

Marketing 101 for cannabis dispensaries

A BEGINNER'S GUIDE



Marketing is crucial for any business; cannabis dispensaries included.

With the right marketing strategies, you can attract more customers, increase your sales, and build a strong, recognizable brand. This guide is designed to introduce you to the basics of marketing, with focus specifically on supporting cannabis dispensary owners and operators with no prior marketing experience.

1

Know your customers



Who are your customers?

The first step in any marketing plan is understanding who your customers are.

Ask yourself:

- Who is buying your products?
- Are they young adults, middle-aged professionals, or senior citizens?
- Do they come to your dispensary for medical reasons, recreational use, or both?
- What products are they interested in?
- Knowing your customers helps your marketing efforts speak directly to their needs and preferences. The more personal you can make your marketing, the more effective it will be.

Why this matters

Understanding your customers is the first step in providing better service and gives you the opportunity to promote products that specifically meet their needs. Moreover, it helps you create marketing messages that show you are listening to them and paying attention to their preferences, making them more likely to choose your dispensary over competitors.

For example, if you know that many of your customers use cannabis for pain relief, you can highlight the benefits

of your products in managing pain. You can then get into specifics if you notice they prefer topicals and tablets over flower. Alternatively, if they are an on-the-go consumer, you won't want to market a product that requires additional equipment to enjoy, like dab rigs.

You group these people with similar interests and purchasing behavior together so you can be specific about what you say and to whom.

Marketers call this [audience segmentation](#).

Creating your brand



Here's where you get to create your retail dispensary's personality, vibe, or otherwise culture around your business.

This is the answer to the “Who are you?” question that has to be answered and reinforced every time a customer sees your brand, enters your store, or hears from you in [dispensary text marketing](#), emails, or push notifications. Once you've built your personality, keeping it consistent is key.

What is a brand?

Your brand is more than just your dispensary's name or logo. It's the overall impression people have of your business.

Think of established brands you know, like Coca-Cola or McDonalds. These companies have a clear identity and are easily recognizable.

The goal of creating and building a brand is to have people associate your business with quality, reliability, and trust. They need to know they can come to you for a consistent experience. After all, we are creatures of habit and we will generally choose the familiar over the unknown.

The objective here is to be able to very clearly state what your brand is and means in as few words as possible.

How to create your brand

Creating your brand starts with defining your dispensary's identity.

Start by choosing a name that reflects your business and appeals to your target audience.

Design a logo that is simple, memorable, and visually appealing.

Choose colors that represent your brand's personality – for example, green often symbolizes health and nature, which can be a good fit for a cannabis dispensary.

When it comes to your establishment, do you want it open and airy with bright lighting or do you want a sultry vibe with warm colors, dimly lit, and more counter-culture when it comes to content?

These are the elements that will solidify your brand identity in the minds of your customers. They will carry over into your marketing and provide a consistent customer experience, whether they visit you in-person or interact with you online.

Simple marketing strategies



You have to crawl before you learn to walk. Marketing strategies for retail dispensaries are no different.

It's important to find what works for you, in your specific market, for your specific customers.

Setting goals

In marketing, one common methodology includes setting SMART goals. These are goals that are:

- **S**pecific
- **M**easurable
- **A**chievable
- **R**elevant
- **T**ime-bound

Setting small, clear goals is important for guiding your marketing efforts. Your goals should be specific and achievable.

For example, you might set a goal to increase your customer base by 10% over the next three months or to increase sales of a particular product/brand by 20% within the same timeframe.

Clear goals give you direction and help you measure your progress. Once you understand what is achievable for your business and you can accurately measure success, you can aim for larger goals and build your marketing machine.

Using social media

Social media is one of the most crucial marketing tools for retail dispensaries when it comes to reaching and engaging with customers.

Start with the basics: create profiles for your dispensary on Reddit, Facebook, and Instagram.

Post high-quality pictures and updates about your store as well as the products you carry, and engage with your

followers by responding to their comments and messages. Whether comments are positive or negative, show them you are listening, thank them for their feedback and make changes where it makes sense to do so.

Social media is a great way to build a community around your brand and keep customers informed and excited about what you offer.

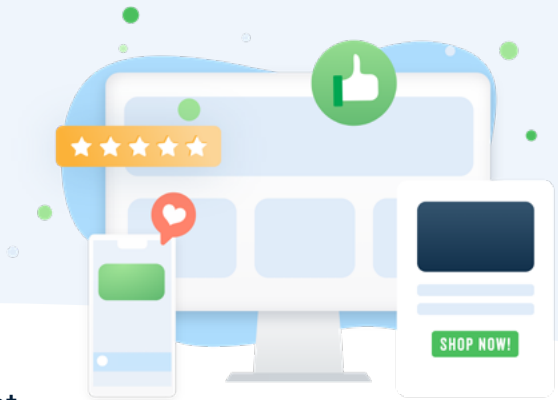
In-store promotions

In-store promotions and events can attract new customers and encourage repeat business. It's a way to meet your customers face-to-face and give them a reason to recommend your dispensary in an increasingly online world.

Some ways to bring people into your store include [discounts on popular products](#), giveaways, [loyalty programs](#), or hosting special events like product launches or educational workshops. You can even hold events in collaboration with other businesses like restaurants or entertainment companies depending on your local regulations.

Make your store a welcoming and friendly place where customers feel valued and appreciated. These events can be seen as a reward for loyal customers while at the same time providing an opportunity for you to increase sales.

Basic digital marketing



Where you market is just as important as what you market. In marketing, this is generally referred to as a channel.

You can own a channel, like your website, social media profiles, or mobile app.

You can also earn it, where your marketing or brand gets mentioned positively on someone else's owned channel, like a publication's or customer's social media profile. You can think of this as word-of-mouth marketing and it's marketing gold for any brand.

Finally, there are paid channels, like google, facebook, and instagram ads.

For the sake of keeping things simple, we'll focus on your owned marketing channels.

Your website

Having a website is essential for any business.

Your website should be simple, user-friendly and provide important information about your dispensary, such as your location, hours, and product offerings. If nothing else, your website should run smoothly and load quickly. Nothing kills a website experience faster than long load times.

Make sure your website is easy to navigate and looks good on both desktop and mobile devices.

Include high-quality photos (be mindful of their file size) of your products and a blog where you can share news and

articles about cannabis. This is also a place where you can use keywords in your writing that search engines will pick up on and make a connection between your business and potential customers' searches, such as dispensaries in XYZ city.

Don't forget to make a google business profile, where you can include important details like your phone number, address, hours, and provide a place for customers to leave positive reviews of their experience when shopping at your dispensary.

Email newsletters

Email newsletters are a great way to stay in touch with your customers. Collect email addresses from customers who visit your store and offer them something in return, like a discount on their next purchase or a spin of the prize wheel.

Send out regular newsletters with updates on new products or those that may have been sold out and are now back in stock, special promotions, and news about your dispensary.

Keep your emails short, engaging, and relevant to your customers' interests.

Apps

Apps are not a necessity but can be a good way for you to stay close to customers. Let's face it, we are basically attached to our phones at the hip these days.

You can use well-built apps to improve the customer experience and maintain connections. We really have to emphasize the well-built part here because a bad app can break your business' reputation in the eyes of customers.

Here's a bit more information specific to the topic of [dispensary mobile apps](#).

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Keep it legal

COOL CANNABIS CO MARKETING

YES NO

[SIGN ME UP!](#)

The cannabis industry is heavily regulated, and it's important to stay compliant with all advertising laws and regulations. Unfortunately, these are not consistent from one state to another.

Advertising rules

Because different states have different rules about what you can and cannot say in your marketing materials, who you can market to, and how you have to treat opt-ins and opt-outs, make sure you understand the laws in your area and follow them closely to avoid any legal issues.

Measuring success

Successful marketing is backed by data. In short, you did the thing but how do you prove the thing you did was the cause of the results?

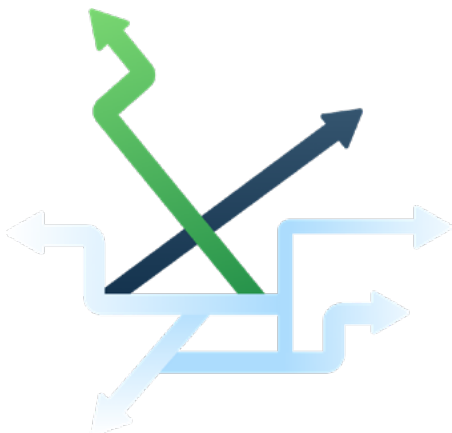
The answer is tracking and measuring.

Simple metrics

To know if your marketing efforts are working, you need to track your performance.

Keep an eye on simple metrics like sales numbers, customer feedback, and website traffic. You can come up with your own metrics to track (AKA Key Performance Indicators or KPIs) if you like, but these are some good ones to start with.

These metrics can give you a clear picture of what's working and what isn't. When your numbers stagnate or dip, you know you're doing something wrong. When they go up, you're doing something right.



START WITH:

SALES NUMBERS

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK

WEBSITE TRAFFIC

Adjusting your approach

Based on the data you collect, be prepared to make changes to your marketing strategy. If something isn't working, don't be afraid to try a new approach.


Marketing is an ongoing process of learning and adapting. The more you experiment and learn from your results, the more effective your marketing efforts will become.

Conclusion

Marketing may seem intimidating at first but, by understanding the basics and starting with simple strategies, you can effectively promote your dispensary and attract more customers.

Remember, the best marketing for cannabis dispensaries revolves around:

- 1 Knowing your customers
- 2 Creating a strong brand
- 3 Setting clear goals
- 4 Using basic digital marketing tools
- 5 Staying compliant with advertising laws
- 6 Regularly measuring your success



With these basic principles in mind, you're well on your way to successfully marketing your retail dispensary.



Interested in learning more about how we can supercharge your revenue using the power of data?
Book a demo today!

insights@happycabbage.io | happycabbage.io/book-a-demo

