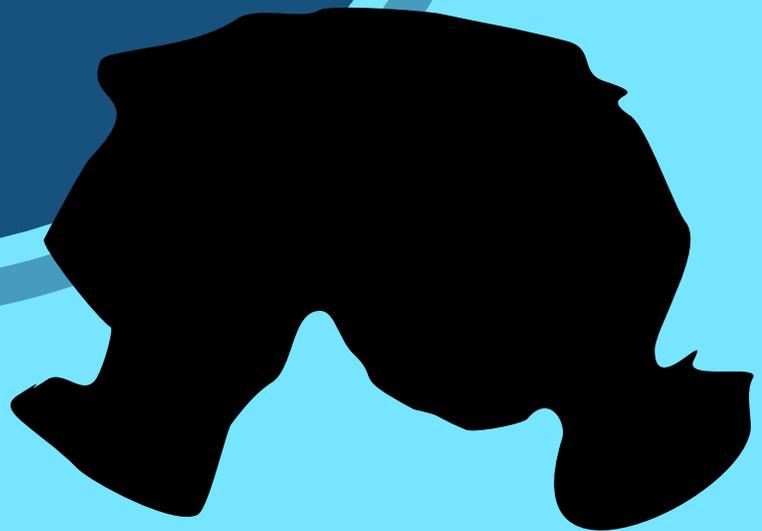


INTRODUCTION



AUTHOR'S NOTE



Storytelling is a powerful tool.

When we tell stories, we create a living history. One that has the ability to transcend time and generate a lasting ripple effect. Data itself is indeed compelling but to truly inspire, the tales behind the analytics must be told.

Stories help us face hard truths and shine a light on the ways in which we show up in the world. They invoke an emotional response, forcing us to reflect and ask ourselves “what can I do better?”

The Women in Cannabis Study was sparked by a clear need for comprehensive data and more importantly, a commitment to authentic representation. When history books are written, women are often left out of the narrative. Knowing we are in an industry still evolving, it's imperative that every person who is a part of this movement is seen and heard.

When I set out to conduct the Women in Cannabis Study, I was compelled not just by the fascinating and dynamic experiences of women in our space, but also by the desire to amplify voices and create a safe, equitable industry for all. We have the chance to shift the paradigm, acknowledge the barriers in our way, and build a supply chain based on integrity.

We have all faced our own trials and tribulations and created our own visions of success. But there is also a common link that unites us in ways we may not realize, a shared experience that goes beyond demographics. It is this fact that implores us to stick together and go the extra mile to enact true change.

This research is my contribution. Providing the report at no cost is my way to take radical action.

Thank you for being a part of this journey. Thank you to the women who donated their time and stories, the allies who spent their privilege to help get this project to the finish line, the volunteers who lent a hand, and everyone I've met over the past few years who encouraged me to keep going. Your support mattered.

I hope this report engages thought-provoking conversations and allows us to make a lasting impact for generations to come.

In solidarity,

JENNIFER WHETZEL

Founder & Author, The Women in Cannabis Study

FOREWORD



For the first time in a generation, we are seeing an entirely new industry form. A medicine derived from an ancient female plant that has the ability to transform the lives of millions is emerging, slowly but surely.

As we rise out of the shadows and into the mainstream, we have the opportunity and responsibility to lead by example. A chance to do things right.

But the cannabis community is at a crossroads.

The Women in Cannabis Study showcases a fantastic dynamic, one where despite our differences, we are more alike than we may even know. Our definitions of success, our values, and our motivations behind our decision to enter this industry are varied, of course. But at their core, there is a clear unifying theme that drives us to forge ahead: a passion for the plant.

But sometimes passion alone isn't enough to move the conversation forward. The shared experiences of the women in cannabis include incredible barriers to entry, whether through lack of funding or opportunity, rampant harassment, blatant misogyny, or clear discrimination. These facts alone should be enough to convince our industry to change, but as we have seen too many times throughout history, injustices often repeat themselves.

At this watershed moment in history, we run the risk of women being marginalized within a space that at its very core is defined by its deep connection to the divine feminine. And while sexism has always run rampant in our society (the cannabis space not entirely excluded), the booming cannabis industry could be one to shift the narrative.

So where do we go from here? If the Women in Cannabis Study does nothing else, it should inform everyone that we are all on the same team. That we all want to build a supply chain that is safe, fair, and on track to succeed for generations to come. In order to create that space, we must move conversations forward both where we work and where we play, advocating for policies, procedures, and perspectives that do the most good. It may not always be easy to accomplish, but moving toward what's right has rarely been the easiest path.

I hope the Women in Cannabis Study inspires you and invokes a monumental shift in our industry, setting the tone for what's to come as we become an unstoppable force.

Warm regards,

RACHELLE GORDON

Partner, The Women in Cannabis Study



STUDYING WOMEN IN CANNABIS

This report is a chance to shine a light on the triumphs and tribulations facing the women in our industry and provides an opportunity for them to be seen and heard.

Women's experiences in corporate America are well-documented. We know that women have not had and still do not have the same opportunities for career advancement as men, hold fewer executive or board positions, and have fewer opportunities for mentorship, sponsorship and career progression.

The cannabis industry is new but is historically tied to progressive cultural ideals and social movement activity, including patient advocacy and advocacy for human rights. Transitioning to formal industry has brought the norms of industry and the deep pockets of capital. As more and more states and countries have opened legal cannabis businesses, the rate at which women enter the cannabis industry increases.

In 2019, Ladyjane Branding launched the Women in Cannabis Study to document and quantify women's experiences and to support businesses, consumers, and policy advocates. We collected rigorous data from qualitative interviews and quantitative surveys to advance equity and diversity in the industry.



WHY THIS STUDY MATTERS

Our hope is that this study will provide a baseline to measure against as the industry grows and changes.

Built on Data, Not Anecdotes

After surveying more than 1,500 women working throughout the US, we found that they make overwhelming sacrifices to work in the industry and face systemic barriers to success, including: sexism, harassment, bullying, lack of support, lack of opportunity, lack of benefits, lack of respect, difficulty obtaining funding and resources, low pay, shame, stigma and more.

Why Data on Gender Equity Matters

By collecting data and creating knowledge, we now understand how women are faring in the cannabis industry (not well) and whether we are doing enough to support women, their careers and their professional goals (we are not).

The data shows that the cannabis industry is not immune to the issues and problems that exist in other industries - like tech and finance. As a newly legal - and increasingly ESSENTIAL industry, we have an unprecedented opportunity to make a change.

Just 11% consider the industry equitable*. Despite these hurdles, the vast majority of women in the space consider themselves successful!

WOMEN IN CANNABIS LEADERSHIP

What We Know: Women are Losing Power

As the legal industry grows, the rate at which women are entering the industry has been increasing. In 2017, *Marijuana Business Daily* released survey findings showing that women held 37% of executive-level roles in the cannabis industry. However, just three years later, the percentage of women holding executive positions has dropped to 22%.



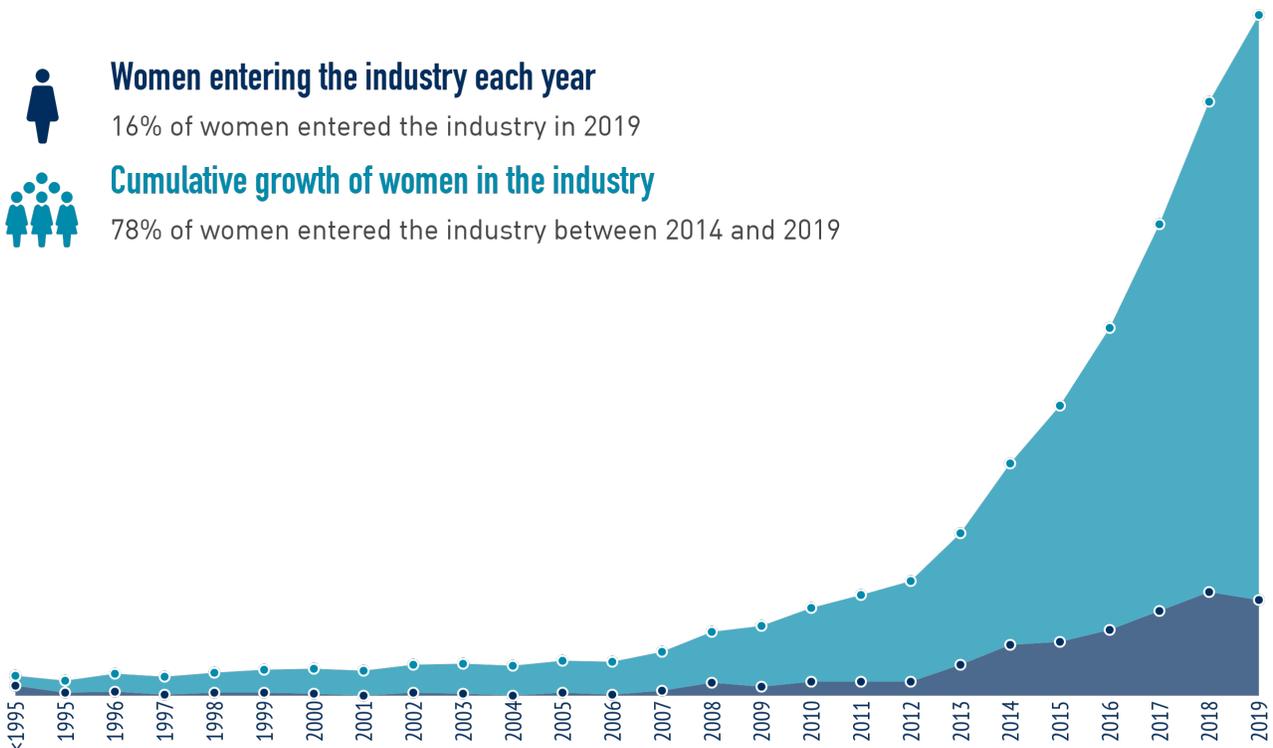
Women entering the industry each year

16% of women entered the industry in 2019



Cumulative growth of women in the industry

78% of women entered the industry between 2014 and 2019



A recent white paper from the [Arcview Group & the National Cannabis Industry Association](#) suggests that companies with women in leadership roles are more profitable and produce more than twice the revenue per dollar invested.

In addition, since women account for 83% of U.S. consumer purchases, companies who better understand their buying decisions and motivations will be better positioned to win their loyalty.

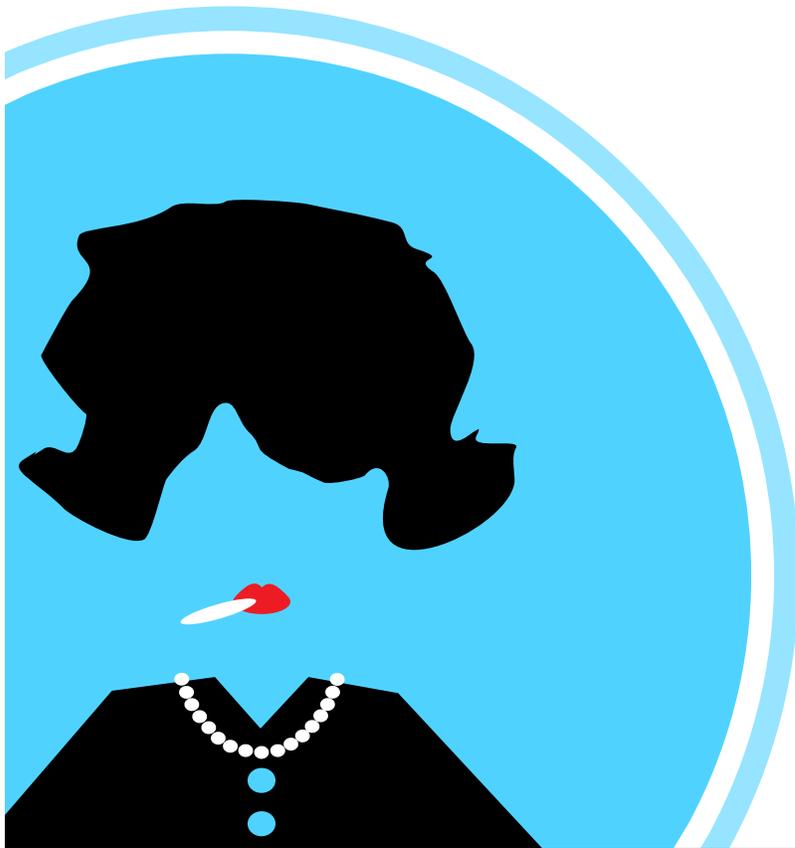


PASSION TO MAKE CHANGE

There is a women-led movement focusing on equity and inclusion is emerging within the cannabis industry.

Women in this industry are inspired to help others and are extremely passionate about the healing power of cannabis. Many are highly educated, have significant experience, and a majority have shown that they are willing and able to overcome various obstacles, roadblocks, shame and stigma to make positive change in the world.

Despite the obstacles and barriers to success, results from the Women in Cannabis Study show our potential.

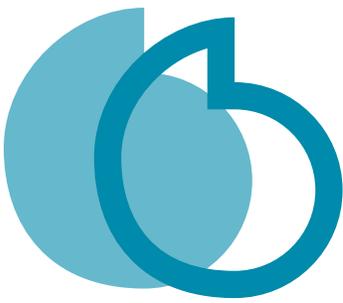


After 4 years in the industry my goal is now to be a cannabis business owner myself and I have a lot of support that will help me make that plan a reality.

After 43 years alive, more importantly, I finally found the family of my heart and soul, and [I] feel truly valuable and worthy in and of myself alone, all because of cannabis.

CANNABIS PROCESSOR, WA





IN MY WORDS...

Women in the cannabis industry are so important.

This field is developing as we speak and could develop into an industry that's women-driven and where women are encouraged to be and thrive.

Additionally, it's important for the realization, by men allies, that the drive for an industry based in equity is important.

We all have a lot of really unique things to bring to the table, and an industry that women thrive in is a thriving industry. I can't thank the women I've met and worked with along the way so far in my career for all the support, advice, and friendship. I wish everyone could feel this way.

Women supporting women supports a thriving, growing, encouraging industry that I want to be a part of and continue to grow.

INTEGRATED PEST MANAGEMENT TECHNICIAN, NY



REPORT CHAPTERS

Interested in learning more? Download additional results at womenincannabis.study/study-chapters.

Introduction

Methodology

Who are the Women Working in Cannabis?

Which Roles do they Play in the Industry?

Why Work in Cannabis?

What Relationship Do Women Have with Cannabis?

What are the Barriers to Success?

What Else Holds Women Back?

BIPOC Women in Cannabis

LGBTQIA+ in Cannabis

How do Women Define Success?

We Have the Data, Now What?

Leverage the Power of the Data

Profiles of Women in Cannabis

Contributors

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THANK YOU

WOMEN IN CANNABIS
a Living History

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