



Real California Cannabis



The California Department of Cannabis Control's (DCC) consumer awareness campaign established to support the state's legal cannabis market.

Campaign Goals

01

Educate existing consumers about the importance of purchasing licensed, tested cannabis, and the potential harms of purchasing cannabis from unlicensed sellers.

02

Arm consumers with the information, tools and resources they need to verify a dispensary is legal before they buy.

03

Inform industry and policy thought leaders throughout the state about the opportunities they have to help educate and motivate consumers to shop legal in their communities.

Why Now?

People want to shop licensed, but they don't know how...yet.

Most people can't tell licensed from unlicensed dispensaries, don't know the risks of consuming unlicensed cannabis, or aren't aware unlicensed dispensaries exist. That's where Real CA Cannabis comes in.

The Real CA Cannabis campaign was launched by the California Department of Cannabis Control to support licensed cannabis businesses and consumers. The campaign is paid for using funds generated through cannabis sales in California.



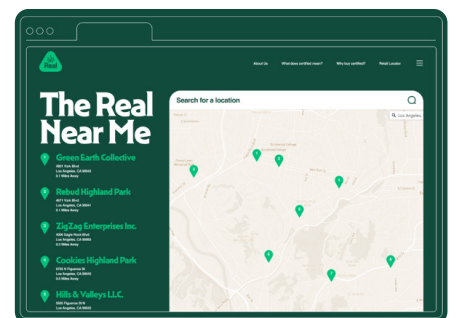
The "Real" Seal

Gone are the days of obscurity and confusion. The Real CA Cannabis seal appears in ads statewide to help consumers tell the difference between licensed and unlicensed dispensaries. By displaying our "Real seal" in-store signage and QR codes (coming soon!), retail licensees can help set themselves apart from unlicensed competitors.

Licensee Search

People can now easily search for licensed dispensaries using our Real CA Cannabis map. Rather than rely on search engines loaded with shady shops, our map exclusively promotes licensees, increasing discoverability and traffic for for retail businesses.

Real.Cannabis.CA.Gov



The Problem



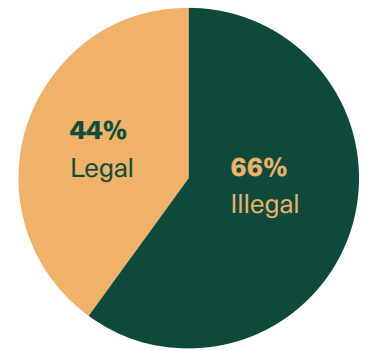
“If it’s legal in the state of California, then why would a community deny?” – Female Focus Group Participant, Fresno

Illegal Market Still Accounts for a Significant Share of Cannabis Sales in California

When Proposition 64 passed in 2016, it established California’s recreational cannabis market, but it did not make all cultivation and sale of cannabis products automatically legal. Adding to consumer confusion, more than half of California’s cities and counties continue to prohibit cannabis retail businesses. While the exact size and scale of the illegal market remains difficult to precisely quantify, estimated illegal cannabis sales are significantly higher per capita in impermissible areas.

A strict framework of legislation and regulations has been put in place to ensure cannabis products are grown, tested and sold legally to protect the state’s cannabis consumers from risk and harm. Illegal cannabis operators do not follow these regulations that protect consumers.

2021 Legal vs. Illegal Cultivation as a share of Cannabis Demand in California



* Hart, J., Sumner, D. A., Goldstein, R., & Sambucci, O. (2023). Exploring US Cannabis Markets: Estimating Cannabis Consumption by State and the Legal Share of Cannabis in California.

The Solution



Encourage Existing Consumers to Purchase Cannabis Legally from Licensed Retailers

According to a recent statewide poll, most consumers say they would purchase cannabis from a licensed dispensary. While consumers overall want to do the right thing by purchasing legally, they simply do not have universal access or lack the knowledge to do so. The Real California Cannabis campaign will educate consumers about the benefits of shopping legal and give them the tools they need to do so.

California cannabis consumers are as diverse as the state itself. **Whether we are talking about age, gender, race, or income level, a majority of California adults over age 21 consume, or have consumed, cannabis.** From those who consume cannabis as a substitute for alcohol, for stress or pain relief, to every consumer in between – all consumers deserve the opportunity to learn more about the benefits of shopping legal.

