

PerfectTed, the brand spreading positive energy through matcha green tea

As part of our quick founder questions series – or QFQs – we spoke to Marisa Poster, Co-Founder of PerfectTed, about matcha green tea, Dragons' Den and self-compassion.

Temps de lecture : minute

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What was the catalyst for launching PerfectTed?

The inception of *PerfectTed* was deeply personal, born from my struggles with ADHD and anxiety exacerbated by the overreliance on coffee and energy drinks during my time studying the Masters in Innovation and Entrepreneurship at Imperial College Business School. The adverse effects of caffeine—jitters, heightened anxiety, and crashing lows—were debilitating, undermining my ability to focus and function. This led me to explore healthier alternatives, and matcha emerged as a promising option. With its roots stretching back over 800 years, used by Japanese monks for enhanced focus during meditation, matcha offered a healthier caffeine source. It delivers a sustained energy boost for 4-6 hours, thanks to its high L-theanine content, and is a powerhouse of antioxidants.

When I relocated to the UK in 2020, I was struck by the scarcity of high-quality matcha offerings, and the market's energy drink solutions were deficient in health benefits, functionality, taste, and often characterised by unappealing hypermasculinity. Recognising a void, we aimed to cater

to the underserved—women and the neurodiverse—providing them with a more inclusive and health-conscious energy alternative.

Tell me about the business - what it is, what it aims to achieve, who you work with, how you reach customers and so on?

PerfectTed is the brand spreading positive energy through matcha green tea. We are the UK's fastest-growing sport & energy drink brand and Europe's largest matcha green tea brand. In just two short years, our products—Europe's first natural energy drinks powered by matcha green tea and our ceremonial grade matcha powder products—have found their way onto the shelves of more than 3,500 retail outlets like Tesco, Waitrose, and Holland & Barrett. Moreover, we're the exclusive partner to popular café chains like Blank Street Coffee and Joe & The Juice globally. Our journey took a pivotal turn when we clinched a deal from renowned Dragons, *Steven Bartlett* and *Peter Jones*, on the *BBC's Dragons' Den*, amidst offers from all five Dragons. Notably, we've since earned the distinction of being Steven Bartlett's most successful Dragons' Den venture.

Our products are crafted to harness matcha's slow-releasing caffeine in a pure, natural formula, eliminating common energy drink pitfalls. This approach is particularly beneficial for those with neurodivergent conditions, offering a smoother energy curve, and as we've grown, advocacy for the ADHD community has become a cornerstone of our ethos.

How has the business evolved since its

launch? When was this?

PerfectTed's journey began from a personal quest for a healthier caffeine alternative during my tenure at The University of Pennsylvania. The transition to matcha was transformative, alleviating the negative impacts of traditional caffeine sources on my ADHD and anxiety.

Upon settling in the UK, the lack of quality matcha and natural energy options was stark. We pinpointed an opportunity to serve the neglected demographics in the energy drink market, particularly women and the neurodiverse community. This focus on inclusivity and health has been pivotal in our evolution, propelling us to become a leading force in the energy and matcha green tea sectors.

Tell us about the working culture at PerfectTed

At PerfectTed, our youthful energy is our superpower. With an average age of 23, our team embodies a dynamic blend of vigor and dedication. We operate on a "work hard, play hard" ethos. Our journey's been fast and furious, and every win is down to our passion and graft.

How are you funded?

We started PerfectTed on a shoestring, with me and my co-founders pouring our savings into this dream. Family loans gave us that extra push. Bootstrapping it has taught us to be smart and scrappy, hitting profitability in just 18 months—a pretty sweet milestone we're stoked about!

What has been your biggest challenge so far and how have you overcome this?

Facing Dragons' Den with mere days to prepare and battling anxiety was daunting. The pressure was intense, filled with doubt and the urge to back down. However, my commitment to not let my co-founder down and realising the importance of this opportunity pushed me beyond my fears. This episode wasn't just pivotal for PerfectTed; it marked significant personal growth, teaching me the value of resilience and the power of stepping out of my comfort zone. It affirmed that true growth and potential are often discovered when we dare to face our fears, a lesson that has profoundly impacted both my professional and personal life.

How does PerfectTed answer an unmet need?

In a world where over 70% of the UK population reports feeling tired for most of their day, it's no surprise that energy is the most sought-after functional benefit from Food & Beverage products. PerfectTed addresses this need by offering an alternative to the jittery energy of coffee and the unhealthy components of mainstream energy drinks. Our matcha-based products provide a smooth, sustained energy boost without the adverse effects, catering to those seeking a healthier lifestyle.

What's in store for the future?

We have exciting plans ahead with new products, retail partnerships, and team expansions. Our focus remains on innovation and growth, ensuring that PerfectTed continues to meet the evolving needs of our customers and the market.

What one piece of advice would you give other founders or future founders?

The key to success is to test and learn. Our initial launch on Kickstarter was a litmus test for market interest, leading to numerous iterations based on feedback. This invaluable approach underscores the importance of adapting and ensuring that your product or service genuinely enhances people's lives.

And finally, a more personal question! What's your daily routine and the rules you're living by at the moment?

Everyday looks very different, so my daily routine changes a lot, but one thing stays the same: I make sure to get in at least 30 minutes of exercise in the morning, whether that's going to Pilates, doing some yoga, or just doing crunches in my living room. Starting my day with a bit of a challenge helps me handle stress better.

I'm also trying to be kinder to myself by setting more achievable goals and exercising self-compassion. While I still aim high, especially in my aspirations for the business, I'm also working on being a bit more realistic - no one is superhuman!

Marisa Poster is the Co-Founder of *PerfectTed*.