Some dispensaries offer discounts on certain products, while others offer points that can be redeemed for free merchandise.

Of course, check with your local regulations to make sure your loyalty program doesn't violate any cannabis-specific laws in your state.

### **Sponsor Local Events**

As a cannabis dispensary, you may be looking for ways to increase brand awareness and build goodwill in your community. One way to achieve this is by sponsoring local events.

Sponsoring local events is a great way to show your support for the community and to get your name out there. It's also a great way to build relationships with other businesses and organizations. When you sponsor an event, you're showing that you're invested in the community and that you care about making it a better place.

There are a number of different events you can sponsor, from art shows to concerts to festivals. You can also sponsor community gatherings and meetups. Whatever type of event you choose to sponsor, make sure it's something that aligns with your brand and your values. Of course, you need to be aware of the prohibition against marketing to minors that exists in most states, but a sponsorship is not the same thing as putting up a billboard or running an ad, which is why it's a great option for dispensaries.

### **Advertise Your Dispensary In Local Publications**

Opening a cannabis dispensary is a big undertaking, and there are many factors to consider when it comes to advertising your new business. You'll want to reach out to your local community and let them know you're open for business. One way to do this is by advertising in local publications.

Cannabis dispensaries can advertise in a variety of local publications, including newspapers, magazines, and online publications. You'll want to choose the publications that reach your target

audience. Then, you'll need to create an advertising plan that outlines your budget, your goals, and your preferred placement in the publication.

Advertising in local publications is a great way to reach out to your community and let them know about your new cannabis dispensary. With a little planning, you can create an advertising campaign that helps you reach your goals and grow your business.

### **Local SEO For Your Dispensary Website**

If you have a dispensary website, then you need to make sure that you are doing everything you can to optimize it for local SEO. Local SEO is a crucial part of any dispensary website's marketing strategy, as it helps to ensure that your website is appearing in search results for people who are searching for dispensaries in your area.

There are a few things you can do to optimize your dispensary website for local SEO. First, make sure that your website's NAP (name, address, and phone number) are prominently displayed on your website and that they are consistent with the NAP on your business's listing in local directories. Second, create local content on your website, such as blog posts about local events or news stories related to the cannabis industry in your area.

Finally, make sure to claim and optimize your business's listing in directories like Google My Business, as well as cannabis-specific directories like Weed Maps and Leafly. Learn more about [Dispensary SEO](#) here.

### **Give Away Branded Merch**

Your dispensary is up and running, and now it's time to start attracting customers. One great way to do this is by giving away branded merch. People love free stuff, and if your merch is high quality, they'll be more likely to remember your dispensary when they need weed.

There are a few things to keep in mind when giving away branded merch. First, make sure the quality is good - you don't want your dispensary's name to be associated with cheap, crappy merchandise. Second, be strategic about where you give it away. Handing out t-shirts at a concert is a great way to reach a lot of potential customers at once. Finally, don't forget to follow up! If you give someone a t-shirt, make sure to get their contact information so you can follow up with them later.

Finally, giving away swag with your name on it helps to fill in the gap created by the rules found in many states that prohibit giving away free weed. A free hat or hoodie is the next best thing.

### **Work With Influencers**

When it comes to promoting your cannabis dispensary, working with social media influencers can be a great way to reach a larger audience. Influencers can help to spread the word about your dispensary and its products, and they can also help to attract new customers.

Of course, not all influencers are created equal. You'll want to work with influencers who have a large audience that is interested in the type of products you sell. You'll also want to make sure that the influencers you work with are reputable and have a good relationship with their followers.

If you're not sure where to start, we can help. We have connections with a lot of influencers in the cannabis industry, and we can help you find the right influencers for your dispensary.

So that's ten ideas for marketing your dispensary. As you may have noticed, they overlapped with many of the general marketing approaches we outlined earlier, which makes sense. But it also gives you an idea of how it's necessary to tailor the principles of marketing to your specific business's needs.

# Hiring An In-House Marketer

Hiring an in-house marketer for your business can be a great way to ensure that your marketing efforts are tailored to your specific needs and goals. However, there are also some potential drawbacks to consider. In this section, we will explore the benefits and detriments of hiring an in-house marketer for your business.

One of the main benefits of hiring an in-house marketer is increased control and flexibility. When you have a marketer on staff, you have more control over your marketing strategy and can make adjustments as needed to better suit your business. This can be especially beneficial for businesses that have unique marketing needs or that operate in a fast-paced industry. Additionally, having a marketer on staff allows you to respond quickly to changes in the market or in your business, allowing you to stay competitive.

Another benefit of hiring an in-house marketer is that they can become an expert in your business and industry. They will have a deep understanding of your target audience, products, and services and can create marketing strategies that are tailored to your specific needs. This can help you to reach the right people with the right message and increase the effectiveness of your marketing efforts.

Moreover, hiring an in-house marketer allows for better collaboration and communication within the company. The marketer can work closely with other departments such as sales and product development, to ensure that all marketing efforts are aligned with the overall goals of the company.

However, hiring an in-house marketer also has its drawbacks. One of the main drawbacks is the cost. Hiring an in-house marketer can be more expensive than hiring an agency or freelancer, especially if you are a small business. You will have to pay for their salary, benefits, and other expenses. Additionally, you will need to provide the necessary tools and resources to allow them to do their job, such as marketing software and subscriptions to marketing services.

Another drawback is that in-house marketers may lack the specialized skills and experience that an agency or freelancer can offer. Agencies and freelancers often have more experience working with a variety of businesses and industries, and they may have specialized skills and knowledge that your in-house marketer may not have. This can make it more challenging for your in-house marketer to create effective marketing strategies, especially if your business is in a niche industry.

In conclusion, hiring an in-house marketer for your business can be a great way to ensure that your marketing efforts are tailored to your specific needs and goals. However, it also comes with some drawbacks such as cost and lack of specialized skills and experience. Business owners should weigh the pros and cons and make a decision based on their specific business needs and budget.



## Working With Freelancers

Working with freelance marketers for your cannabis business can be a great way to get the marketing support you need without the commitment of hiring an in-house employee. However, there are also some potential drawbacks to consider. In this section, we will explore the benefits and drawbacks of working with freelance marketers for your business.

One of the main benefits of working with freelance marketers is cost-effectiveness. Freelance marketers typically charge on a project basis, which can be much more affordable for small businesses or businesses with limited marketing budgets. Additionally, you only pay for the services you need, which can save you money in the long run.

Another benefit of working with freelance marketers is the flexibility they offer. Freelance marketers can work on a project-by-project basis, which allows you to scale your marketing efforts up or down as needed. This can be especially beneficial for businesses that have seasonal or cyclical marketing needs. Additionally, working with a freelancer allows you to bring in specialized skills and experience as necessary, rather than having to build those skills in-house.

Moreover, working with freelance marketers can provide a fresh perspective on your business, marketing strategy, and campaigns. They are not tied to the day-to-day operations of your business and can provide objective advice and suggestions that an in-house marketer may not be able to.

However, working with freelance marketers also has its drawbacks. One of the main drawbacks is the lack of consistency. Freelance marketers may not be available at all times, and you may have to work with different marketers for different projects. This can make it difficult to maintain consistency in your marketing efforts and can also make it challenging to build a long-term relationship with your marketing partner.

Another drawback is the lack of control over the process. When working with a freelancer, you may have less control over the scope and direction of the project, and you may have to rely on their expertise to guide the process. This can be a problem if you have a specific vision or goal in mind for your marketing efforts.

In conclusion, working with freelance marketers can be a great way to get the marketing support you need without the commitment of hiring an in-house employee. However, it also comes with some drawbacks such as lack of consistency and lack of control over the process. Business owners should weigh the pros and cons and make a decision based on their specific business needs and budget. It's important to have clear communication and expectations established with the freelancer, to ensure that the project runs smoothly and the desired outcome is achieved.

# Working With A Marketing Agency

Working with a marketing agency can be a great way for businesses to gain access to a wide range of marketing expertise and resources. However, there are also some potential drawbacks to consider. In this essay, we will explore the advantages and disadvantages of working with a marketing agency for your business.

One of the main advantages of working with a marketing agency is the level of expertise and experience they can bring to the table. Marketing agencies typically have a team of professionals with a variety of specialized skills and experience, which can help businesses to develop and execute effective marketing strategies. Additionally, agencies often have access to the latest tools, technologies, and best practices in the industry, which can give businesses an edge over their competitors.

Another advantage of working with a marketing agency is that they can provide a fresh perspective on your business and marketing efforts. Agencies are not tied to the day-to-day operations of your business and can provide objective advice and suggestions that an in-house team may not be able to. Additionally, agencies often have experience working with a variety of businesses and industries, which can provide valuable insights and ideas that can be applied to your business.

Moreover, working with a marketing agency can save time and resources. Agencies handle all the marketing efforts, from planning to execution, which can free up time for the business owners and internal teams to focus on other aspects of the business.

However, working with a marketing agency also has its drawbacks. One of the main drawbacks is the cost. Agencies typically charge a higher rate than freelancers, and the costs can add up quickly. Additionally, businesses may be required to pay for additional services or resources that are not included in the initial contract.

Another drawback is the lack of control over the process. When working with an agency, businesses may have less control over the scope and direction of the project and may have to rely on the agency's expertise to guide the process. This can be a problem if the business has a specific vision or goal in mind for their marketing efforts.

In conclusion, working with a marketing agency can be a great way for businesses to gain access to a wide range of marketing expertise and resources. However, it also comes with some drawbacks such as cost and lack of control over the process. Business owners should weigh the pros and cons and make a decision based on their specific business needs and budget. It's important to have clear communication and expectations established with the agency before you begin.

# Working With The Hood Collective

We've now reached the part where we talk about ourselves.

The Hood Collective is a full-service marketing agency that specializes in cannabis marketing. By working with The Hood Collective for all or some of your marketing needs, your cannabis company can benefit from the following:

**Industry expertise:** The Hood Collective has extensive experience in the cannabis industry and is well-versed in the unique challenges and opportunities that come with marketing a cannabis business.

**Comprehensive services:** The Hood Collective offers a wide range of services, including branding, graphic design, photography, video, social media, SEO, drone content, and copywriting, which will allow your cannabis company to have a consistent and cohesive marketing strategy that covers all aspects of their marketing needs.

**High-quality content:** The Hood Collective's team of professionals are experts in our respective fields and create high-quality content that stands out in a crowded market. This will help your cannabis company build a strong brand and attract more customers.

**Increased visibility:** The Hood Collective's SEO and social media strategies will help your cannabis company increase its visibility and reach a wider audience.

**Better ROI:** By working with The Hood Collective, your cannabis company can be sure that you are getting the most out of your marketing budget. Our experts will help to create an effective marketing strategy that will drive sales and increase ROI.

**Compliance:** The Hood Collective understands the legal and compliance aspect of cannabis marketing and is well-versed in the rules and regulations surrounding cannabis marketing.

**We care about your success:** The Hood Collective has one goal: help cannabis companies succeed. In fact, we will frequently turn down jobs because we don't believe we're a good fit. Unlike other agencies, you'll have regular contact with our team, and we're extremely responsive to your needs, in particular when circumstances change and a new approach is needed.

Working with The Hood Collective for all of your marketing needs can help your cannabis company build a strong brand, increase visibility, and reach a wider audience, and drive sales and increase ROI, all while staying compliant with the industry's legal and compliance regulations.

**Get in touch** today to learn what we can do for your company.

## Conclusion

In conclusion, we would like to express our gratitude to all of our readers for taking the time to read *The Complete Guide To Marketing Your Cannabis Business in 2023*. We hope that the information provided in this book has been informative and helpful in your efforts to market your cannabis business. Remember, as a cannabis business owner, you have a great product or service that deserves to be seen and experienced by as many people as possible. Be proactive in your marketing efforts and never be afraid to try new things.

Thank you again for choosing our guide, and we wish you all the best in your business endeavors. And to learn more about The Hood Collective and our team of cannabis marketers, please visit our **[website](#)**.

## About The Author

Decater Collins is the founder and business director of The Hood Collective, a cannabis marketing firm based in Portland, Oregon. After more than a decade spent in corporate PR, working with clients such as GM, Amazon Web Services, and Microsoft Research, Doc finally decided it was time to follow his passion. He has spent the last 8 years in the world of video and online marketing, focusing on content creation, social media strategy, and branding. In 2017, he co-founded The Hood Collective, and has focused exclusively on the cannabis industry ever since.

He's also produced and directed a number of short documentaries and films, including two series for the XRay TV platform (Fair Use and The Party). He's passionate about the environment, and continues to work on video projects that highlight environmental concerns in the Pacific Northwest, with partners such as Portland Audubon and the Feral Cat Coalition of Oregon.

In his spare time, he's normally at the beck and call of his rescue beagle, Sir Francis Bacon.