Here’s What the Average Cannabis Consumer in Canada Looks Like

Now that cannabis is legal in Canada, a whole new market of middle-aged, infrequent consumers has emerged.

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The average cannabis consumer is young, adventurous, and not especially concerned with the law. More specifically, they’re between 18 and 34 years old, they ingest weed in some form more than once a week, and they’re likely to disregard legal and health warnings.

But this is changing quickly. Now that Canada has legalized weed, middle-aged people who don’t break the law are interested. This new market is educated, family-oriented, and concerned with their wellbeing. Though young people will continue to be more frequent weed smokers, the average cannabis consumer in Canada is becoming a different kind of person with spending habits that are shaping the market.

The average cannabis consumer is middle aged.

Though there is some debate over the exact figure, most estimates place the age of the average cannabis consumer between early 20s to 30 years old. But, for the first time in

history, this is changing: According to Deloitte's 2018 report, the average cannabis consumer post-legalization is between 25 and 54 years old. They're also more likely to have an undergraduate or graduate degree and a family, whose interests they place above their own.

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Everyone is buying weed more often, but they're not necessarily spending more.

People who frequently bought weed before legalization buy an estimated 22 percent more often now. However, they're not spending more. In fact, frequent consumers are more likely to spend around the same, or slightly less, than they did before Canada legalized recreational use.

By contrast, people who consumed weed infrequently pre-legalization will increase the amount they spend by 68 percent. This brings their monthly consumption from $16 to $27, on average. The average cannabis consumer is becoming someone who buys occasionally.

The average cannabis consumer would rather buy legal weed.

Only 19 percent of irregular cannabis users surveyed said that they would still buy weed on the black market. Half of all cannabis users want to buy retail or government products. A significant portion wants to circumvent retailers by purchasing directly from producers, but this is not legal under current laws.

Comparatively, 53 percent of people who consume daily

expressed an interested in buying black market weed. The same percentage also want to grow their own supply.

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Occasional cannabis consumption is becoming the norm.

Before legalization, people who bought weed tended to consume a lot of it. Specifically, those who ingested cannabis in some form one to six times a week accounted for 33 percent of consumers. Another 22 percent consume it daily. In other words, 53 percent of people who bought black market weed consumed it at least once a week, if not daily.

Deloitte predicts that the average cannabis consumer's behavior is changing post-legalization. Specifically, 63 percent of weed consumers will do so less than monthly. Only 4 and 14 percent of the market will be daily and weekly consumers, respectively.

People are willing to spend more on high-quality weed.

One big reason why the average cannabis consumer is becoming older and more conservative is that cannabis is now safer, not to mention legal. The biggest draw for legal consumers is access to higher quality weed that also meets safety standards. Across all people surveyed, 55 percent ranked quality as their biggest incentive when buying weed from government and certified retail locations.

Quality is important enough that consumers are willing to pay for it. Likely customers are willing to pay a maximum of $11 a gram, while current consumers will pay as much as $14.

Variety is a big part of the legal market’s appeal.

The average cannabis consumer wants access to products with different effects, potency levels and prices. Specifically, 51 percent of all types of weed consumers are anticipating buying edibles once they’re on the market. Chocolate, followed by hard candy, is the most popular edible choice.

Canada’s New Weed Market

Post-legalization, the average cannabis consumer has changed dramatically. A whole new market of middle-aged, infrequent consumers is now comfortable buying weed. And they want quality, variety, and safety at a reasonable price. Though the quintessential 20s weed smoker is buying consistently, the biggest boom is coming from more conservative consumers. This trend could persist into other new markets in the U.S.

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