

## A range of all-Australian health food snacks is now finding its place in stores throughout Europe and Asia

Innovation at the leading edge where good food meets good health has led to the development of 'Luv Sum'. It's a healthy snack brand with a difference: innovation, great quality, great taste, great nutrition, all manufactured in house, with brilliant prospects for export.

### NAME, DESCRIPTION AND GEOGRAPHICAL BASE:

'Luv Sum' protein and energy balls and bars, based in Sydney, Australia.



#### BEFORE:

A successful local business encountering hurdles with mass export opportunities.

#### AFTER:

A growing international premium boutique health food brand anticipating exports to 13 countries by the end of the 2017 calendar year

**Projecting a 30% increase in production from FY17 to FY18**

#### FIAL'S SUPPORT:

FIAL-sponsored attendance at two trade shows has led directly to conversion to export sales including, two new vendor / distributor agreements after the most recent Asian show.

#### KEY TIP

**"Be organised. Export is not easy. It can be costly, time consuming, a lot of paperwork so you need to be export ready, in a strong financial position, know your manufacturing is up to speed."**

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"(FIAL) offers a backbone that is really needed for the industry. Being part of the Australian 'congregation' draws people - if you are a stand-alone they will just walk on by"

"It's all about putting the right producers and suppliers in touch with the right manufacturer - FIAL makes those connections and they benefit everybody"

"We just needed to pick up the phone and we would have our questions answered, FIAL gives us great guidance navigating the complications especially once we started exporting to Europe"

## Energy to burn

When Rhett Hurvitz' parents Bev and Lance began a food business in Australia after arriving from South Africa the late 1990s, their product range consisted of a single line: Bev's signature cinnamon swirl.

Today, the picture couldn't be more different. Rhett oversees a thriving business that manufactures over 170 line items. He has taken his father's entrepreneurial spirit and love of good, healthy food and his mother's passion for her original product to a whole new level. It's one that Rhett's father, who has since passed away, would be proud of.

That especially applies to Rhett's baby, the 'Luv Sum' brand of healthy protein and energy balls and bars.

"Every one of our products still goes out with Dad's signature on the packaging," says Rhett. "We call it the 'seal of approval'."

### Distribution is the key

As Rhett explains it, the journey to successful export is long and circuitous. Having expert guidance and support through the many twists and turns is, in his view, the best way to get from point A to point B with minimal time, effort, cost and mistakes.



Asian market via FIAL-sponsored attendance at HOFEX has been an important training ground before taking the leap further afield.

"You can get on the phone or the email all you like trying to get the export opportunities and I guarantee you, you won't hear back. You need to get on the plane and get overseas with FIAL and it all starts to happen," explains Rhett.

"I had been to shows all around the world, but the results and support from FIAL have been amazing and so cost effective. They offer a backbone that is really needed for the industry. Being part of the Australian 'congregation' draws people – if you



are a stand-alone they will just walk on by."

For Rhett and Luv Sum, Singapore and Hong Kong have offered the opportunity to learn the ropes. They are geographically close and the regulatory and bureaucratic barriers are not as high as some other markets. "Our aim has been to get multiple distributors, because distribution is key. We've been able to showcase our product to a number of the largest players in Hong Kong and China, including coffee outlets, supermarkets and health food franchises. We've also connected with the largest organic chain in Hong Kong."

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### Getting your ducks in a row

While export has been a dream of Rhett and Luv Sum, he stresses that it's not an easy path.

“You need to do your research, get into a good position and, whatever you do, get help. It's all about putting the right producers and suppliers in touch with the right manufacturer – FIAL makes those connections and they benefit everybody.”

To illustrate his point, Rhett describes the process of entering the European market, a follow-on that Luv Sum is making after its success in Asia.

“Once you start getting into Europe, there's a massive premium market to tap into but you also have to consider additional complications. There's

VAT, multiple different languages, different labelling and packaging requirements and advanced product testing for particular ingredients or contaminants that can vary from country to country. To get it right, you must have the paperwork, the team, the manufacturing, the shipping and the right people selling.

“Our advantage has been that we just needed to pick up the phone and we would have our questions answered. FIAL gives us great guidance navigating the complications. A lot of questions are asked when you're entering that market, there is a lot of probing. It can be hard to know what questions you have to answer, what information is the best or most useful to support the product. It can be pretty intimidating if you don't have that help.”

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Luv Sum now has packaging in 12 different languages and, in every case, Rhett’s mission is to ensure the product stands out. That includes at the FIAL-supported trade shows, where the Luv Sum brand has enjoyed a corner location which he believes stood the products in good stead.

“When you’re at the shows you need to get out there, get talking and networking, introduce yourself. You have to show them your products, share it, give samples. Because if your product is good – and ours is very good, they will love it. But they will never know if they never try. And if you’re there with FIAL you have the best chance of getting noticed and getting the business.”

