

# Keyword Gap Analysis

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*A competitive keyword gap audit for Leafy Rewards, a cannabis rewards directory, identifying untapped keywords across the three largest category competitors.*

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KEYWORDS ANALYZED

**14,804**

COMPETITORS

**3**

CONTENT CLUSTERS

**9**

CLIENT

**Leafy Rewards**

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## Overview

Leafy Rewards was preparing to launch into a cannabis directory market dominated by three well-established competitors: Weedmaps, Leafly, and PotGuide. These competitors had captured extensive organic traffic across every major sub-category in the space, from strain information to state legislation to dispensary listings. Before committing to a content roadmap, the team needed a clear picture of where the real opportunities were, which competitor keywords could realistically be won, and how a new entrant should prioritize its content investment.

This analysis was built to answer three questions directly:

- Which keywords are our biggest competitors ranking for that we have no coverage on?
- How are those keywords distributed across topic pillars, content types, and search intent?
- Given the pre-launch state of the site, where should content investment go first?

## Methodology

The analysis was structured in three stages.

**1. Competitor keyword capture.** Keyword rankings for Weedmaps, Leafly, and PotGuide were scraped for every term where at least one competitor held a top-15 position on Google. The top-15 cutoff was chosen deliberately: a competitor ranking on page one or within spillover distance represents a realistic capture target, while positions beyond that tend to reflect accidental ranking rather than a defensible content play.

**2. Gap crosswalking.** Each competitor keyword was crosswalked against Leafy Rewards' own coverage map. Any keyword where Leafy Rewards had no existing page or planned coverage was flagged as a gap. Redundant, irrelevant, and low-volume terms were removed manually.

**3. Classification.** Every retained keyword was tagged on two dimensions:

- **Pillar and cluster** — grouping keywords under the content architecture Leafy Rewards was planning (dispensaries, strains, education, products, legislation, brand, doctor, deals, conditions).
- **Intent** — mapping each keyword to a buyer-journey phase (Awareness, Discovery, Consideration, Customer, Attention).

A 3–5% classification margin of error should be allowed. Because the volume was too large for full SERP-by-SERP review, classification was based on keyword semantics; additional research can be layered per cluster when building individual content plans.

## What the Data Showed

A total of 14,804 keywords were analyzed and classified. The distribution clarified where competitors dominate versus where real openings exist.

### Dispensary keywords

The largest single bucket. These are overwhelmingly name-based (“[Dispensary X] hours”) or location-based (“dispensaries near [city]”). For Leafy Rewards, this bulk will be covered natively by dispensary profile pages

and location pages once the site is live. Post-launch review should flag any residual gaps that need supplemental content.

### **Strains**

High monthly search volume and strong competitor coverage make this a priority content area. Recommended build: a summary strain index page linking to individual strain detail pages, with each detail page interlinked across deals, dispensaries, and relevant blog content.

### **Education topics**

The third-largest bucket and the biggest ongoing content opportunity. Topics skew toward how-tos, Q&A, recipes, best-of/top lists, weight and measurement guides, and 420-friendly venues (hotels, festivals, bars, tours). This cluster should also include a glossary of common cannabis terms and their meanings. Education content should carry the bulk of ongoing monthly publishing post-launch.

### **Products**

Competitor ranking here is mostly driven by branded product names. Deals pages will absorb most of this demand, with additional coverage available through education-style posts.

### **Legislation**

A major opportunity. Most legislation searches are state-specific (“alabama weed laws”, “is cannabis legal in oklahoma”) and represent a predictable, evergreen programmatic content play. Subcategories worth explicit coverage: state laws, approved conditions, and news/updates.

### **Brand, Doctor, Deals**

Handled by the main site architecture. These need interlinking work rather than dedicated content investment.

### **Conditions**

An important cluster covered indirectly through legislation and education content. Interlinking discipline is what turns this into a capture channel — for example, cross-linking a product deal from an educational article about a condition it helps.

### **Reviews**

Shockingly low volume. This is either a genuine low-demand area in cannabis search or evidence that competitors are mishandling the content type. Worth a second-round investigation before deciding whether to invest.

### **Near-me searches**

A small percentage of total volume, but strong commercial intent. Not a growth lever on its own, but shouldn't be ignored in location page design.

### **Online purchase intent**

Only 23 keywords, but they represent active buyers ready to transact.

**A pattern worth designing around.** Over 76% of all searches in the dataset involved the searcher already knowing a specific product, dispensary, doctor, brand, or location. In other words, most cannabis-directory search is navigational, not exploratory. Content architecture should assume this — every page should help a searcher who already knows what they want, not just a generalist browser.

## Buyer Journey Framework

Keywords were also mapped against the buyer funnel to clarify where Leafy Rewards' content should concentrate.

- **Customer phase** — “cannabis near me”, “cbd syracuse ny”. Ready-to-transact searches.
- **Consideration phase** — “product A vs product B”.
- **Discovery phase** — “solutions to ease [condition]”.
- **Awareness phase** — legislation questions, recipes, how-tos.
- **Attention phase** — hyper-specific answer-seeking queries, e.g., “420 friendly hotel trinidad colorado”.

Leafy Rewards' business model aligns with the Customer phase — this is where conversions happen. But the greatest opportunity to influence buyers who haven't made a choice yet sits in **Discovery** and **Awareness**. Content investment should weight toward those two phases, since competitors have already saturated the Customer-phase SERP.

## Strategic Recommendations

Based on the above, the recommended content priorities for launch and the first six months of operation are:

- 1. Launch-ready dispensary and location pages first.** This absorbs the largest bucket of competitor demand with minimal incremental content production.
- 2. Build the strains hub next.** Summary index plus individual strain pages, interlinked into deals and dispensary content.
- 3. Begin sustained publishing on education content.** How-tos, Q&As, glossaries, 420-friendly venues, weight and measurement guides. This is the ongoing engine.
- 4. Programmatic build for state legislation.** State laws, approved conditions, news — templated and updated on a regular cadence.
- 5. Second-round analysis on reviews.** Confirm or reject the reviews cluster before investing.
- 6. Interlinking discipline across conditions, products, and deals.** Conditions don't get their own cluster investment — they get linked to from education and legislation content.

Against a 14,804-keyword opportunity set, this sequencing concentrates effort on the highest-leverage clusters first and defers investment in areas where ROI is either absorbed by site architecture or unclear.