

Energade turns 30

Energade, South Africa's homegrown ready-to-drink sports beverage celebrates its 30th anniversary this year. Introduced in 1993, the brand has grown to hold a significant share of the growing local sports drink market and is today a household name associated with high-performance sports and hydration.



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Operating in a competitive and booming market, Ismail Nanabhay, MD: Beverages at Tiger Brands, says Energade, a proudly homegrown brand, has grown to hold a large portion of the sports drink market spurred by strategic, operational, and in-market growth tactics. Today, Tiger Brands produces at least 77 million bottles of Energade per year up from 43 million three years ago.

Since 2016, Tiger Brands has invested more than R500m in operational and technological advancements at its beverages plant in Roodekop, Germiston, where Energade is produced. This includes the construction of new manufacturing lines and upgrades, which has increased efficiencies for Energade.

These improved efficiencies have been passed on to the consumer, enabling competitive pricing while delivering innovations for a better consumer experience, including better taste, and improved packaging such as an innovative and technologically superior bottle closure that aids in quicker hydration.

“Energade’s growth in the market has been spurred by our consumer-led approach. Our focus has been on keeping pace with consumers’ evolving needs and developing innovative solutions that enhance the hydration experience and respond to an increased focus on health and wellness while offering value without compromising on quality,” says Nanabhay.

Thirty years ago, Energade launched a ready-to-drink sports beverage and over the years has introduced concentrated variants for those requiring more hydration.

Consumer focus on health remains a key driver of consumption choices. Responding to this expanding segment of health-conscious consumers, Energade Zero, a no-sugar option, was launched in 2022, followed by Energade Boost, the company’s first foray into carbonated energy drinks, the fastest-growing beverage segment in South Africa.

Over the years, the Energade brand has partnered with South Africa’s national sports teams, including football and cricket. It has been the main hydration partner to the Springboks since 1999 and has fuelled two of the team’s World Cup wins - in 2007 and 2019. Since 2013, Energade has also supported the development of women’s sports through its partnership with the Proteas national women’s netball team.

Nanabhay says the business is strongly positioned to increase both its own volume and the overall sports drink category with a focus on consumer-led innovation that meets daily health, nutrition, and high-performance sporting needs.

The combined South African Energy and Sport drink segments is estimated to be worth more than R1.5bn and is expected to grow annually over the next five years by 7.34% (Statista, 2023).

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