

GENERAL SERVICES ADMINISTRATION

GLENN SPITZER, DIRECTOR

MAIL: 12200-B Airport Road, Jackson, CA 95642

LOCATION: 12200-B Airport Road, Martell, CA

PHONE: (209) 223-6759 E-MAIL: gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov



July 1, 2026

Via Email to listed email addresses

To Planning Commission for City of Sutter Creek

City Manager Tom DuBois: tdubois@cityofsuttercreek.org

City Planner Erin Ventura: eventura@haugebrueck.com

City Clerk Pam Caronongan: pcaronongan@cityofsuttercreek.org

**Re: Proposed Marijuana Retail Facility (July 8 Planning Commission)
Supplemental Comment**

Dear Planning Commissioners:

The County sent two letters addressing issues regarding this project on June 3 and 22. The June 3 letter discussed a wave of new medical studies showing the ill effects of marijuana, particularly on adolescents. The June 22 letter provided a more thorough analysis of the legal issues (after having received the proposed exemption determination).

In the June 22 letter, the County addressed the "Traffic Impact Analysis" discussed in the staff report. However, I misunderstood the analysis in the staff report regarding traffic and seek here to clarify my comment. I understood the assumed baseline for the bank use to be 150 daily trips and the assumed daily trips for the dispensary to be 195, for an increase of 45 daily trips or 30%.

I followed up with the City's Planner, Erin Ventura, to get clarification on the traffic analysis, and Erin sent me the attached email, which clarified the traffic increase. Erin stated the analysis instead used the following assumptions:

- 1,300 sq. ft. of retail space for the bank and dispensary
- 100 daily trips per 1,000 sq. ft. for the bank use (130 trips for 1,300 sq. ft.)
- 250 daily trips per 1,000 sq. ft. for the dispensary use (325 trips for 1,300 sq. ft.)

Based on these assumptions, staff concluded the change in use would increase daily trips from 130 to 325, an increase of 195 daily trips. This is a 150% increase.

As discussed in the June 22 letter, the "existing facilities" exemption only applies to minor alterations of existing facilities "*involving negligible or no expansion of existing or former use.*" (CEQA Guidelines, § 15301 (emphasis added); see also *Sunflower Alliance v. Dept. of Conservation* (2024) 105 Cal.App. 5th 771, 784 ("the term negligible is intended to allow changes or expansions in use that are inconsequential[.]").)

Using the City's own assumptions, the traffic increase is substantial. By any standard, a traffic increase on the site of 150% is not a "negligible" expansion of the former use. This means the City of Sutter Creek is precluded from using the "existing facilities" exemption. (CEQA Guidelines, § 15301; see also *Sunflower Alliance*, 105 Cal.App. 5th at p. 784.)

In fact, the actual expansion in use is likely far greater than staff assumes. A more accurate way to estimate daily trips is by using the estimated sales figures. According to Embarc's pro-forma forecast, the dispensary will generate gross sales of \$6,228,954 in its first year. The pro-forma shows a steady increase of sales such that, by year five, the dispensary will generate \$10,595,579 annual gross sales.

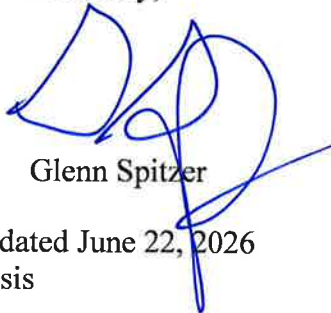
Attached hereto is a Priceonomics analysis of marijuana purchasing behaviors. According to the economics analysis: "Most people spend between \$25 and \$50 per trip to a marijuana store, with a \$33 median spend per trip. 34.7% of customers spend less than \$10 on average, usually picking up a single item like a half gram pre-roll or a carbonated beverage. Only 8.2% spend more than \$100/trip." (Priceonomics Analysis, p. 4.)

With an assumed \$33 per trip, and an assumed \$6,228,954 gross sales in the first year, this works out to 188,756 total annual trips, or an average of 517 trips per day. With an assumed \$10,595,579 annual gross sales, this works out to 321,078 total annual trips, or an average of 880 trips per day.

Using this more realistic methodology, the change in use from 100 trips a day becomes extraordinary. In the first year, the use of the site increases by 417%. By year five, the use increases by 780%. The data shows this project will have a significant traffic impact on the County generally, whether from a trips-generated or vehicle-miles-traveled assessment. Moreover, the project will have an acute impact to the near-500-foot portion of Ridge Road centered at the intersection of Sutter Hill Road. The turn lanes leading onto Highway 49 cannot accommodate this level of use.

Again, the County thanks the City for providing the opportunity to comment.

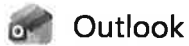
Sincerely,



Glenn Spitzer

Attachments: Erin Ventura Email dated June 22, 2026
Priceonomics Analysis

cc: Sutter Creek City Council
County Board of Supervisors,
Chuck Iley (County Administration Officer),
Greg Gillott (County Counsel)



Outlook

RE: Marijuana Dispensary

From eventura@haugebrueck.com <eventura@haugebrueck.com>

Date Mon 6/22/2026 11:45 AM

To Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Glen- Here is an explanation of our analysis. Please let me know if you have any other questions.

The daily trip generation rate published in the ITE Trip Generation Manual for Marijuana Dispensary (LU#882) is 252. This number was referenced in traffic reports prepared for similar sized dispensaries in other communities that were reviewed for the Sutter Creek staff report. Some of the traffic reports that were reviewed included a lower rate (as low as 70 trips per 1,000 square feet) because of adjustments for "pass-by trip" reductions. However, 250 daily vehicle trips per 1,000 square feet of floor area was used in the analysis in order to be conservative.

The daily trip generation rate used for the existing bank land use was established by taking the reported ITE PM peak hour rate for a bank (12.13 per 1,000 square feet of floor area) and multiplying it times 10, as the PM peak hour rate is typically around 7 to 12 percent of the daily rate. ITE does not currently provide a daily trip generation rate for walk-in bank (LU#911). 100 vehicle trips per 1,000 square feet of floor area was used in the analysis to be conservative.

Thank you,
Erin Ventura
Planning Consultant
City of Sutter Creek

Hauge Brueck Associates, LLC
(916) 283-5800 ext 103
eventura@haugebrueck.com

From: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 9:45 AM
To: eventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>
Subject: Re: Marijuana Dispensary

Hi Erin,
I tried to pull up the recent ITE Trip Generation Manual, but I don't have access to it. Can you please forward the sections the City relied upon? Thanks, ~Glenn

Glenn Spitzer

General Services Administration Director
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642
209-223-6759
gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov

From: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 8:53 AM
To: eventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>
Subject: Re: Marijuana Dispensary

Got it—thanks Erin!

Glenn Spitzer
General Services Administration Director
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642
209-223-6759
gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov

From: eventura@haugebrueck.com <eventura@haugebrueck.com>
Sent: Monday, June 22, 2026 8:14 AM
To: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>
Subject: RE: Marijuana Dispensary

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Good Morning Glen- Sorry I missed your email last week.

The appeal fee is \$375.

We used the data from the Institute of Traffic Engineers to come to the conclusions in the staff report.

Please let me know if you have any additional questions.

Thank you,
Erin Ventura
Planning Consultant
City of Sutter Creek

Hauge Brueck Associates, LLC
(916) 283-5800 ext 103
eventura@haugebrueck.com

From: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>
Sent: Saturday, June 20, 2026 1:51 PM
To: eventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>
Subject: Re: Marijuana Dispensary

Hi Erin, I'm just following up on my request below re appeal costs. Also, can you please provide me a copy of the reports supporting the traffic impact analysis? This relates to the trip generation comparison between banks and dispensaries in the staff report.
Thank you, ~Glenn

Glenn Spitzer
General Services Administration Director
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642
209-223-6759
gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov

From: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>
Sent: Tuesday, June 16, 2026 11:43 AM
To: eventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>
Subject: Re: Marijuana Dispensary

Hi Erin,
Can you please let me know the cost to appeal the planning commission's determination to the city council? I see under code section 18.06.030 that such appeal costs are set by resolution, but I couldn't find the resolution on the city's site.

Thank you! ~Glenn

Glenn Spitzer
General Services Administration Director
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642
209-223-6759
gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov

From: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>
Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 3:49 PM

To: eventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>

Subject: Re: Marijuana Dispensary

Got it—thank you

Glenn Spitzer
General Services Administration Director
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642
209-223-6759
gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov

From: Erin Ventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>

Sent: Monday, June 15, 2026 3:45 PM

To: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>

Subject: Re: Marijuana Dispensary

CAUTION: This email originated from outside the organization. Do not click links or open attachments unless you recognize the sender and know the content is safe.

Here is the staff report and attachments

<https://meetings.municode.com/adaHtmlDocument/index?>

[cc=SUTTRCRKCA&me=4969866919e246e398687b56aae8187c&ip=True](https://meetings.municode.com/adaHtmlDocument/index?cc=SUTTRCRKCA&me=4969866919e246e398687b56aae8187c&ip=True)

Get [Outlook for iOS](#)

From: Glenn Spitzer <gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov>

Sent: Monday, 15 June 2026 15:38:25

To: eventura <eventura@haugebrueck.com>

Subject: Marijuana Dispensary

Hi Erin,

Can you please let me know the upcoming public hearings related to the dispensary?

Thank you, ~Glenn

Glenn Spitzer
General Services Administration Director
County of Amador
12200-B Airport Road
Jackson, CA 95642
209-223-6759
gspitzer@amadorcounty.gov

PRICEONOMICS

(<https://priceonomics.com/>)

ECONOMICS ([HTTPS://PRICEONOMICS.COM/CATEGORY/ECONOMICS/](https://priceonomics.com/category/economics/))

RANKINGS ([HTTPS://PRICEONOMICS.COM/CATEGORY/RANKINGS/](https://priceonomics.com/category/rankings/))

DATA VISUALIZATION ([HTTPS://PRICEONOMICS.COM/CATEGORY/DATA-VISUALIZATION/](https://priceonomics.com/category/data-visualization/))

DATA STUDIO ([HTTPS://PRICEONOMICS.COM/THE-PRICEONOMICS-DATA-STUDIO-2/](https://priceonomics.com/the-priceonomics-data-studio-2/))

ABOUT US ([HTTPS://PRICEONOMICS.COM/ABOUT-US/](https://priceonomics.com/about-us/))

(<https://priceonomics.com/who-buys-legal-weed/>)Who Buys Legal Weed?

Team Recurrency (<https://priceonomics.wpengine.com>)



This post is adapted from Headset Inc. Cannabis Intelligence

(<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>), a Priceonomics Data Studio customer. Does your company have interesting data? Become a Priceonomics customer (<https://priceonomics.com/the-priceonomics-data-studio/>).

Photo credit: Ashton (<https://www.flickr.com/photos/8364994@No2/4834872285>)

Marijuana pop culture has traditionally centered around the young male (<http://time.com/3825221/women-in-weed-culture/>) smoker and his high times. But the legalization movement has made marijuana more accessible than ever been before, and cannabis's application as a painkiller is particularly appealing to senior citizens.

So what does the typical, recreational marijuana user look like today? And how do the preferences and spending habits of groups like young men and senior citizens differ?

We explored these questions by drawing on the data of Headset, a Priceonomics customer with a large dataset of cannabis retailer transaction data. Since many of these cannabis dispensaries have customer loyalty programs, the data includes information about customers' age and gender. We decided to use to this data to learn more about who buys weed and what they smoke or consume.

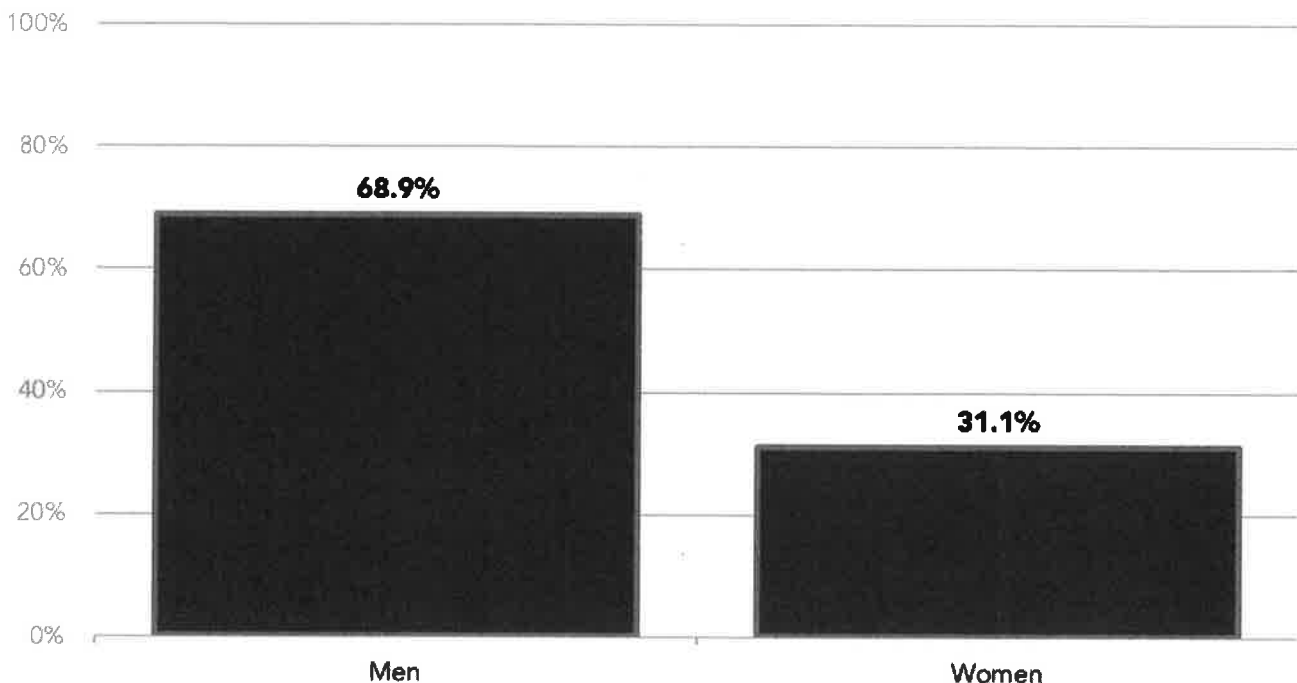
The data suggests that smokers in the customer loyalty program are overwhelmingly male, accounting for about 70% of all members. And, while customers range from ages 21 to 95, over 50% of loyalty members are under 40.

We also found that while Flower (your typical marijuana bud) accounts for about half of the purchases made by each demographic, each group has its own quirks. Compared to the opposite sex, men prefer concentrates and women prefer pre-rolls and edibles. Older consumers prefer edibles to pre-rolled joints.

We began our analysis by examining the the customer split by gender. Are men or women more likely to visit cannabis dispensaries often?

Who Buys More Weed, Men or Women?

There are more than twice as many men than women in the customer loyalty program



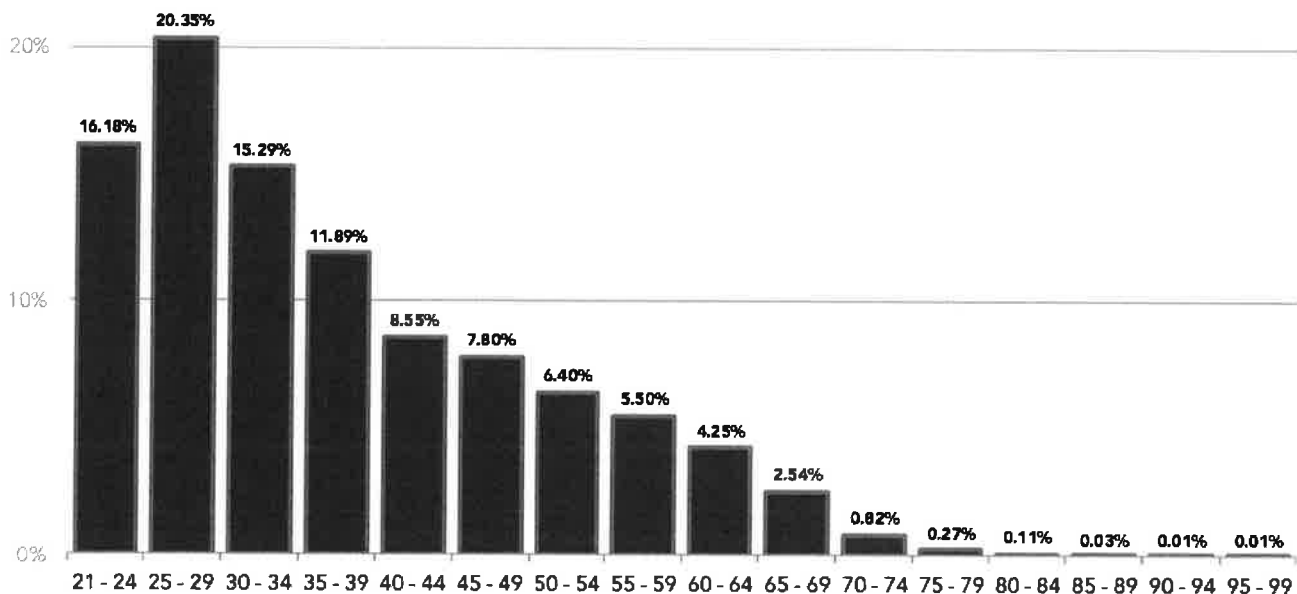
Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

Accounting for 68.9% of customers, the ratio of men to women is well over 2:1. This disparity is not surprising given cannabis culture's emphasis on the male pothead (<http://www.rollingstone.com/movies/lists/the-greatest-stoner-movies-of-all-time-20130606/harold-kumar-go-to-white-castle-2004-19691231>).

Next we examined the distribution of customer age.

How Old Are Recreational Marijuana Consumers?

While the average customer is 37 years old, marijuana dispensaries serve customers ages 21 to 95



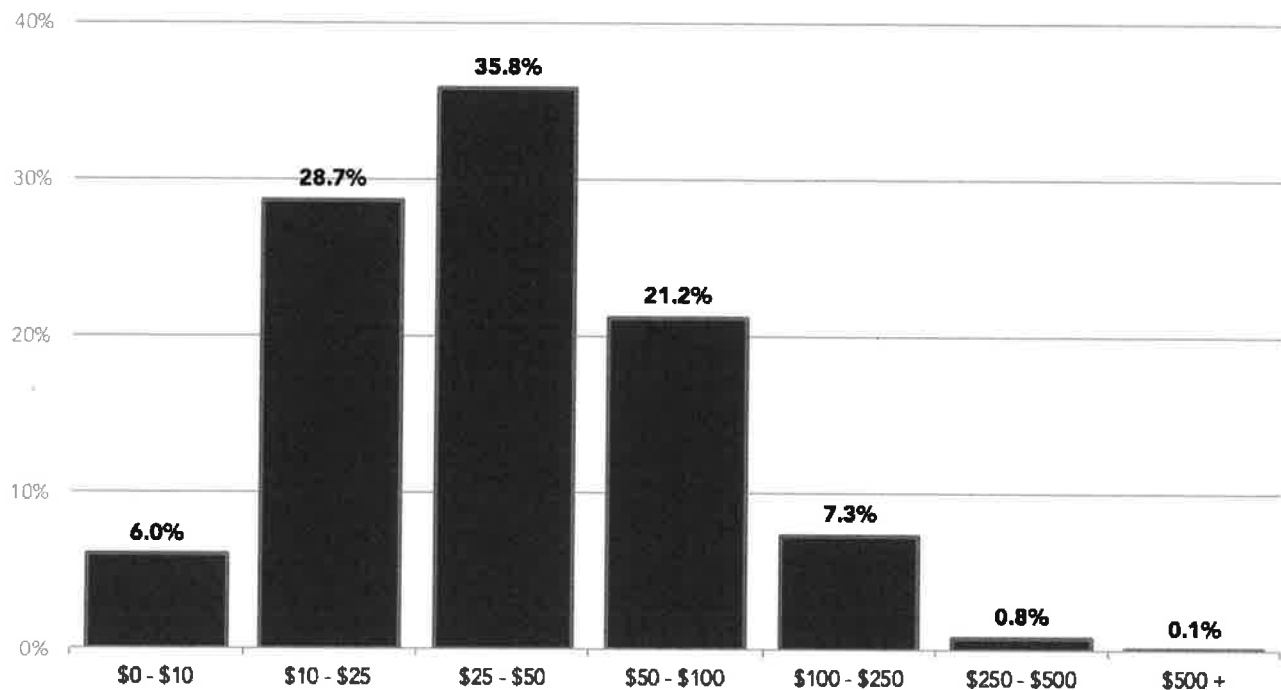
Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

25- to 29-year-olds account for the largest percentage of customer loyalty members (20%), followed by 21- to 24-year-olds (16%). Yet the average customer age is 37.6-years-old, which is a higher than one might expect given stereotypes (https://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/style/great-stoner-characters-in-american-film/2013/06/14/95699616-d4e1-11e2-a73e-826d299ff459_gallery.html) about marijuana users. The average age for female customers is slightly older at 38.2, while the average age for males is 37.4. People ages 65 to 95 make up less than 5% of customers.

We also wanted to look at customer spending habits. Below is the distribution of average dollars spent per trip to the store.

How Much Money Do People Spend on Weed?

The average marijuana consumer spends \$33 on weed per trip to dispensary



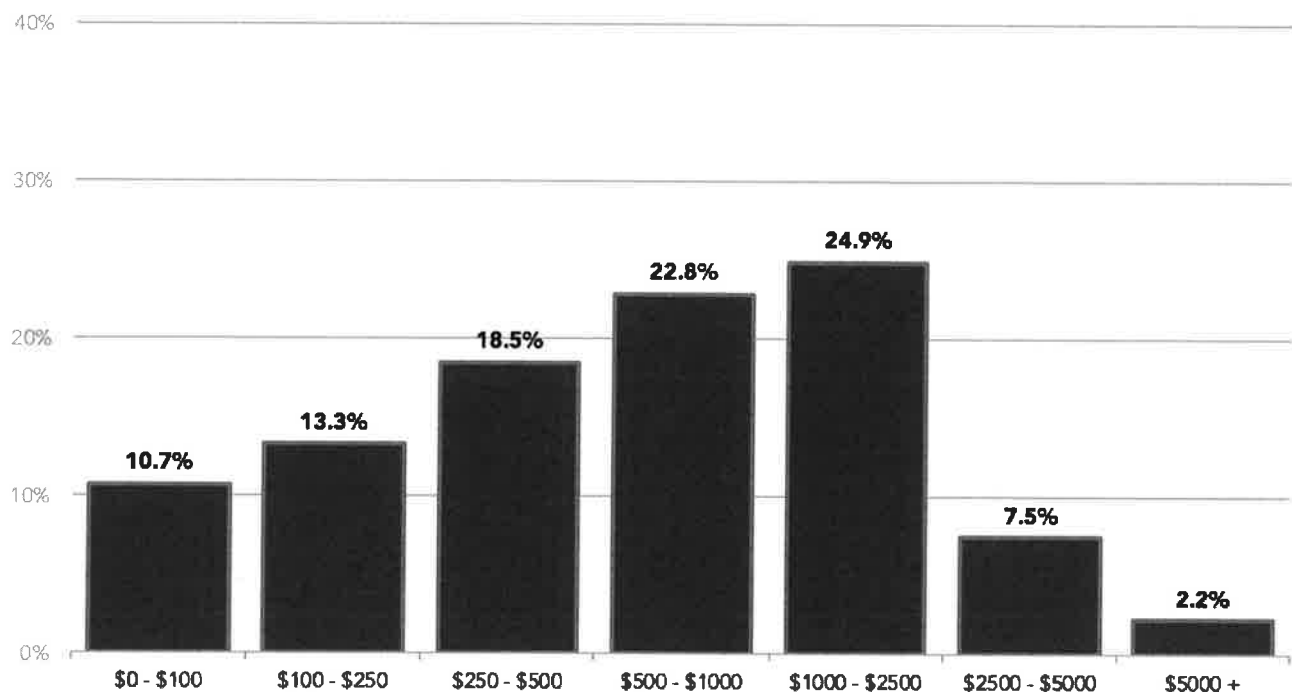
Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

Most people spend between \$25 and \$50 per trip to a marijuana store, with a \$33 median spend per trip. 34.7% of customers spend less than \$10 on average, usually picking up a single item like a half gram pre-roll or a carbonated beverage. Only 8.2% spend more than \$100/trip.

We also analyzed the distribution of annual spend by customer loyalty members on marijuana. The chart below shows the total amount spent in dispensaries over the last year by customers who have been loyalty members for over one year.

How Much Money Do People Spend Each Year on Weed?

Weed smokers spent \$645 on average in the last year buying pot



Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

The median customer spends \$645 on pot each year, and over 57% of customers spent more than \$500. Very few customers—less than 10%—spent over \$2,500.

So do different demographics have different shopping habits? To investigate, we first analyzed the marijuana purchasing behavior of loyalty members by gender.

Do Different Customer Segments Have Different Shopping Habits?

Shopping Behavior of Male vs. Female Customers

Customer Segment	Average Age	Median Days Between Purchases	Median Items Per Purchase	Median Spend Per Trip	Median Spend Over Last Year
Male	37.4	19.5	1.6	\$33	\$647
Female	38.2	21.5	2.0	\$35	\$634

Note - Median Spend Over Last Year only includes data for customers who have been loyalty members for over one year

Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

For the most part, men and women have similar shopping and spending habits. Men shop slightly more often, visiting the store about every 19.5 days compared to 21.5 day for women. Although men buy fewer items per trip, they spend almost as much (\$33) as women (\$35).

Next we looked at these habits segmented by age.

Do Different Customer Segments Have Different Shopping Habits?

Shopping Behavior of Customers in Different Age Segments

Customer Segment	Percent Male	Median Days Between Purchases	Median Items Per Purchase	Average Spend Per Trip	Average Spend Over Last Year
20s	62.1%	16.0	1.6	\$27	\$627
30s	66.2%	18.2	1.7	\$33	\$677
40s	65.3%	20.0	1.9	\$39	\$823
50s	61.6%	20.1	1.8	\$41	\$753
60s	63.9%	26.0	1.8	\$43	\$552
70s	61.6%	22.6	1.6	\$50	\$165
80s +	53.7%	41.7	1.3	\$64	N/A

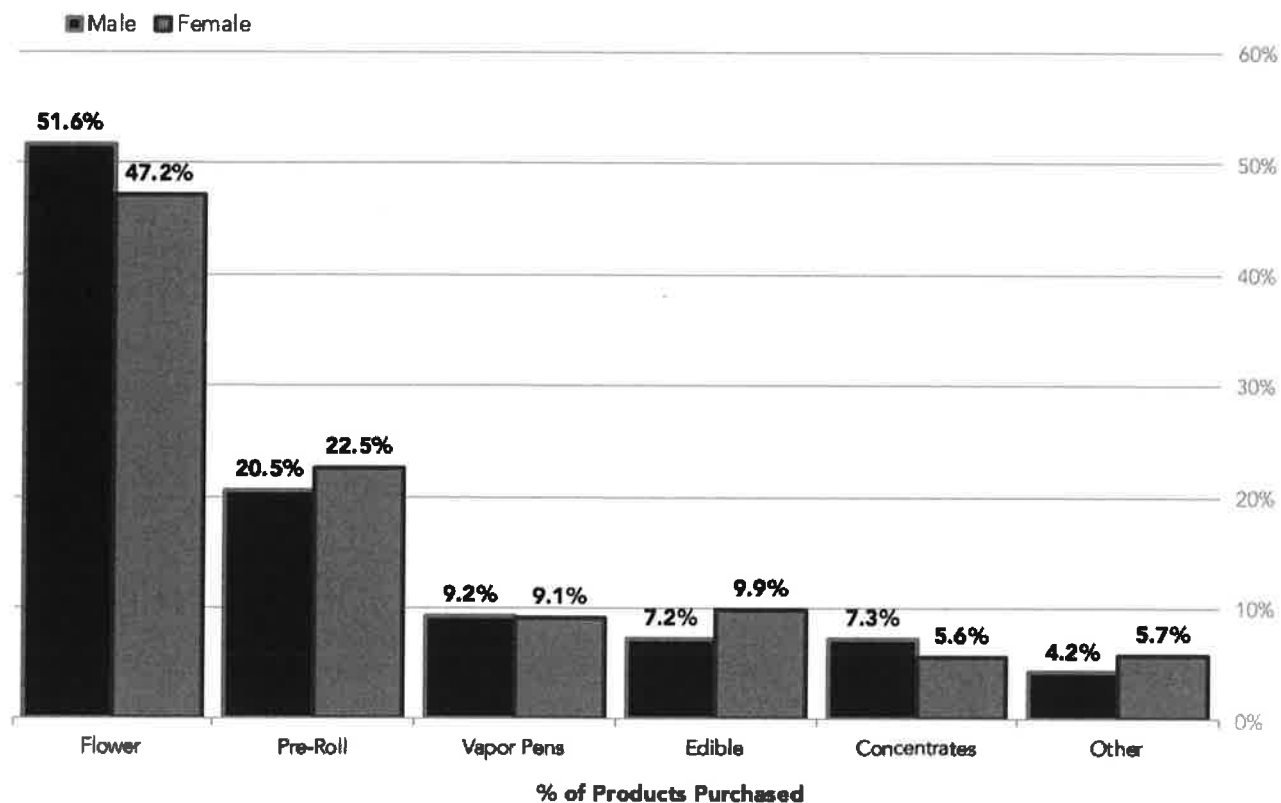
Note - Median Spend Over Last Year only includes data for customers who have been loyalty members for over one year

Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

Older loyalty members generally visit dispensaries less frequently, but they spend more when they do visit. Customers in their 80s spend the most per trip, with a median spend per trip of \$64. Customers in their 40s, however, spent the most last year: a median of \$823.

In a previous blog post, we looked at the most popular (<http://headset.io/blog/what-are-the-most-popular-cannabis-products>) types of cannabis products. We were curious to see if the popularity of particular products differed by demographic. The chart below displays the product preferences of men and women.

Do Men and Women Buy Similar Products?

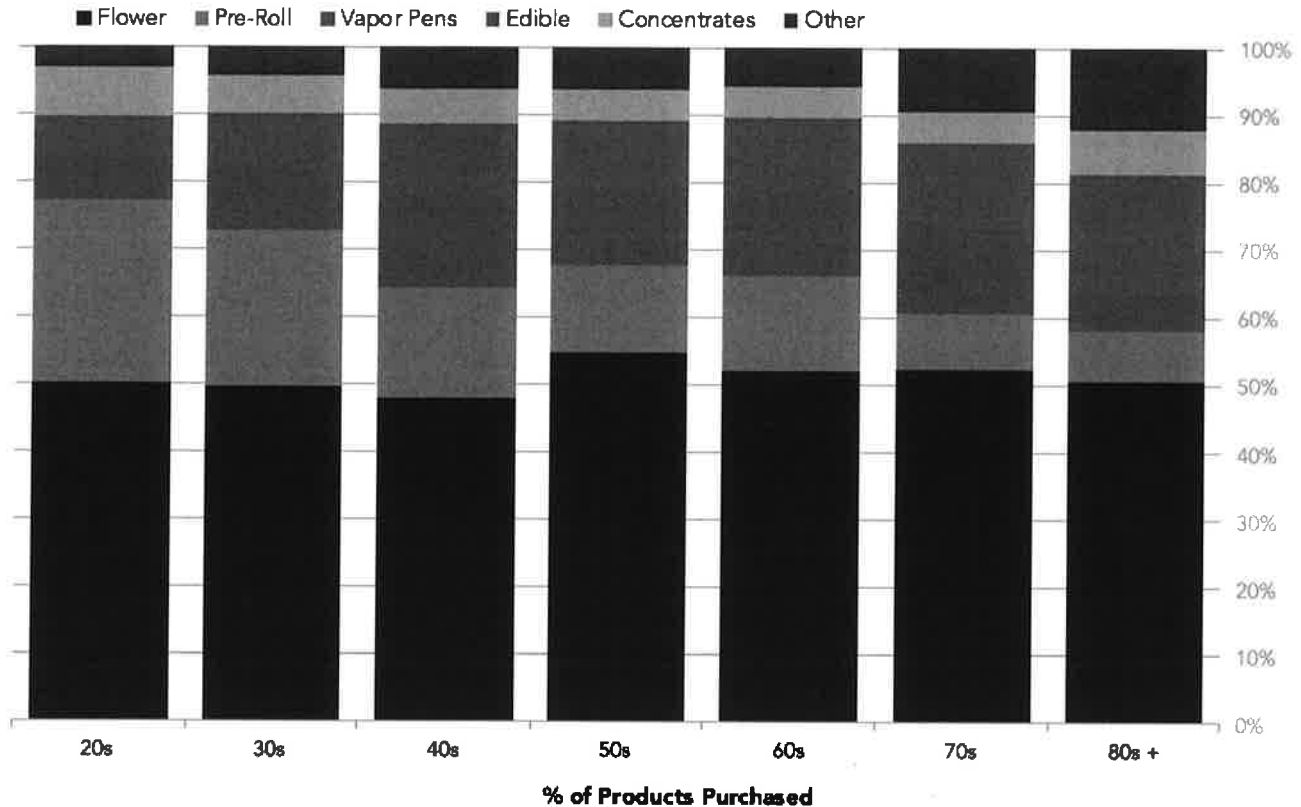


Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

Flower, which is “traditional” marijuana bud, is the most popular product for both genders. But it is even more popular among men: flower accounts for 4.4% more of their purchases. Women tend to buy more Pre-Roll and Edibles, while men buy more Concentrates. Women also tend to experiment more with non-traditional products (Other) such as Beverages, Tincture & Sublingual and Topicals.

We also explored product preferences by age.

Does Age Impact Product Choice?



Data source: Headset (<http://headset.io/blog/what-does-the-average-cannabis-consumer-look-like>)

Each segment buys mostly Flower, with those in their 50s buying Flower at the highest rate. Older customers buy less Pre-Rolls than their younger counterparts. Pre-Rolls make up 27% of purchases among customers in their 20s, and this ratio drops down with each age band to only 8% of purchases for those 80 years or older. Conversely, the proportion of both Edibles and Other purchased increase with age—from 6% to 18% and 3% to 12%, respectively.

In contrast to the stereotypical depictions of marijuana users in popular culture and the mainstream media, our customer loyalty data shows that there is a wide range of pot smokers. Each customer segment brings their own habits and product preferences with them into the marijuana store.

As the industry develops, talking generically about "marijuana" and "pot sales" may become like referring to "alcohol sales" rather than talking about beer, wine, and cocktails.

Note: If you're a company that wants to work with Priceonomics to turn your data into great stories, learn more about the **Priceonomics Data Studio** (<https://priceonomics.com/the-priceonomics-data-studio/>).

Economics (<https://priceconomics.com/category/economics/>)

Rankings (<https://priceconomics.com/category/rankings/>)

Data Visualization (<https://priceconomics.com/category/data-visualization/>)

Data Studio (<https://priceconomics.com/the-priceconomics-data-studio-2/>)

About Us (<https://priceconomics.com/about-us/>)

Terms (<https://priceconomics.com/privacy-and-terms/>)

Contact Us (<https://priceconomics.com/contact/>)