

Health snacks for vending machines

Philip Rubin launched Health Island in June 2010, described as the first vending business in South Africa to supply healthy snacks and drinks to the corporate market, especially designed and selected to provide excellent, nutritious snack food to companies, gyms, hospitals, schools and tertiary institutions. The first six machines rolled out in July 2010.



The company offers a full range of organic and natural snacks, drinks and smoothies, guaranteed to have great taste, no artificial flavour, colouring or preservatives, no hydrogenated oils or trans fats and no high fructose corn syrup.

"Yes, junk food and fast food may be cheaper," says Rubin. "It can be mass-produced, it has a long history of production that uses cheap and easy ingredients that will not provide consumers with the nutrition their bodies are seeking and that drives the hunger cravings. People may feel they are deriving benefits, but if that is the case those benefits will be very short-term and their bodies will pay for them later one way or another, probably in medical bills in later years. There is much scientific proof that what you eat not only affects your physical shape but your state of mind too.

"The widespread increase in health issues like obesity, diabetes and heart disease in our community, has given rise to awareness about nutrition and a push toward healthier food choices at restaurants and supermarkets. So, why has the food in vending machines stayed so dramatically stuck in the past? Why can't people have the choice to eat healthily, even from of a vending machine?"

Vending machine contents

The machines can provide many nut, seed and berry mixtures, wasabi crisps and roasted coffee beans covered with dark chocolate, a granola mix and some organic bars. Drinks include loaded smoothies, wood pressed pear and apple juice, and spring water.

These foods are reportedly nutritious and filling, will put a halt to cravings for sugar and other highly processed foods and, over time, improve concentration and mood, reduce fatigue and irritability, and make people more productive, calmer and more focussed - ideal for work and for learning environments.

The machines suit any environment that has around 120-plus people as pedestrian traffic. The machines are free for hosts; all they have to do is supply electricity and a space for the machine. The company will deliver the machine, service it,

monitor it and keep it stocked.

"It's been an easy concept to sell as people are open to ideas about health, nutrition, sustainability and conservation. All our vending machines have informative nutritional information on the front and side panels and their look and feel will add brightness and colour to their environment," concludes Rubin.

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