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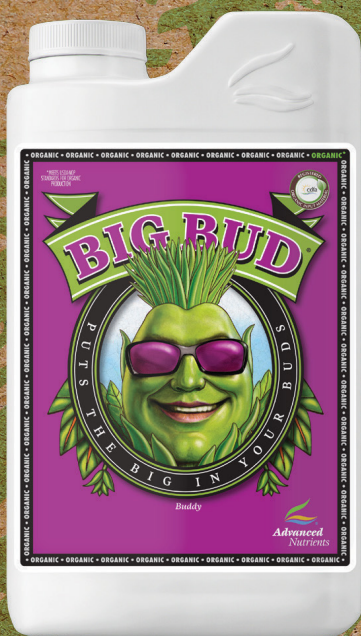
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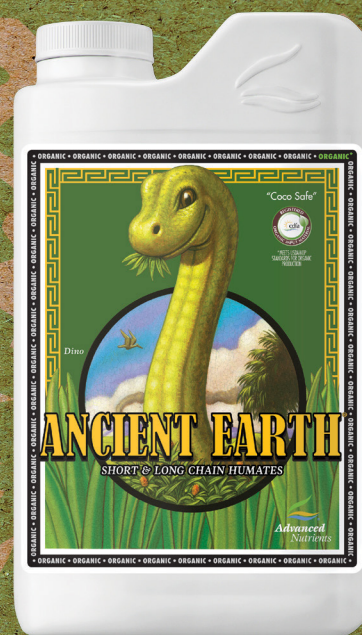


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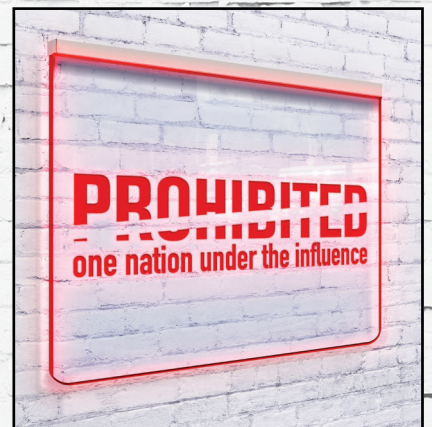
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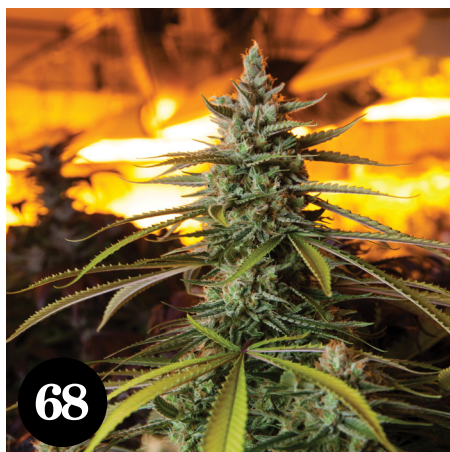
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Faai Steuer, senior marketing strategist for Cova, recommends...



The industry has come a long way since this first prototype of Cannabis Business (mg) from April, 2015. We welcome this photo of Noah Petronic back to our September cover. Photographed by Gregory Neiser.



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City of Angels

IS IT POSSIBLE Los Angeles is on the verge of living up to its “city of angels” nickname? It sounds crazy, but maybe that sort of miracle can happen in Trump’s America. Still, this is Loss Angeles we’re talking about, the city where dreams come to die, where waiter is still synonymous with actor, and where city officials don’t bother to protest when people accuse them of decades-long incompetence. Instead, they nod and smile, in on the joke. Disappointment and inaction is what the city has come to expect of itself, what it sees when it looks in the mirror. Los Angeles doesn’t need statues to its failures.

Except, something is different as Los Angeles works to implement sensible cannabis regulations. Against the odds, city fathers appear to be listening to people’s concerns, and not only taking them under consideration but also addressing them. It looks like leadership in action. Even more impressive was the decision by Mayor Eric Garcetti and the city council to ask Cat Packer to become the permanent head of the city’s first cannabis department. Packer brings immense industry support and capability to the position, and while her appointment does not guarantee success, it is a clarion call by the city that it is serious about taking a leadership role on cannabis legalization.

It is hard to express how heartening that is to residents of one of the world’s great cities who also happen to run world-class cannabis businesses. They may still be holding their collective breath, waiting for the other shoe to fall, but this time there is a feeling that things will be different, and everyone finally will be free to inhale.

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FIRST HAWAII DISPENSARY OPENS FOR BUSINESS

KAHULUI, Hawaii— Following years of delays, Hawaii's first medical cannabis dispensary opened for business August 8. Maui Wellness Group LLC., dba Maui Grown Therapies, was the first licensed medical cannabis dispensary in the state to receive a green light from the Hawaii Department of Health to begin selling medical cannabis to registered patients and their caregivers, reported KHON2.com.

But the dispensary, which initially was permitted to sell flower only, quickly hit a brick wall. "Trouble began after company officials anticipated a recent batch of flowers to clear lab certification by Saturday—but that didn't happen," noted LawStreetMedia.com. "As a result, the company says it sold out of its first batch due to 'high demand.'"

The situation got so bad the store had to close its doors temporarily, resulting in a lot of disappointed patients. "It's unfortunate that an administrative hindrance of this

magnitude prevents patients from getting the help they need," said Christopher Cole, director of product management for Maui Grown Therapies. "We had planned to open with a full range of derivative products such as concentrates, oils, capsules and topical products, but at the eleventh hour we discovered that the State Labs Division had failed to certify a lab to conduct testing of manufactured products."

The bottleneck had a ripple-effect, added Cole. "We could serve thousands of patients with the amount of manufactured product we currently have available for final compliance testing," Cole said. "Even though we were approved by the Department of Health on May 24 to manufacture cannabis products, the restrictions placed on the state's only licensed lab have prevented us from offering these products to our patients—and it is entirely unclear to us when this will change."



Gorilla Glue lawsuit alleges trademark dilution

OHIO— The Girl Scouts don't like the fact that there is a popular cannabis strain called Girl Scout Cookie, and now the Gorilla Glue Company, the maker of actual glue, is peeved about the equally popular Gorilla Glue #4 strain. In the latter instance, a trademark and unfair competition lawsuit has been filed.

"The Gorilla Glue Company—maker of adhesive products such as Gorilla Glue, Gorilla Epoxy and Gorilla Tape—is suing GG Strains LLC, the company founded by [Jackie Don] Peabody and business partner Ross Johnson, alleging trademark infringement, dilution, unfair competition, and cybersquatting," reported *The Cannabist*. "By licensing and marketing products under 'confusingly similar' names, GG Strains is ultimately trading on the reputation and goodwill that the family-run Sharonville, Ohio-based company built over 23 years of business, according to the March 24 complaint."

Whatever the merits of the lawsuit, the defendant finds itself in the unusual position of having to defend more than just its own interests. "If we settle with these guys outside of court, they're going to go after everybody," said Johnson, referring to the large number of growers and shops that cultivate and carry a cornucopia of Gorilla Glue-named flower and derived products.

The case is *Gorilla Glue Co. v. GG Strains*.



CALIFORNIA REHAB CENTER USES CANNABIS TO TREAT DRUG AND ALCOHOL ADDICTION

VENICE BEACH, Calif.— Recent studies indicated the use of cannabis may be effective as an "exit drug" out of opiate addiction and alcoholism. One rehab center is putting the theory into practice.

"High Sobriety is a rehabilitation center in Venice Beach, [near Los Angeles], that offers 'cannabis-inclusive recovery' for its patients," reported Konbini.com. "Founded by former alcoholic Joe Schrank, High Sobriety serves as an alternative option to those who 'reject the idea that total abstinence in [Alcoholics Anonymous]' is the only way to cure addiction."

The center "offers various alternatives to traditional recovery approaches, one of which is cannabis-inclusive modalities, meaning that users of drugs with a known lethal dose, such as cocaine, heroin, methamphetamine, opioids and alcohol, are not asked to quit cold turkey. Instead, they replace lethal drugs with cannabis, which isn't known to have a lethal dose."

Not everyone gets to participate. "The cannabis intake is closely monitored by High Sobriety staff, and this type of treatment is limited to patients who are over 25 years old, have unsuccessfully engaged in abstinence-based recovery in the past, and are using drugs with a known lethal dose or side-effects that have the potential to be life-threatening (like alcohol)," noted Konbini.

STUDY

Lack of research clouds whether cannabis helps with chronic pain, PTSD

NASHVILLE – In a classic Catch-22, a pair of studies looking into the effectiveness of cannabis to help with chronic pain and post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) found conclusive evidence precisely because of the paucity of studies about the subject.

"Both studies were conducted by a team of researchers at the Veterans Health Administration and published in the *Annals of Internal Medicine*," reported Reuters.

"The current studies highlight the real and urgent need for high-quality clinical trials in both of these areas," said Dr. Sachin Patel, a psychiatry re-

searcher at Vanderbilt University Medical Center in Nashville, Tennessee.

The researchers took note of the fact that one in ten adults in the United States uses cannabis.





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HARVEST NEWS

LAW



Sen. Cory Booker's Marijuana Justice Act would end federal prohibition

WASHINGTON— U.S. Senator Cory Booker (D-NJ) last month introduced landmark legislation titled the “Marijuana Justice Act of 2017,” an ambitious bill that would undo “decades of failed drug policy that has disproportionately impacted communities of color,” according to a prepared statement from the senator’s office.

In addition to removing cannabis from the list of controlled substances, the act also would retroactively “apply to those already serving time behind bars for marijuana-related offenses, providing for a judge’s review of marijuana sentences,” continued the statement.

“De-scheduling marijuana and applying that change retroactively to people currently serving time for marijuana offenses is a necessary step in correcting this unjust system,” said Booker. “States have so far led the way in reforming our criminal justice system, and it’s about time the federal government catches up and begins to assert leadership.”

Queen Adesuyi, policy associate at the Drug Policy Alliance, commented, “This bill is the most ambitious marijuana bill we have seen in Congress. Uniquely, it recognizes the fact that people of color have borne the brunt of the failed war on drugs and seeks to repair the damage done. We applaud Senator Booker for his leadership on this issue.”

An ardent critic of Attorney General Jeff Sessions’s efforts to revive the war on drugs, Booker earlier this year also reintroduced the bipartisan CARERS Act, “which would allow patients to access medical marijuana in states where it’s legal without fear of federal prosecution,” the statement noted. “He is also co-author of bills to restrict the use of juvenile solitary confinement and reform the way women are treated behind bars.”



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Special forces soldier sues city, sergeant after SWAT raid on legal grow

FOUNTAIN, Colo. – Following a police SWAT team's raid on his legal greenhouse, a former special forces soldier is suing the city and a police sergeant even though a search warrant had been issued.

"Eli Olivas and his girlfriend Marisela Chavez sued the city of Fountain and Fountain police Sgt. Matthew Racine, claiming the city failed to properly train its police to investigate pot cases in a state where it's legal to grow marijuana," reported *DenverPost.com*. "The lawsuit was filed Wednesday in U.S. District Court in Denver by attorney Terrence Johnson. Olivas and Chavez seek compensatory damages of more than \$100,000. Olivas, a paramedic, also wants his guns returned: an AK-47 rifle, a 5.56-millimeter Sig Sauer rifle and a Glock 17. Court records show Police confiscated the weapons but haven't returned them, the lawsuit says."

According to the complaint "The unconscionable aggression of the police would have traumatized any person, but given plaintiff Olivas' history serving his country in combat, it affected him exponentially more severely and it has caused a relapse of his PTSD symptoms."

Olivas uses marijuana to treat post-traumatic stress disorder after tours in Iraq and Bosnia.



L.A. CITY COUNCIL APPROVES CAT PACKER AS EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF CANNABIS DEPARTMENT

LOS ANGELES— Los Angeles City Council President Herb Wesson presided last month over a regular session of the full council that made history by approving Cat Packer to become the permanent executive director of the city's new Cannabis Department. The vote was 13-0, with two councilmembers absent.

Packer, 26, an attorney who has served as a campaign coordinator for the Drug Policy Alliance, first came to the city's attention last year when she made a comment during a public meeting that so impressed Wesson he sent an aide to track her down before she could leave the building. Since then, Packer's knowledge of the industry and personal resolve to pursue a social-equity-based licensing system for the city has served to reinforce a stellar reputation with city leaders and within the industry. Mayor Eric Garcetti ultimately nominated her to become the first-ever head of a brand-new bureaucracy.

Also approved by the same vote margin were Garcetti's five nominees to serve with Packer as commissioners. They are, as noted by the *Los Angeles Times*, "Robert Ahn, a former planning commissioner; Rita Villa, a certified public accountant; Philip D. Mercado, regional chief of general surgery at Southern California Permanente Medical Group; Misty Wilks, an attorney; and Victor Narro, a former member of the police commission's Police Permit Review Panel."

Addressing the council, Packer exuded a calm and professional demeanor. She said she was looking "forward to working with all of you to make sure, as we embark on this new era of cannabis policies, that we do it the right way. We intend to protect children here in Los Angeles, we intend to protect the environment here in Los Angeles, and we intend to protect legal businesses here serving Los Angeles."

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Governors of two weed states push back against Trump administration



JUNEAU, Alaska— Resistance by cannabis-legal states to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions's threats to stop the legalization movement in its tracks takes many forms, including directly telling the Department of Justice to mind its own business.

"Alaska Gov. Bill Walker, a one-time Republican no longer affiliated with a party, sent a letter to U.S. Attorney General Jeff Sessions this week asking the Department of Justice to maintain the Obama administration's more hands-off enforcement approach to states that have legalized the drug still banned at the federal level," reported the Associated Press. "It comes after Sessions sent responses recently to the governors of Alaska, Colorado, Oregon and Washington, who asked him to allow the pot experiments to continue in the first four states to legalize recreational marijuana. Sessions detailed concerns he had with how effective state regulatory efforts have been or will be."

Walker's was not the only missive. "Washington State Governor Jay Inslee said the attorney general made claims about the situation in Washington that are 'outdated, incorrect, or based on incomplete information,'" added AP.

"If we can engage in a more direct dialogue, we might avoid this sort of miscommunication and make progress on the issues that are important to both of us," Inslee wrote Sessions.

200

Increase in the retail price of cannabis in Nevada in just one month: July 2017 to August 2017

(Source: Forbes.com)



Court halts feds' prosecution of California growers

HUMBOLDT COUNTY, Calif— In a move that stunned the defendants' lawyer, U.S. District Court Judge Richard Seeborg put an abrupt end to the federal government's prosecution of his clients, even though they had already accepted defeat in the case.

"Humboldt County growers Anthony Pisarski and Sonny Moore had already pleaded guilty to federal allegations (conspiracy to manufacture and possess with intent to distribute) but sought an evidentiary hearing based on legislation, first enacted in 2014, that prohibits the U.S. Department of Justice from cracking down on cannabis suspects who are otherwise following their state laws," reported *LA Weekly*. "The Rohrabacher-Farr amendment is a budget rider, co-authored by SoCal U.S. Rep. Dana Rohrabacher, that prevents enforcement and prosecution in medical marijuana states by stripping funding for such endeavors."

No one anticipated what happened next. "Seeborg... stayed the prosecution, so the case is closed unless the Rohrabacher-Farr amendment expires and fails to be re-enacted and federal prosecutors want to resume their case," noted *LA Weekly*.

Ronald Richards, the defendants' lawyer, noted the occasion. "This is the first time in my 23-year career I've had a case stopped because of an appropriations rider," he said. "What the court did in this case may be used as a blueprint for other cases. It opens the door for people not to get scared."

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HERBAN PLANET LAUNCHES

PHOENIX—Herban Planet, an online guide for all things cannabis, has launched. Founded by a group of longtime friends and business associates who recognized the need for a comprehensive source of information about the industry, Herban Planet was created to bridge the information gap between marijuana growers, dispensaries, doctors, business services, and consumers. Herban Planet's mission is to help dispensaries and cannabis businesses tell their stories to a national consumer audience.

The website matches patients and consumers with specific dispensaries and doctors via customizable searches based on geography, product, and reviews. Customers are presented with producer-generated profiles that include virtual tours, videos, photos, and other information that allows dispensaries to tell their story and present their products to actively searching customers.

To publicize upcoming events, a "Cannabis Events" module gets the word out. Likewise, cannabis businesses can showcase products and features that make them unique and promote services, product info, or any other features they desire to promote. A "Marijuana Deals" module offers consumers discounts and sales.

HerbanPlanet.com

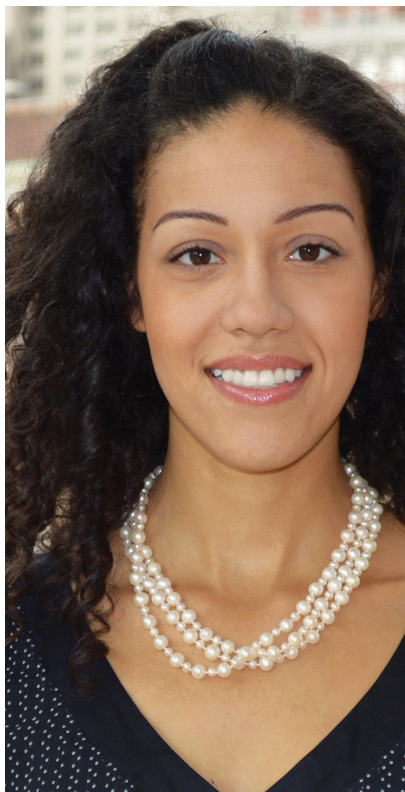
Ardent founder Shanel Lindsay joins Massachusetts Cannabis Advisory Board

BOSTON—Ardent LLC founder and president Shanel Lindsay is one of five members who has been appointed to the newly-created Massachusetts Cannabis Advisory Board. The board, a key component of the marijuana legalization legislation signed into law by Governor Charlie Baker, will work alongside the newly-created Cannabis Control Commission to oversee marijuana legalization and licensure for companies seeking to grow, process, or sell marijuana products in Massachusetts.

"Massachusetts is going to get this right, and I'm proud to be a part of the leadership that will ensure fairness and collaboration in our cannabis industry," said Shanel. "My goal is to make Massachusetts the gold standard around which other states model their own laws and licensure practices."

The Cannabis Advisory Board comprises twenty-five appointees who will make recommendations to, and consult with, the five-member Cannabis Control Commission.

ArdentCannabis.com



The High Road Design Studio hires brand strategist

TEMPE, Ariz.—Cannabis retail design company The High Road Design Studio has expanded its team and services to provide full-service strategy, branding, marketing, and interior design to clients throughout the United States and Canada. Brand strategist Benjamin Schutte is the newest employee of The High Road Design Studio, bringing nationally recognized brand development experience to its clientele.

Schutte has nine years of design experience and has worked with several national and international retail brands such as Reebok, Samsung, CVS, Electrolux, and Aramark. He is a passionate advocate for the cannabis and design industries and uses strategic and professional design to bring awareness and legitimacy to the cannabis industry.

"I am thrilled to have Benjamin join The High Road and I look forward to seeing this side of my business expand," said founder Megan Stone. "I have long seen a need to elevate the design of packaging, visual merchandising, and apparel lines in my clients' retail stores to reflect the same standard of quality, design, and experience that we bring to the store itself."

HighRoadStudio.com

"This is the first time in my 23-year career I've had a case stopped because of an appropriations rider."

— Ronald Richards, lawyer in federal criminal case halted by judge citing Robrabacher-Farr.

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LEAFBUYER TECHNOLOGIES EXPANDS SALES TO WEST COAST MARKETS

DENVER— Leafbuyer Technologies plans a 2017 sales expansion into West Coast legal cannabis markets, including recreational markets in Washington and Oregon and medical markets in California.

"We are excited about the expansion and have deployed sales teams in each market," said Mark Breen, vice president of business development. "We continue to believe that face-to-face interaction with potential and current clients is the best way to gain their trust."

CEO Kurt Rossner added, "As markets become recreational, the rules change. Potential consumers increase from a list of patients with a medical marijuana card to any consumer over the age of 21. Many consumers new to cannabis find it challenging to find accurate information about products, prices, and where to find the best deals. As an online resource, Leafbuyer helps the consumer research and find answers to cannabis-related questions from the privacy of their mobile phone or desktop."

Along with the expansion plans in Oregon, Leafbuyer recently released a list of the most unique dispensaries in Portland.

LeafBuyer.com



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EVENTS CALENDAR



Emerald Exchange, Los Angeles

OCTOBER 2017 EVENT SCHEDULE

The following is a list of select industry events taking place during October 2017.

CANNABIS WORLD CONGRESS & BUSINESS EXPO

OCTOBER 4-6

John B. Hynes Convention Center, Boston

Featuring the latest technologies, solutions, and resources for cannabis-related companies, CWCExpo offers a comprehensive slate of exhibits, products, services, and seminars.

CWCExpo.com

GROW UP: CANNABIS CONFERENCE & EXPO

OCTOBER 6-7

Scotiabank Convention Centre, Niagara Falls, Canada

Attracting licensed producers, suppliers, equipment manufacturers, investors, lawyers, government officials, and growing enthusiasts, Grow Up's focus is on education, collaboration, and the growth of the cannabis growing industry.

GrowUpConference.com

INTERNATIONAL DRUG POLICY REFORM CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 11-14

Omni Atlanta Hotel at CNN Center, Atlanta

With more than 1,500 attendees representing more than eighty countries, the conference is a biennial event that brings together people who believe the war on drugs is doing more harm than good.

ReformConference.com

SOUTHWEST CANNABIS CONFERENCE

OCTOBER 12-14

Phoenix Convention Center, Phoenix

A business-to-business event bringing together experts from the local, regional, and national cannabis industry to network and share the latest industry information.

SWCCExpo.com



*NorCal CannaCuisine Gala
Photo by Mike Rosatti*

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EDIBLES		INDICA		SATIVA		EXTRACTS					
		DOMINANT		DOMINANT							
		G	1/8 1/4 1/2 OZ	G	1/8 1/4 1/2 OZ	G	1/8 1/4 1/2 OZ				
    	2-15 ea	15-175 mg	JESUS CHRIST KUSH	25	00	150	300	500	   	1/2 g 50	1 g 100
			FLINTSTONE'S VITAMINS	25	00	150	300	500			
			LIBERTY CHEESE	25	00	150	300	500			
			ONCE UPON A TIME IN JAMA...	25	00	150	300	500			
			BLEU CHEESE	10	50	100	175	300			
			PURPLE CREAM	10	50	100	175	300			
			CREAM CHEESE	10	50	100	175	300			
			HERO D'JOK	10	50	100	175	300			
			NYC O.G.	10	50	100	175	300			
			DYNAMA O.G.	10	50	100	175	300			
	12-24 ea	70-100 mg	DYNAMA O.G.	10	50	100	175	300			
			DYNAMA O.G.	10	50	100	175	300			
			LOUISIANA O.G.	15	15	30	100	230			
			LOUISIANA O.G.	15	15	30	100	230			
			OBAMA O.G.	15	15	30	100	230			
			SNOOP DOGG MASTER KUSH	15	15	30	100	230			
			PLUTO KUSH	15	15	30	100	230			
			AFGHANI BULLRIDER	15	15	30	100	230			
			DUTCH WINDMILL	15	15	30	100	230			
			DOOM KAT O.G.	15	15	30	100	230			
	5-27 ea	20-120 mg	SELF DESTRUCT O.G.	10	10	00	135	250			
			RUSTY O.G.	10	10	00	135	250			

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Dispensing Medicine with **AARON HEISLER** of JAYNE in Portland, Oregon

SINCE opening in November 2015, JAYNE has garnered a reputation as a beautiful shop with a friendly staff, knowledgeable budtenders, and great deals. Iowa native Aaron Heisler, 31, a former bartender and longtime cannabis connoisseur, said the dispensary suits him. A year ago, Heisler packed up his car and headed to the the City of Roses to join the cannabis industry.

"Cannabis has always been something I have enjoyed," he said, "and I believe it to be one of the few budding industries left in the country."

While Heisler initially thought his ten years of bartending experience would have been the most helpful training for becoming a budtender, the year of counseling work he did was vastly more helpful. It makes sense: Budtenders are in the business of conveying the experiences different strains and methods of ingestion may induce in patients.

"The listening and communication skills I learned in a counseling setting mirror this job very closely."

"THE LISTENING AND COMMUNICATION SKILLS I LEARNED IN A COUNSELING SETTING MIRROR BUDTENDING VERY CLOSELY."

—Aaron Heisler


BEST WAYS TO ATTRACT AND KEEP CUSTOMERS

"You have to genuinely care about the people who are your customers," said Heisler. "Being able to connect with the individual people that come into your shop and make them feel like people instead of customers is key."

WHAT'S HOT

"Empower makes soaking salts that are my favorite topical product," said Heisler. "Edibles-wise, She Don't Know makes a bake-less coconut cookie that is both vegan and paleo, while Peak Extracts makes strain-specific chocolates. On the flower side, Cascade High Organics, High Valley Organics, and Pilot Farm."

PASSION

"Cannabis has always had a very positive influence on my life," Heisler said. "Budtending gives me the opportunity to help people explore the ways in which cannabis can improve their lives. Helping people find their cannabis is something I feel incredibly lucky to have the opportunity to do." 



The Bottom Line

GOOD BUDTENDERS ARE KEY TO A PROFITABLE BUSINESS BECAUSE...

"People come back for people," noted Heisler. "Prices are pretty consistent in all shops and ambiance can only take you so far. If a customer doesn't have a good experience with the people behind the counter, they will go to other places. Always hire budtenders who will give customers a good experience, and [consumers] won't go anywhere else, period."

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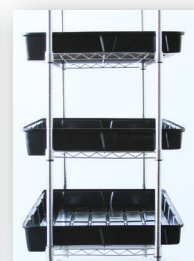
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2 x 4 RACK TRAY



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- Great for top feed drip or flood and drain propagation.
- Easy clean, shallow drainage reduces standing water.
- Designed features allow tray to sit flat on shelving with a trough that hangs slightly over the edge.
- Trough collects runoff then directs it towards the bulkhead recess to reduce standing water.



- 45.5" x 25.5" x 3.5"
- Designed to fit standard (48"L x 18"D x 69"H) chrome wire shelving.
- Perfect for large scale micro green or commercial propagators.
- Easy clean, shallow drainage reduces standing water.
- Designed features allow tray to sit flat on shelving with a trough that hangs slightly over the edge.
- Trough collects runoff then directs it towards the bulkhead recess to reduce standing water.



Excellence in Seattle

DESPITE WASHINGTON STATE'S FALLING PRICES, DRACONIAN TAX AND CREDIT CARD CHALLENGES, **SEATTLE CANNABIS CO.** CONTINUES TO THRIVE BY STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD.

S EATTLE CANNABIS CO. benefits from having five owners with different professional backgrounds. All of them, however, had at least some experience in the medical marijuana field.

Co-owner Steve Ode, 31, worked in the growing service industry. In 2013, he and his brother and sister-in-law launched the grow Marigold Products Inc. "After doing a lot of research, we found it made more sense financially for us to become a retailer," Ode said. "In Washington State, there was a lottery system for retail applicants, and initially we were put as seventh on the waiting list. Enough applicants either gave up or couldn't comply with all the state's demands, so eventually our name came up."

Seattle Cannabis Co. finally opened its doors in February 2015.



SEATTLE CANNABIS CO.



**3230 1ST AVE SOUTH
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SEATTLECANNABIS.CO

DESIGN

"We were going for a clean, open, inviting space," Ode said. "We wanted to maintain the spirit of the industrial neighborhood we're in, so we made use of live-edge shelving, exposed beams, piping, and old barn doors. The aim was to move away from the clinical aesthetic and layout of most of the shops."

BUDTENDER REQUIREMENTS


"The number one requirement is to have good customer service," said Ode. "Product knowledge can always be taught, classes can be taken, but it is much more difficult to teach someone to provide good service. Other than that, attention to detail, good math skills, and cannabis interest are all-important."

BEST SELLERS

"Flower is still the king, but edibles and extracts are not far behind," according to Ode. "We're still at the point where high THC percentages tend to get the most attention but, as customers learn more about terpenes and the entourage effect, their buying habits are changing. High-terpene concentrates are popular right now, as are infused holiday cookies. A segment of our customers are looking strictly for CBD-heavy strains and products."

SALES

"Business has been good, but everything has changed dramatically since we opened," Ode said. "Prices have fallen a lot; some of our products have seen about a 50-percent price reduction since that time. That's because, although there is a limit to the amount of retail locations allowed, there is no limit on the amount of producers and processors. Competition is extremely fierce among producers and processors, while retailers get to be very selective about what they choose to carry. I don't want to get too into the numbers of our company but, like most retail stores, we rely on moving lots of products to be profitable."

One thing to keep in mind is that we are taxed much more heavily than other businesses. We have to pay state excise tax of 37 percent and city sales tax of 9.6 percent, as well as fees for certificates and authorizations specific to the industry."  — Rob Hill



Number of employees:

20



Customers per day:

200 - 300



66

BUSINESS HAS BEEN GOOD, BUT EVERYTHING HAS CHANGED SINCE WE OPENED. PRICES HAVE FALLEN A LOT; SOME OF OUR PRODUCTS HAVE SEEN ABOUT A 50-PERCENT PRICE REDUCTION. THAT'S BECAUSE, ALTHOUGH THERE IS A LIMIT TO THE AMOUNT OF RETAIL LOCATIONS ALLOWED, THERE IS NO LIMIT ON THE AMOUNT OF PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS. COMPETITION IS EXTREMELY FIERCE AMONG PRODUCERS AND PROCESSORS, WHILE RETAILERS GET TO BE VERY SELECTIVE ABOUT WHAT THEY CHOOSE TO CARRY?"

— Steve Ode, co-owner, Seattle Cannabis Co.

99

Profits Over Problems

THE THREE BIGGEST CHALLENGES SEATTLE CANNABIS CO. HAS OVERCOME ARE...

1

STAYING IN COMPLIANCE WITH EVER CHANGING LAWS, REGULATIONS, AND NEW RULES. "Washington State has not made it easy for us. The number one challenge is staying updated and in compliance with the changes in the law," said Ode. "You must be adaptive to not only change how you do business at a moment's notice, but to work with state systems which may not always operate as intended."

2

ACCEPTING PAYMENT AND WORKING WITH BANKS. "Initially, there were zero banking options since marijuana is still federally illegal," Ode noted. "We used to have a lot of cash on hand when we first started. Luckily, there are a few different options now, but it's still a big pain to accept credit cards. Different solutions have come up for accepting credit, but none of them have survived for very long."

3

STANDING OUT FROM THE CROWD. "We're surrounded by other retail locations competing for similar demographics, so we had to find our niche," said Ode. "Considering Washington State was the first state to legalize, we figured there would be a good amount of marijuana tourism. We chose our name so we'd have the most search engine visibility for cannabis users visiting Seattle."



L'Eagle co-owner Amy Andrie

Passing the Test

AMY ANDRLE, CO-OWNER OF L'EAGLE SERVICES, ON SELLING TOP-QUALITY CANNABIS, FINDING THE RIGHT EMPLOYEES, AND YEAR-OVER-YEAR GROWTH.

AMY ANDRLE IS EXCITED. As a founding member of the Cannabis Cultivation Council (CCC), she's just begun preparing for the organization's second annual Cannabis Sustainability Symposium in October. Andrle's dispensary, L'Eagle in Denver, Colorado, is renowned for its clean, powerful, and top-tier flower. Business has grown 30 percent since the shop's launch in 2010, thanks to popular strains like L'Eagle Eagle, known for its flavor and engaging characteristics ("artistic, talkative"), Bruce Banner #5 ("very upbeat, energetic"), and GS Cookies ("intensely flavorful"). L'Eagle sells only what they grow and currently cultivates more than seventy different strains.

"We're all about quality, spacing, and never cutting corners," said Andrle, who founded L'Eagle with her husband, John. "At L'Eagle, our nutrients are derived from high-quality, food-grade minerals and mineral acids, then blended with organic and inorganic compounds to create a fully balanced plant food that is rich with a high rate of bioavailability."

L'Eagle also subscribes to a rigorous integrated pest management system rooted in non-synthetic pesticides and clean cultural practices. "We have created low-stress environments, we sterilize all areas between batches, and we never treat late flower. L'Eagle believes healthy plants are still the best defense against pests and disease, and our treatments include organic OMRI-certified oils, bio-fungicides and bio-insecticides, bactericides, and beneficial insects."

"WHEN IT COMES TO OUR CULTIVATION TEAM, WE HIRE EMPLOYEES WHO HAVE DEGREES IN AGRICULTURE AND ENVIRONMENTAL SCIENCES. WE INVEST A LOT OF TIME AND ENERGY IN OUR STAFF, BECAUSE WE WANT THEM TO GROW WITH US."

—Amy Andrle, co-owner, L'Eagle

CLEARLY, YOU HAVE A PASSION FOR CANNABIS. HOW DID THIS COME ABOUT?

I've always been an advocate for ending marijuana prohibition, both from a health and human services standpoint and from an adult-use angle, not to mention the ripple effects of legalization as it relates to incarceration rates and drug trafficking. Cannabis is an alternative to toxic pharmaceuticals and addictive narcotics. When

I have a friend or family member who is sick, it feels good to be able to offer them a choice and teach them about alternative treatments.

YOU OPENED L'EAGLE ALMOST EIGHT YEARS AGO. HOW'S BUSINESS?

We've been averaging 30 percent year-over-year growth and now have thirty full-time employees and ten part-time.

We are a mission-driven team. We lift each other up and take care of one another. We seek longevity in our employees, and our business does everything it can to keep them satisfied.

HOW DO YOU FIND GOOD EMPLOYEES?

We put listings out with a unique call to action: We're not looking for budtenders; we're looking for people who want to make a career in the space. When it comes to our cultivation team, we hire employees who have degrees in agriculture and environmental sciences. We invest a lot of time and energy into our staff, because we want them to grow with us. We want our staff to feel good about having a future at L'Eagle and to get engaged with the brand.



YOUR FLOWER HAS A STELLAR REPUTATION.

In an effort to ensure our clients have access to safe, clean, long-cured cannabis, we only sell flower we cultivate ourselves. Overall, the onset of standalone cultivation facilities and the elimination of vertical integration in Colorado has altered the landscape of the wholesale market and shifted the pricing. However, product differentiation is starting to occur, and customers now recognize there can be an enormous difference between one Blue Dream and another.

WHAT DOES “ORGANIC” MEAN TO YOU?

L'Eagle uses the term “clean cannabis” because of the federal regulations and restrictions around labeling one’s marijuana products organic. That said, we define clean cannabis as utilizing organic best-practice cultivation methods and being free of synthetic pesticides. In fact, we do not treat the plants at all after the first three weeks of flowering, and we long-cure for a minimum of sixty days. ^{mg}

— Rob Hill



Did you know?

L'Eagle does not treat plants after the first three weeks of flowering and long-cures for a minimum of sixty days in a temperature-controlled sixty-six-degrees airtight container in complete darkness.

Amy's Tips for a Healthy Business

DON'T CUT CORNERS, whether in quality, sustainability or health standards.

TAKE CARE of employees.

DO RIGHT BY CUSTOMERS, and they will reward you with loyalty.

L'Eagle co-owner John Andrie on growing cleaner, greener cannabis.



TELL US ABOUT YOUR GROW.

Unlike many indoor grows, we focus on having sufficient airflow and lots of space, not just for ourselves, but also for our plants. We don't cram in as many lights as possible, then fill every square inch underneath with plants. We have pulled out our irrigation lines and are back to having a degreed horticulturalist hand-water the plants. It's important that our staff and plants have room to move and grow.

YOU'VE BEEN DOING THIS FOR A WHILE.

I've sold pot to Colorado cannabis connoisseurs most of my life. When retail was on the horizon in 2009, I thought Colorado Kind Bud would be a desirable product. After eight years and the consolidation of stores and grows, quantity is the name of the game, and there is very little flower that is reminiscent of the organic home-grower from twenty years ago. However, my goal is for our pot to be just like it was then.

HOW DO YOU ACHIEVE THAT GOAL?

Our plants are completely clean. We don't drench or spray once the buds have set. Contrary to popular belief, spraying OMRI-rated products on buds and flowers does not equate to an “organic” product. Also, we cure for ninety days in a temperature-controlled sixty-six degrees airtight container in complete darkness. This step has been discounted since the inception of commercial cannabis cultivation. Like wine, steak or caviar, if it's not cured, it's just grape juice, meat, or fish eggs. Plus, our shit is strong: We grow mostly nine-week strains that are at least 20-percent THC.

ANY FAVORITE STRAINS?

L'Eagle Eagle and The Cookies Forum Cut (very rare in the dispensary world). The former is the house strain and by far our most popular. It's a cross between Candy Haze and Skunk #6, making for a high-THC sativa with zero raciness, similar to Sour Diesel, Durban Poison, or Bruce Banner. The latter is a low-yielding, incredibly delicious combo of Durban Poison and traditional Southern California OG Kush.

WHAT LIGHTING AND NUTRIENT SYSTEM DO YOU USE?

T-5 fluorescents in the nursery, ceramic metal halides in veg, and double-ended high-pressure sodium in flower. Our nutrients are derived from high-quality minerals and mineral acids, then blended with organic and inorganic compounds to create a fully balanced plant food that is rich with a high rate of bioavailability.

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Rad Source's RS 420 Zaps Mold

LOOK OUT MOLD, YEAST, PESTS, AND OTHER PATHOGENS!
THE RS 420 IRRADIATION UNIT HAS SUPER POWERS
OVER CANNABIS CROP VILLAINS.

RADIATION gets an undeserved bad rap. In popular culture, the word alone prompts comicbook visions of leaky nuclear reactors, global apocalypse, and strange mutations. So, zapping cannabis crops with non-gamma X-rays may seem extremely unnatural to some. Will smoking irradiated flower turn you green like the Incredible Hulk?

"No, radiation has very little effect on the cannabis," Rad Source product engineer Nathan Kroeger said, debunking a popular misconception. Irradiated materials do not contain radiation.

"There is no heat or pressure put on the buds during processing," he said. "The buds are placed inside of the processing canisters; then the canisters are placed inside of the RS 420. While the canisters themselves move around our patented QuaStar® X-ray source, the cannabis buds do not move inside of the canisters."

Rad Source developed the RS 420 modular irradiation unit exclusively for the industrial cannabis market to eliminate pests, mold, yeast, disease-causing bacteria, and other microorganisms in crops. The on-site unit can increase yields by effectively removing harmful pathogens from fully grown plants, making the product viable for sale and compliant with (current and quickly developing) regulations for human consumption.

Irradiation also helps ensure consumer safety and product quality by removing

harmful contaminants. The Food and Drug Administration, U.S. Department of Agriculture, and World Health Organization have approved the proprietary technology used in the RS 420 in other applications, but the technology is new to cannabis growers.

"At this time, two and a half pounds per cycle is the maximum. We're evaluating developing larger units," Kroeger said. Each cycle takes up to two hours. Companies requiring larger configurations should contact Rad Source, according to the company's website.

The RS 420 also can provide growers with data about questionable crops, which can help growers pinpoint specific problem organisms and also document issues or improvements by batch. Kroeger explained, using aerobic plate count as an example. "Aerobic plate count is the total count of microorganisms on a product and is generally used as a quality test."

The Georgia-based company, established in 1997, specializes in developing X-ray technology for use in closed-source irradiation processes. In 1999, Rad Source's blood irradiator was the first to be approved by the FDA. Other product development has been primarily in the medical and research industries.

"Other items that our X-ray irradiators are used for are to irradiate blood for GVHD [a process used for bone marrow treatments], cells for cancer research, and insects for insect pest control," Kroeger said.

Irradiating insects, called "sterile insect



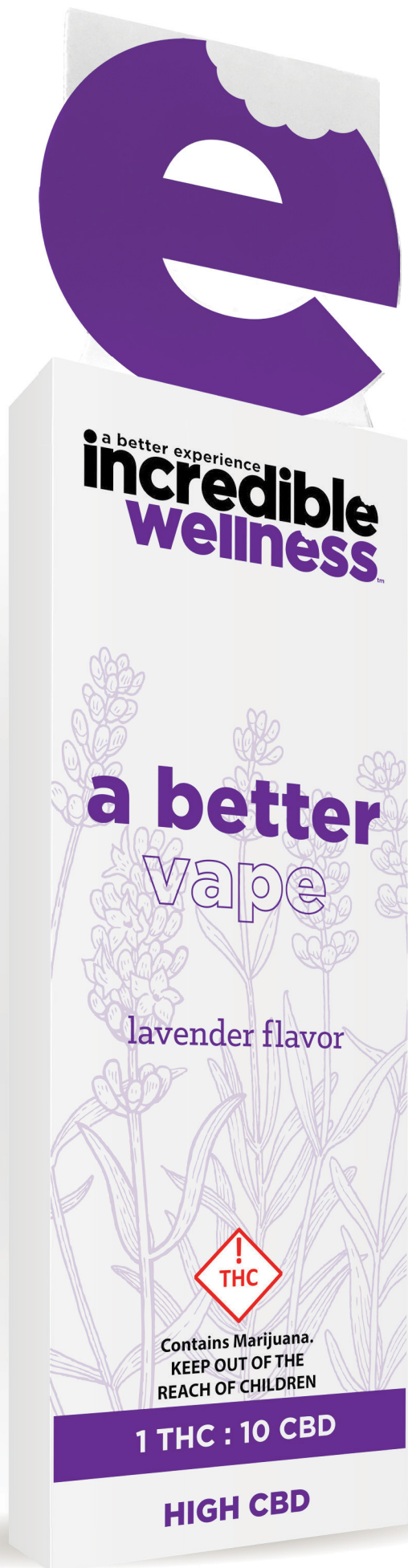
technique," is used against crop pests and vector insects. The technique creates sterile bugs, which are introduced to the environment in order to interrupt targeted organisms' reproductive cycle. Even small animals like mice can be irradiated for research purposes.

In the U.S., the FDA and USDA regulate federal irradiation standards and policies for consumable goods and have allowed the technology's use for decades. Foods that have been approved for irradiation in the U.S. include red meat, poultry, pork, produce, potatoes, wheat, herbs, and spices. Common consumables that contain measurable amounts of natural radioactivity include bananas, Brazil nuts, and tobacco, which accumulate natural radium from soil.

International standards for irradiation vary and typically include products for import and export. India recently approved four irradiation projects to build facilities that will use gamma irradiation to preserve perishable food products including onions, garlic, pomegranates, mangoes, dehydrated onion powder, and Ayurvedic raw materials.

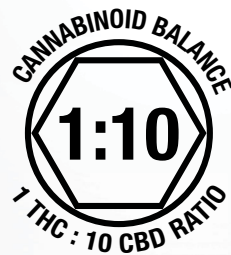
As markets expand and marijuana begins to be treated like more traditional consumable crops, irradiation may become a processing standard. That would be great for Rad Source and future iterations of the RS 420. For growers—and their customers—who hate moldy weed, the wait for a practical, high-tech solution could be over. **mg**

—Joanne Cachapero



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Leveraging SEO to Grow your Cannabiz

BY CAMERON MARTEL

AH YES, SEO: the website marketing strategy every business knows it needs but few know how to leverage.

Since Google's rise to search engine domination, SEO—or search engine optimization—has become entrenched as a must-have component of every online marketing mix. In the cannabis space, where paid search options are limited yet consumer interest is strong, SEO can be a particularly potent tool to attract new customers, introduce your brand to new vendors, and help solidify your business as a subject matter expert.

The capability and potential of SEO is huge—which you most certainly already know—but how can it be leveraged?

SEO PRESENTS A POWERFUL OPPORTUNITY IN THE CANNABIS SPACE.

Restrictions on most pay-per-click platforms, including AdWords, prevent your cannabusiness from utilizing them effectively. You may be able to market accessories and peripherals, but the core product can't grace the PPC platform.

SO, WHAT CAN YOU DO?

SEO is an excellent workaround. You can rank for terms people search for, grow organic traffic (traffic coming from a search engine), and capture the audience. The path to success is a little less direct compared to PPC, but it is a tangible path many others have walked to their benefit.

If you want to capture Google users, SEO is the best way to do it. Let's discuss how you can leverage Google and grow your business.

FIRST, UNDERSTAND WHAT SEO IS...

As one of the most misunderstood disciplines of modern marketing, 99 percent of business owners struggle to explain SEO and why they need it. This is due, in part, to its relative obscurity, but mostly to its ever-changing practices and principles. If we skip over the minutiae and focus on the concept, SEO is actually quite simple:

- Create a website experience that is positive and delivers value to your users.

- Build strong, high-quality content that delivers value to your users.
- Promote said content through various channels like social media (Facebook, Reddit), blogs, influencers, and subject-matter-authority websites.

The methods behind achieving the above three objectives vary from strategy to strategy, but at the core of any good SEO plan is a method to make them happen.

...AND WHAT SEO ISN'T.

As SEO has evolved, misconceptions about what it is and how to produce results have emerged. Often, the fallacies exist due to the proliferation of bad advice about what used to work. SEO is a field rife with opportunists, and many times so-called SEO professionals operate as though stuck in 2012.

Google has evolved in the more than seventeen years since it rose to prominence, and throughout its evolution the search engine relied on various metrics to help determine which websites should rank higher than others in search results. Outdated ideas about which techniques are effective were born of trying to manipulate the metrics. Be wary if your prospective SEO professional focuses on:

- One-track promotional efforts, such as “social bookmarking” or article writing.
- Building a high volume of backlinks (a link from a website back to yours), regardless from where those backlinks come.
- Creating content with a focus on word count.
- Content loaded with keywords.
- Stuffing keywords into pages or blog posts wherever possible.
- Creating satellite websites for the purpose of linking back to yours.

While the above methods should be part of an SEO strategy, they should be leveraged only as part of a larger and more expansive program that focuses on creating and delivering value to users.

IN THE MODERN AGE OF SOUNDBITES AND HEADLINES, PROVIDING VALUE IS KEY.

Value is an interesting word that means different things to different people. What you or I define as valuable may not be valuable to the audience we're trying to attract.

Understanding what users seek and the kind of content they're looking to consume is critical in delivering value. When we deliver value to users, they tend to do things that send positive signals to Google.

- They stay on your website longer, a sign they're consuming the content.
- They visit multiple pages and interact with more material.
- They share the content they consume, bringing more users to the website.

VALUE, VALUE, VALUE: IT'S THE FUTURE OF SEO.

What do we mean when we say “delivering value to users?”

It's simple: all parts of SEO should focus on creating a pleasant and enjoyable experience. The focus should not be on ranking higher, but instead on providing enjoyment from both technical and content points of view. What does that look like? Let's look at two different businesses:

- For a car-review website, hands-on, high-quality reviews with original photos, specifications, and comparisons provide much more value than a brief summary with stock photos.
- For a physiotherapy practice, outlining the steps taken to address a specific injury, including embedded videos demonstrating at-home exercises, provides much more value than a page briefly describing all the injuries the practice treats.

In both of the above examples, extra value is added by anticipating the needs of the user and proactively addressing them.

A website experience can, and should be, powerful and intuitive.

The days of website resembling online brochures are over. In 2017, sites are digital storefronts and, likely, the front line that anchors a business's marketing efforts.

EFFORTS TO DELIVER VALUE START HERE.

To maximize SEO potential, invest in:

- The mobile experience. Google is moving toward a mobile-first index, so ensure the mobile experience is top-notch.
- Content that addresses user intent. Every search is rooted in a question, and by answering that question a website provides a great user experience.
- A clean, uncluttered layout that follows clear aesthetic and structural best practices. Every page and blog post should have a goal. Ensure the site design and layout help the user achieve that goal.

A website need not be expensive to accomplish the above. It does need a well-thought-out plan that actively considers all those to generate the best return on investment.

In every stage of development, ask yourself whether you are building the website you would use if you were the consumer.

CONTENT IS 90 PERCENT OF THE BATTLE.

The prettiest website will fail to perform if the content doesn't do its job. Whether you are reaching out to consumers or trying to market yourself to other cannabusinesses, the content must perform.

Creating great content is a time-consuming process that requires considerable research, attention to detail, and thought. It's about more than words; it's the interconnection of the copy, media, and other assets that come together to provide a cohesive experience.

Great content meets the needs and wants of the consumer. What can that look like?



- A compelling blog that helps users understand the dosage information about your edible products.
- An infographic that outlines the different methods of cannabis consumption, including their pros and cons.
- A video that walks visitors through the proper way to use your new vaporizer.
- An online “quiz” that helps consumers better determine which strain is best suited to their needs.

Great content is not “one size fits all.” It is bespoke, created to suit the need of the user searching for it. There is no formula for its creation outside “meet the needs of the website visitor, however that must be done.”

THE NEXT STEP IS SMART, TACTFUL PROMOTION.

Promoting the high-quality content you’ve created is a massive part of SEO. This is commonly referred to as link building, an accurate term for 2012 but no longer the case in 2017. Instead, this part of SEO should be referred to as offsite marketing.

The main goal of offsite marketing is to build a strong base of backlinks and social shares, yes, but the link itself is no longer the singular focus. Today, it’s about building a positive brand perception. This is easily the most misunderstood part of SEO.

Think of it like this: You’ve invested time, money, and effort in creating a positive experience on your website, complete with compelling content. Why promote that experience using spammy, disingenuous, or outdated techniques? After all, the key to SEO success is in delivering value...and that includes your efforts offsite.

Taking into consideration the importance of that value, what kind of offsite marketing practices can be leveraged to improve SEO?

- Share educational content on social media, including content aggregators such as Reddit and StumbleUpon.
- Contribute to forums where discussions relevant to your business take place.
- Participate in Facebook groups.
- Get involved in industry associations and conferences; demonstrate yourself as the subject matter expert you are.
- Contribute to related websites and blogs, providing their readers the opportunity to engage your brand.
- Share rich media, such as videos, on the platforms where users look for them (YouTube, Vimeo, etc.).

THE CANNABIS SPACE IS AN SEO OPPORTUNITY WAITING TO BE LEVERAGED.

The above provides a high-level overview of how to achieve success in SEO, but by no means is it comprehensive. How your business should utilize SEO depends on many things, from the customers you serve to your position in the industry.

Regardless, in an industry where paid marketing avenues such as AdWords or Facebook, are difficult or impossible to take advantage of, SEO remains a stable, powerful opportunity.

When you deliver value whenever and however possible, Google rankings skyrocket—and, hopefully, your business will grow, too. 🍀

CAMERON MARTEL is a long-term SEO veteran. He began his career in 2005 and now works with Mint Chip Media to help cannabis-businesses improve their organic visibility. He has worked with companies in a variety of industries to help them achieve their marketing goals. As a medicinal marijuana user himself, he brings passion sourced from his personal experiences to his cannabis clients. MintChipMedia.com



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Strain Factory

PHAT PANDA IS SMART, STRATEGIC, AND DOMINATING THE WASHINGTON STATE FLOWER MARKET.

BY TOM HYMES

PHOTOGRAPHY BY KRISTEN ANGELO

It's been several months since I toured the Grow Op Farms operation, located in a massive 100,000-square-foot industrial building abutting the Spokane, Washington, train tracks, but it feels like yesterday. Grow Op is known in the industry by the name of its primary brand, Phat Panda, the number one producer of flower in the state, but it also encompasses the company's two other brands, Sticky Frog (concentrates), and Hot Sugar! (edibles).

CONDUCTED BY BOB MCKINLEY, an experienced marketer who founded the company in 2014 with his wife, Katrina, the two-and-a-half-hour tour was a master's class in logistics. The operation was impossibly intricate, a multi-dimensional ballet of continuous cultivation, production, and processing that seamlessly hummed along as construction crews worked 24/7 shifts building out even more grow rooms in which to produce more of the company's market-leading flower.

Cultivating, harvesting, processing, packaging, and shipping to retail stores throughout the state within environments tightly controlled by the seemingly all-knowing Washington State Liquor and Cannabis Board, Phat Panda's operation displays military-like logistical precision.

“
**WE'RE A KRAFT OR
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”

Compliance certainly is everything, but what makes Phat Panda even more impressive is the way in which the company entered the Washington State market in early 2015. Working against the prevailing market forces, the company quickly dominated its flower market and has preserved its status by maintaining its original price

points, meeting controlled statewide demand, and maintaining a stellar reputation for consistency and quality among retailers and consumers. It sounds like a fairy tale, which the company may want to consider naming one of the thirty or so strains Phat Panda regularly has on the shelves.

It would be easy to suggest Phat Panda was simply in the right place at the right time, but that would fail to appreciate what the company truly accomplished. Starting with an initial investment





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of \$3 million, in a few short years Phat Panda became the largest flower producer in the state, a lead it has maintained ever since by plowing all profits back into operations. The way McKinley explained it, laying the proper foundation was essential.

“When I did my original business model, I did it at \$1,200 a pound [for flower],” he said. “Could I survive at \$1,200?”

The answer was yes, but could the still-immature Washington State market support such a price point?

“The first companies in the cannabis space here were hated because they charged \$18 a gram up to whatever they could get, and people would pay it,” said McKinley. “The growers were taking advantage of the retailers.”

McKinley saw an opportunity at his fingertips. “When we came into the marketplace in January 2015, the price per gram was around \$8,” he said. “We were growing a lot, and I didn’t want to sit on it. I didn’t want slow growth; I wanted to go as high as I could go. So, when we started working with our first

retailers, I asked them, ‘What is the price you need to be at?’ They told me, ‘If we could be at \$5 a gram, we could move all of it and then some.’ An eighth would be \$17.50 wholesale and retail for from \$45 to \$50.

“So, we came in and basically readjusted everybody’s price,” he said. “We went straight to \$5. It’s a part of the reason why people hate us. We changed the whole market and it helped us accelerate, but it also made the average growers come down in price.”

That was three years ago. “We haven’t had to change our pricing,” said McKinley. “I can still get \$5 a gram, and we’ve been profitable enough to continue to grow.” The story is a living, breathing example of McKinley’s business philosophy in action: “Best product for the lowest price.”

Price was not the only thing Phat Panda had going for it. “Having our product in glass was the differentiation when we were new,” said McKinley. “We were also the first big indoor grower to have product for lots of stores at once.” The company sold only

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flower and pre-rolls to start. “Our first month, we sold \$200,000 in product,” said McKinley. “We went to \$600,000 our second month, stayed there for a few months, and were the first company to hit \$1 million a month in sales. We hit \$2 million at the same time as our main competitor, but we had a big jump from \$1.2 million to \$2.1 million when our new rooms came online last year.”

Five more grow rooms have come online since, with a capacity of about 200 pounds of dry, usable bud per room.

REMARKABLE GROWTH

At the time of my tour, McKinley said Phat Panda was producing an estimated 150 pounds or more of wholesale flower per week. “We grow the most flower in the state,” he said. Phat Panda re-

“ I GREW UP IN A GROCERY STORE, AND AT AN EARLY AGE I LEARNED THAT WHEN SOMETHING LEFT THE SHELF, THERE WAS ALWAYS SOMETHING TO REPLACE IT. ”

and 10-percent edibles (Hot Sugar!).

Still, for what it’s worth, the two companies are virtually neck and neck. Each has generated more than \$41 million in total sales, but less than \$100,000 difference between the two constitutes a statistical tie. The third-most-profitable processor in the state claims less than \$19 million in total sales.

Monthly and yearly tallies also indicate a two-horse race, with Grow Op and Northwest each bringing in more than \$2 million

mains the number two processor in the state month-after-month, just behind Northwest Cannabis Solutions. However, McKinley noted, 40 percent of Northwest’s sales are edibles, whereas Grow Op maintains a consistent breakdown of its three brands at 70-percent flower (Phat Panda), 20-percent concentrates (Sticky Frog),





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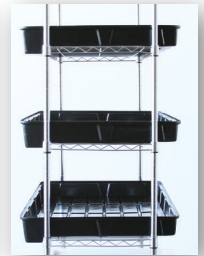
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in sales, a threshold Grow Op has attained four out of the past seven months, including the most recent three. Considering the falling prices for flower in the state, with the average having dipped as low as \$7 a gram for retail, maintaining \$2 million in monthly sales is no mean feat.

The long-term trajectory is upward. "In 2016, we generated just under \$20 million [in sales]," said McKinley. "The first year was \$8 million. Everything extra is put right back into the company."

There is also a list of retailers waiting to receive Phat Panda flower. That's exactly how McKinley likes it. "I grew up in a grocery store, and at an early age I learned that when something left the shelf, there was always something to replace it. It wasn't always the same brand, but maybe a similar product," he said. "In our original business plan, we had it that we would always have enough product so we would never lose our spot on the shelf. As we've grown, that has meant not bringing on too many clients so we would never lose that spot on the shelf. Some stores run out, but we always replenish

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them within twenty-four to forty-eight hours.” Five trucks deliver products to more than ninety stores weekly.

As far as relations with partner retailers, the company takes pride in being a rare anchor brand in the industry. “We look at ourselves as a cornerstone brand in your retail shop,” said McKinley. “We’re a Kraft or Kellogg’s, a key cog to your success. If we’re in your store, we’re going to dominate and take 15 to 20 percent of your retail sales. It’s inevitable. That’s how many people will come and ask for it. It’s why we have ninety stores on our waiting list. So many people go into stores asking for our products, and we can’t service them.”

FUTURE OUTLOOK

Washington state recently increased the number of retail licenses it will approve. Five hundred eight licensed retailers current ex-

“**WE LOOK AT OURSELVES
AS A CORNERSTONE
BRAND IN YOUR
RETAIL SHOP.**”

ist in the state, with more possibly to come. McKinley is happiest when he knows he will sell out of flower every month, and there is still room for growth. “The maximum revenue we will be able to derive out of this market will be about \$5 million a month if we are running at peak efficiency with edibles and concentrates,” he said. “Somewhere between \$4 million and \$5 million a month.”

Though it remains a bona-fide flower king in the state, Grow Op is looking to increase its concentrates and edibles market share. Currently, its Golden Pineapple and OG Chem strains are consistent standouts, and Phat Panda’s pre-rolls are so dominant McKinley calls the company the “Baskin-Robbins of pre-rolls.” That’s an apt comparison, considering Phat Panda produces 50,000 to 80,000 every week in twenty flavors. The company also produces well over 15,000 vape pens each week and continues



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to innovate with products like the Pocket Panda, a sleek new pen that features patent-pending technology and retails for less than \$80. As well, a half-dozen strain-specific concentrates are offered under the Sticky Frog brand. As far as edibles go, Hot Sugar! offers flavored THC powder in 10mg servings, more than twenty-five flavored 10mg Panda Candies, and five flavors of caramels. Drink-enhancing Panda Shots are coming soon.

The company also sells thousands of dollars of Phat Panda merchandise monthly, a testament to the reach of the brand across state lines. McKinley is singularly focused on making sure the Washington State business continues to dominate the market, but expansion into other states is not off the table. “I think we will at least be able to carve a niche on California,” McKinley said modestly. He’s in no rush, but he readily admits “lots of people like our brand.”

And well they should. McKinley’s focused and businesslike discipline has allowed the company to expand without outside investment. Meanwhile, his master grower, Andrew Guy, con-

tinues to produce acclaimed strains consumers appreciate. Flower is produced from clone to nug in pristine environments using time-tested standard operating procedures, and everything tested on-site by Trace Analytics before hitting the market. The company spends more than \$10,000 a month on pest-killing bugs—just one effort it undertakes to ensure all its products are pesticide-free. McKinley is on a “super-huge pheno hunt” in a farsighted effort to protect his intellectual property by identifying the specific dominant traits he wants to develop in his plants.

Grow Op is one of the industry’s few “large-scale boutique” success stories with an even brighter future, which might make it a tasty target for takeover. But with more than 1,000 people dependent upon the company staying in business, as well as a multitude of consumers clamoring for their products, McKinley and his wife are super-protective of what they have created. They also are the type to see a project through to completion.

“We want to be number one in every sector,” is how McKinley put it. 

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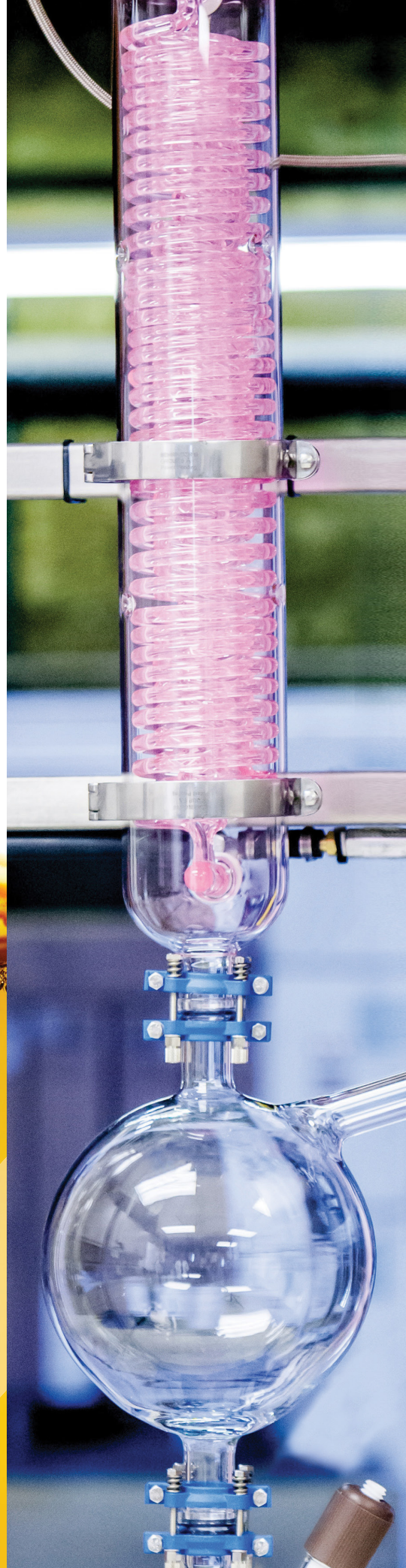


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Plant	Feeding Mix	pH	Temp	Humidity	Time
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 683 ppm	5 pH 73°F	75°F - 45%	1211 ppm	M Hardin Mar 21 [09:24 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 839 ppm	5 pH 75°F	78°F / 71°F		M Hardin Mar 21 [09:24 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 674 ppm	5 pH 75°F	71°F - 48%	1197 ppm	M Hardin Mar 21 [12:07 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 696 ppm	5 pH 73°F	74°F / 68°F		M Hardin Mar 21 [12:05 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 896 ppm	5 pH 73°F	77°F - 55%	1219 ppm	M Hardin Mar 21 [12:05 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 884 ppm	5 pH 76°F	78°F / 71°F		M Hardin Mar 20 [10:05 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 884 ppm	5 pH 76°F	78°F / 71°F		M Hardin Mar 20 [10:05 PM
1 plant	Feed Flower Mix 884 ppm	5 pH 76°F	78°F / 71°F		M Hardin Mar 20 [11:17 AM

Future Farms

CANNABIS HELPED SPUR INNOVATIVE INDOOR GROWING; NOW, TECHNOLOGY GIVES YOUR FARM A BRAIN.

BY JOANNE CACHAPERO

You know that sound like an elevator at the beginning of Pink Floyd's "Welcome to the Machine?" Imagine that sound as the elevator comes to a stop. Bright, white doors slide open. Swish, thunk.

Step through the airlock into a control room populated with a few agricultural techs in white bio-contagion coveralls. A digital control panel pings and blinks, monitoring and adjusting levels, ultra-efficient, sleek, and modern. A huge window looks onto the grow room, stacked floor-to-ceiling with racks of trays planted with cannabis clones. Or arugula. Or spinach. Or strawberries. The rows and rows and rows, tended by automatons, grow in perfectly sterile conditions.

*Photos courtesy of MedMen
Med Men's grow facility in Sun Valley, CA*

WELCOME TO FUTURE FARMS

Previously, success in any agricultural sector has depended on variable conditions including soil quality, weather, location, pests, possibility of blights, and the wild whims of Mother Nature. Now, all those variables can be controlled inside “smart farms.” Hooked into the Internet of Things, grow spaces are getting on WIFI, receiving their own brains, and starting to talk.

“We’re involved in a couple of projects that are highly automated, which are for food production—leafy greens, lettuce, micro-greens. This definitely can cross over with the cannabis space as well,” said Ted Tanner, founder of Denver-based Growlink. “I just left a facility where everything that’s growing is one hundred percent automated, so people never enter into the room. That already eliminates any need for pesticides, right? No contaminations. It has positive air pressure, so nothing can come into the room and no people are going in to introduce anything.

“This system goes up fifteen layers high,” Tanner continued, “and an elevator and robot actually grab these pods, bring them down, and put them on a roller in front of people, and that’s where they actually harvest it.”

Called “vertical farming,” environmental controllers are integral to these brave, new grows. In the post-modern agricultural era, commercial cannabis crops are controlled with modular hardware connected to software platforms that form a digital communication network. Though the technology has been under development and in use for some time, especially in Europe, controllers are set to change the way the United States looks at traditional farming—and cannabis may be accelerating the process.

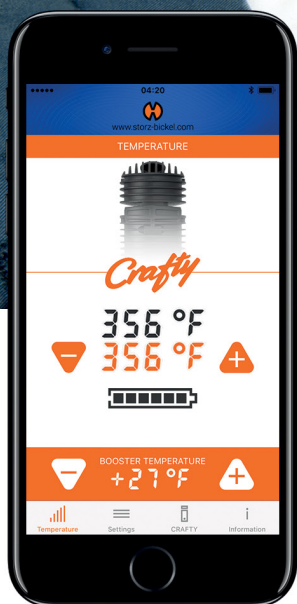
IF YOUR FARM ONLY HAD A BRAIN

“The SmartBee system is a wireless network that creates a wireless mesh network and so, for all intensive purposes, it’s a wireless, network-based controller,” explained SmartBee Marketing Manager David Aragon. “It integrates all your grow appliances into one easy-to-use application. We’re a complete grow room solution.”

The controller market already is competitive. Both SmartBee and Growlink were founded with the cannabis industry as the basis for their business model. Long-established industrial horticulture suppliers also see a new vertical in commercial cannabis. Companies like Argus and Priva have been in the space for decades, developing



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their systems with traditional greenhouse crops.

“We refer to [the Growlink system] as a platform,” Tanner said. “There are a lot of controllers out on the market. There are timers you can buy for lights, competitive controllers that can monitor temp, humidity, and CO2. We’ve created a platform that is both hardware and software that’s tightly integrated, all developed here in Denver, Colorado, and built here in Denver. You’ve heard the term ‘smart home.’ This is about making farms extremely smart.”

MedMen Director of Ag Technology and Systems Damian Solomon described the situation from a grower’s point of view: “There are differing levels of control and automation available in cultivation systems, and as you increase the technology used you gain more precision control over the environment, which optimizes output and efficiency.

“[Required] from any system is management over climate, temperature, carbon dioxide, humidity, irrigation and fertilization,

“ **YOU’VE HEARD THE TERM ‘SMART HOME,’ IT’S ABOUT MAKING FARMS EXTREMELY SMART.**

— Ted Tanner, founder, Growlink ”

lighting, shading control, and others,” he said. “MedMen uses the Dutch company Hortimax’s integrated control systems. They have more than fifty years of commercial horticulture experience.”

The MedMen grow facility in Sun Valley, California, has 4,100 square feet of canopy space and a fully integrated controller system. According to their calculations, crop yields are up to 50 percent more per square foot than comparable “legacy” or more traditionally operated facilities.

FROM HERE TO INFINITY

Tanner said Growlink’s system is more optimal for spaces 2,000 square feet or larger and can be expanded simply by adding more modules to create a larger network.

SmartBee’s Aragon explained company founder Skye Hanke’s background in cannabis cultivation. The company designed its system as a simple solution for growers, and can be scaled to accommodate everyone from small growers to large cultivation facilities.



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SmartBee's system software has an Android- and IOS-compatible integrated app that enables growers to be connected to their crops around the clock, though once a grower sets rules, the system operates automatically to correct any issues detected and documents any changes. It even can send alerts. Historical data is stored with cloud services.

"What you get is peace of mind and inside communication with your plants you otherwise would not have the advanced knowledge to know about," Aragon said. "Now you have a system that has this visibility to it, and it puts you on a different level. You're now using your system to make educated decisions to get a better outcome, and that's a benefit for any size grower."

SmartBee and Growlink agreed: Analyzed data is invaluable for growers to help further streamline operations, maintain any regulatory compliance standards requiring documentation, decrease waste and unneeded expense, and conserve resources.

"A valuable part of our platform or solution is the software," Growlink's Tanner said. "You have to have all the hardware to collect the data and control stuff, but where farmers find the true value in our system is to be able to easily get to the data they need, set up rules, and control things—but really, looking at historical data, to

make improvements harvest after harvest, and being able to increase yields, and reduce nutrient use and cost."

FUTURE EXPECTATIONS

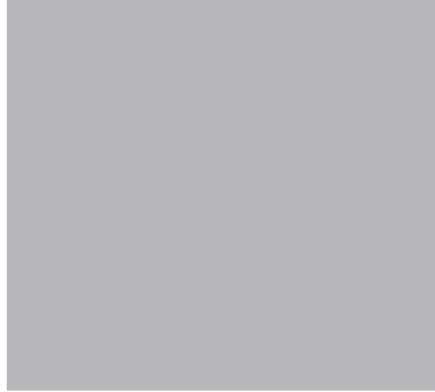
As cannabis perhaps becomes a federally legal commodity, consistency, cost reduction, and a focus on the bottom line will be imperative. In fact, they already are. Controller systems, proven effective in traditional horticulture, could help create the precise platform needed for cannabis to become a global crop.

Another driving force behind innovations, indoor cultivation, and advanced agricultural technologies is the direct result of the failure of some traditional farming methods. Environmental damage including soil depletion, pollution from pesticides and fertilizers, loss of threatened environments, and a long list of other ills have combined with climate change and growing populations to take traditional farming to the tipping point.

"We find that California, even though they don't have their entire book written yet on requirements for commercial cultivators, a lot of the early information that we're getting and we're being asked for from people out in California [about] power consump-



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tion,” Tanner said. California growers want to know “how to reduce power consumption.

“We do a lot of greenhouses in Northern California, and being able to use the sun when you can and only supplement lighting when you need to, or use shades to reduce heat versus HVAC is important,” he continued. “Also precision watering—using moisture sensors to water just the right amount, so you don’t have runoff. In those aspects, we are [eco-friendly]. We’re reducing the amount of water used, reducing fertilizer use, and energy used for lighting.

“And if you dial in all of the variables where they need to be with consistency, it definitely can reduce the need for pesticide use,” Tanner added.

The trend toward locally sourced food again leads to the intersection of traditional and cannabis crops, since currently cannabis must be produced within the states where it’s legally sold.


“We do a lot within containers,” Tanner said. “CropBox uses our products. Modular Farms is another. Cubic Farms uses our product. Another one that’s getting a lot of publicity that’s looking at our product to put within their farms is Plenty. They just raised \$200

million [in venture capital funding].”

Growlink also works with UCLA’s School of Environmental Design on research and development for sustainable food practices.

“I definitely see, and have seen and we’re working with, companies that are really believing in growing food near major populations, and that’s happening indoors and in greenhouses,” he added. “[Putting] these farms near populated areas, so there’s not a lot of traveling. If you live in New York and your lettuce comes from California, it kind of doesn’t look so good by the time it gets there.”

Never fear, lettuce lovers of New York. Tanner said some of the large cannabis cultivators he knows also are thinking about expanding into other crops. And MedMen has you covered. They already have a grow facility located in upstate New York, and are in the process of opening a dispensary, which will be located in Manhattan.

“As multi-state operations expand, consumers will begin to expect the same customer experience wherever they are,” MedMen’s Solomon said. “By having a system in place that delivers consistency and uniformity, cultivators can meet those expectations.” 



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Lighting The Way

FROM DISRUPTIVE INNOVATION TO THE WIRELESS AND LED EXPLOSION, THE LIGHTING SECTOR IS IN A RENAISSANCE, DELIVERING RECORD PROFITS AND YIELDS.

BY ROB HILL

LATE LAST YEAR, the expo circuit was abuzz when Scotts Miracle-Gro bought the fabled Dutch lighting and hydroponic company Gavita for a whopping \$136 million. Gavita, like the sector as a whole, had watched its sales balloon by more than \$100 million a year. (Gavita's management team remained in place and the company retains 25-percent ownership.)

Founded thirty-some-odd years ago in Norway, Gavita long has taken pride in being at the intersection of technology, efficiency, and quality. Along the way, the company's marketplace timing appeared impeccable—and profitable. Although the 1000W DE HPS system historically led sales, Gavita executives noticed an emerging trend: Growers realized big is not always beautiful. Ever attentive, the company designed a 750W fixture, and sales exploded. Now imitators, con-artists, and frauds all are trying to take a bite out of sales.

“We have to compete hard against newcomers who have no innovation or development costs whatsoever,” said Theo Tekstra, marketing manager for Gavita International B.V. “They just copy

*Treehawk Farms, Chimaquum WA
Photography by Kristen Angelo*



"We have to compete hard against newcomers, who have no innovation or development costs whatsoever."

—Theo Tekstra, marketing manager, Gavita International B.V.

the designs themselves. This is called 'disruptive innovation.'"

Currently, the horticulture lighting market is in a grow-and-replace phase. Because there are so many new suppliers, established companies must work hard to keep their businesses growing as fast as the market. When one is deemed "the best," all the others go gunning for it. Case in point: Gavita's double-ended fixtures purportedly are the most copied products in the industry.

"Fortunately, our brand is strong, and more and more newcomers in the industry understand that not only price, but also service, reliability, and support are important for their bottom line," said Tekstra. "Reliability of assets is a big talking point. Plasma sales are also sharply on the rise as there is the growing awareness that producing a high-quality crop results in a much better market position. Lastly, we see much more professional horticultural automation in projects."

Alan Lien, president of Solis Tek Inc., has taken a different approach to the market and created a fixture that is suitable for what growers and operators need in an indoor greenhouse setting. The "light diet" offers four different lights to use at different parts of the grow cycle.

"With the legalization of cannabis and the type of money and investments coming into this space, more pressure is being put on growers and operators to really dial in their facilities and make sure

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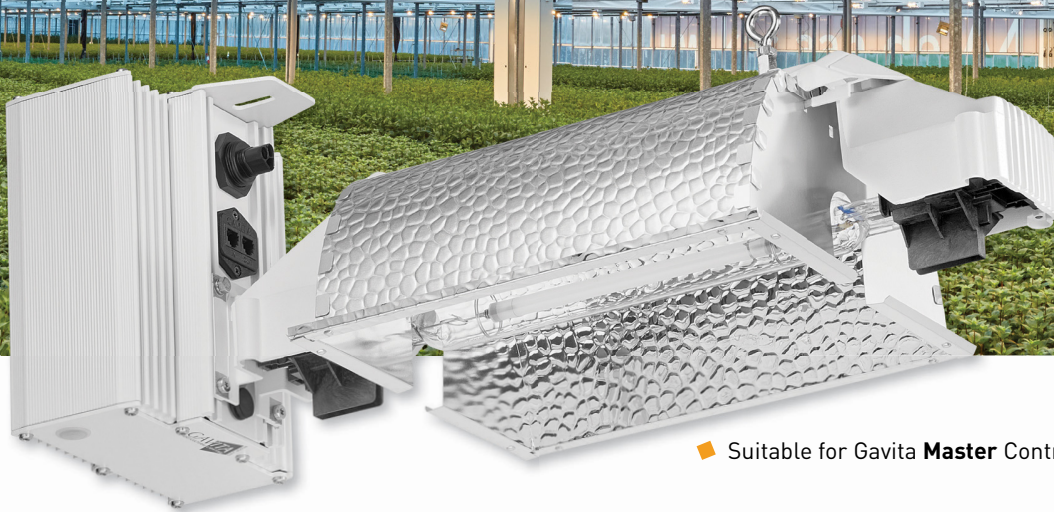
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they operate in the most efficient way possible," Lien said. "Lighting technology advancement is going to be a huge part of that. Right now, there isn't another company outside of Solis Tek that has come out with the technical and scientific innovation intended to increase yield and [return on investment] specifically for cannabis."

Apparently, the market approves. In the first quarter of 2017, Solis Tek. reported record revenues of \$2.9 million, a 12-percent increase in revenue year over year.

A FEW STARS ARE BORN

Nanolux Technology Inc.'s much-anticipated 950 CMH will hit the market in September. The forty-year-old company, which boasts more patents than any other lighting brand, is in a spirited growth phase, and with the 950 it's taking a giant step forward in energy-efficient lighting.

"We are working on expanding our wireless control system and adding additional modules so the room can be controlled remotely," said Nanolux Sales and Marketing Manager Emily Walter. "These products can be used as standalones or in conjunction with our NCCS software."

Nanolux has gained a reputation as a vertically integrated outfit: The company performs its own engineering, manufacturing, and distributing. This allows Nanolux to change, update, or create new

OLD SAILOR'S LORE tells of a place of endless joy where the music never stops, the dancers never tire, and the smiles never fall. Known as the Fiddler's Green, it promised paradise to those stalwart and fortunate enough to find it.

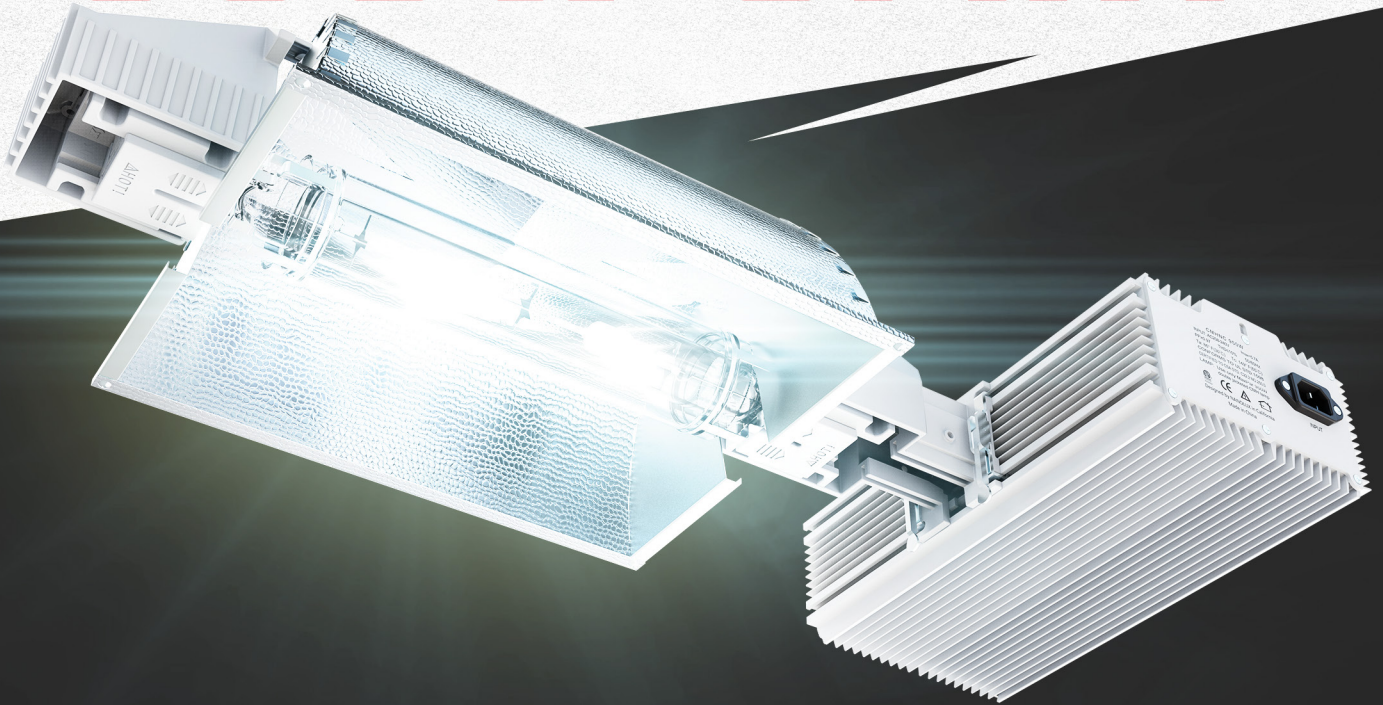
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products based on user demand. Integration also allows the company to provide robust customer service and have inventory readily available at three warehouses in the United States.

For Erik Elder, sales director for Global Garden Company, the most exciting thing in lighting right now is ceramic metal halide (CMH) technology. As opposed to traditional high pressure sodium (HPS), which has been the industry standard, CMH lamps provide a full spectrum of UVA and UVB with fewer watts and producing less heat.

"The fuller spectrum of light increases overall health, growth, yield, resin, trichome, and terpene production," said Elder. "With CMH, you get a superior product come harvest time at a significantly reduced cost. In addition, because of the paradigm shift to automation in cultivation, we are seeing more intelligent lighting controllers that communicate with humidity and temperature sensors to regulate, schedule, and control lighting based on what is happening in the grow room environment."

With the launch of the DimLux brand, "the Ferrari of the light industry," Global Garden has experienced explosive growth, Elder said.

"Having the highest-performing lighting system on the market, in both performance and automation, has allowed us to grow our team to meet the ever-increasing needs to support the demand," he said.

THE LED TRAIN

"Today, the lighting sector is very dynamic, mostly because LEDs are beginning to take over and their efficiencies should continue to increase steadily for the next decade," said Eric Harrington, com-

mercial sales manager and technology evangelist for California Lightworks. "Lighting just gets better and faster than virtually any other factor in growing. Remember, it's the second largest input after manpower, so that's exciting."

The company's SolarSystem 550 has made a huge impact on the market, in terms of both technology and value. With a 400W light in commercial quantities dropping in price to below \$1.50 per watt, it's not only a profit driver, but also creates impressive ROI. In most markets with 10- to 12-percent electricity, the system will pay for itself in about two years, Harrington said. That's a 50-percent return on investment.

"I challenge you to get that return on any other investment... short of some insider initial public offering," said Harrington.

Making it an even better deal, the company's hybrid-spectrum-control design merges the best of full-spectrum lights with the science of photosynthesis. Next up for the company is a UVB lamp reputed to increase THC by 25 percent.

"It's a new bump in LED efficiency that will take us to above 2.3 umol per joule. That is going to be a game changer," said Harrington.


Matthew Price, operations manager for KIND LED Grow Lights, is experiencing the same excitement. Grow lighting technology has remained largely unchanged for decades, but now arguably is one of the fastest evolving sectors in indoor gardening, thanks, in part, to LED advances.

"While there have been an impressive number of LED grow light companies joining the industry, all with their own take on this developing technology, we feel has helped shape the standard of excellence in LED grow lighting," said Price.

Currently, the company's best-selling product is the UL-certified XL series. The product has been in extraordinary demand because KIND nailed the spectrum.

"Our twelve-band complete perfect spectrum gives growers' plants everything they need in terms of lighting, creating the most efficient grow light on the market," said Price. "With the inclusion of far-reaching wavelengths outside the PAR range, such as [ultra-violet] and [infrared], we have been able to reach new echelons in harvest quality."

To be sure, this is an exciting time for the lighting sector. With revenues up and technology improving, almost everyone is bullish on the future. However, obstacles and misconceptions remain. One of the biggest misconceptions about grow lighting is that brighter is better. In reality, simply recreating sunlight doesn't necessarily produce the best results. Plants have particular lighting needs and use specific wavelengths in varying quantities within the photosynthetic range. Traditional grow lights may have a high-wattage light output, but nearly half of that wattage is wasted in the emission of light wavelengths plant use very little of.

In the end, despite all the advances and innovation, finding the right lighting arrangement remains a difficult task. No one solution fits every situation, so homework is key to producing the best harvest. 

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Ease of Use vs. Quality of Life, the CBD Revolution

BY ALLEN S. MILLER, DC

MY GREAT-GRANDFATHER mined gold in Hayfork, California, some 120 years ago. I got to meet him in 1963 when I was eight years old and he was 97. He fractured his hip in a mining accident when he was young; consequently, he walked with a limp and used a cane for the rest of his life.

When the pain from his injury became unbearable, he rested and sipped whiskey. There were no opioids at his disposal “back in the day,” so whiskey and rest served as his pain control until the day he died at 99.

His method was typical of the time. Before industrialization, families cared for the sick and injured at home, using folk medicine and remedies they had on hand. Many ate what they raised themselves or hunted: fresh, organic vegetables and meat from animals that

grazed on hemp plants as part of their free-range diets. Hemp acts as a nutritional uptake catalyst, enabling cattle and other animals to gain lean muscle mass. Cannabinoids are passed to humans through ingestion of the meat and milk.

As industrialization began to change society, medicine evolved, too. The Civil War brought about advancements in pain medication and anesthetic agents, familiarity with prevention and treatment of infectious diseases, and surgical principles that rapidly advanced the overall quality of American medical practice. These advances extended human lifespan and enabled the building of the transcontinental railroad. They also encouraged people to work longer hours and leave outdoor occupations for factories and mines.

Thus began the “ease of use” mentality. Almost 150 years later, we can still see the clash between living off the land and industrializa-

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tion. The American Academy of Anti-Aging Medicine (A4M), a nonprofit entity that hosts 3,000 to 5,000 physicians and healthcare practitioners at two world congresses annually, has prioritized fighting the adverse effects of our environment and aging by integrating natural remedies including organic, healthy foods; nutraceuticals; bio-identical hormones; and cannabis. Additives in manufactured foods, over-the-counter medications, prescription medications, stress, and the contemporary environment have resulted in a plethora of health issues. The physicians of the A4M incorporate natural remedies including CBD-based products into their treatment protocols, employing pharmaceuticals only as a last resort.

Conversely, the ease-of-use approach has resulted in increases not only in the varieties of cancer and cancer diagnoses but also mental health issues, genetic diseases, autism, and autoimmune disorders. In essence, ease of use introduced an ever-increasing fragility to the human condition.

We are seeing a resurgence of natural, organic health solutions. The rediscovered “old” remedy cannabis, specifically CBDs, is the leader in the march back to a healthy lifestyle. Vegetarian diets, along with elimination of gluten and sugars in the diet, are commonplace and more the rule than the exception in everyday culture.

Cannabis has been shown to assist and stimulate the body to heal itself, but it’s far from an ease-of-use solution. Significant time is required to reverse the damage environmental pollutants, water, food, and drugs have inflicted on the human body.

Thanks to cannabis, we are seeing a resurgence of natural, holistic, alternative health solutions. Twenty-five years ago, chiropractors were at the forefront of a holistic approach to treating disease. Regardless the extensive marketing of traditional drug-based therapies, alternative doctors only treated a fraction of the population in those years. Only a few saw or could afford alternative medicine as a blueprint to a very long, healthy life.

No longer are holistic, organic solutions available to a mere a few. People are turning away from organized medicine and pharmaceutical products for natural alternatives. In many cases, natural products are more effective, faster, devoid of side effects, and cost less. Prescription medications have become financially prohibitive to purchase and the side effects are untenable, but to live longer unencumbered by disease is the goal. People now realize their quality of life has deteriorated, and they are embracing cannabis as part of the solution. Cannabis, combined with a healthy lifestyle, not only can “cure” us, but also virtually ensures a longer, healthier, more active life.




66 **THANKS TO CANNABIS,
WE ARE SEEING A
RESURGENCE OF NATURAL,
HOLISTIC, ALTERNATIVE
HEALTH SOLUTIONS.** 99

Except for time and ease of use, there is no proven downside to employing cannabis as part of a natural treatment plan. Patients usually experience no negative side effects and have nothing to lose by implementing natural, organic solutions. We know cannabis works to assist in fighting cancer; CBDs have been credited with saving children⁵ and shown to alleviate diseases that impact quality of life. Not surprisingly, insurance companies and employers have begun to embrace the medicine called cannabis as fiscally prudent. People are taking control of their health, mothers are saving their children from the horrible consequences of cancer, and grandchildren are giving cannabis products to their grandparents to stop the onslaught of Alzheimer’s, senility, and dementia. Cannabis is becoming a mainstream path to a healthier future.

The insurance industry rewards healthy individuals with reduced premiums and other incentives. Companies including Wells Fargo Bank, Costco, Facebook, and Google support their employees’ use of healthy alternatives because doing so ultimately increases productivity and profits.

I perform employment and post-injury physicals for insurance companies. The exams determine a person’s physical strength and ability to perform a task safely. Predictive physical testing has saved hundreds of millions of dollars in costs related to workplace injuries. Currently, cardiac, blood, and urine analysis help determine insurance eligibility, but DNA testing, blood analysis, and physical testing soon will be commonplace. We will see mandatory health baselines employees must achieve to enter the workforce, as well as continue in a job where they receive bonuses and other benefits.

In short, the price of admission to the workforce will be personal health and wellness. More importantly, to quote Star Trek icon Mr. Spock, people will “live long and prosper” thanks, in part, to cannabis. 



A noted speaker and published author, DR. MILLER is President of Autogenic Industrial Solutions and an expert in Worker’s Compensation cost containment, pain management and cannabis. He has been approved by several workers compensation insurance companies to implement cannabinoids (CBD) to treat injured workers with chronic pain and opioid addiction.

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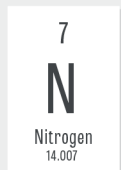


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Retail Therapy

A FEW MOMENTS WITH BRAD ZERMAN, FOUNDER, CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER, AND GENERAL MANAGER FOR SEVEN POINT DISPENSARY, CHICAGO, ILLINOIS.

THE ILLINOIS medical marijuana market is a burgeoning and challenging environment. The state has only 23,000 patients. Dispensaries constantly deal with changing educational, legal, and regulatory issues.

A shining star in the struggle is Seven Point Dispensary in tony downtown Oak Park, Illinois. The clean, modern, and bespoke pharmacy, which features a chic glass humidor, opened in February 2015 and sales have grown ever since.

"We attribute our steady growth to our incredible staff, warm environment and, most importantly, providing education and assistance to our patients," said founder, Chief Executive Officer, and General Manager Brad Zerman. "We also offer daily specials so people can try new things at lower costs."

MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

"I manage seven client-care consultants and accounting people," Zerman said. "I like to share my goals for the company and customer-care philosophy as well as teach compliance issues to the staff. They were

all hired for their unique characteristics and have done a great job. Of course, there is always room for improvement, which is another part of our philosophy. We have weekly meetings where we can share issues, problems, and successes."

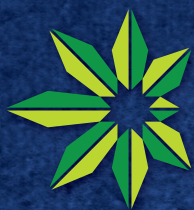
CHALLENGES

"We have one of the largest menus in the state of Illinois—possibly the largest," Zerman said. "We are trying to balance having a large menu of items with reducing the products that don't sell well and changing our ordering style in order to streamline the inventory process. We are required to manually count each item daily, which is quite a long process. The other challenges relate to staying on top of all the state compliance issues and sharing all that information with staff."

ADVICE

"It's important to go for the job that you are best fitted for," said Zerman. "In the world of medical cannabis, there are a lot of positions besides just helping people select the strain and form of cannabis best

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suited for them. As with any start-up, cannabis is no different: We need smart, compassionate people to play a variety of roles. Bottom line: Go straight to the top to try to get hired and give them your thirty-second elevator pitch. If you have retail [point-of-sale] or inventory experience, let that be known. Be confident but not pushy.”

STOCKING SHELVES

“We like to evaluate the cannabinoid profiles and terpene levels of all the products being sold,” Zerman said. “We also evaluate any additives such as in disposable vape pens. We look for trends with edibles and like to add new products that fit into groups of products selling well.”

STATE GROWN

“Several of the approximately fourteen growers in Illinois are top-notch,” Zerman noted. “I would say the top five likely account for 80 percent of the business. Dispensaries in Illinois carry extremely safe, pesticide- and mold-free medicine, which is lab tested. Illinois growers are producing Grade A flower and a ton of other interesting, flavorful, and creative concentrates, oils, edibles, topicals, and transdermal products.”

SUPPLY AND DEMAND

“There is no shortage of supply in Illinois,” said Zerman. “Growers have between 10,000 and 80,000 square feet per cultivation facility. Grams of flower are typically \$20, and eighths of premium flower are \$60. Less-potent, less-expensive eighths go for between \$40 and \$50. Typically, there are price breaks for quantity above that.”


CAN'T LIVE WITHOUT...

“...my POS provider, Leaf Logix,” Zerman said. “They understand the meaning of feedback and giving customers what they need.”

DOING IT RIGHT

“Seven Point is an Illinois pioneer in patient and physician education,” Zerman said. “Since May 2015, we have hosted 300-plus educational workshops regarding the benefits of medical cannabis and also provided no-cost fingerprinting to area residents, along with patient application processing assistance.”

FIRST CANNABIS EXPERIENCE

“I was 15 and went to my friend’s house after school,” Zerman said. “I recall checking out the flower as my friend was packing the bowl. I remember having a good experience, but I don’t recall if I actually got high.”  — Rob Hill

Lesson Learned

PAY ATTENTION TO THE DETAILS AND IMPROVISE

WHEN SEVEN POINT DISPENSARY OPENED, ZERMAN NOTICED NO ONE BOUGHT CONCENTRATES. SO, THE SHOP BEGAN OFFERING SPECIAL DEALS ON CONCENTRATES, INCLUDING A FREE VAPE PEN. THE TACTIC WORKED WELL TO HELP INTRODUCE EXOTIC PRODUCTS LIKE OIL, WAX, AND SHATTER TO THE MARKET. NOW, CONCENTRATES HAVE BECOME A STEADY SELLER.



Illinois by the Numbers

10,000 to 80,000

Typical square feet per cultivation facility.

\$20

Price for a gram of flower.

\$60

Price for an eighth of top-shelf flower.

\$40 to \$50

Price for less potent eighths.

23,000

Number of medical marijuana patients.

35-50

Average patients Seven Point sees in a day.



Brad Zerman



“WE HAVE ONE OF THE LARGEST MENUS IN THE STATE OF ILLINOIS—POSSIBLY THE LARGEST. WE ARE TRYING TO BALANCE HAVING A LARGE MENU WITH REDUCING THE PRODUCTS THAT DON’T SELL WELL AND CHANGING OUR ORDERING STYLE IN ORDER TO STREAMLINE THE INVENTORY PROCESS.”

—Brad Zerman, founder, CEO, and general manager, Seven Point Dispensary





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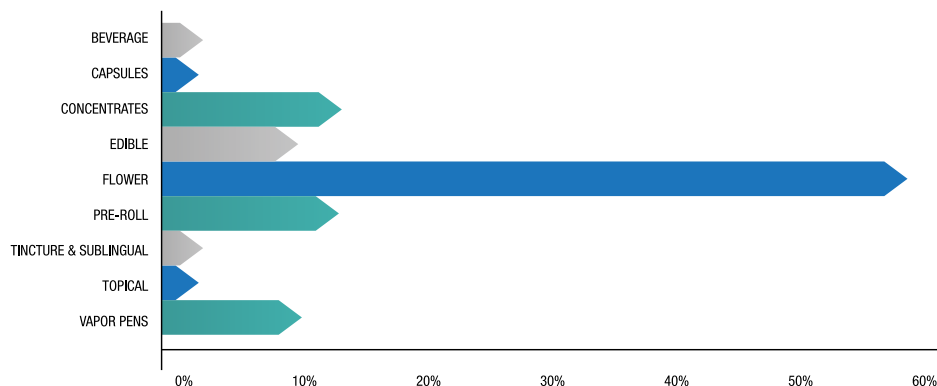
COMMUNITY.

Washington State's Market Movement

Source: Headset; headset.io

Flower sales are the largest category of cannabis sales, accounting for just under 60% of all sales.

Flower sales have been losing market share gradually over time and have been leveling out at just under 60% of all cannabis sales. While market share has declined, sales continue to climb as there is more transaction.



Eighths

(3.5 grams) account for the largest amount of sales for flower with **+52%**



+52%

Single

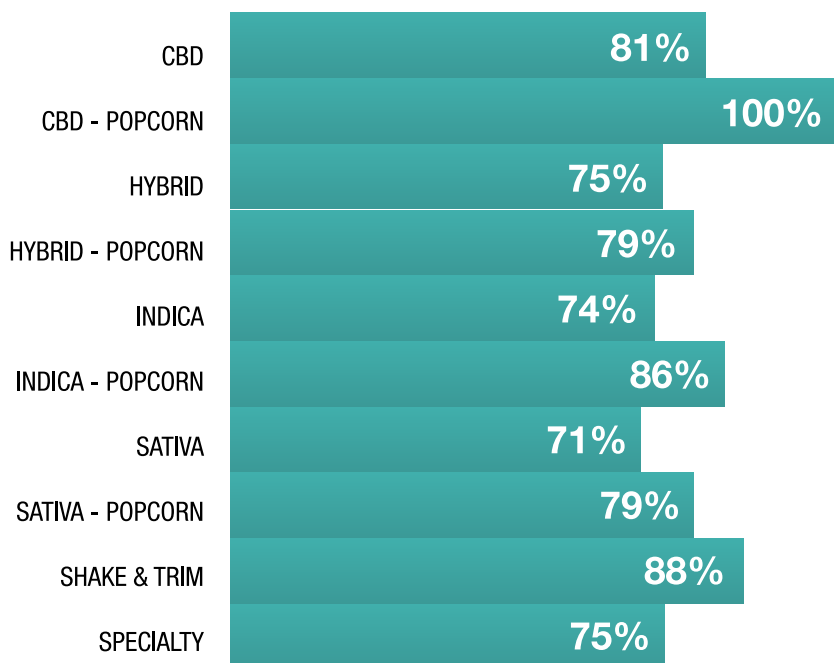
(1 gram) accounts for the second largest amount of sales for flower with **17.6%**



17.6%

Price Variance

% OF UNIT SALES BY FLOWER SEGMENT (SUBCATEGORY) THAT FALL WITHIN +/- 10% OF AVERAGE PRICE:



Next to concentrates, flower has the least amount of price variance with 74% of units sold falling into a +/- 10% of average price. This could be because flower products are more popular and less likely to be offered as specials.

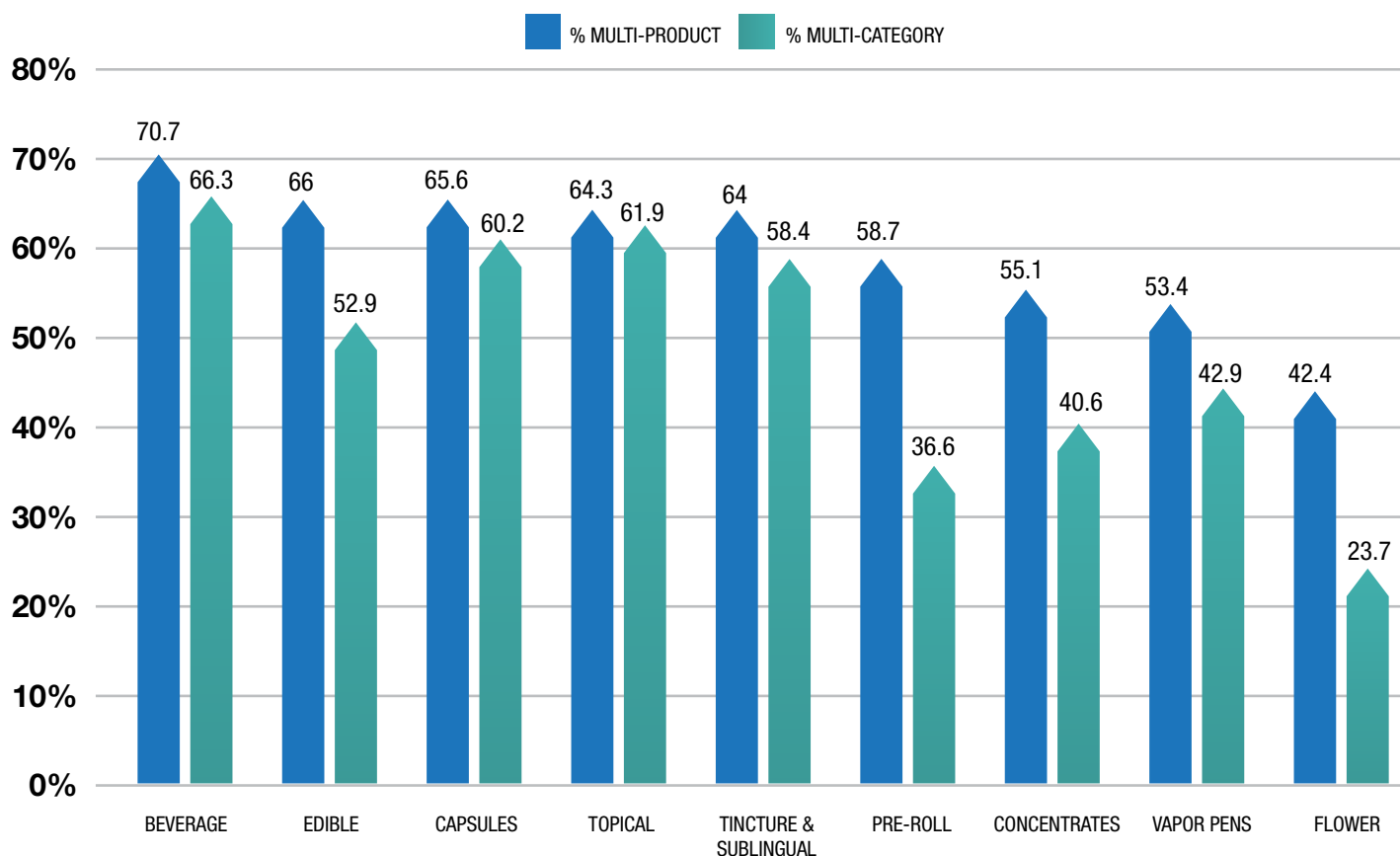
Flower generally has less price variance within a product, probably because of what a popular category it is and how familiar consumers are with it. This could also be because consumers have historically bought flower products based on fixed metrics, like THC content and price-per-gram. Popcorn variations of each type have the least price variance—they're usually already quite cheap—while sativa is the strain type with the most variance.

Multi-Product Basket Trends

Our data shows some affinity between categories, and some categories that are more prevalent in multi-product baskets. Categories that commonly appear in baskets alongside other categories are likely impulse buys. People purchasing flower tend to only purchase

flower products and not include other categories. This is in stark contrast to beverages, which are most likely to be purchased along with other categories; about two-thirds of baskets that contained beverages also contained another category.

% OF BASKETS WITH MULTIPLE PRODUCTS OR CATEGORIES



Methodology

Data for this report comes from real-time sales reporting by participating Washington State cannabis retailers via their point-of-sale systems, which are linked up with Headset's business analytics software. This report uses

data for sales in Washington State. The data is cross-referenced with Headset's catalog of over 100,000 products to provide detailed information on market trends.

Source: Headset; headset.io

Headset is a cannabis tech company that's passionate about helping cannabis businesses become successful. Their core team founded Leafly, revolutionizing cannabis consumption by putting information in the hands of consumers. Headset aims to do the same thing for cannabis business intelligence. Their comprehensive cannabis data analytics services benefit the entire supply chain, from seed to sale.

Hard Goods



LADY G HANDBAG

Created for the snazzy smoker on the go, the Lady G handbag has it all: a cell phone pocket, two Aroma-Bloc zippered compartments, and a soft, silky lining. Styles include cognac whipstitch, black quilted, and snake print. **ANNABISSTYLE.COM**



PIGEON TOE STONE PIPE

Made with precious rocks from the Washougal River in Washington State, this sophisticated pipe is the latest refined product launch from the Portland-based company Pigeon Toe Ceramics. Well-curated, lively, and handy, this unique pipe is a nice break from the many run-of-the-mill smoking devices flooding the market. Colors include charcoal, cobalt, blush, and grey. **TOKYOSMOKE.COM**



SOURCE VAPE: SLIM 3 TRAVEL KIT

An improvement on the award-winning 3 series, the Slim brings lower temperatures, more choices, and is ready to hit the road with you. It's also smaller (10mm) and contains one Quartz Double Coil atomizer, one Coil-less Source terra, and a big carb hole for gargantuan cloud hits. Is a USA lab-certified product. **SOURCEVAPES.COM**



LEVO OIL INFUSER

After five years of research and development, the technologically chic LEVO is the first oil infuser made exclusively for infusing oil and butter without solvents. With its time and temperature controls and automatic filtration, this suave, high-tech device lets you creatively medicate right from your kitchen. Available in four eye-catching colors.

LEVOOIL.COM



BUG'S LIFE SPOON

The creative folks from the Placencia, California-based Empire Glassworks have outdone themselves with this colorful, insect-inspired heavy glass pipe resplendent with mushrooms, ladybugs, and a caterpillar. **EMPIREGLASSWORKS.COM**



TRANSPRING DP3 DISPOSABLE VAPE PEN

Transpring, a pioneer in preheating technology, just announced the release of its patented disposable vape pen, the DP3. This bespoke, petite, metal-and-glass vape pen is full of power, fully automatic, and can be customized with your company's logo. Supported by a six-month warranty for batteries; and three months for cartridges.

TRANSPRING.COM



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Horticulture & Growing



SPRING POT CLASSIC

Made with an internal plastic-coated spring that pops up, the classic Spring Pot is the first fabric pot that can hold its shape. Available in black with colored stitching in sizes from two gallons to fifteen gallons. **SPRINGPOT.COM**



GROWLINK ENVIRONMENT CONTROLLER

With Growlink's all-in-one Environment Controller, you can manage your grow room from your phone. The Environment Controller can be used to set rules including sensor triggers, timers, and schedules to automate the grow process. One-year limited warranty and free lifetime support.

GROWLINK.COM



HYDRO ORGANICS EARTH JUICE ORIGINAL "BIG 5"

Widely hailed, Earth Juice is a natural, organic liquid fertilizer that is mixed to create big-time vegetative stem and leaf growth. Available in sizes from one pint to fifty-five gallons.

HYDRO-ORGANICS.COM



GORILLA GROW TENT

Constructed with an all-steel, interlocking frame, an infrared-blocking roof insertion, 360-degree wraparound access, 11-inch double cinching, and no-leak ducting ports, the indoor hydroponic Gorilla Grow Tent comes in twelve sizes from 2' x 4' to 10' x 20'. **GORILLAGROWTENT.COM**



THE MOTHER BUCKER

Developed seventy-five years ago for mechanically harvesting hops, the Mother Bucker is an efficient, industrial-grade machine that delicately removes flowers from stripped stems. Variable speed control allows for versatility; can be used wet or dry.

MUNCHMACHINE.COM

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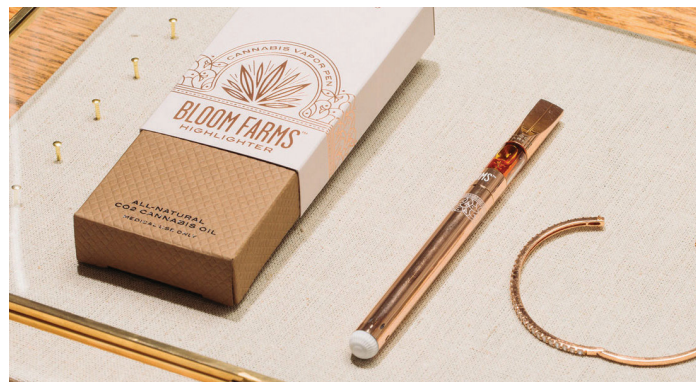


Psychoactive



SIR NEWTON'S BLACK CHERRY CRAFT SODA

Fresh from Arizona comes this cutting-edge, sugar-free, non-caffeinated tasty craft soda. The company's other flavors include Kiwi Storm, Lemon Lime, Root Beer, and Mandarin. Each lab-tested 12 oz. can contains 100mg THC. SIRNEWTONS.COM



BLOOM FARMS ROSE GOLD

Styled in a luxurious rose gold finish, the Rose Gold Highlighter vape pen is the latest release by the California-based company. From the pen's signature metal mouthpiece to its newly designed battery, this high-gloss fashion accessory emphasizes both form and function. GETBLOOMFARMS.COM

TOAST SLICES CANNABIS CIGARETTES

Made with 100-percent all-natural cannabis wrapped inside pristine hemp paper replete with a purple filter at the end for a silky, consistent draw, the award-winning Slices come in jazzy, Art Deco-esque packs of ten. WETOAST.COM



LAURIE + MARYJANE BROWNIE TRUFFLE BITES

Serving the state of Oregon, the multiple-award-winning Laurie + MaryJane has been making high-end, dose-friendly, tasty edibles for more than three years. The dreamy Brownie Truffle Bites fuse the best of a fudge brownie with savory chocolate buttercream. Each bite contains 5mg THC. LAURIEANDMARYJANE.COM

LEGAL SATIVA ESPRESSO MOCHA

In September, Oregon's will launch its all-natural, ready-to-drink sparkling tonics, beverages, and cold brews in California. The Sativa Espresso Mocha is an invigorating combination of organic cannabis, dark chocolate, and hearty espresso beans. Other flavors include Sparkling Pomegranate, Cranberry, Lemon Ginger, and Rainier Cherry. MIRTHPROVISIONS.COM



KIKOKO TEAS

Launched by a Kiwi and NoCal-er, Kikoko Teas compose a high-end, organic, infused tea line for the classy woman who likes to relax but not smoke. The teas come in a wide variety of exotic flavors—Lemongrass Mint, Hibiscus Cardamon Rose, Ginger Orange, Chamomile & Lemon Myrtle—and are water-soluble and toxin-free. Five percent of profits is donated to non-profit organizations that provide education about, and access to, cannabis medicine for sick children. KIKOKO.COM





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CHARLOTTE'S WEB EVERYDAY PLUS HEMP OIL

This potent hemp oil can be taken orally, mixed with your favorite beverage, or drizzled on your dinner salad. Can also be used for pets. Made in Colorado from Colorado-grown hemp. **CWHEMP.COM**

ACESO WELLNESS SUPPLEMENT

Available in both a beverage powder and spray, Aceso is a proprietary blend of hemp, synergistic terpenes, and vitamins designed to promote energy, encourage mood stability, and support the immune system. Each spray bottle contains 335mg of cannabinoids while each 30-pack of sachets contains 225mg.

MYACESO.COM



WILDFLOWER CBD SOAP

This exclusive CBD soap is both face and body cleanser. The soft, milky lather leaves skin soft and velvety to touch. Available in lavender and vanilla scents. Made in the U.S.A. **WILDFLOWERUS.COM**



PURE HEMP BOTANICALS TEA

Dubbed "hemptealicious™," Pure Hemp Teas are made with 100-percent industrial organic hemp infused with savory herbs to create a kick similar to that of green tea. Flavors include Peppermint Mate, Chamomile Lavender, Ginger Turmeric, and the best-selling Lemongrass Spearmint.

PUREHEMPBOTANICALS.COM



Ahoy!

It's been a long, long doldrum of a journey but now the winds of change will catch our sails and the blood-letting rule of tyranny will end. Together, we're taking back our well-being, our future, our liberty, and our lives. The time has come to damn our barbarous overlords and fill our medicine chests and bodies, with the bounty nature gave us, to nourish, sooth, heal and empower our anatomy. To be sure, the dawn of the bucko mischievous warrior has come about. Beware, you emperors of maltreatment: We are execution dock prisoners no more... your hippocratic pillories will not abide!



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Edward Teach

AKA Black Beard



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The Recommender



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DISPENSARY

"My favorite is **Green Lady Marijuana** (GreenLadyMj.com) in Olympia, Washington. Their budtenders are helpful and incredibly knowledgeable, and they offer a lot of great brands and boutique flower. **2020 Solutions** (2020-Solutions.com) in Bellingham, Washington, is pretty awesome, too. The store is very clean and organized, and the staff is super-friendly and professional."



BRANDS

"I really appreciate **Jetty Extracts** (JettyExtracts.com). I like their story and their values: 'We want a world where people with illnesses can have access to things that make them feel better. A world where we encourage one another to follow dreams and do incredible things.'"

CBD

"CBD-infused soap from **Wildflower** (WildFlowerUs.com) is hands down the best. It smells so good and makes my skin soft and healthy. I love the lavender smell."



VAPE

"My favorite is **Wildflower** (WildFlowerUS.com). Their vaporizers are small and sleek. I love their gorgeous design, and they don't contain toxic materials like chromium. They use soft-touch paint, so it's really nice and smooth to the touch and just adds to the overall experience. **PAX** (PaxVapor.com) is another one of my favorites."



EDIBLES

"I really love the infused honey from **Apothecary Labs** (ApothecaryLabs.com). It has a hint of cinnamon and goes really well with tea. It's the kind of thing that allows you to relax with a hot drink after a long day and just unwind. **Dixie Elixirs** (DixieElixirs.com) makes a good gummy. Not only do they come in really fun packaging, but they taste good, too."

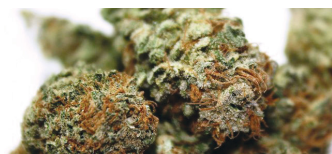


TREND

"The shifting demographics of cannabis consumers. It's fascinating to me to see how quickly [cannabis has] become part of people's routines and has become a part of all demographics including women, young professionals, and seniors. Capturing the attention of these customers should be every retail operation's goal."

FLOWER

"I'm loving **Olympic Chocolate Chunk**. It's great for relaxing and sleeping."



COVA designs products to elevate the dispensary experience. The company's point-of-sale system, touchscreen menu, and digital signage solutions are built for the industry based on years of research and expertise. The end goal: to enable business owners to run their retail operations easily so they can grow quickly and have more time to enjoy doing what they love to do.

CovaSoft.com

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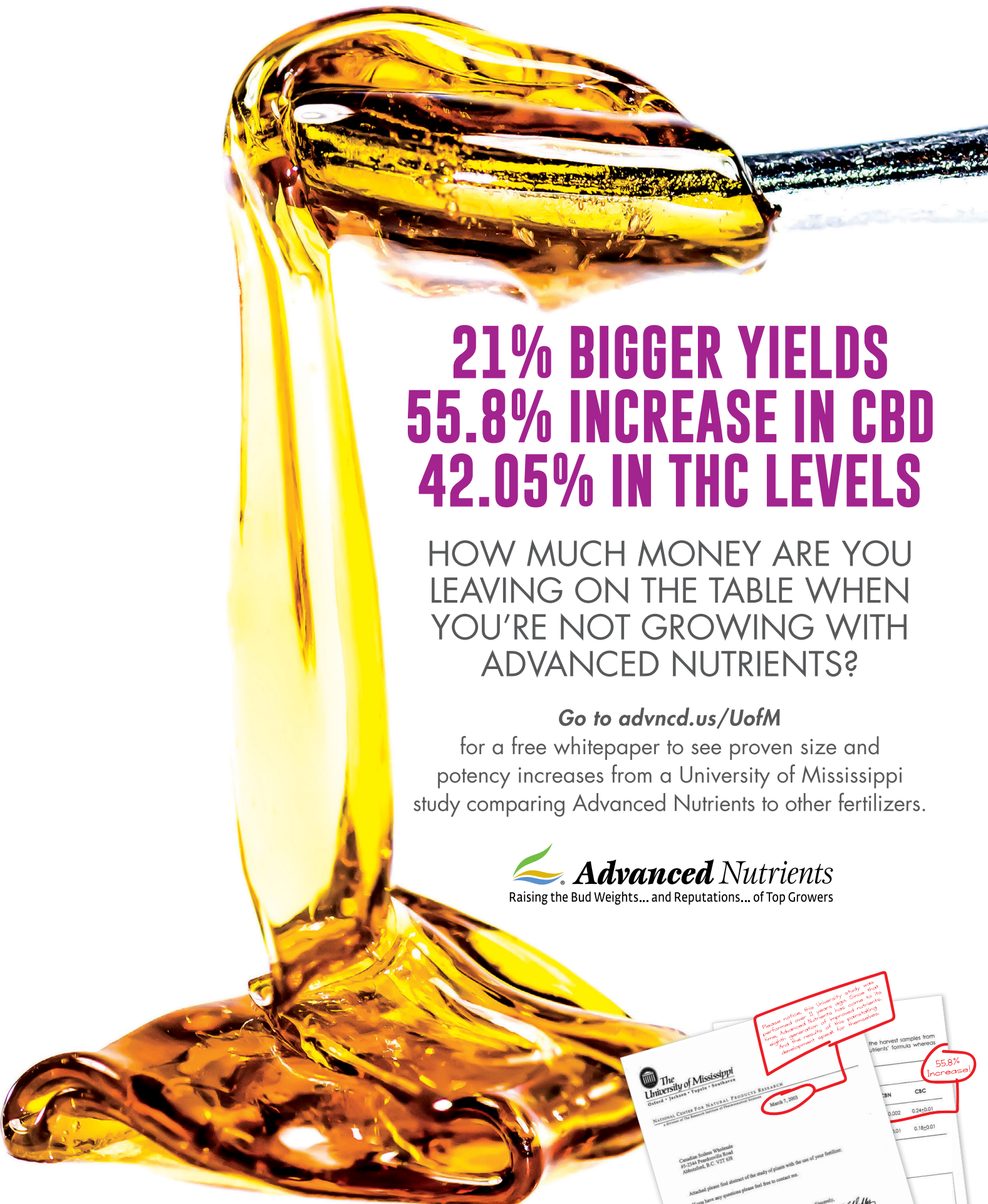


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