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Zipfizz Corp. aims at 'healthy' energy drink market; it's a big seller at Costco

Fizz biz

Puget Sound Business Journal (Seattle) - by [Jeanne Lang Jones](#) Staff Writer

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Sometimes it's not so much what you sell but who you sell it to -- just ask **Zipfizz Corp.** CEO Riley Livingston.

Livingston launched a new business based on a electrolyte replacement drink initially developed at his Mill Creek-based nutraceutical company, **BioGenesis Nutraceuticals Inc.**

BioGenesis makes dietary supplements that are sold mainly to naturopaths, chiropractors and other health-care professionals. The company, which Livingston co-founded in 2000 with naturopathic physician David Wood, has annual sales in excess of \$6 million, according to Livingston.

Since he repositioned the product from a dietary supplement aimed mainly at health-care practitioners to an energy drink sold through mainstream retailers, Livingston has seen sales take off.



Photo: Matt Hagen
Riley Livingston, CEO of Zipfizz Corp. of Mill Creek, makes a toast with his energy drink product.

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Touted as a "healthy alternative" to other energy drinks, Zipfizz contains caffeine from green tea extract, nine vitamins, eight minerals, electrolytes, antioxidants and an especially big swig of vitamin B12. It comes in berry, citrus and pink lemonade flavors. The drink, which uses artificial sweeteners, has 10 calories.

What users get, the company claims, is a burst of energy that lasts up to four hours, without the crash that may follow consumption of other, more sugary caffeinated drinks.

Under new agreements signed earlier this month, the Mill Creek company's fizzy vitamin-packed caffeinated energy drinks will now be sold through 79 QFC groceries and several **Bed Bath & Beyond** stores in the Pacific Northwest, as well as 25 **Walgreens** drug stores in the greater Seattle area. The bulk of Zipfizz sales are through Issaquah-based **Costco Wholesale Corp.** stores throughout the United States.

Livingston expects Zipfizz Corp. to nearly double its annual revenues by year's end to approximately \$20 million. In its first full year of sales in 2005, Zipfizz sold about \$11 million worth of product. The Mill Creek-based energy drink company recently moved to larger quarters in Mill Creek to accommodate its expansion.

Zipfizz evolved from the electrolyte replacement drink made by BioGenesis, said Livingston.

"The younger guys in the office were using it for hangovers and joking with me that I ought to put it in Pixy Stix," Livingston said.

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