

MONARQ thrives in troubled regional environment

Spirits distribution and marketing company MONARQ Group not only survived the troubling times in the region in 2015, but thrived to have another positive year, says MONARQ managing director/owner Robert de Monchy.

“We have been in the fortunate position that 2015 has been another year of double digit growth, despite the nosedive of the Brazilian economy and its duty free border business. Our growth came mostly from the Caribbean region, Colombia, Mexico and USA Duty Free,” he says. “This year started well, especially for the Caribbean and Central American region while most of the South Cone of Latin America remains under pressure due to the Brazilian crisis.”

The instability in Brazil has been felt throughout the entire region, says de Monchy.

“Latin America has been heavily impacted by the Brazilian crisis, especially its neighboring markets, Uruguay, Paraguay and Bolivia. Argentina travel retail/duty free continued to do well in 2015 but is expected to suffer from the Brazilian currency crisis as well this year. On the other hand, Chile, Peru and Central America did well. Colombia and Mexico are facing some challenges due to the devaluation of their currency but I believe that they rebound relatively fast since the remaining socio-economic indicators look positive. Like most people in our business, we are looking out to see what will happen in Cuba.”

The strongest performers in MONARQ’s spirits portfolio in 2015 were Heineken, Bols, Ole Smoky Moonshine, Seagram’s, Zubrowka and Crystal Head Vodka, says de Monchy.

“The Bacardi specialty brands portfolio, such as Oxley London Dry Gin, B&B / Benedictine and Noilly Prat have also done well, as have the Italian brands Fernet Branca, Molinari and Luxardo. The London Dry



The successful Limoncello di Capri sorbet ice machine program

Gins of Quintessential Brands made a very promising start, especially Greenall’s, Bloom and Opihr Oriental Spiced Gin. Scotch Single Malt brand Tomatin, Michter’s bourbon and American whiskeys and Jefferson’s ridiculously small batch bourbon have also performed particularly well,” he says.

“We have three new Heineken TR/DF exclusive promotions lined up for 2016 and will roll out the hugely. We will also launch a TR exclusive pack for Jefferson’s ridiculously small batch bourbon: Jefferson’s Declaration.”

MONARQ will also offer a new TR exclusive 4x5cl pack for Crystal Head Vodka and introduce the 1 liter TR/DF bottles for Opihr Oriental Spiced Gin and Bloom London Dry Gin at the IAADFS.

MONARQ’s portfolio is well positioned to take advantage of the spirits trends in the region, says de Monchy.

“While Vodka & Scotch Whisky will certainly maintain their leading position, we find an increased consumer interest in Gin, Bourbon, Tequila, Irish Whiskey and Single Malt Scotch Whisky growing. High quality traditional American spirits such as

Mezcal, Moonshine, Cachaça and Pisco are still relatively small but also gaining share. I also see quite a lot of new initiatives in the r(h)um category and this could well be the next category to - finally - seriously take off in travel retail/duty free. The wine category is also gaining interest and shelf space.”

Despite the challenges in Latin America, MONARQ has extended its reach in the region with new brands and listings.

“During the last year we have taken on board a number of new premium brands, most notably Del Maguey Mezcal, Rhum J.M, St Germain, Cognac D’Ussé and the iconic Chartreuse brand. We also started working with Licor 43 in Latin America and Boulard Calvados in USA Duty Free. At the IAADFS we will proudly introduce Tamdhu Speyside Single Malt Scotch Whisky and Kilchoman Islay Single Malt Scotch Whisky, the only independent Single Malt distillery on Islay.”

MONARQ listed Heineken with JPT in Iquique, Chile; Luxardo with DFA; Ole Smoky Moonshine and Toussaint Rum Coffee liqueur with UETA; Alizé, Opihr, Boulard Calvados, Charles Smith Wines and Limoncello di Capri with SMT; Atlantico Rum and Rhum J.M with Caribbean ARI; Ole Smoky with Neutral; AIX Rose de Provence and Pocas with London Supply; and Tomatin Single Malt Scotch with Shopping China.

MONARQ Group has extended and upgraded its booth in Orlando and has high expectations for the Duty Free Show of the Americas.

“We have a full meeting schedule with existing and potentially new customers, it’s hard work and great fun at the same time. We will have laughs, espressos and drinks with our friends and join the social and sports programs as well, such as golf and tennis.”

