

# 8 TIPS FOR EXPANDING YOUR MEDICAL DISPENSARY TO ADULT-USE

**EXCLUSIVE TAKEAWAYS**  
FROM CANNABIS CONFERENCE 2021

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**August 23 – 25, 2022**

Paris Las Vegas Hotel & Casino  
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# EXPANDING INTO ADULT-USE

Bringing your business to a recreational market is a substantial route to company growth. However, many factors are at play that can hinder or ensure success with such a major business change. Get ready to pivot your dispensary to serve recreational consumers with these considerations from experts who've already made the leap (and learned the hard lessons along the way). If you are an expanding retail business, you'll find tips in this guide from the Cannabis Conference 2021 session "Expand Your Medical Dispensary To Adult-Use: What You Need To Know."

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# THE EXPERTS

**Lilach Mazor Power is the founder and managing director at vertically integrated, Arizona-based cannabis company Giving Tree Dispensary.** She has served nine years in the cannabis sector with a focus on R&D and retail. Since establishing Giving Tree in 2013, Power has placed a strong emphasis on corporate citizenship, raising over \$100,000 for charities. Giving Tree is one of the only majority woman-owned dispensaries in the state with plans to begin operations in both Puerto Rico and Israel. Beyond her executive leadership, Power is a brand builder with an intuitive understanding of market trends. She has formulated multiple product lines, including lifestyle brand Kindred. Power is an Arizona Dispensary Association board member and, among other titles, is a proud mother of two.



**Lilach Mazor Power**

**Founder and CEO, Giving Tree Dispensary**

# THE EXPERTS

**Wanda L. James is the founder and CEO of Denver-based Simply Pure Dispensary.** Along with her husband, Scott Durrah, they became the first African Americans, legally licensed, to own a dispensary, a cultivation facility, and an edible company. She is also the founder and managing partner of the Cannabis Global Initiative (CGI), a consulting firm that specializes in cannabis production, dispensing and processing, regulatory framework and political outreach.

As a leading advocate in the cannabis industry focused on social equity and justice, James' work on cannabis reform has led to her working with a host of politicians, including President Barack Obama, Vice President and former Sen. Kamala Harris, Sen. Kirsten Gillibrand, Rep. Barbara Lee and Gov. Jared Polis.

She was the first inductee into the MJ Biz Cannabis Hall of Fame, was named one of the 100 Most Influential People in Cannabis and one of the 50 Most Influential Women by *High Times*.



**Wanda James**

**Co-Founder and CEO, Simply Pure Brands**

## 1. Have a Clear Understanding of Medicinal and Adult-Use

**Lilach Mazor Power:** “There is no difference with the way we grow it or extract it. It’s just on the regulation side, adult-use means you are limited to the 10 mg or to the one ounce of flower. So, it’s really the same exact product except dosed in different quantities. And that is really what [distinguishes] it on the customer [and] retail side. What we see is yes, we might have some registered patients that suffer from chronic issues and need a quantity

that is higher. So, we definitely recommend for them to get a [medical] card to be able to [not] pay the higher taxes and get those quantities, but other than that, we see the everyday mom that doesn’t want to drink a bottle of wine to tolerate life, ... or someone that can’t sleep, has anxiety, or vertigo. Whatever it is, [even if] it’s not necessarily a registered patient, people are using it every day for their wellbeing.”

# MAKE CONNECTIONS

## 2. Connect With Your Local Officials



PHOTOS BY LAS VEGAS EVENT PHOTOGRAPHY

**Wanda James:** "Politicians work for you, and I can't say that enough. ... Start with your city council members. They are going to meet with you, and [when] you meet with [them] say, 'Hey can you introduce me to the House Rep?' or 'Hey, can you introduce me to the State Senator?'... Call them up. Set a meeting. And see them."

## 3. Ensure You Have Supply to Meet Demand

**Wanda James:** “When you go from seeing maybe 25 to 75 people a day and then as soon as you flip that switch [to adult-use], you may go from 75 to 300 people a day, to 400 people a day. So, imagine what you have to have on your shelves to satisfy those 400 people who are coming in and looking for all different types of things, not just weed. Now they want gummies, and now they want a drink, ... and they want topicals. They want all different types of things, just like if you were going to walk into a Whole Foods market. You don’t want to just see chicken, apples and lettuce. You want to see a whole variety of different things. ... So, the idea of being able to stock your dispensary is going to be key. So, for those of you who are in medical marijuana states right now, get to know your suppliers and the people who are creating products and your growers, not just one grower.”

## 4. Increase Operations

**Wanda James:** “If you have a small dispensary and have one register for 75 people a day, you’re going to need at least four registers in your space. You’re going to [have to] figure out how to make that happen.”

## 5. Stock Your **Staff**

**Wanda James:** “If you are writing your business plan, make sure you have enough employees to be able to do this work. Because if you only have two employees opening and closing your store, now you are going to need 5 to 15 employees opening and closing your store to be able to set up and know where your inventory is coming from every day because the minute you run out of inventory, you’re going to lose that customer to the dispensary that’s a thousand feet away.”

## 6. Train Your Staff Accordingly

**Lilach Mazor Power:** “We went from a team of 10 to a team of 26 just in our dispensary. There [are] different titles [and] different positions. So, we had to have people that are dedicated to just [watching] inventory and [filling] in the orders, and then [there are] people that are just ... cashiers and then [there are] people that are doing sales. That is the difference in how we’re hiring and how we train [employees] because the person that is now at a retail store in a sales position needs to be a salesperson with great customer service and passion.”

**Wanda James:** “Training for me reigns supreme. ... If you’ve had other dispensary experience, you won’t get on my floor for almost two and a half weeks. If you come to us ‘green’ [having no experience] it will be a month before you get on the floor. So, our budtenders are not budtenders, they’re budologists because of the level of training that we put them through. They go to the grow facility and they train for a week. Why? Because I want you to know the plant; I want you to know the product from start to bottom.”

## 7. Educate the Consumer on Dosing

**Wanda James:** “With edibles, it is important for people to know how long the effect takes. If you pop an edible and 30 minutes later you don’t feel anything and you pop another one, trust me when I say that they are going to hit you all at the same time. ... And it’s funny for someone who knows they are going to be [OK], but it’s not funny for someone when they think they’re about to die. ... Your people have really got to explain to folks over and over and over, ‘Do not eat this entire 100-milligram candy bar if you have never had an edible before because you will not enjoy what is getting ready to happen to you.’ ... On the same token, if someone comes in and they are on a very high dose of chemotherapy and they are in an extreme amount of pain and all they want to do is sleep through this process, then yeah, we’re going to talk them through the process of [giving them] the 100-milligram edible with the terpene ... [and] cannabinoid profile that [they’re] looking for.”

**Lilach Mazor Power:** “Our job as a company and a regular retail store is to make sure other people don’t have [bad experiences.] So, the conversation with them about being a part of their journey and starting slow has been our mantra, as well.”

## 8. Establish Your Brands

**Lilach Mazor Power:** “People choose brands and products for different reasons. ... So, when you talk about a commodity, be able to differentiate yourself with brands. ... Because if you don’t have a brand, all you are doing is just competing for the right price, and if you have that differentiator, now you are not part of that race to the bottom [that] we are seeing in cannabis. So, creating a brand in adult-use that really focuses on what people need and how you [can] create that loyalty that’s not based on price, is really what’s going to differentiate you. ... You just have to decide what is your passion and where you want to position yourself.”



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