

From: [Evan Butman](#)
To: [dencc - City Council](#)
Subject: [EXTERNAL] Social Consumption Sunset & Vape n Play Closure
Date: Monday, February 25, 2019 2:33:26 PM
Attachments: [PastedGraphic-2.tiff](#)

Members of Denver City Council,

I am writing in regard to tonight's vote on removing the sunset on Denver's *Social Consumption Pilot Program*.

By now, I assume some, if not all of you, have been informed about Vape n Play's sudden closure, and I wanted to address that situation head on.

I'm sure there will be many ways to spin this story, but as someone with intimate knowledge of the situation, I would like the chance to set the record straight, with proper context.

I was contacted last week by the owners of Vape n Play, the second social consumption business to receive a license. It was evident by their tone that there was some sort of situation going on, and they requested a meeting scheduled for the following day. Upon meeting with them, we learned of their desperate financial situation. I immediately became curious, seeing as they had only opened their doors 30 days ago. "*What could have possibly changed since then?*", I thought to myself.

Our concern was that they were only 30 days into operations. What could have possibly gone so wrong in 30 days, that it was necessary to shut their doors? We wanted to help. If it was possible to take over management and bring them out fo the red, we wanted to show them how.

Having spent the better part of two years working on a social consumption business model, my team and I immediately went to work. We poured over their marketing strategies, customer engagement, programming, and of course their financials.

Here's what we discovered:

- 1) Zero marketing budget.
- 2) No viable marketing strategy. Even their neighbors were unaware of their existence.
- 3) No support from the cannabis industry. A number of public faux pas created a rift between them and the industry needed to support them.
- 4) Customer service concerns. A small survey was done of their past sponsors and customers, and all signs pointed to potential issues.
- 5) No experience in booking talent. This issue led to low turnout for all events thrown, and no sustainable model for programming going forward.
- 6) The biggest problem of all was the lack of financial forecasts. Their assumption, which in my opinion seemed very unobtainable, was that success would come immediately, and

marketing beyond Facebook was unnecessary.

It is our conclusion that all of these factors led to their early demise. We understand that social consumption is a model in which innovation and experimentation is what drives its success.

This is why we anchor our social consumption concept with entertainment, led by a headlining musician. Our spokesperson sells out Red Rocks annually, so for us, with or without the cannabis, we could be successful. That is our draw.

Vape n Play had no draw, and due to the size of the space they choose for their location, they were limited in their ability to utilize their space for whatever draw they could have come up with.

Unfortunately, Vape n Play failed as a concept due to inexperience in business, not because there is no viable social consumption model, not because of the lengthy process, and not because of anyone but the owners of Vape n Play.

The point of my letter is not to insult or defame Vape n Play. Their hearts were in the right place. They were just inexperienced, and had thoughts of immediate success.

My point is to ask the Council Members to not judge Social Consumption by the failure of Vape n Play.

Betamax didn't survive either, but that doesn't mean the industry of home video was a failure. Myspace failed, but it doesn't mean social media as a whole wasn't a viable concept for a business.

My point is, by repealing the sunset, you will allow the innovators, the trailblazers, and the pioneers to create long lasting concepts, new business, and thousands of jobs.

By failing to repeal the sunset, you will be handing the reigns of social consumption to the State, which in turn revert back to the City Council to regulate, leaving us back where we all started, and leaving behind a trail of broken dreams and financial ruin.

Dean Ween's Honey Pot Lounge will be applying for its first ten events this week, which we hope will show the city, state, country, and world what social consumption could and should be.

Thank you for your time and attention. If you should have any questions, or would like to discuss before tonight's vote, my cell phone number is (303) 842-3724, and I will make myself available any time.

Evan Butman
(303)842-3724

www.honeypotlounge.com

