

It's Not Quite 4/20, but 7/10 Is Catching Up in Cannabis Circles

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Is 7/10 the new 4/20?

In cannabis circles, this early July date isn't nearly as famous as its world-renowned spring cousin. Still, it does have an actual—if somewhat unofficial—designation as National Dab Day.

Its origin story is murky, meaning no one's taken credit for "inventing" it, but July 10 is starting to catch on among marketers in the legal weed space.

For one, Harvest Health and Recreation, a vertically integrated company that operates 35 dispensaries in seven states, has built a new ad campaign around the lead-up to 7/10, complete with brand partnerships, product bundles, promotions and gifts with purchase. Many others, including Lowell, Moxie, LeafLink, Curaleaf, Select, F/ELD and Airgraft, have followed suit, turning a nondescript summer day into a full-blown sales event.

"Having holidays around cannabis is rather new, at least on a national level," said John Moyers, Harvest's director of marketing. "This gives the industry another reason to get excited."

Ad spending has increased over the past several years, according to Jon Lowen, co-founder of mar-tech firm Surfside, with brands and dispensaries "putting more into promos and messaging around this time of year, whereas in the past all of the focus was on 4/20."



And while 4/20 continues to be a priority, he noted, “We’ve seen a steady incline for 7/10.”

Some pop-culture and weed-centric context here: April 20 made its mark as a celebration of flower and edibles—products at the top of the cannabis food chain—while July 10 is all about concentrates, distilled oils, tinctures and extracts. (Flip the numbers 710 upside down, and they spell OIL, which seems to be as good a reason as any to create festivities around it).

So far, the holiday hasn’t set any sales records and will have “quite a bit of catching up to do” to reach 4/20’s stratospheric heights, according to research firm BDSA’s co-founder and executive chairman Roy Bingham.

Execs at Harvest, though, think it’s a way to plant a flag in summer, align with partner brands and give consumers something special, says Moyers.

Pre-pandemic efforts from Harvest have been designed to drive foot traffic to their brick-and-mortar locations from California to Florida to Pennsylvania. This year focuses instead on e-commerce and digital channels, taking into account the massive shift recently from physical retail to online shopping.

The campaign includes the company’s first multi-state programmatic ad buy, via Surfside, that kicked off July 1

ahead of the traditionally busy weed-buying July 4th holiday.

Creative for the campaign, done by Harvest's in-house team, takes a simple-pleasures-meets-back-to-basics route to speak to consumers who may be camping and backpacking in small groups, hitting a drive-in movie or staying home to barbecue with their families. (The coronavirus-related lockdown isn't over in most of the country, after all).



"The insight we have is that people are kind of doing things old school right now, like renting RVs, putting plastic swimming pools in their back yards and running through the sprinklers," Moyers said. "So the campaign is intentionally retro."

The ads, with their breezy vibe and throwback 1970s feel under the tagline, "No one does summer like us," are targeted at everyone from seasoned cannabis fans and moderate users to the canna-curious, which has emerged as a key demo, along with millennials and Gen Z.

And the 7/10 peg shows that the cannabis business "is looking for moments to celebrate and promote product," Moyers said,

similar to other, more mainstream consumer packaged goods.

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