

### **Levi Roots' Reggae Reggae Sauce**

Chef and musician Levi Roots also appeared on the U.K.'s *Dragons' Den* show in 2007. The Dragons were keen to invest in his product, Reggae Reggae Sauce, a **tasty** jerk barbecue condiment.

Roots walked away with \$62,600 from Dragons Richard Farleigh and Peter Jones in exchange for 40% equity. Major U.K. supermarket Sainsbury's immediately stocked the product in 600 of its stores. Sales were projected at 50,000 bottles a year, but the chain ended up shifting 50,000 per week.

The product range was expanded and the super-popular Reggae Reggae brand is now available from a variety of retailers, as well as fast food chains including Subway and KFC. Needless to say, Levi Roots is rolling in it. His net worth is estimated at \$37.9 million.

### **Aaron Krause's Scrub Daddy**

Auto polisher and inventor Aaron Krause created his clever multitasking sponge with a smiley face in 2006 while developing a foam buffing pad. The car detail expert came up with an extra-special sponge that turns **soft in warm water and hard when it's drenched in cold water**.

The foam buffing pad was sold to 3M in 2008 and Krause almost forgot about his other invention until 2011 when he had to clean some garden furniture. Krause dug out the sponge and was bowled over by its cleaning prowess. Thinking he was on to something big, the polishing pro went on the *Shark Tank* TV show in 2012 to pitch the product.

The Sharks loved it. Krause bagged a \$200,000 investment for 20% equity from Lori Greiner, who helped him garner deals with major retailers like QVC. Scrub Daddy is now America's No. 1 sponge, with total revenues topping \$110 million, and its inventor is thought to be worth up to \$70 million.

### **Scott Boilen's Snuggie**

**Blankets with sleeves** have been around since the 1990s – the Slanket for instance was invented by Maine's Gary Clegg in 1998 – but innovator Scott Boilen's take on the concept, the all-conquering Snuggie, has been the most lucrative by a long shot.

Boilen's company Allstar Marketing Group brought the Snuggie to market in 2008 and launched a cheesy commercial that generated a lot of buzz, triggering a massive craze. A whopping 20 million Snuggies were sold in the first year, with sales exceeding \$40 million in the first three months alone.

The "Cult of the Snuggie" was featured on *The Tonight Show*, appeared in countless YouTube videos and inspired everything from Snuggie pub crawls to 'wear your Snuggie movie nights'. By 2018, the product had generated a whopping \$500 million, according to CNBC, and Boilen is now estimated to be worth at least \$200 million.

### **Hamdi Ulukaya's Chobani**

In 2005, Kurdish businessman and dairy guru Hamdi Ulukaya spotted a gap in the U.S. market for thick, strained **Greek-style yogurt** and set about launching his own version. The **all-natural product**, which he called Chobani, launched in 2007.

Starting off by selling to small-scale retailers, Ulukaya relied on word of mouth initially to promote the product and this strategy paid off a treat. In 2009, several major chain stores began to stock the yogurt and sales hit the roof.

By 2012, Chobani had grown to become America's leading Greek-style yogurt brand with revenues topping \$1 billion. A resounding success, the brand has remained on top and Ulukaya is now worth \$2 billion, according to Forbes.

### **Nick Woodman's GoPro Hero**

GoPro Hero inventor Nick Woodman had his eureka moment in 2002 on a surf trip to Australia. Keen to capture all the action, Woodman cobbled together a wrist strap that enabled him to wear his camera while hitting the waves.

Woodman developed his idea further and, with the help of a loan from his father, launched the first GoPro Hero in 2004. The product consisted of a Chinese-made 35mm camera and Woodman's custom strap. Sales were buoyant from the get-go and doubled year on year.

The camera, which is now digital and has spawned a HD video version, was selling in the millions by 2012. GoPro went public in 2014 and Woodman's net worth peaked at \$3.9 billion. Since then, the company share price has tanked as sales have bottomed out. Still, Woodman remains fabulously rich, though his net worth has fallen to a reported \$900 million.

### **Sara Blakely's Spanx**

Sara Blakely came up with the idea for Spanx in 1996 when she was working as a door-to-door saleswoman in Florida and had to wear panty hose on the job. Blakely liked the slimming effect but hated the way the seams showed when she was sporting open-toe sandals.

One evening, Blakely was getting ready for a party and wanted to wear a pair of white trousers, but didn't have any underwear that wouldn't show through the fabric, so she grabbed a pair of her work panty hose, cut off the leg parts, and Spanx was born.

Realizing her invention's potential, Blakely invested her life savings of \$5,000 into developing the concept. Spanx launched in 2000 and found its way into major department stores in no time. Sales soared and the product became a lingerie staple. Blakely is now estimated to be worth \$1 billion.

### **Manoj Bhargava's 5-Hour Energy**

Former monk Manoj Bhargava dreamed up his \$1 billion product after tasting an energy drink at a trade show in California back in 2003. Michigan-based Bhargava was put off by the large bottle and thought a mini shot-sized version would be more appealing to consumers.

He wasn't wrong. Bhargava formulated a stimulating concoction of caffeine and B vitamins that he packed into tiny 2-ounce bottles. His 5-Hour Energy drink was launched that same year and picked up by drugstores, supermarkets and convenience stores. It has since taken America by storm.

Now the go-to mini energy drink for everyone from athletes to students, 5-Hour Energy pulls in annual revenues of almost \$1 billion. Bhargava, who has signed the Giving Pledge and intends to give away 99% of his fortune, is thought to have a net worth of up to \$1.5 billion.