

## PRESS RELEASE

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### Juicy Profits From Juice Bars – Still

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*(November, 2002) Juice and smoothie bars are still "on a roll" across the U.S. gaining momentum from nutraceutical craze. Juice and smoothie business has topped \$1 billion in sales for the first time. What's the buzz about wheat grass juice? Maui Wowi is a story of growth.*

By **FitCommerce.com**

### November 2002

Quick, what's the future nutritional fast food? Would you believe fresh strawberries, bananas, orange sherbet, ice or nonfat frozen yogurt with a boost of Ginseng?

Smoothies, an original California craze once relegated to health restaurants, have gone mainstream. Although many urban health clubs now serve them up as standard fare, those of you that are not fully on board yet, may heed these findings.

According to Dan Titus, director of The Juice and Smoothie Association ([www.smoothiecentral.com](http://www.smoothiecentral.com)) the juice and smoothie business has topped \$1 billion in sales for the first time.

"We have seen steady industry growth over the past several years, with a slight dip in 2000 - 2002. 2002 is what we are calling a second wind for the industry", said Titus. "The population is more aware of what smoothies are now. They are on menus everywhere".

### Nutraceutical Trend

Smoothies and juice bars may be riding on this contemporary trend toward digesting nutraceuticals. This relatively new phenomenon is widely misunderstood.

What are nutraceuticals? They are not vitamins or minerals, but highly specialized food derivatives that serve essential needs of the body. A nutraceutical is any food or food ingredient considered to provide

medical or health benefits, including the prevention and treatment of disease.

At present, most juices and smoothies merely give you your allotment of vitamins and minerals.

### **"I Want Nutrition and I Want it Fast!"**

"We're all conditioned in the United States of America for a 'quick fix' and that's why vitamin sales are huge," Titus said. "If people can get vitamins in their smoothies, then it's natural to gravitate towards them."

### **People Feel Good About Putting Something Good Into Their Bodies**

The additions of "boosts", or vitamin supplements, in smoothies have made smoothies a symbol of health and convenience.

One popular boost often added to smoothies is Ginkgo Biloba, a supplement mostly taken by the middle aged and elderly to increase blood flow to the brain. Many smoothie drinkers believe taking this supplement will increase memory. Another one is Ginseng which can give a shot of energy and sexual prowess.

### **Would You Believe Wheat Grass Juice?**

Wheat grass juice is made from young wheat plants. Sold in health food stores and lately as shots in juice bars, it is touted as a "super food". Some claim it's a fountain of youth with numerous health benefits such as removing toxins, keeping hair from graying, improving digestion, and even preventing cancer.

Marketers claim that one ounce of wheat grass juice has as many vitamins, minerals, and protein as two pounds of vegetables. However, there is no evidence to support these claims. According to Nutrition News Focus newsletter, "Nutritionally, wheat grass is green water. It does not contain any nutrient in significant quantities, unless you consume oceans of the stuff."

Now, we at FitCommerce.com won't go into what Samantha hoped

drinking wheat grass would do for her date in "Sex in the City".

### **Popular with Women**

So far, health-obsessed women ages 15-45 are mostly responsible for smoothies' growing popularity.

Rhondi Schigemura, who conducts research and development trends on supplements for Jamba Juice, a San Francisco based juice bar company ([www.jambajuice.com](http://www.jambajuice.com)), said college educated and professional women are the company's primary consumers.

Women in that age range make up the majority of the population and influence society's ideas about food and health, she said.

### **Maui Wowi, An Indicator of Juice Bar Growth**

Maui Wowi, Founded in 1982, is a privately held company operating 110 franchisees and nearly 200 kiosks across the country. CEO Michael Haith said the company is aiming to have 1,000 franchisees operating anywhere from 2,000 to 2,500 carts by January 2005.

Haith said the average franchisee can expect to earn anywhere from \$50,000 to \$300,000 in annual sales. "People can come in for an investment of \$60,000 or \$75,000 and build the business as large as they would like," Haith said.

In an effort to boost revenues and gain more franchisees, Maui Wowi recently expanded its menu. The company added espresso drinks and a new frozen yogurt item called the *Rip Stick* that comes packaged in a tube.

### **Designed to Be Fast**

Haith said the smoothies are designed to be made quickly for fast service.

But Maui Wowi's signature product is its line of fruit-flavored smoothies. Made with ice, a banana and a fruit blend of fruit juices and non-fat yogurt, Maui Wowi features flavors like strawberry, black raspberry, piña colada and peach.