

JAY CHIAT AWARDS 2023

ACE VALLEY

**IS THAT A GUMMY
IN YOUR POCKET**

OR ARE YOU JUST HAPPY TO SEE ME?



SUMMARY

NOW THAT'S A GREAT FOCUSING IDEA.



Here's the story of a Canadian cannabis brand that set out to penetrate a new market by giving people a universal reason to embrace its new product...and each other 😊

Armed with a human truth, Ace Valley launched THC-infused sex gummies designed to normalize an unmet need within cannabis culture. While sex sells, helping people understand how cannabis enhances intimacy wouldn't come easily in a heavily-regulated category where distribution is limited to dispensaries. We had to create a safe space to shift behavior.

That began with influencing the influencers—specifically, the “budtenders” on whom customers heavily rely to match them with the right products. So naturally, we gave them a manual — “The Canna Sutra” — featuring illustrated positions inspired by cannabis. We launched with a bang — hosting a seductive rendezvous at a boutique in Toronto. There, we encouraged open conversations with renowned sexperts and titillated guests' senses with interactive experiences.

Ace Valley's gummies found the spot — selling out on the recommendation of budtenders, driving 50% more sales than projected and over 235 million impressions within the first month alone.


Ace Valley disrupted the market and ignited a movement, inviting individuals to embrace their desires and enhance the joy of intimate experiences.

BUSINESS CHALLENGE

These days it seems weed can do just about anything, from easing chronic pain to improving focus. But even with all these extremely vocal advocates, a few unknown pleasures weren't being discussed. One brand dared to change that.

This is the story of Ace Valley, a cannabis brand that set out to penetrate a new market in the THC edible category by giving people a universal reason to fully embrace its new line of THC gummies...and each other 😊





The legalization of cannabis in Canada has unleashed an orgy of new brands and products lusting to get noticed. Ace Valley knew it needed to find a unique way to stand out from the clutter, confusion, and cliches of dispensaries.

A LITTLE BACKGROUND

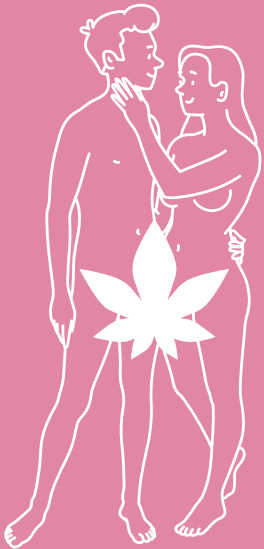
Since its start, the Ace Valley brand has been synonymous with lifestyle and wellness. When it comes to developing new products, it has a track record of catering to specific “need states” of customers, whether it be anxiety relief, improving sleep, or acute pain management. The Ace Valley team understands the importance of meeting consumers where they already are and providing solutions to effectively enhance their daily lives.

The brand’s mission was clear: create a new product that not only stood out on the shelf but also elevated the conversation around cannabis that could broaden its audience appeal.



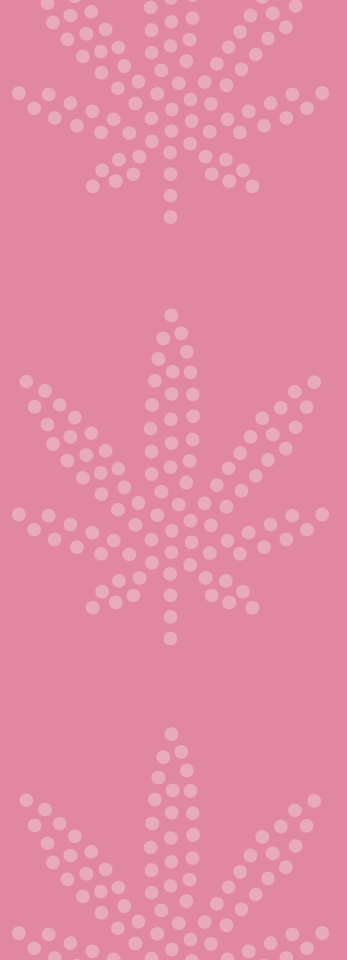
INSIGHT

Then, a revelation struck. While society has whispered about it discreetly, cannabis has long been known in some circles as a powerful aphrodisiac.



**In an online survey (Strainprint)
75% of seasoned cannabis
customers were actively using
weed to enhance sex.**

**While 42% claimed they already
use cannabis to “connect with
their partner.”**



THE OPPORTUNITY

Meanwhile, the global sexual wellness industry continues to experience its own awakening, with growth expected to exceed \$32 billion from 2021–2025. Woah, that’s really big!

Ace Valley recognized this universally unmet need in the market and decided it was high time to celebrate it openly and inclusively with a product at the intersection of cannabis and sexuality — introducing sex gummies.

Rather than speak to OG stoners, the brand would aim to spread its message wider so everyone could improve their sex lives by engineering a new line of edible gummies specifically tailored to enhance pleasure and intimacy.



BUT WHY NOW?

Good sex has become increasingly harder to achieve in a world grappling with health and economic crises, climate change, social isolation, depression, anxiety, and polarization.

Sexual interactions among adults had been on the decline even before the pandemic, but, according to Statista, more recent studies **showed 64% of cohabiting couples report feeling sexual desire less often** (Nov 2022).

Ace Valley was compelled to confront this issue head-on by helping destigmatize both cannabis use and open dialogue around the universal need (*hell, the right*) for people to have better sex.



THE LAUNCH

Enter Lust and Thrust – delicious THC-infused gummies deliberately designed for the purpose of enhancing intimate experiences.



Ace Valley “Lust”

Cherry Rose Gummies feature juicy botanical extracts infused with 25mg of CBD and 2.5mg of THC per gummy, with the sweet yet delicate taste of cherry and rose blossoms. Each gummy also features a cool tingle on your tongue, activating your senses.



Ace Valley “Thrust”

Watermelon Goji Gummies infused with 5mg THC per gummy, each with a burst of watermelon, a tickle of goji berry flavor, and a hint of naturally occurring caffeine.

Stiff regulations made it hard.

Canada is incredibly strict about the marketing of cannabis. Ace Valley couldn't really advertise in traditional ways. And the use of lifestyle imagery was also forbidden. But the brand was determined to overcome these obstacles and create a truly sex-positive, inclusive brand experience.



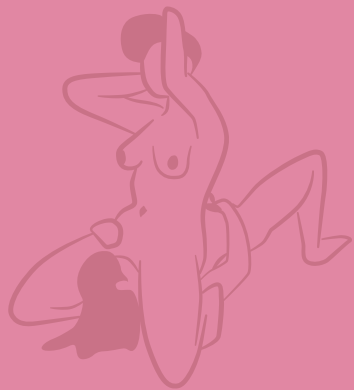
“Influence the Influencers”

Budtenders are the bonafide gatekeepers of the dispensary world. In-depth consumer journey mapping confirmed their individual recommendations to be the leading source of influence on purchase decisions among buyers in Canadian dispensaries. Arousing their interest was crucial for our success.

Despite their names and uses, the Lust and Thrust gummies are not sold in sex shops. This meant Budtenders would partially decide the fate of this brand launch. So, how did we help Ace Valley break the ice? After all, there’s no manual for merchandising sex gummies. **Or is there?**



THE STRATEGY



ENTER THE CANNA SUTRA

We illustrated 10 “creative” positions paired with fun facts celebrating the not-so-strange bedfellows of sex and cannabis.



STRATEGIC ACTIVATION

To further stimulate consumers, the brand hosted an intimate launch event at a seductively chic sex shop in Toronto adorned with soft lighting and elegant displays showcasing the new product line.

Guests, including industry influencers, celebrities, and journalists, gathered to experience the unveiling of the Ace Valley Sex Gummies. The vibe of the event reflected the brand's commitment to promoting open conversations about sexuality, emphasizing the importance of personal exploration and pleasure in a safe and enjoyable manner.

And what's sexier than a panel discussion? We gathered renowned sexologists, cannabis experts, and influential figures from the adult wellness industry to position the product's introduction.

Throughout the event, guests were invited to explore hygienically interactive stations designed to engage the senses and offer a multi-dimensional journey through sensuality.



THE RESULTS

“No thanks, I’d rather have awkward, unsatisfying sex.”

- Nobody Ever

Budtenders across Canada recommended our gummies as a playful add-on at purchase for curious customers. With a product unlike anything else in the store and creative work that was impossible to ignore, Ace Valley’s launch of Lust and Thrust totally surpassed expectations.

- 🌿 **Sold out of product** at key retailers on the very first day!
- 🌿 Saw **+50% more sales** than projected for the launch
- 🌿 Earned **235MM impressions** within the first month alone



BECAUSE F@#% BORING BRANDS

With a bold vision, Ace Valley launched its new product, aiming to shatter stigmas and ignite conversations. The brand's approach was unapologetically open-minded, embracing all types of sex and creating a safe space free from judgment.

Its unwavering commitment to inclusivity, authenticity, and positive sexual experiences propelled them to the forefront of the industry as a brand with a discerning point of view. Ace Valley launched both a product and a movement, confidently inviting individuals to embrace their desires, enhance their connections, and celebrate the joy of intimate experiences. Ultimately, Ace Valley not only disrupted the market with its product launch but also unlocked a new realm of possibilities where pleasure and cannabis can coexist.

In short, Ace Valley's gummies flew off the shelves, leaving clients and consumers feeling mutually satisfied.

