



## *Announcement*

### **WheyUP Teams With GBS Growth Partners and MidMarket Capital**

- *Whey UP is the ultimate fitness drink that provides protein and energy. It can be consumed before or during your workout, or anytime throughout the day.*
- *GBS, a team of beverage industry specialists, helps emerging, high potential beverage companies.*
- *MidMarket Capital is an investment banking firm that focuses on equity strategies and capital sourcing.*
- *Services will include business development advice, strategic equity sourcing, and hands on assistance.*

**Plano, Texas, Gilbert Arizona, Chicago: February 20, 2008** – WheyUP’s inventor and co-founder, Arizona based Erick Rothchild, is an avid workout enthusiast and amateur boxer who saw an opportunity. “Prior to exercising at the gym, I blended a sugar free energy drink with strawberries and whey protein powder, so that I would get the recommended amount of protein and energy in one drink” said Rothchild. “I started to ask around the gym if other people would be interested in a protein drink with energy and the overwhelming answer was ‘yes’...and thus, the WheyUP idea was born!”

WheyUP represents a breakthrough in the sports energy drink market. It combines 20 grams of whey protein with an energy formula in a sugar-free, non-carbonated beverage. WheyUP’s energy formula is a combination of taurine, B-complex vitamins and caffeine. It is, according to Rothchild, the next generation of healthy energy drinks.

Rothchild worked with Custom Food Solutions, a Chicago-based drink development company, to design the taste and formula for WheyUP. After deciding on the optimal formulation, the product was introduced in the Summer of 2007 in the Arizona market. Consumer, distributor and retailer interest in the product ‘far exceeded our wildest expectations’, said Rothchild. Since then they have picked up an impressive list of customers, such as Ralphs Supermarkets in California, GNC,

WheyUP is currently available in two flavors: Wild Berry and Tropical Fruit, and sold in 16 ounce PET bottles. WheyUP has planned three additional flavors planned for introduction this coming July. They are also gaining critical acclaim as WheyUP is a finalist for the prestigious 2008 Best New Dairy Brand Award by the International Dairy Association.

“WheyUP is what we call a ‘New Rule Maker’, and we are very excited about the ability to work with Erik Rothchild and his team,” said GBS Managing Partner John Blackington. “New Rule Maker is a term we use to describe today’s entrepreneurs that are redefining the US beverage industry. If you look at who is creating innovation and value today, it is start-ups like WheyUP, not the large traditional beverage companies. WheyUP can, in our opinion, redefine the basis for consideration for consumers, it fulfills an unmet need.” GBS, founded in 2004 by Blackington and Gordon Hill, is a team of beverage industry specialists that helps emerging, high-potential brands like WheyUP. Their services range from strategic advice all the way to hands-on

implementation. They have helped companies with strategy and plan development, building distribution systems, equity strategies and solutions. GBS recently helped BYB Brands, a unit of Coca-Cola Bottling Company Consolidated, the second largest Coca-Cola Bottler in the US, with the launch of their brands - Cinnabon RTD coffee lattes and Respect, a vitamin enhanced water brand. They are now two of the fastest growing brands in the US.

They are also proponents of what they call 'Smart Equity', partnering large companies with and small, start-up businesses. "We have worked in both worlds – large and small companies – and we believe that you can create significant synergy if you can marry the strengths of both worlds" said Blackington. GBS is partnering with MidMarket Capital to work with WheyUP and other beverage companies to find strategic industry partners as an alternative to venture capital. MidMarket Capital is a Chicago-based investment banking firm that focuses on equity strategies and capital sourcing. MidMarket is led by Founder and CEO Dave Kauppi. "We think that we can work together – MidMarket and GBS – to bring the beverage and financial knowledge to help WheyUP get to the next level," said Dave Kauppi.

WheyUP is located in Gilbert, Arizona. For more information on them and their brands, visit [www.wheyup.com](http://www.wheyup.com). GBS Growth Partners is based in Plano, Texas. For more information on their services, visit [www.gbsgrowthpartners.com](http://www.gbsgrowthpartners.com). MidMarket Capital is based in Chicago, Illinois. For more information on their services, visit [www.midmarkcap.com](http://www.midmarkcap.com).

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