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## CHARLOTTE BUSINESS JOURNAL

**Energy drink company expands distribution with deal in New York**



Owen Ryan's High Voltage Beverages produces energy and sports drinks under the Volt® brand. It's bottled in Charlotte, but the primary markets are in Asheville and northern Florida. - photo NANCY PIERCE Charlotte Business Journal January 16, 2009

After a successful career in the advertising business, I moved from NYC to launch VOLT® to compete with Gatorade and Mountain Dew, two brands from PepsiCo with \$14 billion in sales. VOLT® soon replaced Gatorade as the Official Sports Drink of AAU Baseball in NC and was gaining traction in convenience stores in VA, OH, SC, NC and FL. Soon we were invited into large chains like Publix and Walgreen's. With the backing of outside investors, I recruited a former President of Cadbury-Schweppes and RC Cola to deal with the challenges VOLT® faced competing with Coke and Pepsi, while I focused my energies defending the VOLT® brand in Federal Court here in Charlotte, from a trademark cancellation action brought against VOLT® by The Coca-Cola Company. Eventually, the jury ruled in VOLT's favor, and Coca-Cola's subsequent efforts to get the jury's verdict overturned went nowhere. But by then, the VOLT business was in a bit of a shambles and I needed capital to regain ownership of the trademark, and restart it, **which I did with income gained from partial return to my former career as a marketing consultant, and all-purpose creative problem solver.** See: [www.HeavyweightKillers.com](http://www.HeavyweightKillers.com) & [www.FutureCharlotte.com](http://www.FutureCharlotte.com)

A visual “scrapbook” review of my entrepreneurial history creating and launching new brands against tough competitors can be seen below:



**VOLT® Sports Drinks & VOLT® “Citrus Shock” Sodas.**

[www.VOLTbeverage.com](http://www.VOLTbeverage.com) <http://voltbeverage.com/>



**VOLT “CITRUS SHOCK” CARBONATED SODAS.**

(Click link!)



Click → [WINNERS DON'T QUIT & QUITTERS DONT WIN!](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMDTLUoN5K0&feature=youtu.be) ← Click

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pMDTLUoN5K0&feature=youtu.be>



### OWEN RYAN'S ENTREPRENEURIAL HISTORY.

Prior to **VOLT® beverages**, I ran a new products development and strategy consulting business in New York City for 20 years, solving tough marketing and communications problems, and creating sales promotion and advertising for clients such as Kraft Foods, Unilever, Citibank, P&G, The Blackstone Group, Anheuser-Busch, IBM, and Johnson & Johnson. Before that I was an award-winning copywriter and creative director at several large NYC ad agencies.

And, before that – way too long and crazy a story to tell here -- I was a dairy farmer in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains near Harper's Ferry, West Virginia. When I moved from the dairy farm to NYC, my clients would joke that I'd merely been promoted from a job dealing with "*real bullshit*" in West Virginia, to a career producing "*professional bullshit*" in New York! Eventually, I created and launched multiple branded consumer products, including a kids beverage company, an international licensing agency, a direct mail company, and a laundry detergent. Once, I actually started a company as a joke, where the title on my business card read: "*Earth's Official Representative Of 'Halley's Comet*".



## HOW TO SELL THIN AIR!

“HERE’S HOW THIS NYC ENTREPRENEUR TURNED A ONCE-IN-A-LIFETIME VISITOR FROM OUTER SPACE INTO AN INTERNATIONAL MARKETING PHENOMENA!”



I am grateful for the many wonderful clients I have worked for over the years – and, more importantly, learned from – in my role as a creative and marketing consultant, including the CMO's and CEO's of some of America's leading consumer products companies. Separately, I have created and launched a number of high profile, entrepreneurial ventures on my own, which demonstrate my history of identifying a business opportunity, and innovating quickly, usually on a shoestring, to build brand awareness and sales. One such venture was the Official Halley's Comet brand. I launched this venture in 1986, intending it only as a light-hearted publicity stunt, and parody of the over-merchandising of the "Official" Olympics that year. My goal was to gain publicity for my new marketing firm. It was a crazy idea, but, it worked! 80 countries ended up putting my "Official" Halley's Comet logo on their postage stamps! Well-known companies such as British Airways, Cunard Cruise Lines, The Toyota Motors Company, and the RCA Electronics Corporation, a subsidiary of General Electric Company, paid me thousands of dollars to license the rights to my "Official" Halley's Comet logo for use in their advertising and sales promotion programs!

<http://www.nytimes.com/1984/12/11/business/advertising-marketing-halley-s-comet.html?scp=1&sq=marketing%20halley's%20comet&st=cse>

# HOW TO SELL THIN AIR

A CASE HISTORY THEY WON'T TEACH YOU AT HARVARD

I assume that as the head of a large public company, you probably don't get too many letters regarding visitors from outer space. On the other hand, you probably do get more than your fair share of communications from shareholders interested in guaranteed returns. This letter is about both subjects.

In 1985, in order to prepare the world for the once-every-76-year arrival of Halley's Comet in 1986, I set up General Comet Industries as a light-hearted parody of the "official" over merchandizing of the summer Olympics. I billed what was to become the start-up/wind-down company of the century as "the official representative of Halley's Comet". The rest, as they say, is history.



At the time, I figured that although I might lose a few thousand dollars.. the cost of incorporation, logo development and business cards.. in the process of officially welcoming Halley's Comet to earthly skies, the idea would prove an imaginative way to increase awareness of my company and demonstrate our creativity to potential clients.

Eventually, this "spoof" company turned into what my wife referred to as a "profitable nightmare" with offices in five countries, nine U.S., one Japanese and three German trademarks, multiple domestic and international vendors and six exhausted employees here in New York.

We eventually made a nice profit on this comet project, but there were times when this "spoof" company nearly put us under as it diverted time and capital from our regular new product development

and marketing consulting business. The comet left us with a good way to demonstrate the creative thinking and future vision that we are capable of.

To cite but one example: the "official" Halley's Comet logo we created ended up on everything from the postage stamps of over 100 countries around the world, to coffee mugs, duffle bags and collectable license plates made by inmates in the Utah State Prison. Ever watchful for new opportunities, we set up a direct marketing company to sell these stamps to America's 22 million stamp collectors (see attached brochure).

However, the purpose of this letter is not to sell you postage stamps from places you've never heard of, can't pronounce and will probably never visit (unless of course, your Learjet runs out of gas somewhere over the South Pacific).

An old Jewish proverb says "if there are two courses of action you should always take the third" which is why you should put our particular brand of conceptual fluency to work, to help you solve a particularly difficult business or marketing problem.

Our marketing objective with Halley's Comet was reasonably straight forward: To convince corporate executives like yourself that any company that can market a 250 billion ton celestial vagabond can certainly be put to effective use in increasing sales for more down to earth products like laundry soaps, soda, computers, hamburgers, ball bearings, toothpaste, restaurant chains, beer, airline seats etc.

If you'd like to see examples of our marketing creativity and intuition at work for clients like General Electric, Digital Equipment and Johnson & Johnson, or want to hear how to put our creativity, energy and enthusiasm to work for you, just call.

**Owen Ryan (646) 812-5109**  
**Knock Out Marketing Partners**  
[www.HeavyweightKillers.com](http://www.HeavyweightKillers.com)

**ANTIOXIDANT FARMS®**  
**HEALTHIER FOODS FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE.™**  
**GRANOLA, DRINKABLE YOGURTS, FUNCTIONAL BEVERAGES.**



<http://www.antioxidantfarms.com/>

**AntiOxidant Farms® 100% Blueberry  
 Concentrate. All-Natural. Organic.  
 No Sugar or Water Added!**

**From the “oldest and most famous organic blueberry farm”  
 in the Southeast United States!**



Produced for AntiOxidant Farms by Byne Blueberry Farm, Waynesboro, GA  
 HEALTHIER FOODS FOR A HEALTHIER FUTURE ©2014 AntiOxidant Farms, Inc. [gwenryon@yahoo.com](mailto:gwenryon@yahoo.com)



# *Dream Garden™ All Natural Fruit Sodas*

**Carbonated Soda – 3 All-Natural Gourmet Fruit Flavors 12 OZ bottles.**



**Great taste. Made with Natural Cane Sugar.  
Light & Refreshing Gourmet Taste.**



Zero Calories. All Natural. Soothing. Refreshing. 16 OZ bottles.

# Dream Garden™ Zero Calorie Herbal Water – Organic!



**No Preservatives. No Calories. No Chemicals.  
All Natural. USDA Organic.**







**“AN ENTREPRENEUR IS SOMEONE WILLING TO WORK 80 HOURS A WEEK IN A RISKY JOB, TO AVOID WORKING FOR SOMEONE ELSE 40 HOURS A WEEK IN A SAFE JOB” -- Lori Greiner on 'Shark Tank'.**



I created, funded, and launched, or co-created/funded/launched multiple branded consumer ventures, including a kids beverage company (**CRAYONS® Fruit Drinks**), a salty snack company (**PARTY ANIMALS®**), an international licensing company (**GCI/HALLEY'S COMET**), a direct mail company (PCI, Inc.), and a laundry detergent business (**WIN® Detergents**). I intend to put the very valuable learning to work as I recruit investors and colleagues to help me build the VOLT® beverage brand.



A few years back, on a volunteer basis, I became co-chair of the Charlotte Chapter of Silicon Valley-based Founder Institute. From that experience working with young tech entrepreneurs, I saw an opportunity to create a unique algorithmic gift recommendation system called **PsychicSanta®**, a web-based gift recommendation and selection system specifically designed for the \$700 billion dollar holiday gift giving season.

[www.PsychicSanta.com](http://www.PsychicSanta.com)

An advertisement for PsychicSanta.com. At the top, a red banner with white text reads 'End Gift Giving Stress! 2018'. Below the banner, a woman wearing a Santa hat and a red scarf has a stressed, wide-eyed expression. To her right is a large, wrapped gift in red paper with a silver ribbon. At the bottom right, the text 'PsychicSanta.com' is displayed in red and green, with the tagline 'Perfectly Matched Gifts everytime.' in black below it.



**PsychicSanta.com** shared a link.



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### Your Personal Gift Predictor!

Improve gift giving accuracy. Free ...  
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## WHY I GOT INVOLVED IN THE SPORTS & ENERGY DRINK BUSINESS!



I guess I love a challenge. The more impossible an opportunity *seems*, the more I am drawn to it! After I sold a beverage business I'd started from scratch to a West Coast investment group, I used a chunk of that successful 7-figure exit to develop the **VOLT®** beverage brand, and, also, **AntiOxidant Farms®** a healthy food and beverage company. I'm writing a book about these experiences, mainly focusing on the VOLT beverage brand and the expensive lessons I've learned, the valuable insights I've gained, and, the many "hidden" opportunities I've discovered about VOLT, all of which remain relevant to this day. Stay tuned!

Also, I am always keeping my eye out for ambitious hard-working partners – people with genuine entrepreneurial DNA -- to come join me and help build VOLT®. I continue to have extreme passion for the VOLT® brand, and believe it is a HUGE opportunity, so if you'd like to quit that high-paying 40-hour a week job of yours in order to start working 70 hours a week for low pay on a business you can own a significant piece of, give me a call. It could be the best business and financial decision you'll ever make!

→ [www.VOLTbeverage.com](http://www.VOLTbeverage.com) ←

**HERE'S A FAVORITE PROJECT OF MINE, TO SHARE WITH YOU:  
ATLANTA CONSTANCE SAMPSON, (b. 1896, d. 1995)**

At this link from the NEW YORK TIMES **there is a remarkable story** of a chance meeting I had with a stranger back in 1988. Three decades later, the life story of Atlanta Constance Sampson is on the verge of finally being turned into an inspirational feature film, giving cinematic testimony to what can be accomplished when someone has a combination of God-given talent, never-ending desire, hard work, perseverance, and, an ever-present faith in the future. And, in God! This is a truly inspiring story, which you will realize as you watch this brief video [The Atlanta Sampson Story](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BD9xvJPaaCM). <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BD9xvJPaaCM> <http://www.nytimes.com/1992/11/18/nyregion/about-new-york-amazement-wonder-and-meaning-of-beauty.html?pagewanted=1>



"When I first met Atlanta Sampson she was 91 years old, destitute and unknown, a frail woman in poor health living alone in New York City with the folks from Saint Patrick's Cathedral bringing her meals. Yet she never once gave up on her faith, always knowing that the lifetime she had spent chronicling America through the eyes of a midwestern farm girl would not be wasted. *"God created me to be an artist,"* she said, *"It was God's plan for my life."* No matter what setbacks life presented, she never stopped pursuing her lifelong dream of having a one-woman show of her art.

God did indeed have a plan, and that dream soon became manifest. Her paintings would eventually be exhibited at prestigious New York City galleries and a one-woman show of her life's work at The National Arts Club would draw critical acclaim. Presidents and Hollywood celebrities would soon own her work.

A one-woman exhibit in Washington DC would follow, on the occasion of her 96<sup>th</sup> birthday, *"saluting Atlanta Constance Sampson and her contribution to American Art"*. The NEW YORK TIMES would note the comparison of her work to the most well-known American artists of the 20th century, pointing out that: *"In the magazine Art in America, Lawrence Campbell, himself an artist, wrote that Miss Sampson's work recalled various painters, among them Kandinsky, Rothko, Jasper Johns. "But," he added, "there is always the personal quality of an individual shining through. A personal lyricism. A person. Of her work in all its phases, this is always true."*

**"His marketing flair has drawn clients like Johnson & Johnson, Lever Brothers and Coca Cola to his tiny company..."**

THE NEW YORK TIMES

**"Always thinking ahead..."**

NEWSWEEK MAGAZINE

**"Not your run-of-the-mill adman..."**

THE NEW YORK TIMES

**"Ryan is either an advertising and promotional genius or the re-incarnation of P.T. Barnum."**

DISCOVER MAGAZINE

**"In the new products arena he seems to possess a preternatural ability to see around marketing corners."**

AMERICAN MARKETING ASSOCIATION

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Owen Ryan resides in Charlotte, NC with his wife Myung Sook Kim and their daughter Emma Kim Ryan. On a volunteer basis Ryan is Co-Director of the Charlotte Chapter of Silicon Valley-based Founder Institute, the world's largest tech entrepreneur education and training program. He's also Founder at [www.FutureCharlotte.com](http://www.FutureCharlotte.com) and was CEO of AntiOxidant Farms® Inc., and a founding partner at <http://HeavyweightKillers.com> and [www.PsychicSanta.com](http://www.PsychicSanta.com). He can be reached at [owenryan@yahoo.com](mailto:owenryan@yahoo.com) (646) 812-5109