

**HIGH VOLTAGE BEVERAGES LLC  
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **If You're Going After the Giants, You'd Better Have a Pretty Good Slingshot**

CHARLOTTE – Owen Ryan, founder and creative director of High Voltage Beverages, knows a thing or two about taking on the big guys and coming out on top.

Just ask the folks at Anheuser Busch. They sued over a line of snack crackers Ryan had created called “Party Animals.” Anheuser Busch thought that term was the exclusive property of Spuds McKenzie, then the official spokesdog of Bud Lite Beer.

Two years later, Spuds tucked his tail between his legs and retreated, leaving Ryan in sole possession of the Party Animals trademark. Anheuser Busch lost the litigation that they had started but later hired Ryan to help them with new product development and brand promotions on Budweiser.

“It’s ironic,” Ryan muses, “my mortal ‘enemy’ that I fought non-stop for two years became the best client I ever had.”

Thinking out-of-the-box – way out! – Ryan was also the marketing genius behind General Comet Industries, which trademarked an “official” Haley’s Comet logo to publicize the once-every-76-year return of Haley’s Comet. There was a commemorative magazine, collectible postage stamps from over 106 nations with Ryan’s “official” Halley’s Comet logo, and articles in TIME, Newsweek, Inc. and other publications.

That success put him in huge demand by such marketing giants as Unilever, Johnson & Johnson, IBM, Gillette, AT&T and Kraft Foods (where he had previously helped develop Crystal Light).

But the entrepreneurial bug had bitten hard, and Ryan continued to develop consumer products.



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One such brand is Crayons Fruit Drinks, an all natural better-4-you fruit juice drink aimed at capturing (or re-capturing) the fun spirit and great tastes of childhood. Once he had that up and running, Ryan sold the company to California investors in order to focus his energies on Volt soft drinks.

This, Ryan thought, was the opportunity to combine his successes in product development with the lessons learned helping small entrepreneurs gain markets share against entrenched leaders. “Being an underdog isn’t fun, but if you can establish your brand despite the obstacles, you have something to be proud of.”

He began the process in 1997, applying for the VOLT trademark, doing research, conducting mini sales test and developing formulas for a line of VOLT soft drinks that would take on two unchallenged powerhouses: Gatorade in the sports drink category and Mountain Dew in the citrus soda category.

In 2005 he moved the company to Charlotte, NC, because of its centralized location and reputation as a good place to start and run a business. Also, North Carolina has a history of soft drink successes, with Pepsi Cola and Cheerwine both having been developed within its borders.

With a new management team and expanded sales and distribution forces, High Voltage Beverages is ready to take on the competition with VOLT.

They may be giants, but Ryan’s slingshot has worked before.

END

