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Success by the bottle

Entrepreneur Lincoln Lawson creates healthy alternative children's drink

BY: Austin Maxwell

Lincoln Lawson, a Los Angeles-based business executive and entrepreneur had been working in corporate finance and trading commodities such as gold when he grew tired of the Midas touch lining every pocket but his own. So he decided to turn his attention to another commodity, one that he could control: water.

Working with a veterinarian, Lawson created a nutrient-filled water product for small pet that he called Pet-H2O.

"We actually saved a litter of Mastiff puppies with it, too, because several of them would not eat, were losing weight and becoming sick. The vet mixed some Pet-H2O into the gruel he'd been feeding them and... they began to eat!"

Then, on a visit to a mall one day, he saw a toy store promoting "Superman"-flavoured water. He felt this gave children the impression that the product was, in some way, special, when it obviously was not.

Given his recent experience with Pet-H2O — and further inspired as a new father himself — he decided to try creating a formula for children that he could be sure will provide his son and others with a healthy, nutritious and delicious product that would avoid the ills of existing offerings on the market.

His goals were to avoid high-fructose corn sugars, use all-natural flavours, avoid artificial colouring and include fibre and vitamins. In short, he wanted something he'd be happy offering to his own son.

"I came up with the formula, took it and gave it to a bottler, saying, 'Here's my formula — let's bottle it!'

Unfortunately, it wasn't as simple as that, because he couldn't touch my product until after it was federally approved. "Once that was done, I was able to move ahead with production," says Lawson.

Shortly after unfruitful discussions with McDonald's restaurants about distributing his product under the name "Happy Meal Water," Lawson felt he needed a more marketable label for his invention. Soon after, his Gabonese-born wife, Rania, suggested calling it Waterlicious.

"I ran to the phone and called the lawyers... they checked it out and no one else had it. So now... we did!"

Today, Waterlicious Inc. is a prospering, 100 per cent black-owned company with more than 100 multicultural investors. The product is currently only available in the US, but coming to Canada soon.

- For more information visit waterlicious.com.

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