

-- Speaker 0 00:04 Make it right. Manufacturing podcast. Welcome to the mega ripe podcast. I'm Janet Weissman. I recently pass through the cosmetic department of a large retail chain and it got me thinking about this multibillion dollar industry though the market is directed at women. There was the occasional section for men presenting everything from fragrances to beard and shaving care to skincare products. This is a market that may just be on the cusp of huge growth if you join me for make it right. Episode 81 last week you had the opportunity to hear how two entrepreneurs are bringing their hops and hemp based organic skincare line for men to market. This week on the show, I continue my conversation with chatbox. Sleep. He's a chemist and a beer lover and Chris Rebsamen, his partner is a marketing executive and they're the two fellows behind batch 21 they're in the process of moving their products into large retail and we pick up our conversation talking about how they source their ingredients manufacturer, their hops and hemp skincare line and how they're moving their endeavor forward. When you're sourcing ingredients, are there any challenges getting those right ingredients? I mean, is it down to specific hops and specific types of hemp that you need?

Speaker 1 01:23 So we, we have a particular suppliers that we buy for each ingredient. Um, in particular the hops in the hint. And I can definitely say that not all suppliers are created the same, just like in any industry. Um, this one's no different. Uh, but the, you know, so we are careful about how, um, you know, we selected the suppliers based on their processing for how they produce the materials. So for example, the hemp seed oil is, uh, you know, it's cold pressed Virgin material so that we know that it's, uh, you know, organic certified and come off in a certain way. Um, and the cold pressing is really important for us because we want to preserve all the phytonutrients that are inside the hemp seed oil just naturally. And that if you use a hot process, can, can, can break down those materials and leave it, uh, less effective, uh, for skin penetration.

Speaker 1 02:19 Um, and you know, skin health, overall moisturization properties that we want to preserve. Um, and the same thing with the hops. Um, so we prefer a very gentle extraction of the essential oil out of the hop cones. Um, that's, uh, any, it's usually supercritical CO2 that they use to extract it. And so going to suppliers and, and meeting with them and talking with them and knowing that their extraction process goes and how it works. Um, and trusting that. And then we tested several suppliers of each one of each ingredient, the other ones that are in there as well. Cause there's, you know, a really nice, I hope it will and the mango butter, um, things that are non comedogenic and don't clog the pores on the face cause a breakout or something like that. So carefully selecting those ingredients so that we know how it's going to benefit the skin and preserve that beneficial by choosing the right supplier.

Speaker 0 03:10 Hmm. How important is it to keep your, your production to those small batches and what's going to happen when you, when you start to scale?

Speaker 1 03:20 So for us, I

Speaker 0 03:22 <inaudible> is coming chat. Right.

Speaker 1 03:24 I know. Uh, I know, um, it's, uh, you know, it's one of the challenges that we look forward to. Um, because, uh, small batch production to me is important. I, I kinda liken it to other craft brewery movement. Um, so, you know, they produce their quality beer in a very small, you know, much smaller than, you know, the, the big giants of the world. And the beer just is a different, much higher quality product that they can control the ingredients going in much easier. They can control the product coming out much easier. Um, and you know, when you're doing things on smaller scale, you just have much more control of what's happening. Um, in any kind of mixing tank or any kind of, uh, grooming tank or whatever industry you're talking about, you have more control over things when they're smaller. So for us, we're going to keep it small, um, but we'll just have to do is just, you know, more patches per day or patches per week or whatever unit of time you want to measure and, um, is what it's going to mean to us when, when you think's common. So, you know, there'll be a little bit less of economies of scale --

-- than other manufacturers. We get that, um, we're willing to accept that.

Speaker 0 04:39 Yeah. Are you like the brewmaster there and you have people helping you or are you making all the batches yourself? I'm trying to get a visual here.

Speaker 1 04:50 I do like myself as a brewmaster, but we do have help. It's not just me. Um, so, but it's a little bit of both. Uh, you know, I do like the thought of being, I've never called myself a brewmaster, but I'm right about that.

Speaker 0 05:07 So I had a nice ring to it. Yeah, it does kind of doesn't it. Right. So most, it's mostly men that are using your product. Um, and if so, like what's the opportunity here?

Because I keep thinking about the male skincare market. The industry is really growing. Chris, you must have researched this a lot. Um, what's the size of this opportunity for you, if you know, is mostly targeting, even though it is kind of a unisex problem, a product?

Speaker 1 05:35 Yeah. So, um, there's two answers to that question. Um, one, the, the male opportunity is still a very Virgin market. Um, it hasn't matured at all. Uh, the room for girls is exceptional. I mean, it's just, it's huge. Um, but second to that is as far as to make sure you do it right. Um, second point is really you have to make sure you do it right. I, you know, coming from my background, I like to scale as fast as possible, so I've had to kind of temper my enthusiasm.

Speaker 0 06:20 Okay.

Speaker 1 06:20 Um, because, you know, I, you know, chip brought up the fact where, you know, when we get into whole foods, it's been a learning experience and we didn't anticipate this to happen so quickly. So we wanted to kind of follow through and kind of get our place in the market first before we actually quote unquote broke for the scale. We've talked to several retailers and there hasn't been a retailer that hasn't liked or, or were dissatisfied with the packaging. You know, we, we've not had a lot of negative feedback. We've made adjustments. So we know the product is, it gives us product validation. Um, but I think what we're going to do is we're going to set up ourselves with whole foods, then take a look at the market again. And that's kind of where I'm getting at is take a look at the market, kind of see where the holes are and assess and take our strengths.

Speaker 1 07:10 We also have some weaknesses and kind of size up our opportunities and the opportunities once we get into whole foods. Yeah, we'll open up because two things. One we're in whole foods and two, our product has gone through their system and also their setup process and their product validation. So it gives us a lot of credit going into other retailers out of the gate, if that makes sense. Um, so the size of the market is huge. Um, the creativity behind our product certainly will fit the market. It's just timing right now I think for us to focus on the male category itself and just take one step at a time.

Speaker 0 07:54 So you have a few, yeah, you have a few months before February comes along. So, uh, you've got, you've got some things to take care of. I guess in that, uh, time period and then it's a, who knows where it goes from there. That's awesome. So,

Speaker 1 08:08 yeah, we're, we're, Oh, I'm sorry, go ahead.

Speaker 0 08:10 No, go ahead.

Speaker 1 08:12 No, we're still, we're actually still in process with whole foods right now, so, um, we just want to make sure that everything, all of our I's are dotted and T's are crossed again just to be ready to, for our scaling.

Speaker 0 08:24 Yeah. So this may seem like a bizarre question, but I'm going to ask it anyway. Are you guys enjoying yourself? Is there any downside to turning, particularly for you, chat your passions for chemistry and beer into a business?

Speaker 1 08:42 Uh, am I having fun? Absolutely. I think that, no doubt about it. Every, I mean, you know, there's always challenges of course, to growing and scaling and building a business on something. Um, you know, I'm excited to get up everyday and come in and, and work on the project. So, uh, as long as that's happening, I'm good.

Speaker 0 09:05 Yeah. So no downsides that you can think of? Oh, no downsides. Yeah.

Speaker 1 09:11 Loving what I do. No, I no, I mean honestly, um, yeah, I know it's, it's, it's a fun project and I really enjoy working on it and I'd love to see it grow and ke --

-- ep doing it thing and um, so as far as I can see it, it's, you know, sky's limit kind of thing.

Speaker 0 09:30 Yeah. So what about some key takeaways for anybody who is thinking of launching a product on their own that have, you know, some passions that they really think that they have a good idea for and they want to go for it? Any stories you can share? Any key takeaways you guys?

Speaker 1 09:49 Pictures,

Speaker 0 09:51 tasting? Yeah,

Speaker 1 09:53 something I'm not very good at. Um, patience and tenacity you have to keep at it. Um, because the business isn't going to grow overnight and as much as we like to be hit receive those companies that are move fast, but we don't really look beyond that. Meaning when did it actually start? I mean, Apple started in a garage and was in development for many years before. So one of the things, one of my key takeaways from this experience is patients and just keep at it, if you set your goals and make sure they are achievable goals, not pie in the sky goals, when you hit those goals and consistently you'll build a business. Um, make sure that you have, you understand the market, you understand where he's said you're understanding competition. Cause if you don't understand, that goes back to the whole marketing thing. No, cause it comes down to once you hit shelf you have to perform. And if you don't perform, you've just, you know, you get one shot so you have to make the best of it. So planning and patience is very important in the beginning.

Speaker 0 11:11 <inaudible> <inaudible> what about you Chet?

Speaker 1 11:14 I would, uh, I mean I, I echo those comments and I will say like from the chemist perspective, uh, we spent a lot of time developing the product itself from a scientific viewpoint. And we, I thought that was going to be the hard part. The challenge, um, was creating the product itself because you do have one shot, right? To impress the customer. And then everything, and it's got to perform when people actually do use it and then so forth. Uh, but, uh, it turns out, in my opinion now that I've done this, that the harder Chris has a harder job than I do. Uh, the product, kind of the science of it. It, it does, we make it, um, but the marketing is way harder. So my advice to any chemist out there or scientists in general trying to do this is to partner with somebody who's got that expertise in that marketing sales regime and that realm and, you know, go for it with them in a true partnership. So that, that would be, uh, my advice. And then, you know, something like, I think you'd asked like funny stories or lessons.

Speaker 0 12:25 Yeah. Yeah.

Speaker 1 12:27 <inaudible> and I have definitely learned that, um, doing events, like a lot of these, you know, as you start off in a young company or you're at small booth type events, and I have learned that I don't do any booth events anymore. That doesn't have to be or present.

Speaker 0 12:42 Okay.

Speaker 1 12:45 If I walk away with nothing else, I've had a good quality deer and I've enjoyed my evening talking to customers and friends and family and whoever shows up at the booth. But a worst case scenario, I have a good quality beer and I can walk out happy. So

Speaker 0 13:00 well it ultimately wasn't that at the root of your one of your passions. Right? So

Speaker 1 13:05 exactly right. So I get back to what I enjoy the most and, and uh, you know, either way it's a win for me.

Speaker 0 13:12 Well, I have to congratulate you both. I think the product, uh, is fantastic. It looks, uh, the website's great. The packaging is great. The, the whole concept behind it is great. And as a craft beer lover, I, I salute you for what you're doing and Hey, maybe that's a, that's why I have good skin. You know, I'm drinking all the, the hops, right? So

Speaker 1 13:34 yeah, better living through chemistry.

Speaker 0 13:36 <inaudible> better living through chemistry. Gentlemen, thank you so much for sharing the batch 21 story and good luck over the next couple of months and keep us posted on how things go when you get out there and start hitting the market really hard.

Speaker 1 13:51 Great. Well thank you for having us. We really appreciate it.

Speaker 0 13:53 It's my pleasure. So Chet and Chris are a with batch 21 Chris reps. Yvette is a marketing guru. He's been on our show before as the preside --

-- nt of a Jupiter sales and marketing and chatbox. Lee is a chemist and a certified natural and organic skincare formulator and their product is called batch 21 if you wanna check it out, just go to www.batchhyphentwentyone.com that's our show for this week. Please check out our Twitter and LinkedIn feeds that are on our podcast page and subscribe and share this podcast with your friends and colleagues through iTunes, Google play, Stitcher, Spotify on YouTube and make it right. Podcast is brought to you by Kevin Snoop, leadership advisor and author of the bestselling book. Make it right. Five steps to align your manufacturing business from the front line to the bottom line. Until next time on Janet Smith, thanks for listening to the makeup right podcast.

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