

Priority Marketing – Cypress Pharmacy CBD Campaign – Division A – Category 7A (Promotional/Marketing)

Research/Situation Analysis: Cypress Pharmacy is a neighborhood health partner offering unique services and programs like customized compounding, medication flavoring and free vitamins for children and adults 50+, as well as personalized wellness and supplement programs with a commitment to support the community's overall health and wellness goals. An estimate released by the Brightfield Group indicated that sales of cannabidiol (CBD)-based products would increase by an astonishing 700% in 2019, making it a \$5 billion market. According to the National Products Association in Washington, D.C., more than 1,500 new CBD products have come to the market in the last three years. The Food and Drug Administration evaluated CBD products in 2015 and 2016 and found that 22 out of 24 products did not have the levels of CBD advertised on their label. Furthermore, a study published in the Journal of the American Medical Association in 2017 showed 70% of CBD products do not match their label. The safety and efficacy of CBD products has become a prevalent concern, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration began hearings at the end of May 2019 on how to assess CBD products and regulate the industry. With CBD oil available seemingly everywhere, it's confusing for consumers to determine if they're purchasing quality product. As a result of this informal secondary research and the region's growing interest in CBD for its wellness properties, Cypress Pharmacy wanted to ensure customers were educated, as well as provide quality CBD products in an unregulated marketplace. The goal was to differentiate themselves from other CBD retailers, especially those who were not medical professionals. Cypress Pharmacy created an educational page on their website for CBD education and products, but soon found its website and its digital ads unrelated to CBD were flagged by Google due to the promotional CBD materials on the website. Without being able to use its website as a source for credible information on CBD, Cypress Pharmacy turned to public relations efforts to respond to requests from customers for CBD information, leveraging its existing partnership with Priority Marketing to develop and execute a public relations program that would increase awareness and understanding of CBD. Target audiences included health care professionals as well as pharmacy and wellness consumers, including Lee County residents needing natural health solutions, especially those with chronic conditions; seniors; caretakers including child/guardian of aging parents and parents/guardians of special needs children and adults; area business professionals; and high net worth individuals needing personalized attention. **Objectives:** 1) To educate target audiences on natural wellness and quality CBD by generating monthly attendance of approximately 15 people each month to its Seminar Saturday, held on the second Saturday of each month. 2) To increase average monthly CBD sales to \$8,000 starting in June 2019. Average monthly CBD sales from June 2018-May 2019 was \$3,399.48. 3) To establish Cypress Pharmacy as a go-to resource for quality CBD products and information by educating target audiences on CBD benefits and safety and wellness topics through at least 10 positive media stories generated between June 2019-February 2020. **Planning:** Planning began in May 2019 and included close communication between Priority Marketing and Cypress Pharmacy to identify areas of consumer confusion surrounding CBD products, and where Cypress Pharmacy could serve as a resource for credible information. To supplement media outreach, a social media influencer event was also scheduled for July 10, 2020. Priority Marketing began planning for the influencer event in mid-June and conducted a site visit at the pharmacy on July 5. **Implementation:** Priority Marketing developed communication strategies designed to improve the community's awareness and understanding of CBD benefits, use and safety starting in June 2019. The plan focused on outreach to educate the community on CBD benefits and raise awareness of the multitude of health benefits, and also to drive attendance to its free monthly educational seminars, which regularly discuss CBD. Tactics included drafting and submitting articles and informational guest opinion articles to publications, pitching Cypress Pharmacy to television and print media as CBD and natural wellness experts, drafting and distributing news releases and submitting calendar listings for Cypress Pharmacy's monthly Seminar Saturday programs,

planning and executing a social media influencer event, and coordinating speaking opportunities related to CBD to key audiences in the community. CBD information was disseminated in foundational materials including seminar event flyers and graphics, as well as a brochure to be distributed at the pharmacy. Media relations was an influential strategy, and guest opinions were authored by Cypress Pharmacy's wellness experts; multiple stories were also generated through media pitching. This content was also shared via Cypress Pharmacy's owned communications' channels, including website, email and social media. Two print advertisements promoting CBD products were also developed and placed by Priority Marketing.

Evaluation: 1) More than 50 community members attended Cypress Pharmacy's first CBD-focused Seminar Saturday program in July 2019, exceeding its goal by 233%. Following CBD-focused Seminar Saturday programs held between August 2019-February 2020 have consistently been at capacity, with average monthly attendance of 20, 33% beyond the goal. 2) Following the first month of campaign ramp-up, sales of CBD products in July nearly doubled from the previous month, a total of \$14,529.55 – 82% beyond the goal. From June 2019-February 2020, monthly sales of CBD products averaged \$15,020.44 – 88% beyond its goal and more than four times its average monthly sales from the 12 months prior. 3) At least 40 favorable stories on CBD benefits and safety were published by media between June 2019-February 2020, surpassing its goal of 10 stories by 300% and attaining a total estimated reach of 2,140,750. On multiple occasions, customers came into the pharmacy as a direct result of earned media coverage, even attracting a new customer from the Naples area, which is far outside of the general customer range for this small community pharmacy in Fort Myers. Following an in-studio television interview with ABC-7, before the time Cypress Pharmacy's representatives could return to the pharmacy, a viewer was in the store ready to purchase CBD products for himself and his family. **Budget:** Cypress Pharmacy leveraged its existing professional services retainer to cover Priority Marketing's fully integrated scope of marketing, public relations and digital services. For the campaign running June 2019-February 2020, Priority Marketing spent 141.16 hours totaling 17,618.88 (avg. \$135/hour). Hard costs for printing 500 CBD brochures = \$220 and CBD-focused print advertising = \$3,036.