

Distribution Roundup: Celsius Adds Ink to Passport

Sure, parts of the Middle East might deliver enough figurative and literal heat to help you swiftly drop a few pounds. However, in Dubai, it'd be pretty easy to swell on steaks in [a boat-shaped hotel](#) that would make even Captain Ahab just, like, chill out for a second, man.

Alongside the gymnastic commitments of The Royal Family of Dubai, the potentially hedonistic nature of the city could explain part of why Celsius has secured distribution there for its "Negative Calorie" beverage. On Tuesday, [Celsius announced](#) that it has reached an exclusive partnership with UAE International Investments (UII), a financial and distribution company in the Middle East.



"UII's strength and influence in Dubai and the Middle East provides a strong partnership for our brand," Celsius CEO Gerry David said in a company release. "The Royal Family of Dubai's dedication to sport and fitness provides the best platform for our Celsius brand."

Celsius has already financed international shipments to China, Brazil, Argentina, Paraguay and Uruguay, and David recognizes the potential of developing a consumer base in a region as big as the Middle East. UII seems to share the enthusiasm.

"We see that with this product we will create a niche and competitive market that will provide consumers value and a different experience," His Excellency Saleh Mohammed BelJafra, CEO of UII and Dubai Franchising, said in the release.

While Brian Ross, CEO of Cheribundi, may never refer to himself as "His Excellency" (at least not in a press release), he's still got encouraging news regarding his tart cherry juice line. On Tuesday, [Cheribundi announced](#) that its products are now available in all 4,800 Rite Aid Stores across the U.S.

"We are excited to partner with one of the top drug store chains in America, gaining the opportunity to introduce Cheribundi to their many health-conscious customers," Ross said in a release.

Cheribundi continues to expand its footprint, adding Rite Aid to its current distribution at retailers such as Kroger, Whole Foods, Sprouts and The Fresh Market, among others. Ross has [previously told BevNET](#) that many athletes, some of the most influential people in the U.S., already love Cheribundi. He believes that a shortage of consumer awareness is slowing the brand's growth. By securing shelf placements at Rite Aid, Ross hopes to continue his mission to educate consumers about the benefits of tart cherry juice.

A couple other beverages that might require more consumer awareness: True Nopal Cactus Water and Organic Me. While folklore has it that cactus water makes for a good last resort of hydration when stuck in a desert, parent company True Me Brands wants consumers to pick up True Nopal Cactus Water when stuck in a grocery store, last resort or not. The company is making progress, [announcing Thursday](#) that it has reached a distribution agreement for True Nopal and Organic Me with Nature's Best.

"Securing distribution with Nature's Best for True Nopal and Organic Me represents a tremendous opportunity for our company which allows us to position the brands for continued domestic growth," Tom Zummo, the CEO of True Me Brands, said in a release.

The sun rises, the moon sets and Reed's keeps growing. BevNET has been [all over the growth of kombucha](#), and there seems to be no slowing the category now. Reed's, which markets Reed's Ginger Brews, Virgil's sodas and Culture Club Kombucha, [announced on Tuesday](#) that it has partnered with Next Generation Beer Co., based in West Asheville, N.C. The agreement will lead to distribution for the array of beverages throughout the state of North Carolina.

"Next Generation Beer Co. is committed to seeking out the most unique specialty craft brews, and our brands of premium craft sodas are the perfect fit with their distribution model," Chris Reed, founder and CEO of Reed's, said in a release.

"Next Generation's beginnings are founded in Asheville, a region with significant kombucha consumption."