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The Boom Beverage team.

HAVE SOME 'BOOM' IN YOUR LIFE

By JACK CHUA
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It's more than a drink. They say it's a lifestyle.

Within less than half a decade, Boom Beverage's product Hausboom, a sparkling real juice drink, has made waves both nationally and internationally.

Within seven months of commercialisation, Hausboom reached more than 3,000 outlets, retail stores, and cafes. They are also exporting to eight countries across Asia and Europe.

Recently, the company received the third prize in the AmBank BizRACE 2018 challenge, beating close to 1,000 small- and medium-sized enterprises and startups in a competitive elimination process that spanned eight months.

BEGINNINGS OF AN EXPLOSIVE GROWTH

The company's founder and chief executive officer (CEO) Azri Zahier Azmi cites Coca-Cola as the inspiration for his business.

Azri strongly believes in having a business in the fast moving consumer goods (FMCG) industry that has powerful branding, meets international standards and can be worth billions of ringgit – just like Coca-Cola.

Setting itself apart, however, Hausboom aims to fill the void in the market for premium, halal, carbonated beverages made of *real fruits*.

"If there's a demand and the market is right, why not take that opportunity, as it does not come twice," says Azri.

But how could Hausboom, a relatively unheard of name at the time, come up against bigger and more established beverage brands in the industry?

According to Azri, getting people to take notice and get excited about Hausboom was a major challenge when starting up his business in 2014.

This was complicated by budgeting constraints, as they received neither government nor bank loans.

Their solution? They decided they were not merely here to sell a drink, but a *lifestyle*.

Hausboom is young, fresh and hip. It embraces culture, arts, and music.

Since its inception, Hausboom has



actively sought to become part of lifestyle events. They seized the initiative to become the official beverage sponsors for an event called Art of Speed 2017.

It was Malaysia's very own home-grown "Ol-Skool & Kustom Culture" event – an event that featured customised classic cars on display.

"With an extensive booth design and layout, we successfully pulled the crowd to our booth and from there, they were amazed by the Hausboom drink itself," Azri states.

The new fans they had made showed their support by purchasing their custom made merchandise and artwork, specially designed for the event. Things took off from there.

"This event opened us up to many business opportunities, as it was the starting point to commercialising and expanding the revenue we had. We were approached by major retail outlets and several other clients."

This model has worked tremendously well for the startup.

To date, their authentic fruit juices fill up close to 900 Petronas Mesra stores and 600 Shell Select outlets nationwide. Internationally, they can be found in China, Brunei, Singapore, Germany, the United Kingdom, and Maldives.

It is because of this that the company looks keenly at the latest lifestyle trends to drive their brand. Azri believes this is one of the key strengths that heighten their brand's value in the eyes of customers.

He credits this as the main reason

behind their brand's ability to stand out compared to the rest of the local beverage companies, and experience jubilant sales figures for a company of its size.

EMBRACING INNOVATION IN MARKETING

The crew at Hausboom also love to push the limits in innovative and technology-driven marketing.

Never shy of fully utilising digital marketing to its advantage, the company has used augmented reality (AR) technology to build awareness of their campaigns and promotions.

Instead of just blasting the news out on social media platforms, they are currently using the AR approach where customers can scan their bottled drinks using their mobile phones and the app then shows them the current promotions and campaign for the particular period or month.

They have done this successfully in their Buy1Free1 campaign with Petronas Mesra.

Speaking about creativity, a good eye for design is also one of Hausboom's key advantages.

The company has received several awards and recognitions including Best Malaysian Booth Design and Presentation at the Malaysia International Halal Showcase 2018, and Best Packaging Bottle for both their normal design bottles and limited edition bottles by Malaysia Good Design Mark.

Azri says that to be ahead of their



Azri, CEO and founder

competitors, they need to be agile.

"We must always be aware of the changes in the market to adapt quickly and easily," he says.

He also stresses that his company must be able to localise the product according to the events, markets or even countries that they are penetrating, stating that this is important to create and sustain the relationship with their customers and distributors.

IMPACT IN THE COMING YEARS

When asked about the future of the company, Azri outlines an ambitious expansion to strengthen their distribution channels over the next few years.

They will soon be landing on the shores of more countries including Japan, Korea, Australia, the United States, India, and Dubai.

Very soon, you will find their products at your nearest 7-Eleven, Giant, or Mercato. Boom Beverage will also start to produce more products in other beverage segments such as coffee, dairy, and isotonic drinks.

Enthusiastic about how things are turning out, Azri remains firm on one thing.

"We will always make sure that we are different from the rest, in anything that we do."