

XanGo Distributors Get Recharged At Convention

By: Mike Fantin
The Salt Lake Tribune

The iPod or dietary supplements? Rosa parks in a bottle?

Yes, yes and yes, says company president Aaron Garrity, at least if the common denominator is catalyst for change.

Garrity used the image of the late Civil Rights icon Parks, sitting on a bus in Montgomery, AL, on Friday to inspire his troops—6,000 distributors gathered at the Salt Palace Convention Center for the third annual XanGo convention, the theme of which is Unleash the Power. All are united by a single product: A tasty blend of juice concentrate made from and marketed around the mangosteen fruit of Thailand.

The Mangosteen

- Grows on mangosteen trees, mostly in Southeast Asia
- Roughly the size of a tangerine; not related to the mango
- Contains a succulent white pulp surrounded by a bitter, purplish rind
- Contains nutrients and antioxidants
- Used by ancient healers to treat a variety of ailments from dysentery to eczema

If you've never heard of the Lehi-based company or the supplement it makes, you're not alone. Salt Lake City Mayor Rocky Anderson hadn't until he was asked to welcome the crowd at Friday's opening session. "We just drove down to BYU law school and noticed XanGo's incredible presence at Thanksgiving Point," Anderson said. "It is a company that has just skyrocketed in just three years and along with that is a huge distributor network."

XanGo (pronounced Zango) has more than 400,000 independent distributors worldwide and employs more than 500 workers in Utah. The privately held company won't discuss its balance sheet, but Nutrition Business Journal ranked XanGo's U.S. sales No. 5—ahead of NuSkin and behind veteran direct sales companies Avon, Altacor (formerly Amway), Mary Kay Cosmetics and HerbaLife.

"We're right up there with the big boys," says spokesman Bob Freeze.

That much is reflected in the spectacle of the two-day convention. Inside a convention center wrapped in XanGo orange, distributors are being treated to Bill Gates-style stage shows—the company has its own there song-motivational videos, a huge store of XanGo swag, and a raffle for cash prizes, a XanGo Vespa and a 2006 Ford Mustang GT. Today, U.S. Sen. Orrin Hatch of Utah—the author of dietary supplement legislation and a rock star in the health-food world—is expected to speak.

This is Justin Banner's first XanGo convention. Before joining the company, Banner earned an MBA from Perdue University and worked at General Electric. "I'd go to their meetings and people don't clap, people don't get excited... The momentum of this company is incredible."

Adds Anderson: "They really crank the crowd up."

This year, the company is launching an online store and taste-testing some new products – XanGo ice cream, a caffeine-free sports energy drink, a chocolate truffle and hard candies, all made in conjunction with Wild Flavors, the German-based company that works with the makers of Capri-Sun and SoBe.

"These aren't two guys who mixed up some potion in their bathtub," said Freeze of founders Joe and Gordon Morton.

But they are celebrities with the orange-clad crowd.

"People come to convention to get recharged, and we see a huge jump in sales immediately after," Freeze said. "But a lot of people come just to get on stage."

CBC Proposes Hurricane Katrina Legislation

The Congressional Budget Committee (CBC) held a recent press conference to announce a new bill that will help reunite families and provide recovery to them in the Gulf Coast area. HR 4197, entitled the "Hurricane Recovery, Reclamation, Restoration, Reconstruction and Reunion Act of 2005," was approved by all 42 House members of the CBC. HR 4197 details the CBC's desire to see established various funds and provisions, such as: a Victims Restoration Fund; and environment, health education, housing and community rebuilding, voting, financial, business opportunities, tax, bankruptcy and poverty provisions. The bill also calls for FEMA to be required to reimburse entities that carried out services that should have been performed by FEMA. The full text of the bill can be accessed at <http://www.thomas.loc.gov> by entering the bill number: HR 4197.

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