

Boosted Chews looks to stimulate interest in its caffeine product

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Some entrepreneurs bite off more than they can chew. UW-Madison seniors Kit Chow and Aditya Singh Parihar knew what they were sinking their teeth into when they created Boosted Chews — a new way to capture America’s fondness for caffeine.

Founded in November 2019, Boosted Chews produces a caffeinated snack that can provide the same punch as a cup of coffee while satisfying America’s sweet tooth for chocolate.

Each chew contains 30 milligrams of caffeine, so three chews have about the same amount of caffeine as a cup of coffee. Boosted Chews also comes in different flavors: original, hazelnut, mint and mocha.

Chow and Parihar started sales in late March and since then, they have sold more than 800 bags. They’ve also launched an online store and have reached out to shops and delivery services to sell their products. It’s available at some retail locations.

Customers can buy three different sized packs of Boosted Chews, a variety pack, the “boosted bundle” and the jumbo boosted bundle. Bags come with a recommended maximum “chews” in one sitting or one day. Prices range from about \$7 to about \$24, depending on the size of the package.

Like many products, Boosted Chews wasn't ready on the first try.

"I started with a drink called 'boosted juice' caffeinated with mango and pomegranate flavors," Chow said. "People weren't liking the pomegranate flavor so eventually we switched to candy-like gushers, for example, then eventually translated to chocolate candy taffy or a firmer fudge. It's a better tasting Tootsie Roll, which is the original flavor, and now comes in mint, hazelnut and mocha."

Chow and Parihar worked with Transcend UW, a campus hub for creative thinking, entrepreneurship and innovation, and entered a competition that helped to move them ahead. They credited the resources available on campus with their ability to move quickly while continuing their studies.

Companies such as Awake Chocolate, Go Cubes and Verb Energy are Boosted Chews' largest competitors, Chow said. Because Boosted Chews planned to launch in March, just about the time COVID-19 shuttered much of the campus, Chow and Pariha couldn't market the samples they planned to get out and had to pivot to digital marketing.

"We were supposed to be in stores by now, Badger Market for example, and had to transition our business to e-commerce," Parihar said.

All varieties are available online. Customers who want to purchase Boosted Chews "live" can visit Roll Play, the Fresh Cool Drinks food cart and Sencha Tea Bar on State Street in Madison.

Chow and Parihar hope to raise \$250,000 by mid-2021 to improve marketing and scale up to a contract manufacturer. The company was selected from a field of applicants to present during the Elevator Pitch Olympics at the 2020 Wisconsin

Early Stage Symposium last week.

Listen to a recent WisBusiness.com podcast with Boosted Chews:

<https://www.wisbusiness.com/2020/wisbusiness-the-podcast-with-boosted-chews-co-founders-kit-chow-and-aditya-parihar/>

-By Caesar Williams

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