

Three New York Dispensaries Elevating Cannabis Retail Through Community and Culture

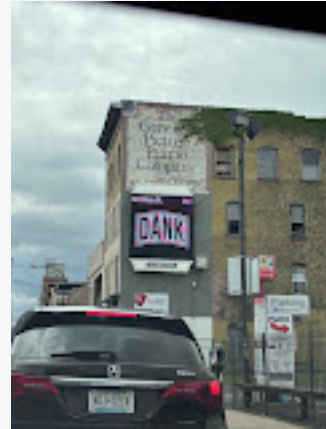
Dank 716, Smiley Exotics, and Nicklz Lead with Legacy, Local Engagement, and Trust in the Empire State

NEW YORK, NY, UNITED STATES, June 24, 2025 /EINPresswire.com/ -- As New York's legal cannabis market continues to grow, a small group of independent dispensaries is redefining what retail can look like—emphasizing community relationships, authenticity, and grassroots values over flashy branding or rapid expansion. [Dank 716](#) (Buffalo), [Smiley Exotics](#) (Manhattan), and [Nicklz](#) (Midtown NYC) are leading this shift, showing how cannabis stores can double as neighborhood institutions and cultural spaces.

Dank 716 – Legacy Experience Meets Local Empowerment in Buffalo

Founded by Aaron, a Buffalo native with firsthand experience of cannabis prohibition, Dank 716 has quickly become a local mainstay. Located on Main Street in downtown Buffalo, the dispensary combines clean, gallery-style interiors with a curated product menu and a no-data, no-frills privacy approach for customers.

The store has received accolades including Best Dispensary and Best New Business in the Buffalo Best of 716 Awards. But beyond sales, Dank 716's impact is community-based. The shop has supported local sports teams, contributed to LGBTQ+ organizations, funded commissary accounts for incarcerated individuals, and provided emergency aid to neighbors and pet owners in need.



Dank 716



Smiley Exotics

Smiley Exotics – A Neighborhood Approach to Cannabis in Kips Bay

Located in Manhattan's Kips Bay, Smiley Exotics offers a personable retail experience grounded in trust and consistency. Co-founded by Michael "Smiley" Gant and Ali Zindani, the store has built a strong customer base since its March 2023 opening by emphasizing curated local products, hands-on budtender service, and an approachable atmosphere.

Known for its growing customer loyalty—particularly among students, healthcare workers, and nearby residents—the shop also contributes to community organizations, including Harlem-based youth and boxing programs. With a future eye on delivery and expanded local partnerships, Smiley Exotics remains focused on what matters most: being a dispensary locals can call their own.



Nicklz

Nicklz – Bridging Legacy and Legal in the Heart of Times Square

A few blocks from Broadway, Nicklz brings cannabis culture to Midtown Manhattan through a high-traffic yet deeply local lens. Founded by Nick Koury, a lifelong New Yorker, the shop opened in 2024 with a clear vision: honor the legacy cannabis community while providing safe, compliant access for a new generation of consumers.

The store has earned over 1,000 five-star Google reviews in under a year, with praise for its staff knowledge, clean design, and commitment to ethical sourcing. Nicklz has also hosted cultural events—including jiu-jitsu and cannabis crossovers—and is undergoing a rebrand featuring new murals and design elements reflective of New York's diversity and creativity.

Retail Rooted in Purpose

In a rapidly commercializing cannabis space, Dank 716, Smiley Exotics, and Nicklz are showing that meaningful customer service, local leadership, and community care still matter. Their work reflects a deeper goal: making cannabis retail safe, equitable, and rooted in real relationships.

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