



For the second week in a row, I apologize for the subject line. Today I went for a cheap pun about “new highs,” because we’re going to focus on loyalty in the retail cannabis industry.

I have a confession to make: I was unaware until the other day that there were loyalty programs in the marijuana industry. I am supposed to be super aware of developments in loyalty, yet I somehow missed this one. Possibly because the last time I was a serious patron of this product, it wasn’t an “industry,” and the only “loyalty program” was when your buddy in the dorm knew some guy’s brother you could score from. Talk about referral programs...

I really should have thought about this, because I live in a state that legalized recreational cannabis some years ago, and I know people who are doing very well with businesses, e.g., custom packaging solutions, that supply and support the industry. And while I’m always thinking about marketing and customer engagement, I just kind of thought cannabis retailers would choose from existing marketing platforms and services. I also assumed most dispensaries would offer simple, home-grown punchcard programs.

What was I smoking?

Cova Software is a leading supplier of POS systems for cannabis stores, and their suite includes loyalty programs. Springbig was listed by Forbes as one of the top ten best-funded cannabis startups back in 2018. They have a robust menu of cannabis marketing services, providing loyalty programs for stores in five states. Headset offers a suite of POS solutions for pot retailers, including loyalty program management. And these firms’ offerings seem as sophisticated as those for other, more established verticals.

The lesson we continually learn is to keep our vision broad and look in unexpected

places for where loyalty and customer engagement is heading. As always, I'd love to hear **your thoughts**.

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