

Fred Sipper: The Bottled Water King

A Timeline of Innovation in American Beverage History

Fred Sipper revolutionized the American beverage industry by introducing premium bottled water and gourmet beverages to mainstream consumers. From a single grocery store in Manhattan to building the largest bottled water distribution empire in the USA, his vision and innovative marketing transformed how Americans think about hydration and premium beverages.

1960

The Beginning at Irving's Food Center

Fred Sipper begins selling Perrier at Irving's Food Center on Ninth Avenue, Manhattan. He purchases cases at a time and runs full-page New York Times advertisements promoting both Perrier and the store.

1970s

Creating the First Bottled Water Section

Fred pioneers the concept of dedicated bottled water sections in supermarkets, creating the first-ever in-store water department. He successfully sells this revolutionary retail concept to NYC's top retailers and supermarket chains.

1976

Founding Mootch and Muck

When Irving's Food Center becomes too small for the volume, Fred opens a warehouse and founds Mootch and Muck Inc. - named after his parents' affectionate nicknames for each other. The company becomes America's first major bottled water distribution company.

1976-1988

Exclusive Evian Distributor

Mootch and Muck becomes the exclusive Evian distributor for the New York ADI (Area of Dominant Influence), partnering with Jack Maguire, first CEO of Evian USA.

1979

Operations During Gas Crisis

New York Times reports Irving's Food Center operating 4 vans and 5 bicycles delivering mineral water, soft drinks, beer and groceries. Despite vans waiting in early morning gasoline lines, Fred maintains free deliveries, demonstrating unwavering customer commitment.

Early 1980s

The Evian Waiter Program

Fred creates the revolutionary Evian Waiter Program, training restaurant staff to present Evian as a premium alternative to tap water. This innovation transforms bottled water from a specialty item to a standard restaurant offering.

1985

NYC Water Crisis Response

During July 1985 NYC water contamination fears, Fred's business explodes. New York Times quotes him: 'We sold out a four-month supply of Evian water in two weeks.' Mootch and Muck distributes 33 brands to 4,000 establishments with sales more than doubling.

1980s

Partnership with Jack Maguire

Fred teams up with Jack Maguire (former VP of Canada Dry, first CEO of Evian USA) to create the largest bottled water empire in the USA. Together they sponsor the NYC Marathon and run in Central

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Park wearing pink Evian shirts.

1980s

Expanding Beyond Water

Mootch and Muck pioneers distribution of premium beverages including Clearly Canadian, Orbitz, Martinelli's apple juice, Orangina, Welch's, and legendary NYC gourmet sodas like Old Tyme Soda and SOHO Soda.

1980s

Television Appearance

Fred appears on the popular game show 'To Tell The Truth,' bringing national attention to the bottled water industry and his pioneering role in making it mainstream.

1990s

First Vitamin Water Distributor

Mootch and Muck becomes the first Vitamin Water distributor, once again ahead of the curve in identifying emerging beverage trends.

1990s

San Pellegrino Distribution

Shares exclusive distribution rights to San Pellegrino with a food service distributor, bringing the iconic Italian sparkling water to New York consumers and restaurants.

2000s

Industry Recognition

Smithsonian Magazine recognizes Fred Sipper as 'The Bottled Water King' for his transformative impact on American beverage culture.

Present

Continuing Legacy

Fred continues consulting for beverage companies, distributors, and restaurants. His friendship with Jack Maguire endures, and his innovations remain foundational to the modern \$200+ billion global bottled water industry.

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Brands Distributed by Mootch and Muck

Premium Bottled Waters:

Perrier, Evian, San Pellegrino, Poland Spring, Mountain Valley, Aqua Panna, Volvic, Badoit, Apollinaris, Gerolsteiner, SPA, Contrexevelle, Clearly Canadian, Orbitz, Saratoga, Deer Park

Pioneering Beverage Brands:

Martinelli's Apple Juice, Orangina, Welch's, Old Tyme Soda (legendary NYC gourmet soda), SOHO Soda, Nice and Natural, Vitamin Water (first distributor)

This timeline documents Fred Sipper's extraordinary journey from selling cases of Perrier to building America's premier bottled water distribution empire. His innovations - from creating the first supermarket water sections to the Evian Waiter Program - fundamentally changed American beverage culture and paved the way for today's multi-billion dollar industry.