

# 2021: Cannabis in America

weedmaps®



# To our Weedmaps community,

Since Weedmaps began in 2008, cannabis has gone from a taboo topic to one openly discussed by policymakers in Washington, and featured in headlines throughout the United States. Cannabis has gone from an industry on the fringe of the business world to one that is the focus of billions of dollars in investment capital and multiplicative market growth. Today, cannabis is legal in more states than not, and as we reflect on 2021, we see steady progress toward a more open, diverse, and professional cannabis marketplace. I believe we are well on our way to a future where cannabis in America raises more capital and employment rates than it raises eyebrows.

It's been almost ten years since adult-use cannabis was first legalized in Colorado, and the industry is expanding and growing at an accelerated pace. While it's important to celebrate this critical moment in the history of cannabis, we still have work to do. Disparate and complicated state cannabis laws have led to decreased transparency in the marketplace, and made it difficult for nascent state cannabis industries to thrive and take market share away from the illicit market. This has also hindered the ability to have true centralized, industry-specific data. In turn, there is a lack of critical information for decision-makers at every level -- from the consumer at the dispensary counter, to dispensary owners, budtenders, growers and farmers, and lawmakers at each step of the legalization process.

At Weedmaps, the goal for this 'Cannabis in America' report is to help us all have a more comprehensive, informed conversation about the state of cannabis in the U.S. In this report, we sought to unearth data and insights on a number of topics including the cannabis marketplace, consumer and industry trends, and how cannabis is permeating American culture and daily life.

As one of the leading technology and software provider to the cannabis industry, Weedmaps is uniquely positioned to gather this data, and in doing so we are fulfilling our mission to power a more transparent and inclusive cannabis economy. The information relayed in this report will allow us to further validate what we are seeing every day: as more is learned about cannabis, the stigma is fading and cannabis is becoming more embedded in our culture. This report is also the launching point for Weedmaps to begin offering more detailed data and analysis to help cannabis businesses make more informed and accurate business decisions; this is especially critical as legal markets grow more competitive and profit margins become tighter. We are proud to be a leader in this growing, vibrant industry, and through this report we hope to shine light and answer some of the persistent questions at the center of cannabis in America.

- Chris Beals, Weedmaps CEO



# Introduction

For decades, America has been having a heart-to-heart chat with itself about the role of cannabis in our culture. In the last ten years, that conversation has gone from hushed sidebar discussions to a full-blown discourse resulting in the legalization of adult-use cannabis in many states, and one form of legalization or another in the majority of states. In the first half of 2021, we watched as the cannabis economy and culture found new places, products, and a renewed sense of purpose.

The result has been an economic driver and has sparked the rise of brands, product diversification, and celebrity endorsements. More than half (54%) of cannabis consumers have a favorite brand, and nearly as many (48%) always buy branded products. Meanwhile, as the market for cannabis expanded, so did exchange and acceptance amongst Americans. More than half (58%) of cannabis non-consumers say they don't mind people in their social circle using cannabis but do not encourage them.

As we look back on the first half of 2021, we hear the echoes of the societal upheaval of the prior 12 months. Americans deemed cannabis essential throughout the pandemic: States embraced it, younger generations recommended it, and the tides of change continued to move steadily toward a more open, and increasingly professional cannabis marketplace.

As the leading technology and software provider to the cannabis industry, Weedmaps has commissioned this report as part of its mission to power a more transparent and inclusive cannabis economy through data and insights. In an ever-maturing market this report reveals industry trends, cultural revelations, and the persistent questions at the center of cannabis in America.



# Executive Summary

Undeniably, 2021 has been a historic year for the legal cannabis industry with shifts in the landscape across policy, people, and the plant itself. Indicative of the social and political climate shifts, the MORE Act - the Marijuana Opportunity, Reinvestment and Expungement Act - has cleared the House Judiciary Committee, which is chaired by the legislation's sponsor, Rep. Jerrold Nadler (D-NY).

First introduced in 2019, this comprehensive piece of legislation is historic in scope as it would end the criminalization of cannabis for adults by removing it from the list of controlled substances, eliminate related criminal penalties, and take several other major steps toward criminal justice reform, social justice, and economic development.

While it may be some time before we see federal legalization of the cannabis industry, adoption of cannabis legalization on the state level continues - resulting in a robust industry that has seen sustained growth in revenue, orders, markets, and consumers.

## ***Cannabis is big business and more professional***

As we take a look back at the first half of 2021, we see that the industry has truly become more professionalized—featuring big businesses fueled by sophisticated technology platforms, expanding product category offerings, and increased consumer demand.

Cannabis consumers are consuming more weed than ever before, with half (50%) saying their consumption has increased since the start of the pandemic. Compared to H1 2020, Weedmaps orders in H1 2021 increased by 55%. In addition, H1 2021 saw a significant shift to cannabis delivery (60% vs. 40%).

While demand across categories remains consistent year over year, almost half (47%) of cannabis consumers believe that edibles are getting more popular (e.g., people liking, consuming, and talking about it). Millennials (ages 25-40) drove demand across categories for both H1 2020 and H1 2021, showing a slight preference for concentrates.

## ***Cannabis is going mainstream and shaking off its stigmas***

As orders and demand across categories increase, the social climate around the plant and the people who choose to use it continues to shift from age-old stigmas that defined the cannabis category.

Our data analysis and review of cultural trends show that using cannabis will become another characteristic that describes rather than defines the people who choose to include it in their lives.

In fact, 72% of cannabis consumers say that everyone or almost everyone knows they use cannabis. More than half (58%) of cannabis non-consumers say they don't mind members of their social circle (family, loved one, significant other, close friend, acquaintance) consuming cannabis but they do not encourage them.

Social taboos and shaming tactics are also being challenged as cannabis consumers seamlessly integrate their cannabis product of choice into their lives. Perhaps surprisingly, more than a quarter (27%) would use cannabis in a work social setting (e.g., company happy hour or holiday party). Even more (31%) say they would use cannabis with multigenerational family in a social setting.

## ***Brands, athlete endorsements, and celebrity cannabis business further increase acceptance***

This increasing usage and acceptance is also being fueled by diverse cannabis brands and endorsements from athletes and other high-profile celebrities who are helping destigmatize cannabis consumption.

This, combined with other market forces, are driving affinity, differentiation, and loyalty among cannabis brands known for their product experience and performance. In fact, more than half (52%) of cannabis consumers have a favorite brand, and nearly as many (50%) believe branded products offer the best results. Branded products often inspire loyalty among cannabis consumers - nearly half (48%) say they always buy branded products.

## ***The fight for social equity and restorative justice within the industry continues as consumers crave a more diverse industry***

The America of 2021 continues to bring heightened awareness to socioeconomic disparities, and business and community leaders are working to find more impactful solutions. The cannabis industry has not ignored these initiatives, and neither have cannabis consumers.

More than half (57%) believe that everyone should have access to opportunities in the cannabis industry, and just as many (57%) also say that everyone benefits from a more inclusive cannabis marketplace.

This translates into a desire to put their cannabis dollars where their intentions are:

- Almost half (46%) say they want to patronize women-owned cannabis businesses
- Nearly as many (44%) say they want to give their business to minority-owned cannabis businesses
- More than a third (37%) say they want to shop with LGBTQ+-owned businesses

## ***The impact of cannabis in local communities is not fully understood among cannabis non-consumers***

While the tangible impact of cannabis legalization varies by state, many cannabis non-consumers are not sure they have seen or understand the laws' impact on them and their communities. More than a third (39%) say they are not sure how laws legalizing cannabis would have an impact on them personally. Nearly as many (38%) say they are not sure what impact cannabis legislation has had in their state.

For those who live in states where cannabis has not been fully legalized, many do not have a clear picture of what a future with legal cannabis would look like. In fact, 61% say they are not sure what will happen once cannabis is legalized in their state.

For those who can imagine the effects, few believe it would have a negative impact on their community: Only 16% believe cannabis legalization will empower illicit market activity. Many are able to see the upside of cannabis legalization, with Generation X holding the most positive views. More than a third (36%) of Generation X believe legalizing cannabis would be a good way to add tax revenue and more than a quarter (25%) believe it will cut down on illegal drug traffic.



technology

THEME ONE

# The Professionalization of Cannabis

The business of weed is entering a critical period. Nearly 5 years since voters first legalized adult-use cannabis in California, more states are backing these measures and federal legalization has never seemed more imminent. The cannabis business has become more sophisticated, appealing to new consumers with welcoming environments and packaging featuring distinctive branding elements often seen in more mature categories.

Now, cannabis means business. And big business uses elaborate marketing to appeal to new audiences, maintain its existing audience, and grow market share. The coronavirus pandemic, social justice movements, and growing markets have all played significant roles in driving the industry further, faster. 2021 is the year that cannabis made greater strides to become more professional.



MACRO CULTURAL DRIVERS

# The Coronavirus Pandemic & Social Justice Movements

This year and last were marked by the ramifications of significant cultural shifts. The two largest issues, COVID-19 and social justice movements, have had significant impacts on the American cannabis legalization efforts.

This points to an industry becoming even more integrated with the culture as a whole. We look at the first half of 2021 (January through June) to inform us as to what has changed and what may remain the same. Has weed helped give birth to economic opportunity? How has the 'perfect storm' of the pandemic, social justice movements as well as economic hardship and essential business combined to become the catalyst of the industry?



# The Coronavirus Pandemic

Much has been written about the effects of the coronavirus pandemic on our society. The cannabis industry, in many ways, has been a bellwether of many of these changes. Whether it's being classified as an essential business or becoming a helpful anxiety mediator, cannabis businesses will remain integral in a post-pandemic world.

As the industry matures, cannabis is bound to experience what other products and trends went through in earlier generations. Events of this year may have been a catalyst, but we are already seeing a higher satisfaction and solidification in cannabis consumer behavior.



**Whether it's to reduce anxiety and stress or to deal with the social isolation and boredom of lockdowns, more cannabis consumers have reached for their stashes since the pandemic took hold of our lives.**



# Many cannabis consumers are choosing cannabis more often as the pandemic continues on.

More than half (51%) said that their cannabis consumption has somewhat or significantly increased since the WHO declared COVID-19 a pandemic on March 11, 2020. This increase is most prominent among Generation Z (58%) and Millennials (57%).

In addition to increased cannabis consumption, younger consumers under 40 years old also drove increases in sales for the beer/wine/spirits category—particularly in the “better for you” segments that feature low or non-alcoholic options. This may be an indicator of a new perspective on self-care that includes ways to indulge without the guilt or negative effects on the body that alcohol can cause.

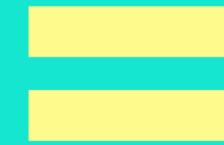
Men were significantly more likely than women to say their usage and/or consumption increased, while women were significantly more likely to say their usage decreased since the pandemic began.

Whether it’s juggling remote work, virtual schooling, or childcare, women have especially felt the disruption caused by the pandemic. Rather than reach for a cannabis product to help cope with the burnout and brain fog, women have reached for an alcoholic drink more often since the start of the pandemic.



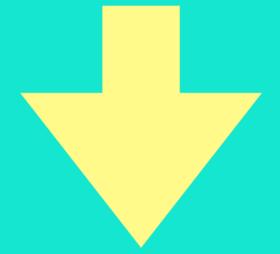
Cannabis consumption **has increased** since the start of the pandemic

**51%**  
TOTAL  
Cannabis Consumers



Cannabis consumption **has stayed the same** since the start of the pandemic

**40%**  
TOTAL  
Cannabis Consumers



Cannabis consumption **has decreased** since the start of the pandemic

**9%**  
TOTAL  
Cannabis Consumers

**Generation Z (21-24)**

58%

25%

17%

**Millennial (25-40)**

57%

33%

10%

**Generation X (41-56)**

52%

40%

8%

**Younger Boomers (57-66)**

32%

57%

11%

**Older Boomers/Silent Generation (66 and older)**

20%

67%

13%

**45%**  
Women

**25%**  
Women

**30%**  
Women

**58%**  
Men

**33%**  
Men

**9%**  
Men

# The second quarter shows an increase in cannabis orders for both H1 2020 and H1 2021.



As self-reported cannabis consumption increased, orders followed suit with H1 2021 experiencing a 55% increase in orders.

The majority of orders occurred in the second quarter, which was consistent with levels seen in 2020.

While 2020 had the vast majority of orders in the second quarter of the year (75%), H1 2021 reflects a more stable order distribution with just over half (53%) of orders in Q2 2021.

Year over year, April and May are the months with the most demand for cannabis.

In addition, the majority of cannabis orders were placed during the week: More than two thirds (68%) of cannabis orders were placed Monday-Friday.

# Perceived positive momentum has been maintained across categories.

	Getting <b>More</b> Popular	Staying the <b>Same</b>	Getting <b>Less</b> Popular	Not <b>Sure</b>
<b>Flower</b> (Buds, pre-rolls, shake, infused flower)	47%	31%	16%	6%
<b>Concentrates</b> (Hash, live resin, rosin, shatter, sauce, budder, crumble, etc.)	46%	25%	18%	11%
<b>Edibles</b> (Beverages, candy, snacks, capsules, tinctures)	69%	18%	10%	3%
<b>Topicals</b> (Lotion, balm, patches, bath bombs, beauty products, etc.)	53%	24%	14%	9%
<b>Vape Pens</b> (Cartridges and disposable)	59%	19%	16%	6%

As cannabis consumption and orders increased, we wanted to understand what was driving momentum in the industry. We asked cannabis consumers about the popularity of the various categories to learn which categories were fueling interest and excitement.

While every category has had a positive forward momentum—that is, the category is growing in popularity by people using, liking, and talking about the specific type of cannabis product—[Edibles saw the most gains in category momentum. This reflects the explosion of new products that made their way onto "best of" lists across the nation—including options featuring delta-8 THC.](#)

SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Survey 2021  
Q: Thinking about the following types of cannabis products, do you think they are becoming more popular, becoming less popular, or staying the same in terms of popularity? By popularity we mean people using, liking, and talking about the cannabis product.

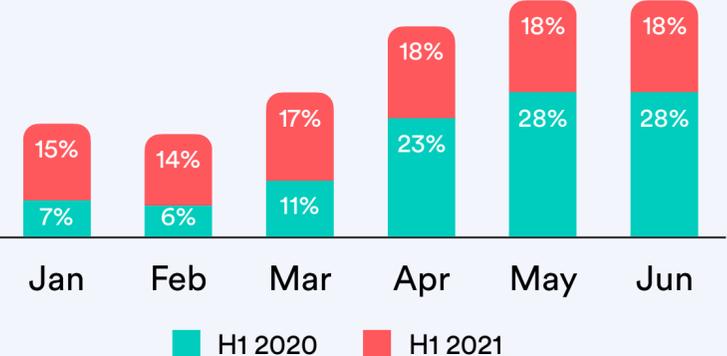
The popularity of edibles can be seen in the explosion of new products making their way onto “best of” lists across the nation, including options featuring delta-8 THC.



# Demand across cannabis categories is consistent in Q2 2021.

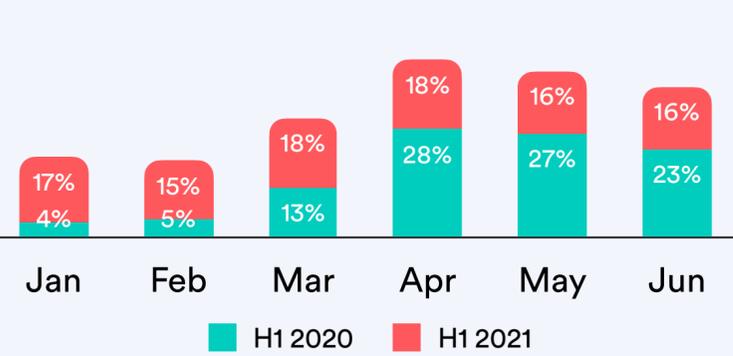
## Concentrates

(Hash, live resin, rosin, shatter, sauce, budder, crumble, etc.)



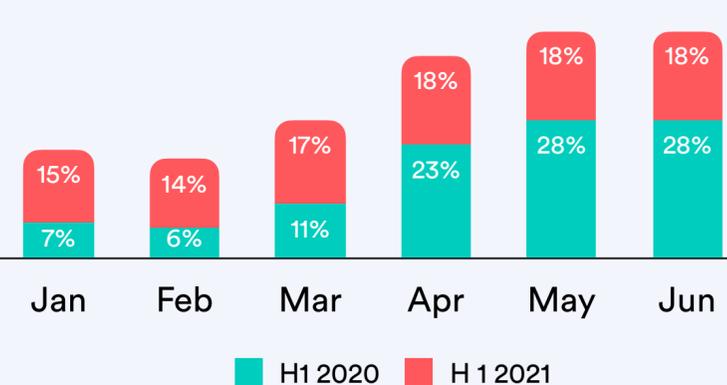
## Edibles

(Beverages, candy, snacks, capsules, tinctures)



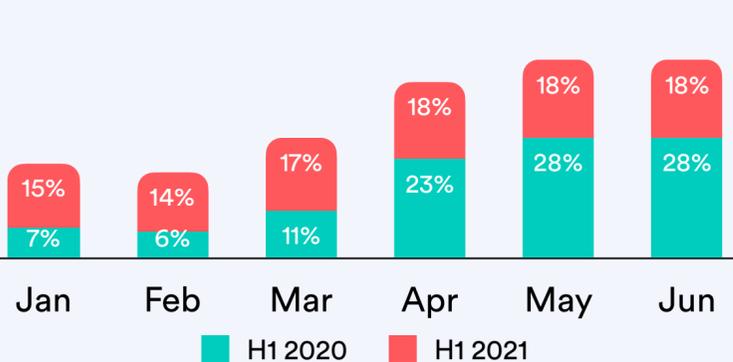
## Flower

(Buds, pre-rolls, shake, infused flower)



## Topicals

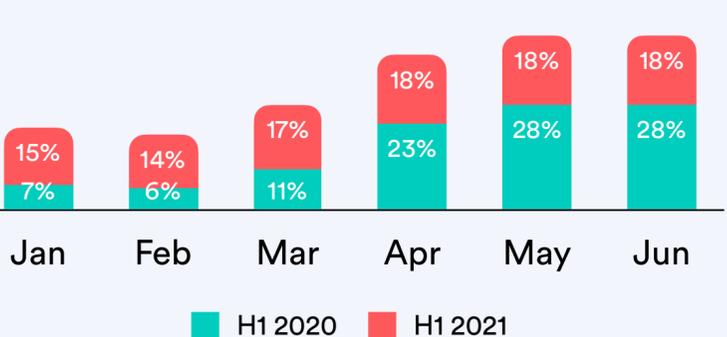
(Lotion, balm, patches, bath bombs, etc.)



While cannabis consumer momentum is most pronounced behind edibles in the first half of the year, order data shows that most categories have a comparable order rate in the second quarter of H1 2021. This may indicate that the cannabis consumer base is not uniform in its preferences, but rather category innovation continues to create a dynamic industry that offers increasing choice for consumers who are using cannabis more often.

## Vape Pens

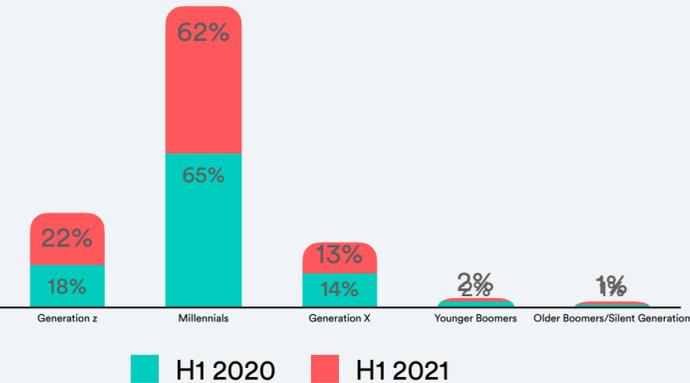
(Cartridges and disposable)



# Millennials fueled demand across categories year over year.

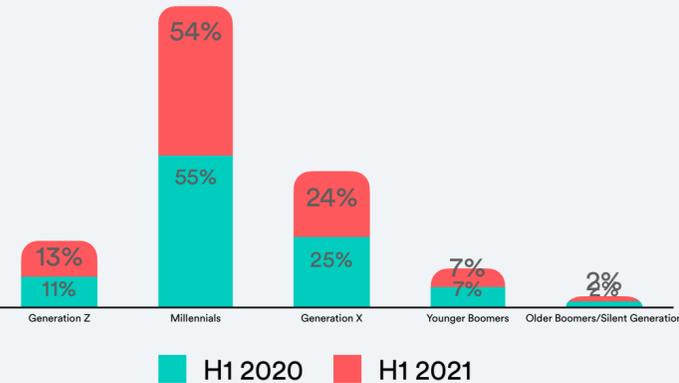
## Concentrates

(Hash, live resin, rosin, shatter, sauce, budder, crumble, etc.)



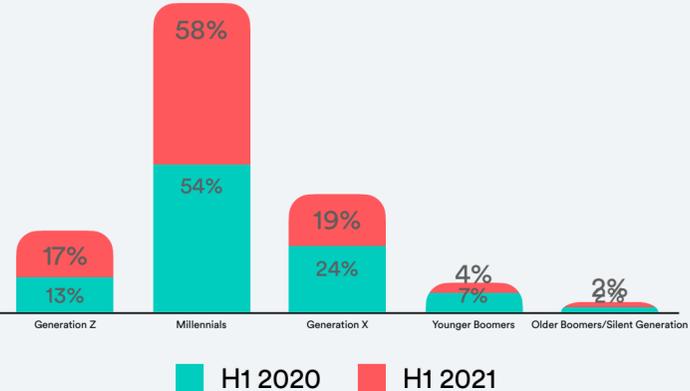
## Edibles

(Beverages, candy, snacks, capsules, tinctures)



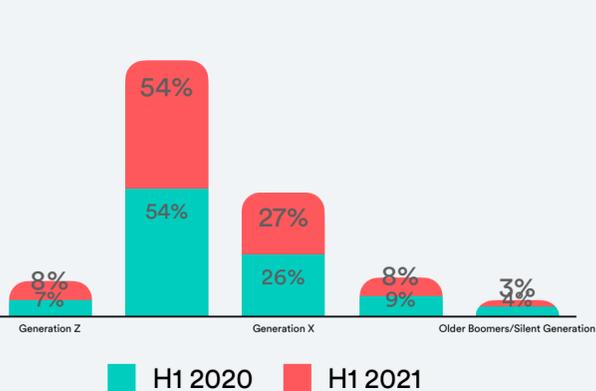
## Flower

(Buds, pre-rolls, shake, infused flower)



## Topicals

(Lotion, balm, patches, bath bombs, etc.)

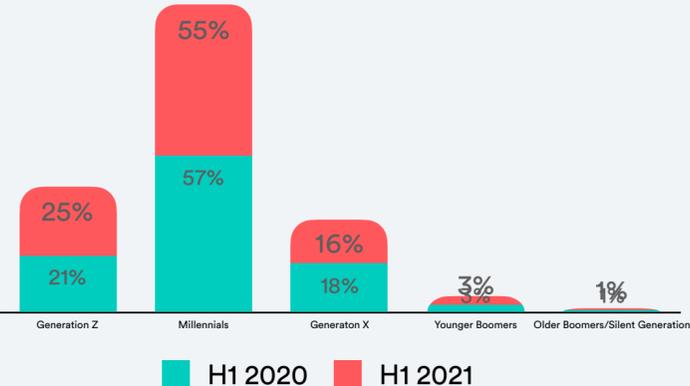


While millennials have often been cited as causing the “death” of many industries, they are the generation that is the engine of the cannabis boom. Across categories, millennials comprise the majority of orders and show a slight preference for Concentrates: 62% of Concentrate orders in 2021 were placed by millennials.

In the first half of this year, Generation X was most likely to place orders for Topicals (27%), Edibles (24%), and Flower (19%). Generation Z was most likely to place orders for Vape Pens (25%), Concentrates (22%), and Flower (17%).

## Vape Pens

(Cartridges and disposable)



SOURCE: Weedmaps H1 2020 and H1 2021 Order Data

# Social conversation composition and sentiment remains consistent during the pandemic.

While the volume of conversation has declined year over year (6.37MM mentions in H1 2020 to 5.81MM mentions in H1 2021), the distribution of conversation across cannabis product categories has remained consistent.

With almost half of the mention volume, flower continues to have the largest share of voice in the cannabis category, followed by edibles. Vape pens, concentrates, and topicals make up 16% of the cannabis conversation in the first half of this year, and is consistent with H1 2020.

Sentiment is also stable year over year, with most of the cannabis conversation reflecting a negative tone. While this would normally be concerning as negative sentiment can signal significant issues within a category, in this case the negativity is often anger directed toward the injustices perpetuated by the criminal justice system toward cannabis convictions. It is also a reflection of calls to legalize cannabis.

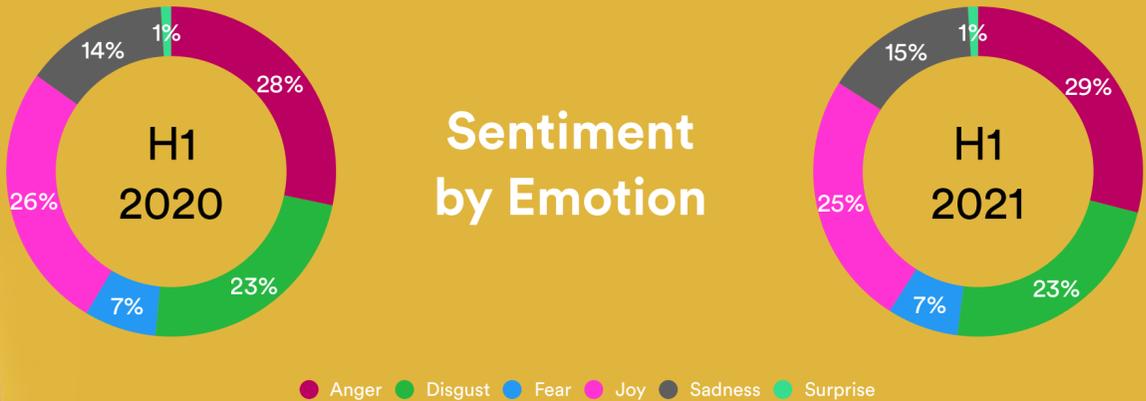
This becomes more apparent when analyzing sentiment by emotion, by which anger and

disgust are the prevailing feelings in the cannabis conversation.

With more than half of the social conversation being fueled by these negative emotions, the social landscape could become a toxic minefield—but we more often see cannabis users and supporters advocating for change and the benefits of both medical and recreational cannabis.

As expected, this support is most pronounced on 4/20, when cannabis consumers celebrate their love of the plant and desire to see changes in the legal system.

Conversation also increased around March 19 when several Biden administration staffers were either suspended, asked to resign, or were placed in a remote work program as a result of past cannabis use.



**megtheeparty (Megan)** @megtheeparty 21 Apr  
 RT @ashakiiii Happy 420. Free all the Black people incarcerated on non-violent marijuana charges 🌿





**Social listening data trends suggest that the cannabis conversation will continue to be passionate, reflecting consumers who are down for the cause and willing to share stories, strength, and support.**



# As conversation ignites around the cannabis categories, the urge to experiment is also strong among cannabis consumers.

Whether due to increased anxiety or growing acceptance, the cannabis consumer has adopted new products at an ever increasing rate, driving the largest gains in the industry.



## Millennials are the most likely to experiment

**56%** have tried a new cannabis product and would absolutely use it again (vs. 47% of total)

**36%** have experimented with different cannabis products (vs. 29% of total)

**20%** have switched the types of cannabis products they used (vs. 14% of total)

**More than 1 in 10 have added a new cannabis product to their repertoire**

## Men are more likely to switch up their cannabis routine

**51%** have tried a new cannabis product and would absolutely use it again (vs 44% of women)

**37%** have experimented with different cannabis products (vs 23% of women)

**20%** have switched the types of cannabis products they used (vs. 10% of women)

**More than 1 in 10 men have added a new cannabis product to their repertoire**

# While some cannabis consumers are choosing to expand their weed horizons, others are doubling down on what they know and love.

When looking at the reasons why people opted to stick with what's in their stash, reasons shifted into three categories that reflected the different perspectives on their tastes, expertise, and weed budgets.

Younger baby boomers (ages 57- 66) were most likely to be creatures of habit (60%) and not too adventurous (27%), while Generation X (ages 41- 56) were the least likely to say they are creatures of habit (39%).

[Younger boomers were also the most likely to say it's too expensive to try something new.](#)

Nearly 20% of Generation Z said they had a bad experience the last time they tried something and were the most likely to say they know what type of high they get from their go-to products (17%).

## I like what I like

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48%

say they are a creature of habit and like what they currently use

21%

say they are not adventurous when it comes to new cannabis products

11%

say it's hard to find new products that are appealing

## I know what I know

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14%

say they already know what kind of high they are getting from their go-to products

12%

say understanding the dosage with new products is too confusing

## I spend what I spend

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28%

say they don't want to potentially waste money on a product that's not right for them

17%

say it's too expensive to try something new

# Repeat orders outpaced new orders year over year.

The majority of orders (67%) in 2020 were cannabis consumers once again choosing the Weedmaps platform among options available to them in the first half of that year. In 2021, repeat orders increased by almost 20 percentage points - signaling that existing customers were turning to Weedmaps for their cannabis needs.

While the number of repeat orders increased, the average delivery time decreased to 5.6 hours compared to 7.7 hours in 2020.

Repeat order timing is consistent year over year, with the majority of repeat orders placed between 10 am and 6 pm.

New orders spiked in April 2020, with 30% of orders being placed that month by cannabis consumers who were new to the Weedmaps platform. Year over year, millennials placed over half of the repeat orders processed on the Weedmaps marketplace.

As millennials continue to show their interest and enthusiasm for the cannabis industry, younger cannabis consumers are also opening their wallets more often.

Repeat orders more than doubled among Generation Z in H1 2021, making up 20% of repeat orders placed on the Weedmaps marketplace.

New  
33%



H1 2020

Repeat  
67%

Repeat  
86%



H1 2021

New  
14%

# H1 2021 saw a significant shift to cannabis order delivery.

While the first half of last year saw an even split between delivery and pick up orders, this year saw a reallocation of orders that favored delivery.

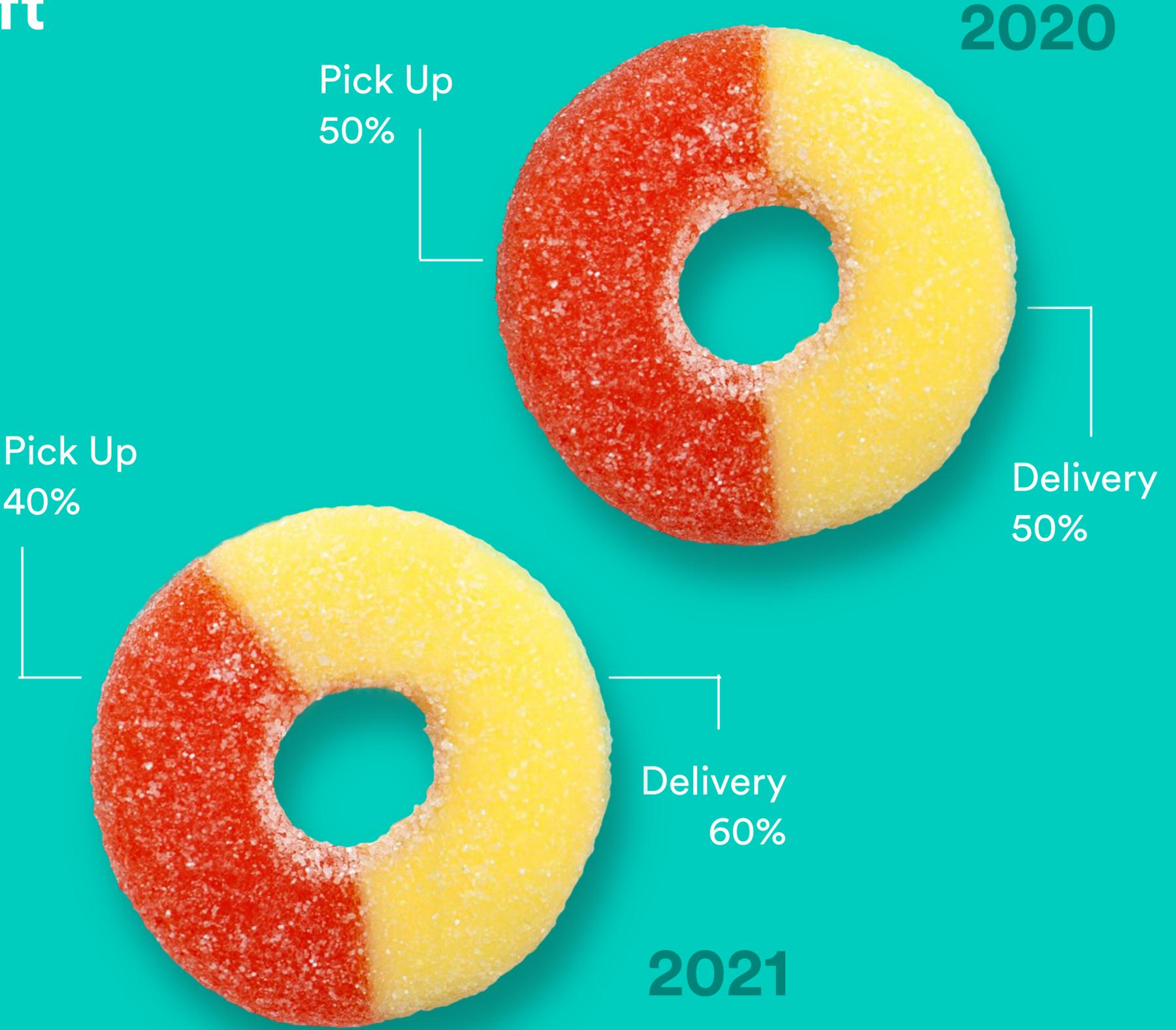
In H1 2021 the majority of orders placed were for delivery (60%) - an increase of 97% compared to H1 of last year. As more cannabis consumers settled into routines that leveraged the increasing availability of delivery on demand through platforms like GrubHub, Drizly, and Shipt, cannabis delivery has also made its way into the lives of cannabis consumers.

While delivery saw increases overall in 2021, the distribution of orders

remained fairly consistent from month to month with majority of delivery orders in Q2 (54%).

Similar to the trend found in repeat orders, millennials also drive the demand for delivery with the majority (57%) of H1 2021 delivery orders being placed by this generation.

Generation Z has also shown a developing desire for cannabis delivery, with delivery orders among this age group increasing by more than 125% from H1 2020 to H1 2021.



SOURCE: Weedmaps H1 2020 and H1 2021 Order Data



**As cannabis delivery gains traction with younger cannabis consumers (ages 21-40), this interest and enthusiasm is reflected in social conversations.**



# Cannabis delivery sparked conversations on social.

As many states with legal cannabis declared it an essential business alongside grocery and liquor stores, many cannabis businesses were quick to pivot to increasing curbside pick-up and delivery options.

Social conversations around pick-up and delivery were predominantly neutral in 2020 as cannabis consumers recognized the efforts of legislators and cannabis businesses. Nearly a third (31%) expressed joy around new options and availability for both medical and adult-use cannabis consumers.

As we continued navigating the changes brought about by the ongoing global pandemic, social conversation spiked in April of this year when Uber CEO Dara

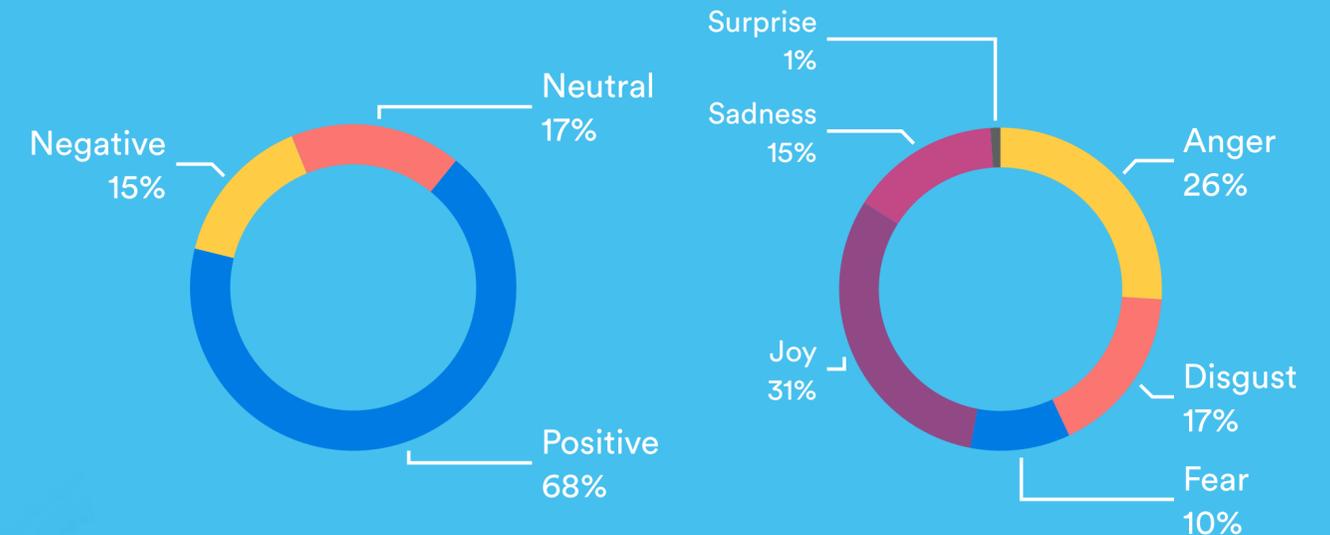
Khosrowshahi told CNBC: “When the road is clear for cannabis, when federal laws come into play, we’re absolutely going to take a look at it.”

This announcement was met with a variety of responses from the cannabis community. Many were excited about another delivery option while others were critical of a large corporation taking advantage of the hard work put in by people advocating for change in the industry.

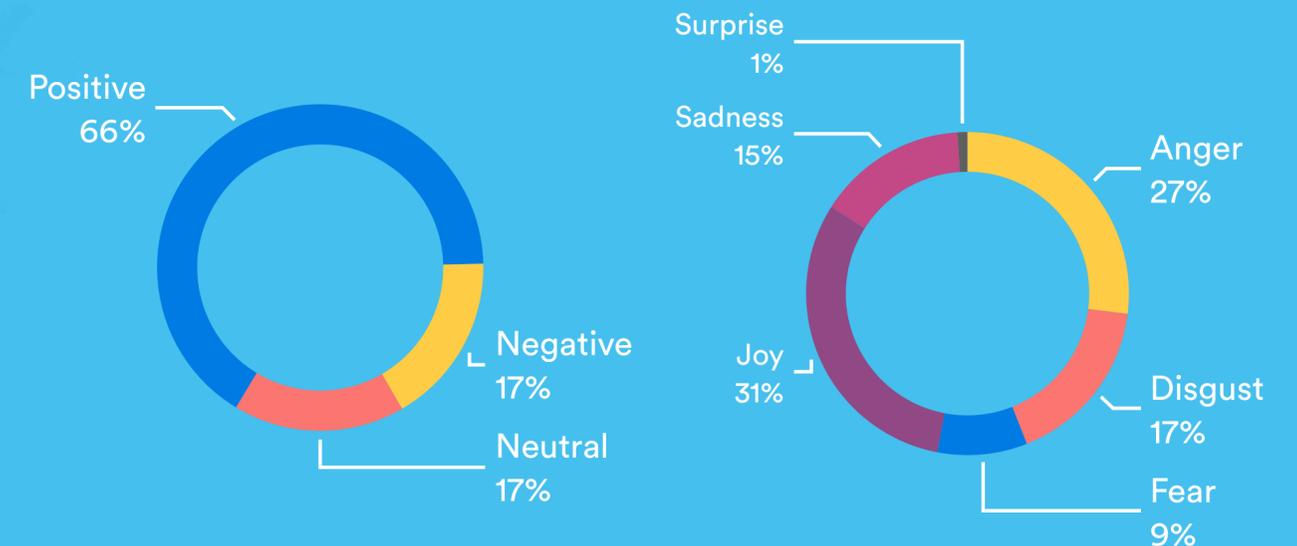
And some cannabis consumers could not miss the opportunity to inject a bit of #weedhumor into the conversation with creative new names for the possible new offering. Doober, anyone?



## 2020 Pick Up/Delivery Social Conversation



## 2021 Pick Up/Delivery Social Conversation



**KevinLCarillo (Kevin Carrillo)** @KevinLCarillo 13 Apr  
Uber CEO says company could get into **cannabis delivery** <https://t.co/Ou9QnvK17M>

**TheWeedsmen420 (The Weedsmen Potcast)** @TheWeedsmen420 13 Apr  
Hell yeah! 🍃 #cannabis #weed #marijuana #popculture #comedy #humor #detroit #michigan  
Uber CEO says company could get into **cannabis delivery** <https://t.co/drrAkd4f6>

**brvus (Ricardo Baca)** @brvus 12 Apr  
The outsiders are just dying to get in - after the insiders finish the important work ahead, naturally. <https://t.co/XMWXJtqhC3>

**daviddinenberg (David Dinenberg)** @daviddinenberg 17 Mar  
Just like Rite Aid, CVS, Walgreens etc, #medical #cannabis patients need access to their medicine. I hope states allow their dispensaries stay open or allow expanded delivery! #marijuana #coronavirus @MarijuanaPolicy @NCIAorg <https://t.co/HI3auaORQe>

**DJSteezyD1 (Steezy D)** @DJSteezyD1 26 Jun  
Ok hear me out. The only way to get the economy back on track. Legalize weed. Legal weed curbside pick up, weed home delivery and later weed coffee shops, weed bars, weed restaurants. 2020 is Thanos and legalizing weed is the marvel superheroes coming to save us.

**Veronica2twit1 (Veronica)** @Veronica2twit1 26 Jun  
The new rules allow dispensaries to offer online sales and curbside pick-up. <https://t.co/ZXYIoEI6ff>



# Social Justice Movements

If 2020 was a year of significant change, then 2021 was the year that those modifications began to take shape. The America of 2021 continues to be divided with widespread protests and growing awareness of socioeconomic disparities.

The cannabis industry has felt it too. As a result, some cannabis businesses and policy advocates are asking how the industry can help African Americans, Latinx, women, and others share in the decisions being made. This diversification of participation is not only inclusive and begins to repair the years of damage once inflicted on whole communities, but is also a business imperative.

The more diverse an industry, the more choices the consumer has, and the more opportunities there are for workers, merchants, and investors. In the face of mounting pressure to legalize cannabis on the federal level, now may be the time to nurture this diversification before homogeneity gets foothold and choice dwindles.

Is enough being done?



While only 13% of cannabis consumers say they actually know if their cannabis retailer reflects a specific ownership type (e.g., women, minority, LGBTQ+, veteran, disabled), **significantly more** want to patronize cannabis businesses with these characteristics.

Almost half (46%) of cannabis consumers say they want to actively patronize women-owned cannabis retailers, while 44% say they want to give business to minority or veteran owned cannabis establishments.

More than a third (37%) say they want to shop with LGBTQ+-owned cannabis businesses.

As the trends around supporting equitable business practices and social justice movements continue to be part of the economic and cultural conversations, cannabis businesses can benefit from positive consumer sentiment by stating their ownership stakeholders as part of their marketing efforts.

46%

want to patronize women-owned cannabis businesses

44%

want to patronize veteran-owned cannabis businesses

44%

want to patronize minority-owned cannabis businesses

40%

want to patronize disabled-owned cannabis businesses

37%

want to patronize LGBTQ+ -owned cannabis businesses



SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Study 2021  
Q: Which of the following best describes how you think about shopping for cannabis? I know if my preferred cannabis retailer is owned by women, LGBTQ+, minority, veteran, disabled individuals.  
Q: Which of the following cannabis retailer ownership types would you want to actively patronize?

# Cannabis consumers believe in a diverse, equitable, and inclusive cannabis marketplace and they see how everyone can benefit.

The majority of cannabis consumers (57%) believe that everyone should have access to cannabis industry opportunities, with Generation Z being the most passionate believers. This should be no surprise as members of this generation are often known for its fierce belief in social justice and equity.

The majority of women (60%) also believe in equitable access—significantly more than men (53%). More than a third of women who use cannabis (37%) also say that everyone benefits from diversity and

inclusion in the cannabis marketplace. Fewer men who use cannabis believe this to be true (32%).

While more than a third (35%) of this generation believes that everyone benefits from a more diverse and inclusive cannabis marketplace, it's actually older generations that drives this belief. Nearly half (45%) of older boomers and silent generation members (ages 67+) say that diversity and inclusion in the cannabis marketplace benefits everyone.

Everyone should have access to opportunities in the cannabis industry



Everyone benefits from a more diverse and inclusive cannabis marketplace



SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Study 2021  
Q: Which of the following statements best reflect how you feel about the cannabis industry and social equity?

**Data shows that Diversity, Equity,  
and Inclusion is the dream, but the  
support is not as strong.**



# There is a disconnect between what people are saying and what they are willing to support.

Of the cannabis consumers surveyed, 44% say that there is an opportunity to create a more fair and equitable cannabis industry—but only 27% say they actually support social equity programs.

[While you might expect Generation Z to lead in this space, it's actually Generation X that drives the belief in the opportunity for a more fair and equitable cannabis industry.](#)

Almost half (48%) of Generation Z see the opportunity—but again, the attitude does not follow the action as fewer state their support (30%). Older boomers/silent generation members are the most likely to lend their support, with 43% saying they support social equity programs.

It's also interesting to note that while men and women have similar outlooks when it comes to understanding the opportunity, there are differences in gender identity when it comes to support.

A comparable number of men and women (44% and 43%) say that there is room for improvement when it comes to a fair and equitable cannabis industry. Yet significantly more women than men say they support social equity programs in the industry (31% vs. 21%).

As the industry continues to expand and questions are raised around who benefits and why, a smaller, motivated group of cannabis consumers may hold the industry accountable for their diversity, equity, and inclusion efforts.

SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Study 2021  
Q: Which of the following statements best reflects how you feel about the cannabis industry and social equity?

## The endorsement

There is an opportunity to create a more fair and equitable cannabis industry

TOTAL % Agree	GENERATION Z % Agree	WOMEN % Agree
44%	48%	44%

vs.

## The advocacy

I support social equity programs for the cannabis industry

TOTAL % Agree	OLDER BOOMER/ SILENT GENERATION % Agree	WOMEN % Agree
27%	43%	31%



# Insights and Implications

The cannabis industry is at a major inflection point. Grow as much as possible before larger forces enter the field? Or help those who suffered unfairly during the prohibition years? This does not have to be a binary decision. The diversification of the industry can give consumers greater choice while holding off players from other industries as they enter post federal legalization.

The question remains: Are dispensaries, growers, processors, and others doing enough? There is a perception that the industry is making attempts at inclusivity, but the efforts are not being matched by the impact currently seen in the industry.



THE RISE OF BRANDS, ATHLETES, AND CELEBRITY WEED

# The industry matures

As the industry continues to grow at breakneck speed, we see the attention of more mainstream marketing entities. Celebrities and athletes begin to advocate and endorse the responsible use of cannabis. As weed becomes more marketable mainstream, how does the cannabis consumer feel?



# I Weed

As new strains, products, and forms continue to flood the industry with various levels of potency and personal impact, cannabis brands provide additional traction in the marketplace.



## Affinity

# 54%

of cannabis consumers have a favorite brand

(61% millennials 65% men)

## Differentiation

# 50%

of cannabis consumers believe branded products offer the best results

(57% millennials 62% men)

## Loyalty

# 48%

of cannabis consumers always buy branded products

(54% millennials 57% men)

## Trial

# 20%

of cannabis consumers believe that if they have heard of the brand it is worth trying

(25% millennials 23% men)

# Insights and Implications

One day we may see the cannabis version of the Cola Wars where the dominant players in the industry battle for dominance while smaller brands are driven out of existence. Until then, the industry will likely continue to experience immense growth. More brands will emerge and many will flourish as they meet consumer needs and reflect their lifestyles.

Meanwhile, despite a few groups that are finding and sticking to what they know, more consumers will be made aware of brands by leading voices, and more cannabis consumers will interact with their soon-to-be favorite brands. This will be due in part to the influx of new customers coming into the market through legalized states, but primarily through a greater marketing push.

Brands will need to increase their marketing spend and diversify their product array as consumers seek to find their favorite brands and products.



# Dispensary POV

Many people are finding purpose and fulfillment working at dispensaries, which has allowed these frontline businesses the opportunity to expand their portfolio and employ more people.

However, the specter of old beliefs still haunt the industry. **53%** of owners believe there is still a negative stigma attached to the industry, all while still believing (**63%**) it is one of the best things that has ever personally happened to them.



# Less than a quarter (23%) believe most cannabis companies are only in business for the profit.

Many more believe in the positive impact that cannabis companies provide to their consumers and community.

---

**47%**

say the cannabis industry gives back to the community

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**63%**

believe cannabis companies make a positive impact on society

---

---

**67%**

believe cannabis companies make a positive impact on individuals

---



# Dispensary owners/ operators recognize the opportunities and benefits of a more diverse and inclusive cannabis industry

**57%**

believe that everyone should  
have access to opportunities in  
the cannabis industry

**70%**

believe everyone benefits from  
a more diverse and inclusive  
cannabis marketplace

# As they work on the front lines of the industry they have higher levels of program support - but are less likely to say more programs are needed

**43%**

say they support social equity  
programs for the cannabis industry

**27%**

say there should be more social equity  
programs to create a more diverse and  
inclusive cannabis marketplace



# Investments across business dimensions have made an impact.

## Products

---

50%

say that the ability to diversify cannabis offerings has made a big positive impact

37%

say new branded products has made a big positive impact

## Experience

---

40%

say investments to improve the in-store experience have made a big positive impact

33%

say investments to improve the digital/online/mobile experience have made a big positive impact

## Marketing

---

43%

say marketing where/when available has made a big positive impact

17%

say partnerships have made a big positive impact

**Features that help with detailing and showcasing brand understanding are extremely important when evaluating an online menu, e-commerce solution, or CRM software.**

**40%**

say that brand product syndication (product images, descriptions, and verification syndicated directly to online menu) is extremely important when making a purchase decision on an online menu or e-commerce solution

**34%**

say product reviews from verified purchasers are extremely important features when making a purchase decision on an online menu or e-commerce solution

**18%**

say real-time alerts on trending products in your region with option to create ads/messaging to capitalize on sales is an important feature to have in their CRM software



SOURCE: Weedmaps Internal Dispensary Owner/Operator Survey II 2021  
Q: Indicate below which software features are important to have in your customer relationship management (CRM) software  
Q: Thinking about your online menu and e-commerce solution, which features are important than making a purchase decision

# Views for brands and revenue are extremely important for analytics reporting

**44%**

say top brands you carry by number of products sold, percentage of total sales, and total revenue is an extremely important analytics view

**42%**

say revenue performance from specials, coupons, and advertising campaigns is an extremely important analytics view

# Compliance and reporting features are most important when evaluating a POS solution

**56%**

say compliance features and automation (e.g., one click state compliance reporting, seamless metric integration) are extremely important when making a POS solution decision

**63%**

say reporting/analytics functions (e.g., flexible, easy to use, ability to visualize data) is extremely important when making a POS solution decision



# Insights and Implications

While within the industry there is intense satisfaction, outside, old habits die hard.

As legalization begins to take shape there is no indicator that perceptions will change overnight.

While structural changes will change the function of the industry, customers and especially non-consumers will continue to dictate the discussion in the near term.

Eventually, as cannabis products, consumers, and dispensaries become more commonplace, opinions will begin to change as well.



THEME TWO

# A New Cannabis Generations

As the cannabis industry expands, so does the composition and characteristics of its consumer base. Stigmas are fading as the stereotypes around cannabis consumers are being shattered by people of all generations.

From Generation Z to Older baby boomers, cannabis consumers are re-defining what it means to be part of the cannabis community.

Each generation has a different relationship with cannabis based on the cultural and historical context of their coming of age — and it shows in their attitudes and behaviors.

Let's find out what they are like ...



# Many cannabis consumers reach for their stash daily.

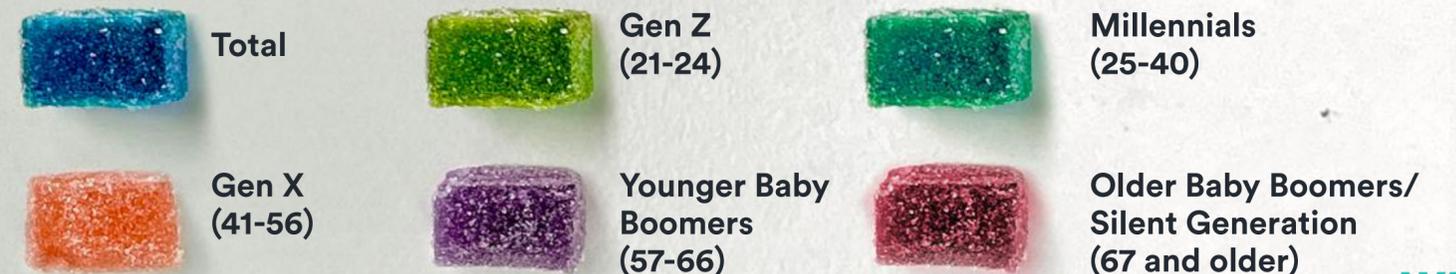
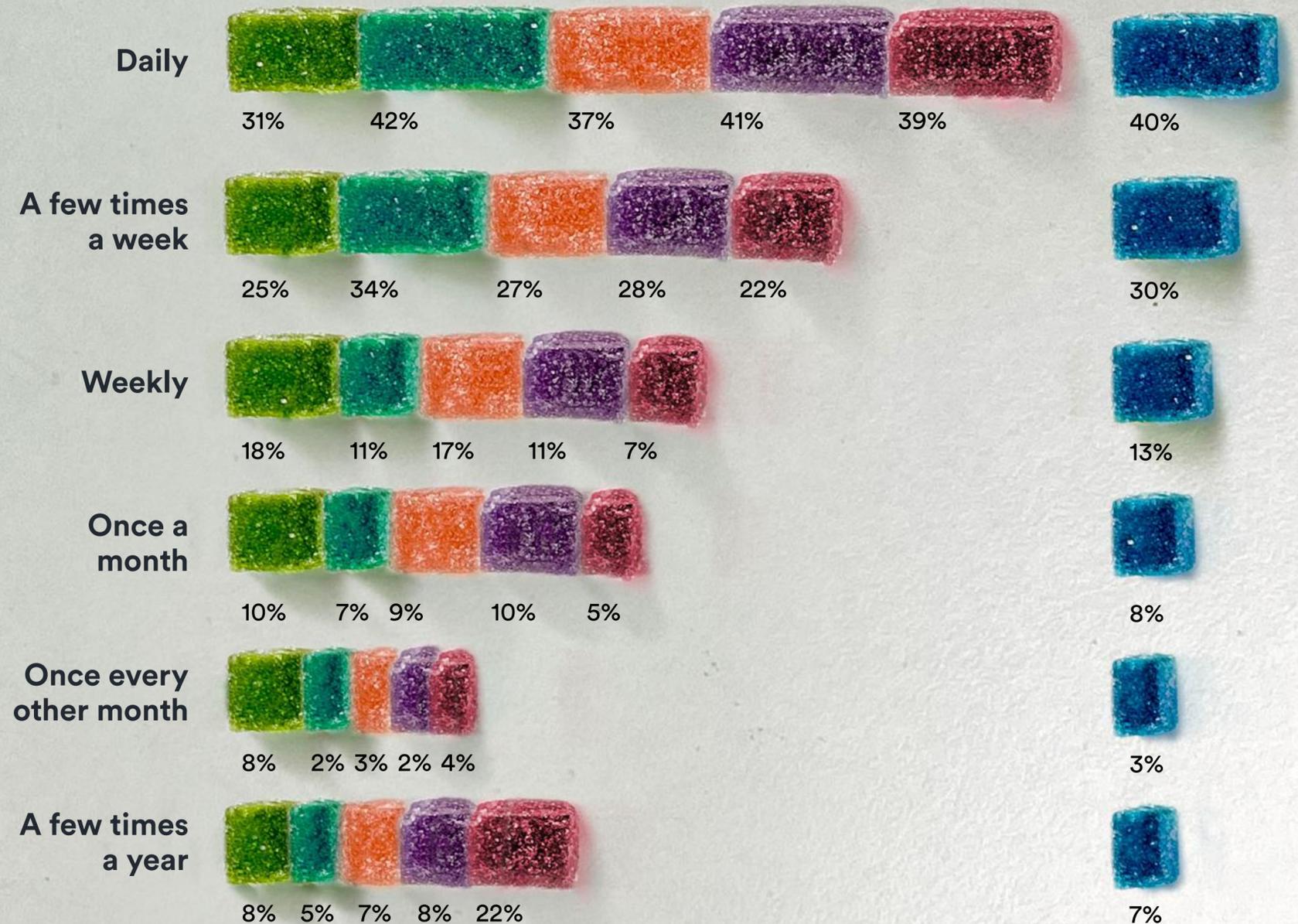
In fact, 40% of cannabis consumers say they consume their choice of cannabis or CBD every day.

Millennials are the most likely to use cannabis daily, and men and women have comparable levels of daily use.

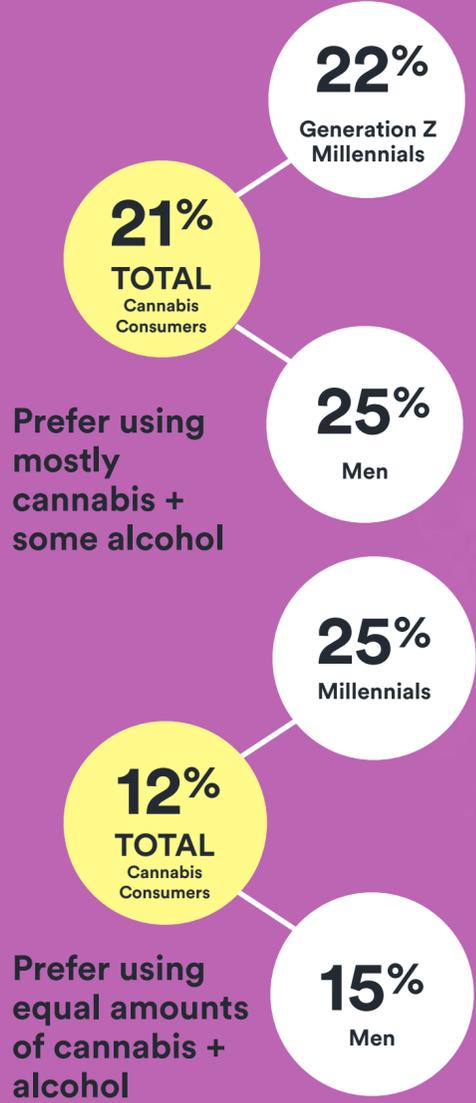
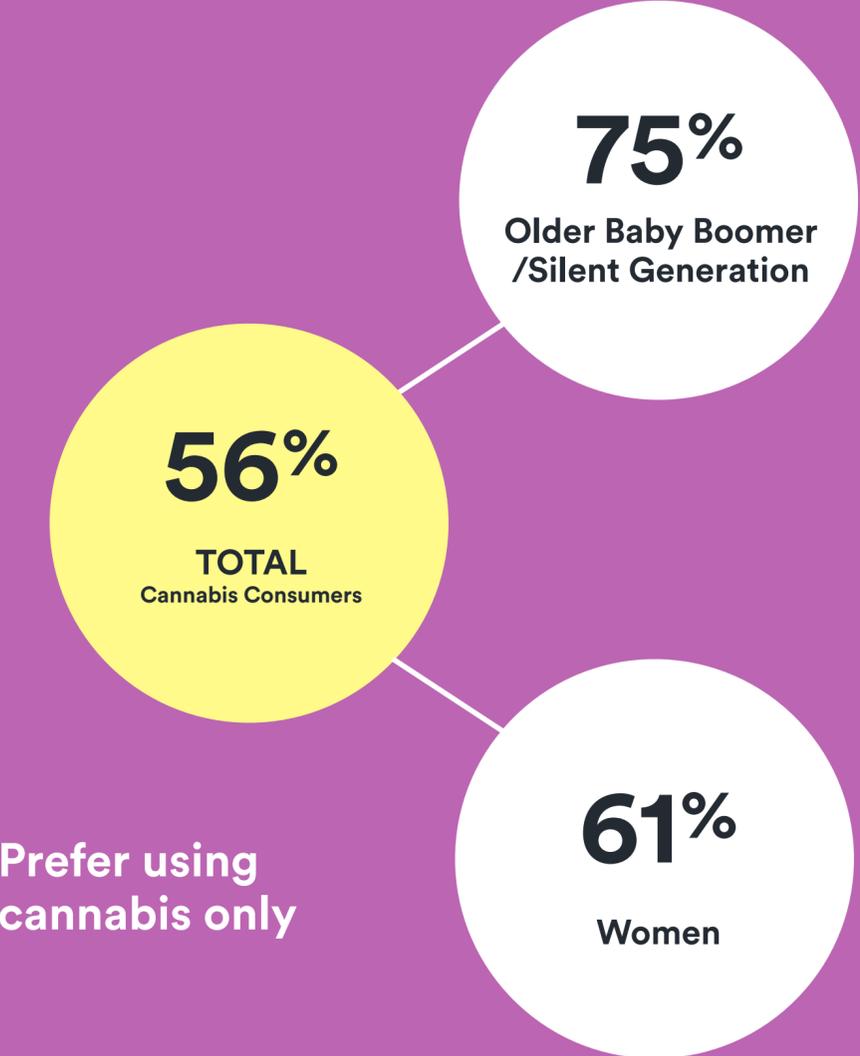
Frequent use influences how (and with whom) cannabis consumers share this experience.

The majority (66%) says their preferred method of consumption is alone or with one or two other people. This preference is driven by younger boomers (83%) and men (69%).

For many this is a personal practice that have a lasting impact on how they live, work, and play.



# Cannabis consumers often stick to the basics when it comes to using weed.



When asked about their ideal cannabis consumption scenario, most consumers are purists: 56% say they prefer to only use cannabis. Older baby boomers and the silent generation (aged 67 and older) fuel this trend as the vast majority (75%) say that they nix other options and prefer using weed only. This is true for women as well with 61% stating their preference is cannabis only. When it comes to consuming cannabis and alcohol, less than a quarter (21%) say they prefer using mostly cannabis and some alcohol, and

more than one in 10 (12%) say they prefer using equal amounts of cannabis and alcohol. Cannabis consumers under 40 lead the trend of pairing cannabis and alcohol—which may be surprising as many other studies have noted that millennials in particular are showing a preference for cannabis over alcohol. Our research revealed that 30% of millennials see using cannabis the same as drinking a glass of your favorite beer, wine, or liquor —suggesting that these products

are seen as interchangeable depending on the occasion and timing. As more states make cannabis legal, the data trends suggest that consumer sentiment and usage will evolve, creating a dynamic and competitive marketplace. This shift in mindset can be seen in how the traditional beer, wine, and spirits category has been expanded to include cannabis products when reporting sales, product, and consumer

trends—indicating that the fight for attention, relevance, and preference will continue to be shaped by shifts in consumer sentiment toward “vice” categories. As cannabis consumers and the canna-curious explore what’s right for them, we can expect to see this metric evolve over time.

SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Survey 2021  
Q: Which of the following is your ideal cannabis usage or consumption scenario?



# Mileage may vary when it comes to cannabis expertise.

Knowledge is power—and almost half (49%) of cannabis consumers say they are very or fairly knowledgeable about cannabis.

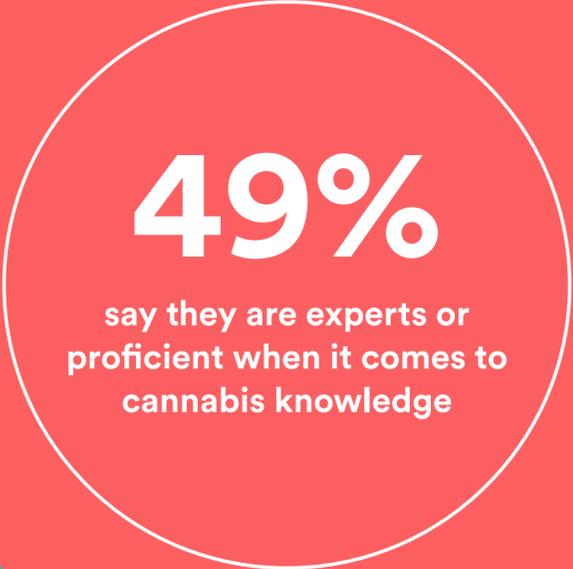
Millennials are the most likely to say they are experts when it comes to cannabis knowledge (29%). This generation has been said to be fueling the cannabis boom, and their understanding and exploration show their interest and enthusiasm for legal cannabis.

Gender has an impact on perceived expertise. Fewer women say they are experts or proficient when it comes to cannabis knowledge (38% vs. 63% of men). As more women than ever before enter the category, many are still exploring the various facets of cannabis. Mastery may take on different forms as their expertise and confidence

increases the more they understand what works (and doesn't) for them along their cannabis journey.

So where are cannabis consumers getting their weed intel? Friends and family top the list, with over half (56%) saying they get their cannabis info from some of the people closest to them. Celebrities who use and/or have a cannabis business also have influence; in fact, 17% of cannabis consumers say this is where they get their cannabis info.

As cannabis consumers continue to expand and experiment it will be important for credible, consistent, and reliable information to be available in snackable formats to help create confidence and enhance the cannabis understanding for experts and novices alike.



SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Survey 2021  
Q: When it comes to understanding the different cannabis forms, strains, and products, how would you rate your knowledge level?  
Q: Generally, where do you get your information about cannabis (e.g. products, brands, news, regulations, laws, etc.)?

**From expert to novice, many cannabis consumers embrace the positive experiences they have with the plant.**



# Cannabis is life-changing. Full stop.

There are few things in life that are truly game changers—but for many people, cannabis is one of them. Whether they use it for medical or recreational purposes, cannabis consumers are not shy about extolling the positive impact it has had on the fabric of their lives.

More than a third (36%) say that finding cannabis is one of the best things that has happened to them and more than a quarter (27%) say they cannot imagine life without cannabis.

As the evolving pandemic continues to challenge and change our lives, personal interactions have often become more tense even as they become more meaningful. As a result, cannabis consumers reveal that using weed helps with social interactions. From an internal perspective, 40% say they are easier to be around when they use cannabis. Conversely, from an external perspective,

even more cannabis consumers (43%) believe that using cannabis makes it easier to be around other people.

This is especially true for Generation X and women who have bore the brunt of caring for frazzled children now learning remotely and often ailing parents, in addition to dealing with workplaces stumbling through “appropriate” COVID-19 protocols.

Given the state of the world and the chronic stress that many are experiencing, it’s no surprise that nearly half (42%) of cannabis consumers say when they use cannabis it’s easier to cope with the stress of daily life. Almost as many (44%) believe using cannabis makes a bad day better.

Undoubtedly, cannabis has—and will continue to have—a significantly positive impact on people who choose to use it.

36%

say that finding it is one of the best things that has ever happened to them

27%

say they cannot imagine life without cannabis

43%

believe using cannabis makes it easier to be around other people

40%

say they are easier to be around when they use cannabis

46%

say when they use cannabis it’s easier to cope with the stress of daily life

44%

believe using cannabis makes a bad day better

# Stigmas associated with cannabis use are fading.

A “live and let live” attitude towards cannabis consumers often prevails among non-consumers. While a contingent of non-consumers continue to hold negative connotations of people who use cannabis, many recognize that this is a personal, individual choice that people are allowed to make for themselves for whatever reason.

When asked to describe people who consume cannabis, their top of mind associations often speak to freedom of choice and reserving judgement based on cannabis consumption.

Cannabis non-consumers were also significantly more likely to reference medical use while cannabis consumers associated themselves with evocative

descriptors that speak to the many personality dimensions of people who consume weed recreationally.

As medical cannabis becomes more recognized and accepted form of treatment for a variety of diseases and conditions, both cannabis consumers and non-consumers acknowledge the distinction between recreational and medical use.

When looking at the results for cannabis non-consumers, our research revealed that many top-of-mind associations for people who use cannabis not only specifically reference people using the product for pain management, but also to aid with anxiety and sleep disorders.

SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Non-Consumer Survey and Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Survey 2021  
Q: What are the first words or phrases that come to mind when you think about people who use or consume cannabis products?

## Top of Mind Phrases Associated with Cannabis Consumers from Cannabis Non-Consumers

I don't judge

Good for them

They are no different than people who drink alcohol

It's their business

Personal preference

“

None of my business

It's a culture

That is their choice but it's not for me

They are in charge of their own bodies

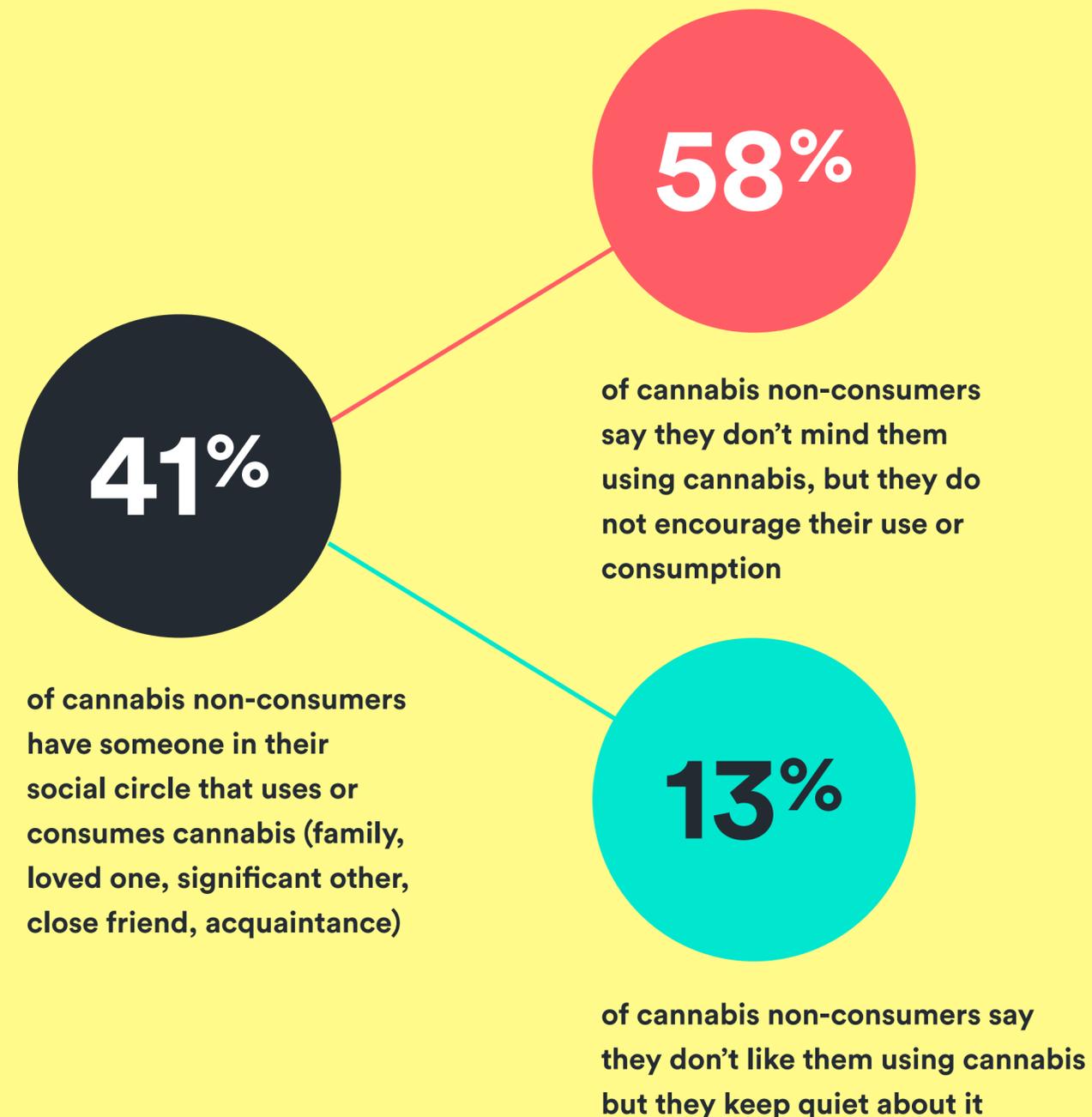
“It's a personal choice for anyone”

Hope it works for them



They are grown





# Friends and family are less likely to judge cannabis consumers.

The majority of cannabis non-consumers (59%) do not have anyone in their social circle who use or consume cannabis. Of the 41% who do, their feelings about cannabis use in their social circle range from active or passive encouragement (13%) to outright disapproval and discouragement (6%).

The majority of cannabis non-consumers find themselves with a more neutral stance: 58% say they don't mind people in their social circle using cannabis, but they do not encourage them.

The oldest generations are the most tolerant when it comes to cannabis use in their social circle, with more than two thirds (66%) of younger boomers and older boomers/silent generation stating they don't mind but don't encourage cannabis use among their social circle.

Men (17%) are more likely than women (13%) to say they don't mind people in their social circle using cannabis but they keep quiet about it. This may be due to the fact that our research found that men are twice as likely to have friends and family that use or consume cannabis.

As cannabis use and consumption continues to grow, data suggests that cannabis non-consumers will continue to adopt a flexible mindset that respects the choices of the consumers and their own personal belief systems.

Attitudes will continue to evolve as cannabis becomes more mainstream with increased legalization, and the negative associations will lessen for those who choose to consume weed.

**As cannabis use and consumption continues to grow, data suggests that cannabis non-consumers will continue to adopt a flexible mindset about cannabis consumers.**



# Learning about cannabis use has a predominantly neutral effect on opinions.

To better understand how using cannabis impacts perceptions, we asked a provocative question to cannabis non-consumers: **Does finding out if someone uses cannabis change your opinion of them?**

While it's no surprise that there is a staunch cohort of cannabis non-consumers who say their opinions got worse when they learned an individual from a selected group of people uses cannabis, **the majority of cannabis non-consumers said their opinion did not change upon learning an individual uses cannabis.**

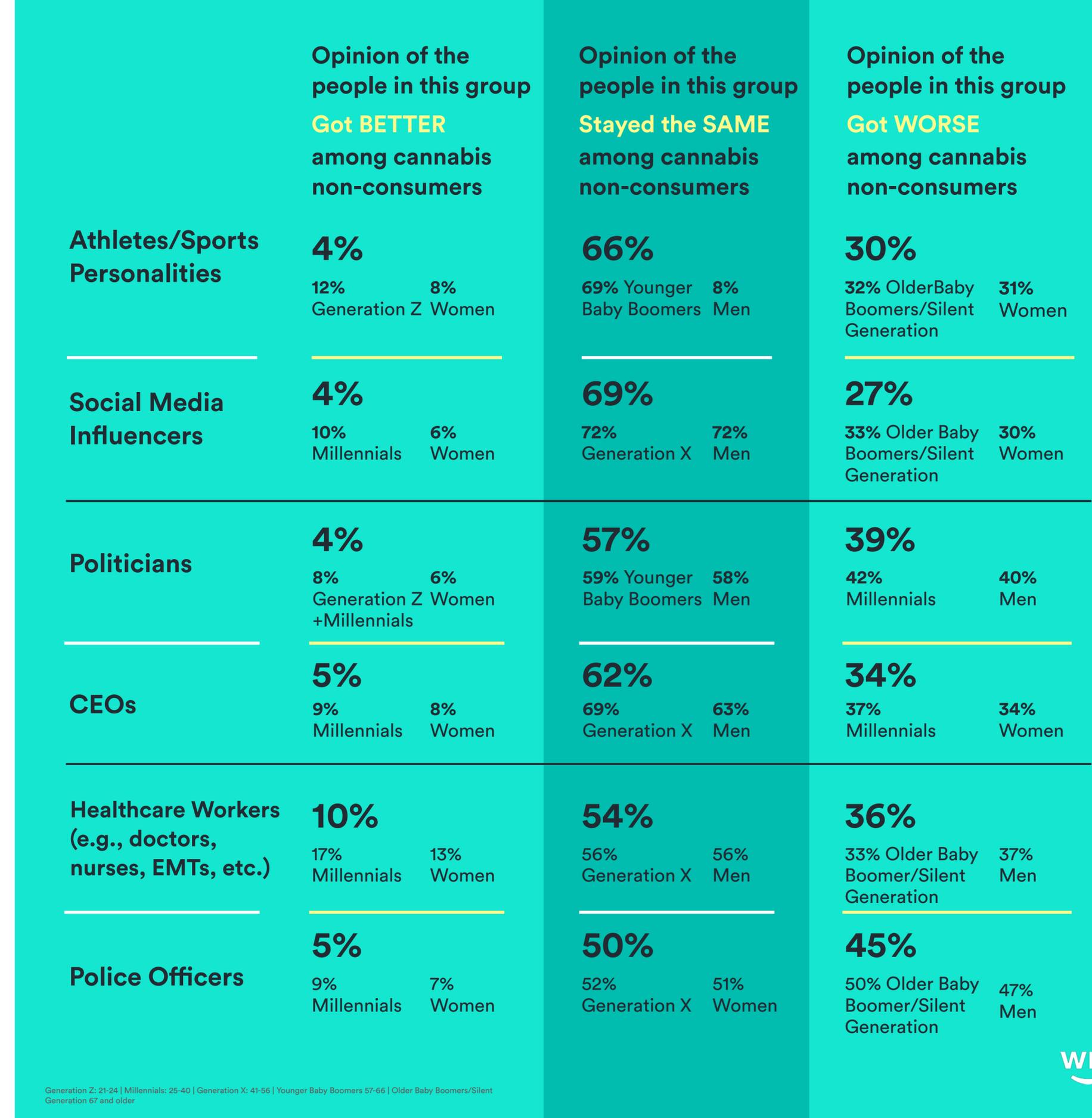
This opinion was consistent among cannabis non-users when they were considering different types of individuals who are often held

accountable for their actions in the court of public opinion. Even with the warranted calls for radical transformation among the nation's law enforcement, the majority (55%) of cannabis non-consumers said their opinions of police officers either got better or stayed the same.

As more athletes, celebrities, and other high-profile individuals help destigmatize cannabis use, the data suggest that opinions will shift to be more positive or remain neutral as their stories create connection and understanding.

Ultimately, the data and cultural trends show that using cannabis will become another characteristic that **describes rather than defines** the people who choose to include it in their lives.

SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Non-Consumer Survey  
Q: How does your opinion change if you learn an individual from one of the following groups of people uses cannabis? Does your opinion get better, get worse, or stay the same?



Generation Z: 21-24 | Millennials: 25-40 | Generation X: 41-56 | Younger Baby Boomers 57-66 | Older Baby Boomers/Silent Generation 67 and older



A hand holding a small glass container with cannabis inside, with another hand reaching up towards it. The background is a solid red color.

# 72%

of cannabis consumers say that everyone or almost everyone knows they use cannabis

## Cannabis confidence is increasing.

Like many personal descriptors, the data trends suggest that cannabis use will be known, shared, and observed freely—and today's cannabis consumers are blazing a trail for future generations.

The majority of cannabis consumers (72%) say their cannabis use is well known—this is not an activity that requires subterfuge or clandestine actions.

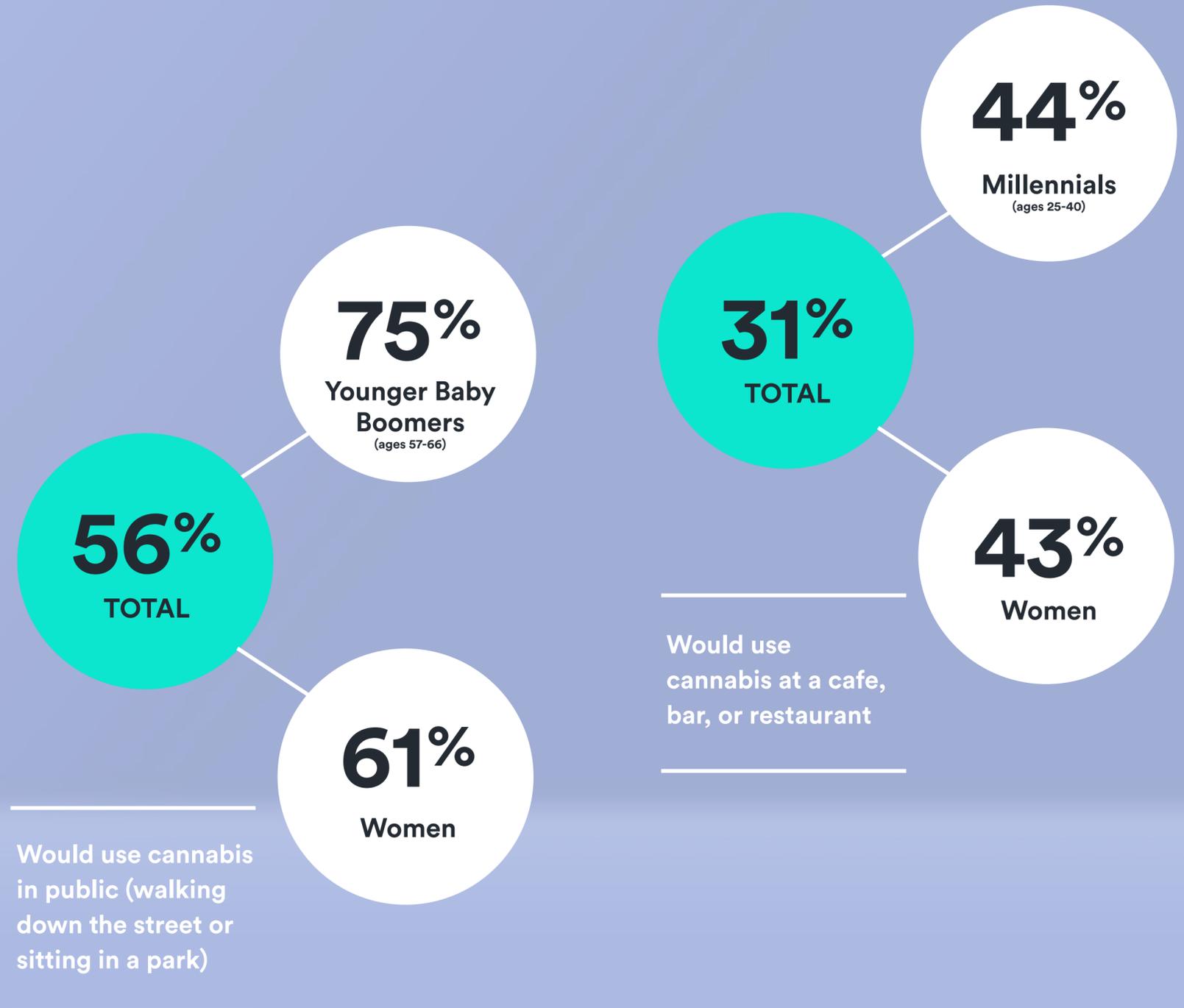
It is not so secret anymore. Among millennials, 48% say everyone knows, while Generation Z is more likely to say almost everyone knows. Also, 46% of men and 31% of women say almost everyone knows.

# Many are comfortable using cannabis in the open.

It's one thing to use cannabis in the comfort of your own home—but what happens when you shift locations? When asked about using cannabis in a variety of locations and occasions, cannabis consumers showed their increasing comfort levels with places, spaces, and people that are a part of the fabric of everyday life.

While more than a third (35%) would use cannabis in public walking down the street or sitting in a park, almost as many (31%) say they would be comfortable with BYOC (bring your own cannabis) to a cafe, bar, or restaurant.

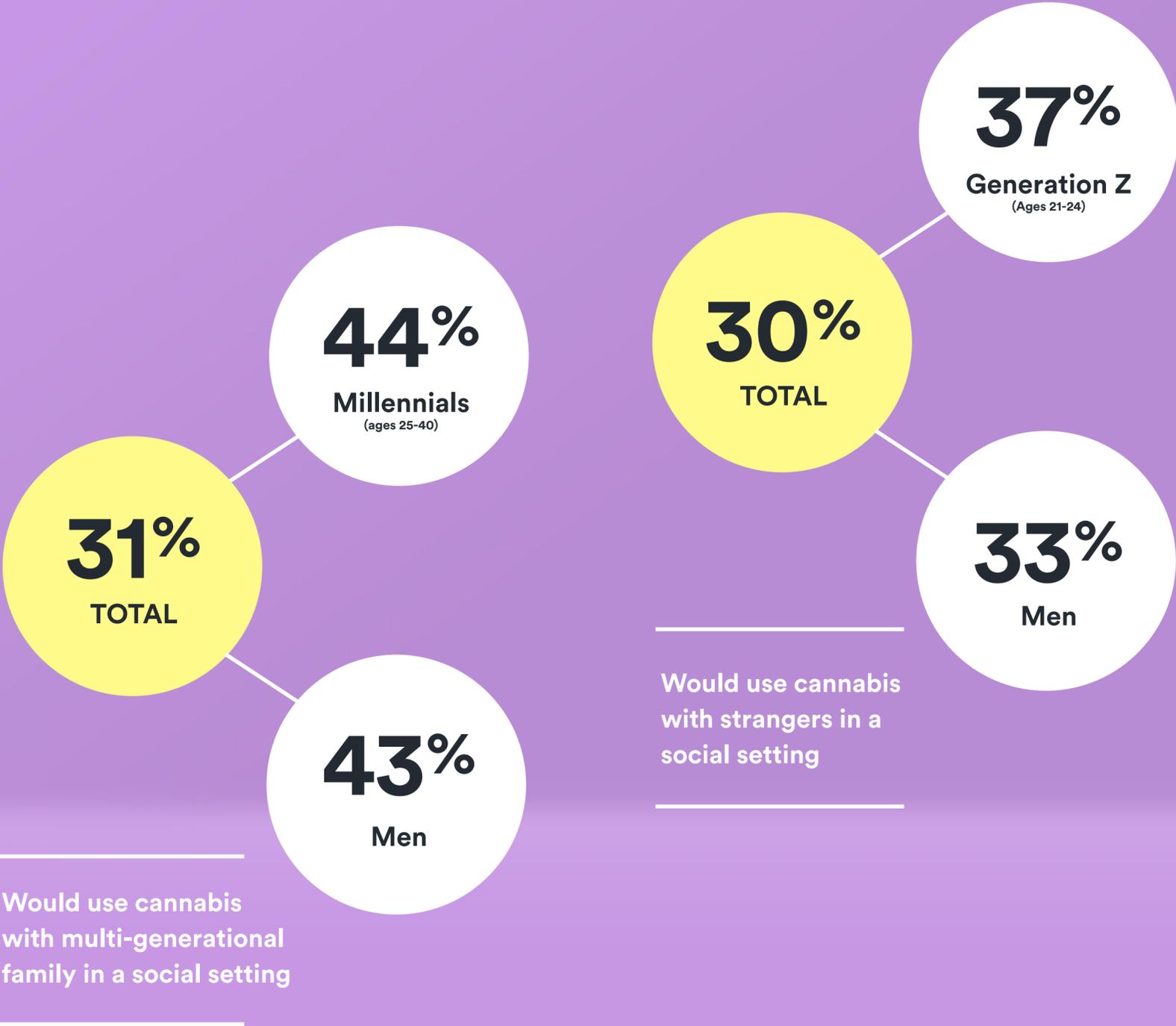
Millennials (44%) and women (43%) are the most likely to BYOC—two groups who are passionate patrons of the restaurant and bar scene that have been vocal in its revitalization during the pandemic. While the West Hollywood Cannabis Cafe (the first cannabis restaurant in the U.S.) is currently closed due to the pandemic, there are many new cannabis cafes opening up where consumers can legally use cannabis products in public, paving the way for the mainstreaming of cannabis in America.



# Cannabis consumers are also willing to break social taboos and challenge shaming tactics.

Cannabis consumers are also willing to break social taboos and challenge shaming tactics. Nearly a third (31%) say they would use cannabis with their family, including children, in a social setting. Nearly as many (30%) are willing

to use cannabis with strangers in a social setting—indicating that cannabis use can be seen as just as acceptable as drinking your alcohol of choice at a party, backyard barbecue, or wedding.



SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Survey 2021  
Q: Which of the following situations would you be comfortable using or consuming cannabis?

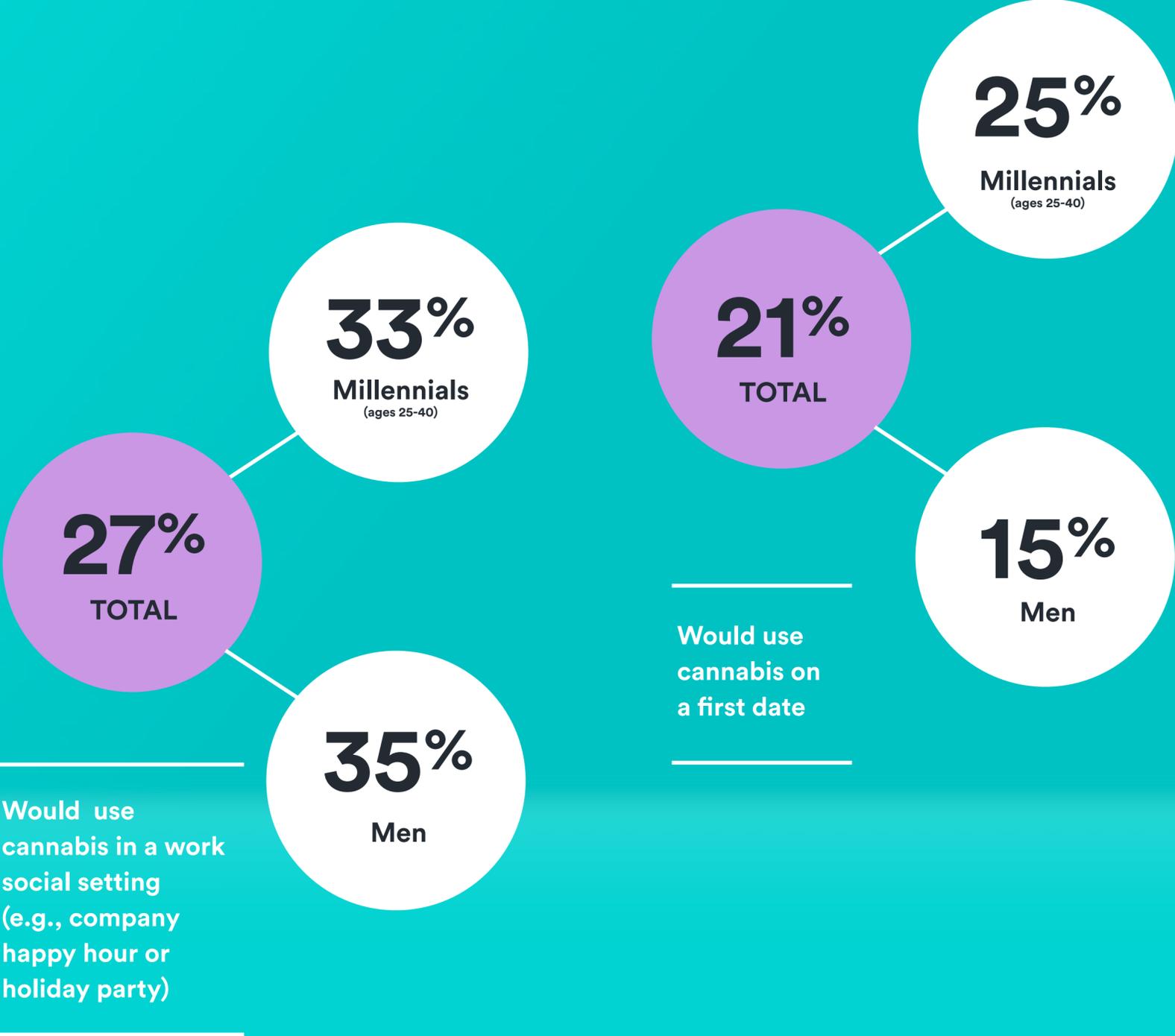
# Most surprisingly, many cannabis consumers are comfortable with bringing cannabis to the workplace.

Most surprisingly, many cannabis consumers are comfortable with bringing cannabis to the workplace. More than a quarter (27%) say they would consume with co-workers (and perhaps even the boss) at a company happy hour or holiday party.

Millennials (33%) and men (35%) are most at ease with using cannabis in a work social setting. This may signal that

the “unwritten rules” of work culture continue to evolve as we navigate one of the most challenging times for business in the nation’s history.

As we struggle with Zoom fatigue, labor shortages, and a desire to “get back to the office”, many are re-evaluating their approach to work and how to make it work for them.



SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Survey 2021  
Q: Which of the following situations would you be comfortable using or consuming cannabis?

# Lingering misperceptions and the (potential) impact on legalization.

While cannabis consumers are ready for a more inclusive future where cannabis is part of mainstream society, there continues to be resistance fueled by misperceptions that continue to be embraced by cannabis non-consumers.

With the drumbeat of legalization getting louder, we take a look at the perceptions of non-consumers in order to understand where the industry may focus its effort in order to embrace more consumers.



**Misperceptions continue to frame the conversation around use and legalization for many cannabis non-consumers—and it often leads to more questions than answers.**



# Perceptions are shaped by lack of knowledge and decades of misinformation.

Not surprisingly, the vast majority of cannabis non-consumers (77%) admit that they have little to no knowledge about cannabis.

What scant information they do have comes from sources that can be vulnerable to misinformation: Nearly a third (30%) get their cannabis information from friends and family while 19% turn to social media.

Combine the lack of credible, reliable, and consistent sources of information, years of aggressive anti-drug policies and education from the failed war on drugs, and the limitations on research into the effects of cannabis on the body, it's no surprise that many cannabis non-consumers have misperceptions about the effects and outcomes of cannabis use.

Many have been raised with (or have parents that have been raised with) drug education programs that continue to list cannabis as a “gateway drug” despite legalization for both medical and recreational use.

In a world where “alternative facts” are alive and well, many are influenced by arguments that have been debunked but ignored. As a result, many people still believe the myths that have been perpetrated for decades around cannabis as an addictive gateway drug that will lead to higher underage usage.

77%

of cannabis non-consumers say they are beginners or novices when it comes to cannabis knowledge

They have few sources of credible, consistent, and factual information

30%

Get their cannabis info from friends and family

19%

Get their cannabis info from social media

18%

Get their cannabis info from non-cannabis related websites, apps or magazines and journals

Myths persist in the face of ignorance and misinformation

21%

believe cannabis is a “gateway drug”

20%

believe cannabis is addictive and more dangerous than cigarettes or alcohol

36%

believe cannabis legalization will lead to higher youth usage

# Cannabis non-consumers are unsure of the personal impact of cannabis legalization.

39%

of cannabis non-consumers say they are not sure how laws legalizing cannabis would have an impact on them personally

15%

of millennials say they wish they knew more about cannabis

17%

of millennials say knowing more about cannabis would make them feel more comfortable with legalization

13%

of Generation X say knowing more about cannabis would help them decide if it was right for them

21%

of Generation Z say they want to know more about how cannabis affects the body

More than a quarter (28%) of cannabis non-consumers are unaware of the legal status of cannabis in their state, and this lack of awareness is often reflected in their views of laws legalizing cannabis. More than a third (39%) admit that they are unsure how laws legalizing cannabis personally affects them.

While there are many conversations about the economic impact, crime rates, and public health, many are unable to connect policy decisions to their everyday lives. Laws often reflect dated social mores rather than current realities. As cannabis continues to be legalized across the country raising questions around the personal,

community, and greater societal impact, more cannabis non-consumers may seek out more unbiased information to help them assess the landscape for themselves.

Our research has shown that there is a small but curious group of people who want to know more

about cannabis to better understand what it means for them. This is mostly driven by the younger generations who have been known to have more tolerant views on cannabis and its consumers.

# 61%

of cannabis non-consumers say they are not sure what will happen once cannabis is legalized in their state

Of those who have an opinion on what will happen once cannabis is legalized:

# 28%

of cannabis non-consumers think additional/new tax revenue will be generated

# 11%

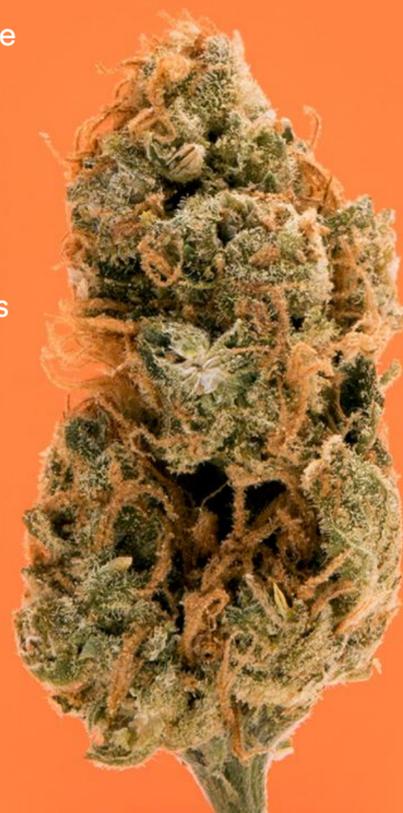
of cannabis non-consumers think opioid use and opioid-related deaths will decrease

# 11%

of cannabis non-consumers think good-paying jobs will be created

# 7%

of cannabis non-consumers think crime rates will remain the same



## While many non-consumers are unsure of what will happen with legalization, some see a positive future.

When looking at the battleground for cannabis legislation on the state level, the majority (61%) of cannabis non-consumers admit that they are not sure what will happen once cannabis is legalized in their state. Men are significantly more likely than women to be unsure of the effects of cannabis legislation (65% vs. 56%).

For non-consumers who can envision what happens once the dispensaries open, most are able to offer a guess on what may happen. More than a quarter (28%) think that additional or new tax revenue will be generated. In addition to tax revenue, 11% think that good-paying jobs will be created.

This more prosperous economic future is now a reality in several states, with California and Colorado surpassing \$1 billion mark for tax revenue generated since legalizing adult-use cannabis. The cannabis industry is also

expected to expand to 743,000 legal-market jobs by 2025—double the amount in 2019.

Looking at the possible negative impact of legal weed, a small group believes adverse effects may actually decrease. More than one in ten (11%) think that opioid use and opioid-related deaths will decrease.

This has been shown to be true: A 2020 Columbia University Irving Medical Center study found that states with medical cannabis programs experienced a nearly 20% drop in certain opioid prescriptions, compared with states that prohibit cannabis. A 2014 study found that states which allow cannabis as a treatment for chronic pain and other conditions have significantly lower state-level opioid overdose mortality rates than states where cannabis is illegal.

# When thinking about legalization in general terms, the positives often outweigh the negatives.

When asked about the general impact of cannabis legalization in the United States, more cannabis non-consumers cited positives of legalization.

Generation X and women are the most likely to cite legal weed as a good way to add tax revenue (36% and 31% respectively) and believe that legalization will cut down on illegal drug traffic (28%).

The oldest generations are the most likely to cite the negative impact of cannabis legalization. More than a third (38%) of Older Baby Boomers/Silent Generation members believe that driving high will become an issue

resulting in an increase in traffic fatalities. They also are significantly more likely to believe that legalization will empower illegal market activity.

Given the demographic shifts revealed by the 2020 U.S. Census and cultural and attitudinal differences among generations, it's not surprising that younger generations are fueling a more positive mindset for cannabis legislation. As the country continues to become more demographically diverse and cannabis is legalized in more states, we will likely see more support for legalization in legislatures or at the ballot box.

## Negative Impact of Legalization

Traffic fatalities will increase if cannabis is legalized



I think cannabis legalization will empower illicit market activity



## Positive Impact of Legalization

Legalizing cannabis is a good way to add tax revenue



Legalizing cannabis will cut down illegal drug traffic



SOURCE: Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Non-Consumer Survey 2021  
 Q: What do you think will happen once cannabis is legalized in your state?  
 Q: Thinking about the legalization of cannabis in the United States, which of the following do you agree with?



# 38%

of cannabis non-consumers say they are not sure what impact cannabis legalization has had in their state.

Of those who have an opinion on what happened once cannabis was legalized:

## 18%

said additional or new tax revenue was generated

## 8%

said good-paying jobs were created

## 12%

said crime rates remained the same

## 7%

said traffic fatalities did not increase

# When asking about effects close to home, many cannabis non-consumers are not sure.

While the tangible impact of cannabis legalization varies by state, many cannabis non-consumers are not sure they have seen or understand the impact the laws have had on them and their communities.

More than a third (38%) say they are not sure what effect cannabis legislation has had in their state—indicating that they may not understand or be able to recognize how cannabis can benefit their community.

While the impact can be quantified among states, there is a small group of non-consumers who believe they saw positives from cannabis legalization. Nearly 20% said that additional or new tax revenue was generated, and 8% said good-paying jobs were created. This is consistent with what has come to fruition in states that have legalized cannabis.

As far as crime is concerned, 12% said that crime rates remained the same. This has proven to be true as a study of Washington and Colorado, the first two states to legalize adult-use, found that legalization had “minimal to no effect” on major crimes, and no long-term effects on violent and property crimes.

Another study published in the Journal of Regional Science and Urban Economics showed that the addition of just one dispensary in a Denver, Colorado neighborhood resulted in a reduction of 17 crimes per month per 10,000 residents—a nearly 20% decline.

When assessing the impact on traffic fatalities, 7% said these did not increase once cannabis was legalized in their state. Several studies have shown this to be true, with a 2017 study conducted by Columbia University’s Mailman School of Public Health showing that states with

medical cannabis laws had lower traffic fatality rates compared with states without such laws.

It also showed that the adoption of a medical cannabis law is “associated with immediate reductions in traffic fatalities in those aged 15 to 24 and 25 to 44 years, and with additional yearly gradual reductions in those aged 25 to 44 years.”

This is one of the most comprehensive studies on cannabis-impaired driving and is based on decades of data from the National Highway Traffic Administration’s Fatality Analysis Reporting System (FARS).

While statistics on economic effects, crimes, and traffic fatalities can be compared among states, it’s interesting to note that a small number of cannabis non-consumers identified the positive effects of legalization.

**As the path to legalization and mainstream acceptance continues to boldly march forward, the data and cultural trends suggest that more cannabis non-consumers could have a better understanding of the positive effects that cannabis has on their community.**



# Insights and Implications

While there is positive momentum, hurdles still remain as we work towards federal legalization. As non-consumers begin to see more within their social circles experience cannabis, they are less apprehensive. The standard arguments in opposition are beginning to disappear.

However, a surprising amount of misconceptions remain. Decades of anti-cannabis campaigns have taken their toll, and legalization differs state by state, contributing to confusion for consumers.



# About Weedmaps

Weedmaps is a leading online marketplace for cannabis users and businesses, operated by WM Technology, Inc. WM Technology, Inc.'s (Nasdaq: MAPS) mission is to power a transparent and inclusive global cannabis economy. Now in its second decade, WM Technology has been a driving force behind much of the legislative change we've seen in the past 10 years.

Founded in 2008, WM Technology is a leading technology and software infrastructure provider to the cannabis industry, comprising a B2C platform, Weedmaps, and B2B software, WM Business. The cloud-based SaaS solutions from WM Business provide an end-to-end operating system for cannabis retailers. WM Business' tools support compliance with the complex, disparate, and constantly evolving regulations applicable to the cannabis industry. Through its website and mobile apps, WM Technology provides consumers with the latest information about cannabis retailers, brands, and products,

facilitating product discovery and driving engagement with our retail and brand customers.

WM Technology holds a strong belief in the power of cannabis and the importance of enabling safe, legal access to consumers worldwide. Since inception, WM Technology has worked tirelessly, not only to become the most comprehensive platform for consumers, but to build the software solutions that power businesses compliantly in the space, to advocate for legalization, social equity, and licensing in many jurisdictions, and to facilitate further learning through partnering with subject matter experts on providing detailed, accurate information about the plant.

Headquartered in Irvine, California, WM Technology supports remote work for all eligible employees. Visit us at [www.weedmaps.com](http://www.weedmaps.com).

# About Absolute Magnitude

A hybrid agency conducting custom research, deep social listening, and data analytics to inspire breakthrough creative executions and actionable reporting. Absolute Magnitude leverages these diversified data streams to better understand brands, consumers, and culture. These sources provide insights that are the foundation of creative output that ranges from reports, broadcast media, Influencer campaigns, guerrilla events, social content, and integrated comms planning.

[absomag.com](https://absomag.com)

# Appendix

Sources



# Weedmaps Order Data

Selected anonymized cannabis orders of any size placed on Weedmaps.com across the following categories: flower, edibles, vape pens, concentrates, topicals.

Order data timeframe is as follows:

H1 2020 (January 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020)

H1 2021 (January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021)

# Custom SocialScape Listening

Cannabis category conversation across Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, Tumblr, Reddit, Forums, Blogs, News, and Reviews

H1 2020 (January 1, 2020 - June 30, 2020): 6.37MM mentions  
6.36MM content sources | 1.46MM unique authors

H1 2021 (January 1, 2021 - June 30, 2021): 5.81MM mentions  
5.80MM content sources | 1.24MM unique authors

# Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Consumer Study

## **SAMPLE SIZE**

1000 self-identified cannabis consumers (marijuana or CBD) aged 21+ in states where medical and/or recreational cannabis is legal as of June 1, 2021

AL, AZ, CA, CO, CT, DE, FL, HI, IL, LA, ME, MD, MA, MI, MN, MO, MT, NV, NH, NJ, NM, NY, ND, OH, OK, OR, PA, RI, SD, UT, VT, VA, WA, WV

## **METHODOLOGY**

Online Survey

## **FIELDING DATES**

July 25, 2021 - August 20, 2021

# Weedmaps Custom Cannabis Non-Consumer Study

## **SAMPLE SIZE**

1000 self-identified consumers aged 21+ in all U.S. states and the District of Columbia who do not use cannabis (marijuana or CBD)

## **METHODOLOGY**

Online Survey

## **FIELDING DATES**

July 25, 2021 - August 20, 2021

# Dispensary Surveys

## **SURVEY I SAMPLE SIZE**

30 completes among people who self-identified as working in legal cannabis business

(dispensary/retailer, cannabis delivery service cannabis dispensary/delivery hybrid, or vertically integrated cannabis company)

## **METHODOLOGY**

Online Survey

## **FIELDING DATES**

July 27, 2021 - August 24, 2021

## **SURVEY II SAMPLE SIZE**

74 completes among people who self-identified as working in legal cannabis business

(dispensary/retailer, cannabis delivery service cannabis dispensary/delivery hybrid, or vertically integrated cannabis company)

## **METHODOLOGY**

Online Survey

## **FIELDING DATES**

July 28, 2021 - August 16, 2021

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