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Illinois Church Action on Alcohol & Addiction Problems

Marijuana Alert - November 30, 2022



Instagram Is the New Neighborhood Pot Dealer Weed sellers find target audience on social media

Social media sites like Instagram are popular platforms for advertisers looking to target a massive user base of young people. One unintended consequence for app owner Meta Platforms Inc., though, is that's also made the app an ideal vehicle for illegal marijuana sellers.

The problem is, even if retail locations come above board there's still little oversight of the digital-only pot sellers that have pounced on Instagram to market their goods.

"Meta is very good at getting themselves incorporated into people's daily routines," said Mike, a New York City cannabis grower who asked Bloomberg News to withhold his last name because he hasn't applied for a license to sell pot. "You reach more people through Instagram."

A Bloomberg News search on Instagram revealed a bevy of sponsored posts and stories featuring cannabis clubs, growers and sellers with some pages linking to illicit cannabis sellers. After sharing some of the marijuana ads that Bloomberg News found, the company said it would remove two pages for violating its policies. The posts, however, remained online. A Meta spokesperson said marijuana content isn't allowed on Instagram. Its so-called restricted goods policy disallows content that attempts to buy, sell, trade, donate or gift or asks for marijuana, as well as tobacco and e-cigarettes.

Hemp products may be advertised, but with some restrictions,

as the products can't include any CBD and may have no more than 0.3% THC.

“We prohibit content — both in ads and organically on pages — that promotes the buying and selling of drugs, including marijuana, and remove it whenever we find it,” Rachel Hamrick, a Meta spokesperson, said in an emailed statement.

To skirt around the regulations, some cannabis companies say they include disclaimers noting that marijuana is “not for sale.” [READ](#)

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