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Drinks ready to perk up the market

Jan 26 2009 by The Journal

AN entrepreneur is helping to melt away the winter blues after setting up a [new company](#) to distribute a range of hot Canadian fruit drinks in the UK.

Stuart Hall has set up J-Plus UK Ltd in Gosforth to sell refreshing hot drinks to coffee shops and cafes and is now looking to tap into the growing vending machine market. Stuart, who has spent a number of years in the drinks industry, believes there is a market for the products, which include a hot apple drink, a cranberry drink and a maple syrup flavoured drink.

He established the [business](#) in 2007 after securing a licensing agreement with Canadian firm Lynch Foods to distribute the drinks, called Hot Apple, and has already managed to sell them through coffee bar chain Esquires, which has three sites in the North East, and Cafe Chill at the head offices of software giant Sage in Newcastle.

He has also secured distribution contracts at smaller venues such as the Crescent Cafe in Seaton Delaval, Northumberland, and the Alnwick Garden Pavilion. Although he expects to make a loss this year, he plans to become profitable by next year.

He said: "There is nothing like these drinks out there at the moment and they are attracting interest from a wide range of outlets as well as vending machine companies."

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