

ALMOST FAMOUS YOSHA! ENTERPRISES INC.

Mint Condition

WITH A FRESH, FUNKY TWIST ON A FAMILIAR PRODUCT, ONE CANDYMAN GETS A TASTE OF SMALL-BUSINESS SUCCESS.

BY APRIL Y. PENNINGTON

VITAL STATS: Anthony C. Shurman, 33, of Yosha! Enterprises Inc.

COMPANY: Westfield, New Jersey-based mint-maker

2004 SALES PROJECTIONS: \$15 million

RETURN TICKET: Pharmaceuticals giant Pfizer Inc.'s acquisition of Warner-Lambert Co. prompted Shurman—a marketing and sales manager and “gum-and-mint guy” in the Warner-Lambert candy division—to opt for the severance package and go into the mint business himself.

“Coming across these mints before the big guys was a stroke of good fortune for us.”

BIG FIND: His initial concept—packaging that allows smokers to tuck breath mints into their cigarette packs—became more appealing when Shurman came across

a process to produce tiny, liquid-filled spheres that pack a punch. In an arena largely consisting of tablet-shaped mints, Shurman is confident of a shake-up with his creation, Momints.

THE BLUES: Packaging options like thin containers that slide into tight spots and petite glass vials have enticed club owners and retailers such as 7-Eleven and CVS, which carry the blue orbs. “There’s never been a good-looking mint,” Shurman remarks on his product’s unique, pearl-like appearance.

SMALLER IS BETTER: “I know the way the big guys operate. I have an opportunity to be faster, to take paths they cannot and will not take,” he says. “They look to buy proven, [smaller-scale] products in the market and roll [them] out on a large scale. Having seen that from the inside, I realize this can be a lucrative market.”



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