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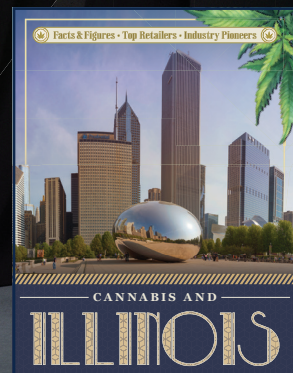
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Review: Cannabis Retail Data Mastery

BY HARRY BRELSFORD

Props to Henry Finkelstein at Cannabis Big Data for bringing a purpose-built, hands-on and first-to-market “earned” certification in cannabis analytics with his Cannabis Retail Data Mastery program.

I recently audited the six-week, 13-session certification series and came away from the experience more inspired and excited about the way cannatech is becoming more sophisticated each day. As a life-long technology professional, the emergence of technical certifications is a true barometer of the health of the cannabis industry: We are growing up!

WHO SHOULD ATTEND?

The Cannabis Retail Data Mastery program is not intended for the budtender working the floor, but rather for those in management. The cohort I participated in had cannabis dispensary owners, managers and data analysts. The audience was geographically dispersed and the experience-levels varied, creating lively participation during the online gatherings. What I found was that everyone learned something. And to me that is the value of continuing education.

The goal of the program is simple: increase the profitability of your dispensary using analytics.

Other factors include being able to prove your skill set to your supervisors and investors, as well as increased professionalism, resulting in more confidence and better customer service.

“Getting certified allows you to become a Most Invaluable Player that improves upon the MVP concept,” Finkelstein says. “MIPs are so priceless; they call the shots and drive the team.”

FRAMEWORKS

There are several methodology highlights that I want to point out:

- **Storytelling:** I’m an active learner so the storytelling paradigm (with pictures, art and charts) works for me. Not only was I able to ingest the content but retain what I learned.

One memorable reflection from the storytelling sessions was the psychology of data.

“Data brings up positive and negative emotions,” Finkelstein told the cohort. “That can be excitement and enthusiasm as well as frustration and self-doubt. It’s our responsibility as data leaders to create an anti-shame container for our team.”

- **SCORE Method:** This is a five-step methodology to be an MIP. Spelled out, it’s Simplify, Connecting, Observing, Recommend, Elevate and Evaluate.

“The best way to become an MIP is to SCORE often,” Finkelstein says. “Every individual has SCORE steps that are easier and harder for them. Teams often have different strengths than the individual. As we practice each step, you’ll lift your own capabilities while also supporting and strengthening your team.”

- **Capstone:** The reason I call this an “earned certification” is that there is actual hands-on practical work. The project plan results in a capstone session where each student “brings it all together” and makes a presentation.

The capstone is valuable on three levels: Participants received real-time feedback as they practiced putting the concepts into action; companies got immediate value with well-communicated, actionable insights to improve their profitability; and participants have a dedicated analysis in their portfolio that they can use for future job opportunities.

I have a background in analytics and technology, so I didn’t have to be sold on the value of the Cannabis Retail Data Mastery certification. I was a sponge for six weeks, soaking it all up. I recommend you learn more about the professional certification opportunity at retail.cannabisdatamastery.co. It’s well worth the investment.

Harry Brelsford is the founder of two technology communities: SMB Nation and 420MSP (where he is a principal analyst). He welcomes inquiries at harrybrelsford@gmail.com or 206-201-2944. Visit www.420msp.com to learn more about cannatech.