

### LOVE HEMP A HOLISTIC COMPANY



LOVE HEMP HAS ALREADY ESTABLISHED ITSELF AS A LEADER IN AN EMERGING MARKET, BUT ITS GOALS ARE FAR MORE AMBITIOUS THAN THAT.

## AHOLISTIC COMPANY

PROJECT MANAGED BY: CONNOR LOVE

When Love Hemp was founded in 2015 by Tony Calamita and his good friend Tom Rowland, the UK CBD industry was non-existent. They set out to change that.

when his father was sadly diagnosed with cancer, he was looking for any remedy to help the situation. He came across the literature online on cannabis and this led him to CBD." Calamita recalls.

CBD is a natural compound derived from hemp plants, a variety of cannabis. While relatively unheard of only a few years ago, CBD is rapidly becoming a huge part of healthy, active lifestyles as a natural way to help support pain, anxiety and sleeplessness

"At the time it was difficult to find, expensive, and there wasn't much choice," Calamita tells us. "We invested a few thousand pounds after seeing the opportunity in the market. Very early on we had an overwhelming amount of positive feedback from customers and realised there was something very special about CBD"

Love Hemp was acquired by World High Life in 2019 after Calamita and Rowland had already built the company organically into a business with a multi-million turnover while still retaining all the equity. Now Calamita feels the company is ready for its next big step.

"We're planning a global launch to become a leading player in the CBD world," he

A big part of that plan has just been announced.

"As part of that global launch, we just partnered with the UFC," Calamita says proudly.

The deal will see Love Hemp feature several branded integrations within The Ultimate Fighting Championship content on digital platforms, and within programming on UFC Fight Pass. Love Hemp's branding will also be prominently integrated into the UFC Performance Institute, working with the UFC to educate people on CBD use and the role it plays in athlete health and injury recovery.

"The UFC chose us because they bought into our story as a company, our purpose and our mission," Calamita says. "I think it's really clear we genuinely care about what we do. We're a CBD company at the heart but our mission is much greater than selling just CBD, we have an ethos of improving quality of life."

This can be seen in Love Hemp's other partnerships. As well as the UFC, Love Hemp has recently forged an agreement with Togetherall, an online service providing access to millions with anxiety, depression and other common mental health issues.

"We're providing 24/7 free mental health support to anyone who subscribes to our mailing list," Calamita explains. "Until now, Togetherall has only been available to organisations or corporations that pay membership fees for their members or staff, but now anybody can access the platform through our partnership. We're making a big impact with community projects and supporting people holistically in their health and wellbeing. Our blog also has a lot of educational resources on health and wellness."





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While it is clear Calamita sees Love Hemp as a business that exists to help people, not just generate profit, building the business empowers the company to do more good.

"We have big aspirations.
We're a relatively small UK
company but we're creating
a very large footprint for
ourselves," Calamita says.

#### SPREADING THE WORD

CBD is an exciting new sector, basically a brand-new industry, but uncharted territory comes with its own challenges.

"I would say what slows us down more than anything is regulation. It's a very turbulent field for CBD. The regulators weren't ready for CBD and how it's become so big so quickly. They have a tough job regulating it correctly," Calamita explains. "Each country has its own unique challenges. It's something we work with, but it does slow us down."

Love Hemp is keen to work with regulatory bodies and often finds itself in the position of helping to draft regulations and set industry standards as they go.

#### "WE HAVE BIG ASPIRATIONS. WE'RE A RELATIVELY SMALL UK COMPANY BUT WE'RE CREATING A VERY LARGE FOOTPRINT FOR OURSELVES."

"We have a big focus on building education from a public perspective, helping to destigmatise CBD and cannabis," Calamita tells us. "We act in a regulated way in an unregulated market, >>







establishing trading standards. A great example of this would be when we established the first ever 'CBD business' primary authority partnership with UK trading standards. We also have equipment for onsite testing and double batch test all products with third parties to ensure our products are exactly what they say on the labels. This all helps to build trust with the regulators. We have also worked internationally with regulators in helping them develop their own local quality standards for CBD products."

That sense of cooperation is reflected among Love Hemp's staff, a team that Calamita and Rowland have built up carefully to reflect their values.



"A while back we used to use recruitment agencies but now, we tend to do all our recruitment in-house either through networking or LinkedIn," Calamita says. "We also have our own personal and professional development programme within the company."

Love Hemp is looking for a very specific kind of person in its recruitment processes.

"We look for passion, for fire in the belly. We want people who, when they work for us, see and understand the bigger picture," Calamita says. "Whether it's an executive or someone operating the bottling line, they understand they're playing their part in creating a product that has this positive impact on someone's life. Someone who believes in our products and our purpose. That for me is the number one priority."

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#### A VISION FOR THE FUTURE

A big part of that picture is Calamita and Rowland's vision for Love Hemp as a company that generates good in the world, not just profits.

"I want CSR to be a big part of the company, and to create a subsidiary dedicated to these kinds of impact projects," Calamita shares with us. "When a company becomes big and successful and you have influence, it's your responsibility to use that company to do good."

Success seems to be coming Love Hemp's way, with the

company planning a launch in the US imminently, alongside an additional four countries by the end of the year.

"We plan to operate local language websites and local distribution, in at least six countries over the next 6 months, and this would be across Europe, North America, Asia and Australasia," Calamita says. "Three to five years from now we're fully intent on being one of the global leaders in the CBD space. We have huge ambitions for the company."

The UFC is an example of how serious Love Hemp is, but it is also a sign of what the company hopes to become.

"We've positioned ourselves as a lifestyle brand. We're going to build our stake into music, fashion, art, and sport," Calamita says. "We're looking for similar level partnerships to UFC across all different lifestyles and demographics." ❖



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