

TechBridge

 **Dimensional**
INSIGHT®



States Are Trying to Better Understand Pandemic Data

Ecommerce & the Future of Cannabis

For Wine And Spirits, There's No Place Like A Liquor Store

All "A" Grades in Data & Analytics Platform Category

Why Diversity Matters in Decision-Making

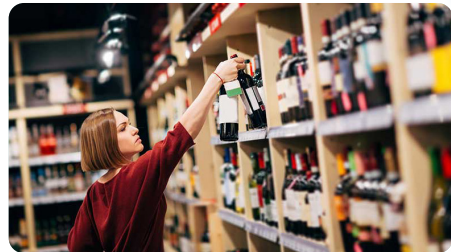
Subscribe!

March 2022



03 States Are Trying to Better Understand Pandemic Data
by Trevor Branch

05 Ecommerce and the Future of Cannabis
by Trevor Branch



08 For Wine And Spirits, There's No Place Like A Liquor Store
by Meredith Galante

10 All "A" Grades in Data & Analytics Platform Category
Press release



11 Why Diversity Matters in Decision-Making
by Kathy Sucich

14 News brief



CONTRIBUTORS



Trevor Branch,
Marketing Writer



Meredith Galante,
Contributing Writer



Kathy Sucich,
VP of Marketing

Click to Subscribe to
our Newsletter:

Subscribe!

States Are Trying to Better Understand Pandemic Data

Despite the best efforts of various agencies and government officials, accurately plotting data from emerging COVID-19 infections remains a much more challenging task than anticipated. On top of home-test kits and asymptomatic individuals making it difficult to identify the true number of active infections, the lack of more explicit reporting guidelines has provided little insight into how COVID-19 is actually affecting overall public health.

In order to establish more transparency on the effects of COVID-19 and its variants (Omicron in particular), some states are now implementing new reporting guidelines to differentiate between the level of severity in hospital-admitted infections. Officials hope that these changes will provide the data necessary for enabling more informed decision-making.

Distinguishing primary cases from incidental ones

One issue states have had in understanding the level of COVID hospitalizations is understanding which patients are hospitalized for COVID as opposed to those patients who are hospitalized with COVID. To better understand the data, the state of Massachusetts recently rolled out new guidelines for reporting COVID-related hospitalizations.

With the new guidelines, COVID-positive patients will now be reported based on their reason for hospitalization as opposed to being grouped together under one category. Hospitalizations will now be reported as either “primary” or “incidental” based on [whether the patient is given dexamethasone](#), an anti-inflammatory steroid used to treat the majority of hospitalized COVID-19 patients.

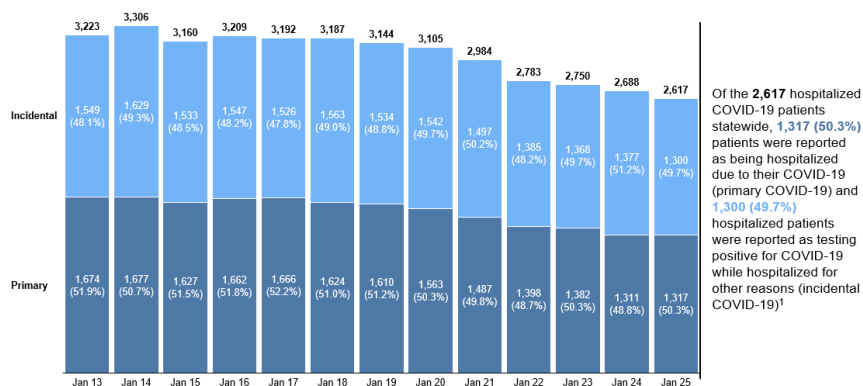
Trevor Branch

Marketing Writer
[LinkedIn](#)



COVID-19 Hospitalizations

Statewide COVID-19 Hospitalizations



1. Patients are reported as being hospitalized due to their COVID-19 if they received dexamethasone treatment. Administration of dexamethasone, a type of steroid medication, is considered an indicator of moderate to severe COVID-19 and provides an estimate of primary COVID-19.

Prior to the guidelines, it was difficult to accurately evaluate the severity of the Omicron variant. “A significant number of my COVID patients fell into 2 buckets: mild symptoms & discharged OR were admitted for non-COVID reasons BUT tested positive for COVID (all admitted patients are tested),” [Tweeted](#) State Rep. Jon Santiago, an emergency room doctor at Boston Medical Center. “The fact that many patients weren’t primarily admitted FOR COVID but rather for other medical issues should add nuance to the ‘COVID hospitalization’ numbers.”

According to data released by the [Massachusetts Department of Public Health](#), primary and incidental hospitalizations reported using the new guidelines are split nearly-even as of the end of January.

The significance of detail

Although this won't change how hospital beds or other resources are allocated, the new guidelines will provide some much-needed insight into how Omicron (and COVID in general) is influencing the overall public health.

According to Santiago, the large volume of incidental hospitalizations [demonstrates that the vaccine is actually working as intended](#). "Recall that the vaccine's primary goal was to prevent severe disease—not prevent transmission. Most of us are bound to get COVID but the majority of people will escape severe consequences."

Massachusetts's new reporting strategy illustrates the value of implementing detail-oriented approaches in addressing the pandemic. Pandemics are never black and white, and most countries are now at a stage where minor nuances in the data can play a major role in how officials and scientists respond to new outbreaks and potential hospitalizations.

However, hospitalization records only go so far. Unreported at-home test kits and asymptomatic individuals make it impossible to gauge the actual scale of recent outbreaks. Currently, citizens aren't required to report positive at-home test results, and with the Biden administration's [recent approval of free at-home COVID tests](#), the number of unreported infections is only going to grow. The administration's decision is due in part to their shift in focus from reporting overall cases to just reporting COVID-induced hospitalizations.



Analytics and COVID-19

Proper data governance and analysis remains our best method of understanding COVID-19 (and its variants) and how to properly respond in the event of future outbreaks. □

To learn more about how data analytics is being used in fighting the COVID-19 pandemic, check out our white paper

Population Health and Data Reporting Strategies in the Era of COVID-19

Ecommerce and the Future of the Cannabis Industry

Trevor Branch

Marketing Writer
[LinkedIn](#)



The social distancing guidelines set in place to combat COVID-19 only hastened the world's transition to a digital marketplace. Many businesses were forced to turn to ecommerce in an effort to save themselves from the effects of a devastated economy. Cannabis, which has traditionally relied entirely on in-person retail sales due to strict regulations, was one of the many industries that had to migrate its operations to the online marketplace.

Experiencing rapid growth due to the legalization of recreational use in many states and [increased pressure from the U.S. Senate for federal reform](#), the cannabis industry's transition to ecommerce couldn't come at a better time. As the world continues to recover from the pandemic and advances further into the digital age, ecommerce will likely play a huge role in how business is conducted in the future of cannabis.



Post-pandemic consumerism

The [substantial rise in ecommerce sales](#) attributed to the onset of COVID-19 has prompted a cultural change in business conduct. Many consumers have grown accustomed to the use of online channels while shopping, with ecommerce platforms such as Uber Eats, Drizzly, and Amazon retaining many of the regular users acquired during the pandemic.

As it stands, many consumers are unlikely to give up the convenience of ecommerce in favor of in-person shopping. The transition to the digital age in developed countries has made it extremely difficult to return to more traditional methods of conducting business.

Many of these digital trends are only going to grow and evolve as newer and more innovative technologies continue to be released. If businesses are to keep up with the rate at which society is advancing, then so must their methodologies.



Brand discovery

Despite its legalization in many areas, cannabis marketing is still highly regulated and faces many restrictions. This, coupled with the recent surge in cannabis businesses, has made it very difficult for consumers to discover new brands and products.

Ecommerce—more specifically, online marketplaces—circumvents this obstacle by providing consumers with brand exposure through personalized recommendations and tailored shopping experiences. Online marketplaces [can use data](#) acquired from the consumer's purchase history and account preferences to determine what brands and products might suit them best.

On top of helping customers discover potential brands, marketplaces also have the added benefit of providing businesses data related to current trends and consumer demographics.



An elevated customer experience

As with all industries, one of the driving factors behind the success of cannabis ecommerce is the attractiveness of convenience and a streamlined-user experience. Personalized product recommendations, user feedback forms, educational materials, promotional campaigns, and customer loyalty programs play a huge part in establishing strong brand-consumer relationships. Ecommerce platforms possess a variety of resources useful in generating consumer trust and credibility that brick-and-mortar establishments lack.

Furthermore, the raw scalability of ecommerce enables customers to browse a larger selection of products and choose those best suited to their needs based on item descriptions and user reviews. The wider array of options, coupled with the confidence that a consumer has that they made the right purchase, play a key role in gaining returning customers.

Ecommerce platforms will likely be responsible for many consumers' first experiences in purchasing cannabis, and as such are responsible for curating a positive first impression in potential future-buyers.

Industry fragmentation


Ecommerce as a whole is well acquainted with the effects of a fragmented market. However, the laws and regulations surrounding cannabis have left the industry particularly disjointed. For the foreseeable future, cannabis is likely to operate in its own lane as a category-specific market.

However, although a fragmented market possesses its own fair share of challenges, there are unique opportunities available for those committed to investing in such an isolated industry. For one, the lack of overlap between other marketplaces and those specific to cannabis allows emerging ecommerce platforms to specialize in the needs of their consumers and produce better customer experiences.

Additionally, the barrier to entry is much lower without the presence of the larger marketplaces associated with other industries. This provides a lot more opportunity for differentiation and gives cannabis business the chance to explore where many larger, more-established companies can't venture.



The future of cannabis-specific technology

Just from looking at the world around us, it's clear that ecommerce is here to stay. 

To learn more about what market-specific technology means for the future of cannabis, check out how Dimensional Insight is transforming the industry with new and advanced data analytics.

DOWNLOAD

For Wine And Spirits, There's No Place Like A Liquor Store

Consumers love the convenience of online ordering for everything from books and clothes to electronics. But when it comes to wine, customers want to open the door and walk into a store.

Almost 90% of all wine, beer, and spirits purchases in the last year were made in-store. That number is expected to rise as pandemic life transitions back closer to everyday life, according to new research by ChaseDesign, a human-centered design agency.



by **Meredith Galante**,
Contributing Writer



Pandemic boom for online alcohol ordering

While [Drizly](#) and other on-demand alcohol delivery businesses soared during mid-2020, customers are still looking to read wine labels, browse, and talk with fellow wine lovers. Now, sites like Drizly are seeing a decline in sales since consumers are leaving their homes.

During the pandemic's peak, 40% of consumers reported to ChaseDesign they bought alcohol online. However, by the summer of 2021, that number dipped to 35%, which is trending toward the 30% pre-pandemic levels.

The fact that so many customers prefer the in-store route but still have online ordering as an option can be tough for businesses to navigate. For brands, it means playing to the average customer online and in-person.

Where the customers shop

In states where it is legal, customers ranked Walmart as their number one choice of where to buy wine and liquor. In fact, 36.8% said Walmart had the best shopping experience. The second-best option for consumers was the local liquor store, with 34.6% choosing an independent liquor store to purchase their spirits.

According to ChaseDesign, people continue to choose the local liquor store because they trust the store associates for recommendations and localization.

"The power of localization and trust in store associates [is] often the most undervalued asset at retail," Joe Lampertius, president at ChaseDesign, told [Supermarket News](#).

Ranking third was Target with 25.4% of consumers preferring to buy wine and liquor there.



Buying in person comes with perks

Shoppers found online alcohol purchasing convenient, but the in-store experience provides a tactile and learning experience online just can't provide.

In the report, 53% of people said they enjoy seeing beverage choices in person, and 42% reported they like to pick up products to learn more about them from the store associates. In fact, 35% of shoppers said that store associates who know about options and choices are missed while shopping online.

When it comes to trying something new, 41% said it's easier to discover new brands in-store, and 37% indicated they like the overall atmosphere in a store.

What brands can do to take advantage of in-person shopping

A key statistic from the survey is that 41% of people found it is easier to find something new in the store.

For brands looking for new customers, offering in-store wine or liquor tastings can help customers who are shopping for something else discover your brand. In addition, you can ask for the emails of customers who try a sample and conduct a quick survey to see if they also shop online or not.

Next, use your sales team to help educate in-store staff so they can promote your product and make educated recommendations that the customers love.

Many alcohol delivery services, such as Drizly, give brands and stores access to analytics to help you understand which specific wine or liquors sell better online and in which zip codes. And it's worth noting that even though consumers are still buying alcoholic drinks mostly in supermarkets, online shopping channels do have the potential to grow, according to the [Wine And Spirits 2021 Market report](#). ▣



Dimensional Insight Achieves All “A” Grades

by Customers in Data & Analytics Platform Category in Annual Best in KLAS Report

Press Release | Feb 10, 2022

Current KLAS score updated at the time of newsletter publication

Customers give Dimensional Insight top scores in Customer Experience Pillars: Culture, Loyalty, Operations, Product, Relationship, and Value

Dimensional Insight Diver Platform	Culture	Loyalty	Operations	Product	Relationship	Value
	A	A	A-	A	A	A



BURLINGTON, MASS.—FEB. 10, 2022—Dimensional Insight®, an award-winning enterprise analytics provider, today announced it was a top performer in the Data & Analytics Platform category in the 2022 Best in KLAS: Software and Services report, and earned all “A” grades from customers in KLAS’ six Customer Experience Pillars. Dimensional Insight was a high scorer in its category with an overall score of 92.1 out of 100.


Each year, KLAS publishes the Best in KLAS report, ranking vendors across the many technology and services markets within healthcare. This report amplifies the voice of the provider and payer communities, whose willingness to share their feedback with KLAS fuels this report.

According to one Dimensional Insight customer who provided feedback to KLAS, “From a vendor-relationship and strategic-partner perspective, Dimensional Insight has been terrific to work with. We had some cybersecurity issues during the pandemic, and the vendor was truly a front-and-center partner to us through all of that. We are very happy with their professional positioning and support of the things that we are trying to do. Dimensional Insight is also flexible and willing to understand our constraints and challenges. They have been absolutely phenomenal. They are completely committed to our success.”

KLAS uses the customer scores to grade vendors in six different areas. Based on these scores, Dimensional Insight was the only vendor in the Data & Analytics Platform category to receive “A” grades across the board, receiving:

- An “A” in Culture
- An “A” in Loyalty
- An “A-” in Operations
- An “A” in Product
- An “A” in Relationship
- An “A” in Value

In addition, Dimensional Insight was the only vendor in its category for whom 100% of customers surveyed reported that the vendor “keeps all promises.”

“Healthcare organizations are finding that digital health transformation is not possible without a strong data foundation that provides a single source of truth. We work in partnership with our customers to ensure they have this foundation so they can achieve their strategic goals,” says Fred Powers, CEO & co-founder of Dimensional Insight. 

Why Diversity Matters in Decision-Making

Kathy Sucich

VP of Marketing
[LinkedIn](#)



Diversity matters for businesses. Not just because it's the right thing to do, but also because it's the smart thing to do. Businesses with more diverse staffs excel at decision-making and outperform their peers financially.

To many, diversity seems good in theory but hard to implement. However, having a more diverse workforce is worth the effort. Here's how diversity can help organizations in promoting a [culture](#) that enables better business decisions. We'll also look at one ingredient that is critical to building diverse and high-performing teams.



The business case for diversity

According to [McKinsey & Company research](#), businesses in the top quartile for gender diversity are 15% more likely to outperform their peers, and businesses in the top quartile for ethnic diversity are 35% more likely to outperform their peers.

While McKinsey researchers caution that correlation does not equal causation, they believe more diverse companies are better able to:

- Win top talent
- Improve customer orientation
- Improve employee satisfaction
- Enhance decision making

And better decision making is key to better financial returns. According to [research conducted by Bain and Co.](#), decision effectiveness and financial results are correlated at a 95% confidence level. Those companies most effective at making decisions have financial returns nearly 6% higher than those of other companies.

How diversity matters in making decisions

So what is it about diversity that enables businesses to make better decisions? A lot of research has been conducted in this area, and it appears that while homogeneity may lull people into thinking they are making better decisions (because everyone agrees with each other), viewpoints that challenge each other sharpen the performance of teams.

A Harvard Business Review article titled, "[Diverse Teams Feel Less Comfortable—and That's Why They Perform Better](#)," underscores this point. When discussing a study of decision-making in which participants had to solve a murder mystery, the authors write:

On a homogenous team, people readily understand each other and collaboration flows smoothly, giving the sensation of progress. Dealing with outsiders causes friction, which feels counterproductive.

But in this case their judgments were starkly wrong. Among groups where all three original members didn't already know the correct answer, adding an outsider versus an insider actually doubled their chance of arriving at the correct solution, from 29% to 60%. The work felt harder, but the outcomes were better.



Another HBR article, "[Why Diverse Teams Are Smarter](#)," gives some of the reasons why a diverse team produces better results. These reasons include:

1. They focus more on facts. This is because they may more closely scrutinize each other's actions. They become less entrenched in "group think," which may blind them to key pieces of information.
2. They process facts more carefully. This is because they are considering perspectives of people who think differently than they do.
3. They are more innovative. This is because conformity discourages innovative thinking; diverse perspectives encourage new ways of looking at problems.



Moving from insight to action

While diversity has been shown to improve the quality of decision-making, diverse teams often struggle in their execution of those decisions. Moving from insight to action can be hard, simply because, as previously mentioned, less homogenous teams feel less comfortable. To actually execute on these decisions requires not just diversity, but also inclusion.

Inclusion: The secret ingredient to stimulate diverse teams

Inclusion is the catalyst that catapults good decisions into well-executed actions. In fact, [one study](#) by Cloverpop found that the most inclusive teams in both decision-making and execution outperformed average teams by 60%.

How does inclusion differ from diversity? According to Juliet Bourke and Andrea Espedido, who wrote, "[Why Inclusive Leaders Are Good for Organizations, and How to Become One](#)," inclusive leadership is "leadership that assures that all team members feel they are treated respectfully and fairly, are valued and sense that they belong, and are confident and inspired."

According to the authors' research, inclusive leaders are:

- 17% more likely to report they are high performing
- 20% more likely to say they make high-quality decisions
- 29% more likely to report behaving collaboratively

They also found a 10% improvement in perceptions of inclusion at work increases employee attendance by almost one day each year.

What can your company do to make better decisions?

Making better decisions first requires a commitment to diversity. That requires building teams that are age, gender, ethnically, and geographically diverse. According to the Cloverpop study, teams that are diverse in all those areas make better business decisions 87% of the time.

Second, teams need inclusive leaders who, according to Bourke and Espedido, treat everyone fairly and respectfully, value their opinion, provide a sense of belonging, and make team members feel psychologically safe.

Third, team members need to listen and consider the opinions of others. When it comes to data and analytics, many people will say, "the numbers don't lie," and feel there is only one interpretation of the data. But are you looking at the numbers correctly? Have you considered the reasons for the numbers? Can you dig in further to find root causes? Strong [data trust and governance](#) can help immensely here, but it also helps to consider other points of view and come to a joint consensus on what the numbers are showing and how you should respond to what they are showing you.

Inclusive companies are...



60% more likely to outperform peers in decision-making



Conclusion

Diversity matters. So does inclusion. These are critical for building a culture where employees feel valued and welcome, and that makes them more productive. It also helps enable better decisions, which, in turn, helps the financial performance of organizations.

Is diversity hard? Yes. Most business leaders will seek out and surround themselves with people who feel and act the way they do. It can be difficult to transition to new ways of finding and recruiting talent, as well as building internal teams. But is diversity worth it? From both a human and a financial standpoint, the answer is most definitely. ▣

Upcoming Events

HIMSS 22

Orlando, FL | March 14-18, 2022 | Booth #949

[Learn more](#)



The New England Cannabis Convention

*Hynes Convention Center, 900 Boylston St, Boston, MA
Boston, MA | March 18-20, 2022 | Booth #1312*

[Learn more](#)

NECANN

Growing Local
CANNABIS MARKETS

12TH ANNUAL MEETING

Hyatt Regency Chicago

Chicago, IL | April 25-28, 2022 | Booth #TBD

[Learn more](#)

