Best Practice Guidebook

# The Coca Cola Company

# Creating Brand Value through Content Excellence

The Coca-Cola Company **INDUSTRY** 

Consumer Packaged Goods

REVENUE (2012)

\$48.01 billion USD



### Challenge

Facing profound changes in the way consumers access and share information, The Coca-Cola Company recognizes that the effectiveness and relevance of traditional creative media are fast diminishing



#### Solution

Coca-Cola designs a content-based marketing strategy to drive consumer conversations, inspire purchases, and enhance brand value.



Applicability to **Executive Functions** 





# Solution Components



Devise a Content Strategy »



Create "Liquid and Linked" Ideas »



**Develop Compelling** Content »



Measure Impact »



### Coca-Cola's Key Lessons Learned

- Storytelling is a powerful tool to use within a company, just like it is for your target audience. It is all too frequently overlooked by companies. Businesses need to use persuasive storytelling to create cultural change, which can galvanize a new strategy and align companywide stakeholders.
- When creating a new strategy, collective inputs are important to ensure cross-functional perspectives are incorporated. That said, it is crucial that the final output has one primary author and voice. This ensures the narrative of the strategy has a consistent tone and flow, which invariably strengthens the message and enhances receptivity.

**READ MORE»** 



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# The Coca Cola Company

HEADQUARTERS Atlanta, Georgia, United States GEOGRAPHIC FOOTPRINT Global OWNERSHIP Public EMPLOYEES (2012) 150,900

### **Business Results**

- Increased global unit case volume
- Boosted stock prices
- · Recognition through international marketing and advertising awards



# \* Resources Required

- An internal leader to spearhead the project
- A team of key creative experts representing all the regions
- An internal creative director/producer



# Contact the Growth Team Membership<sup>™</sup> (GTM)

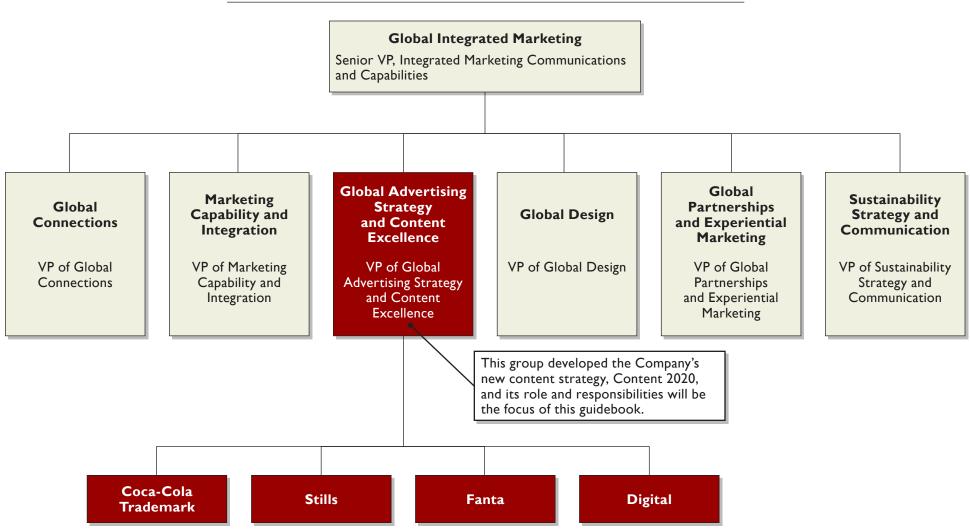






Within The Coca-Cola Company's Global Integrated Marketing, Communications and Capabilities, Global Advertising Strategy and Content Excellence is responsible for the Company's content strategy

Integrated Marketing Communications and Capabilities Organization Structure\*



<sup>\*</sup> Organizational structure as of June 2011.

# The Coca-Cola Company develops and implements a content marketing strategy that significantly elevates the role of content across the brand portfolio

Content Strategy Implementation Process



Create "Liquid and Linked" Ideas

**Develop Compelling Content** 

**Measure Impact** 



#### **Objective**

Develop a framework to guide content production through 2020

#### **Key Activities**

- Examine trends in generation and consumption of content
- Convene creative leaders from throughout the Company to craft a content strategy
- Solicit Companywide feedback on the content strategy
- Share the content strategy publicly



#### **Objective**

Generate compelling ideas that support key marketing objectives

#### **Key Activities**

- Develop engaging ideas that can take on a life of their own
- Ensure the ideas assist the Company's business objectives, brand goals, and consumer interests



#### **Objective**

Create content that drives brand conversations and value

#### **Key Activities**

- Categorize content as high, medium, and low risk
- Designate how much time and resources to invest in each category
- Prioritize the content through a voting-based selection process



#### **Objective**

Assess the effectiveness of the Company's content marketing efforts

#### **Key Activities**

- Identify meaningful metrics for each content initiative
- Analyze consistent metrics to gauge content's impact



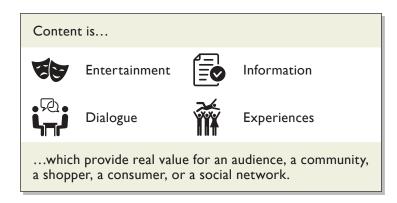
### KEY TAKEAWAY: Engage with consumers on their own terms (not yours)

Coca-Cola confronts the reality that traditional creative does not produce the engagement that it did in a pre-social media age

#### Corporate Context

- Coca-Cola plans to double its system revenue by 2020, and Marketing must play a key role in meeting this goal.
- The revenue goal prompts Marketing to rethink its approach on traditional creative.
- Marketing determines that content must drive its strategy for the future.

#### What is Content?



The Case for Content: Consumers...

# ... Access information whenever they want, however they want...



#### **Attributes**

- 24-7 Information: Technology has granted consumers access to information wherever and whenever they want it, which requires real-time marketing to stay relevant
- Convenience: The proliferation of social media platforms allows consumers to easily find and share information

#### ... Are in the driver's seat...



#### **Attributes**

- Consumer Empowerment: The traditional approach of companies talking at consumers is no longer viable. Consumers now talk among themselves and use a multiplicity of sources when evaluating a company's goods/services.
- Signal-to-Noise Ratio: Consumers have an array of messages vying for their attention and companies have to compete by providing more exclusive and engaging content

# ...Are already a part of the conversation



#### **Attributes**

- A Bigger Tent: Anyone, anywhere—from Coca-Cola associates to customers, and from brand fans to brand detractors—can participate in brand and category conversations. Companies therefore need an array of engaging content to inspire these discussions
- Age of Advocacy: As there is a continual dialogue among consumers, companies must identify brand advocates, engage with them in a transparent manner, and consistently deliver value-adding content



# KEY TAKEAWAY: Use a facilitator to promote new thinking about content

Content Excellence employs an external facilitator to drive the Content Strategy Development Team's pre-meeting outputs

Developing a Manifesto for Content Excellence

#### Steps

# Assign Pre-Meeting Work

# Provide Sufficient Time for Preparation

#### **Create Presentations**

Output

Content Excellence sets out to create the Manifesto for Content Excellence—new thinking on how Coca-Cola's brands will engage consumers.

**Establish Objective** 

Content Excellence chooses 40 key creative experts (e.g., creative and production directors) from all regions of the world to make up the Content Strategy Development Team.

**Select Participants** 

Content Excellence assigns each participant a topic that is related to the future of content marketing.

Chapter One (**John**): The Case for Change

Chapter Two (Maria and leff):

Defining (or Rethinking) a Core Creative Idea

Content Excellence gives participants six weeks to work on their assigned topics and consult with an external facilitator to refine their presentations.

The participants finalize their 45-minute presentations and share them with their colleagues in person at a meeting at Coca-Cola's Atlanta headquarters.

#### The External Facilitator Is...



A Content Vision Advocate: Works closely with the VP of Global Advertising Strategy and Content Excellence to ensure the team's work is consistent with the VP's content vision and the project's objectives

An Alignment Promoter: Ensures individuals working in teams collaborate and reach consensus

An Objective Third-Party Guide: Provides an impartial, external perspective on the team's content excellence presentations

A Flexible (Yet Structured) Taskmaster: Encourages team members to bring originality to their open-ended topic assignments, while ensuring all presentations have comparable substance and detail

Content vision is "the development of powerful ideas that spark liquid content that generates social currency for our brands in order to earn a disproportionate share of popular culture."

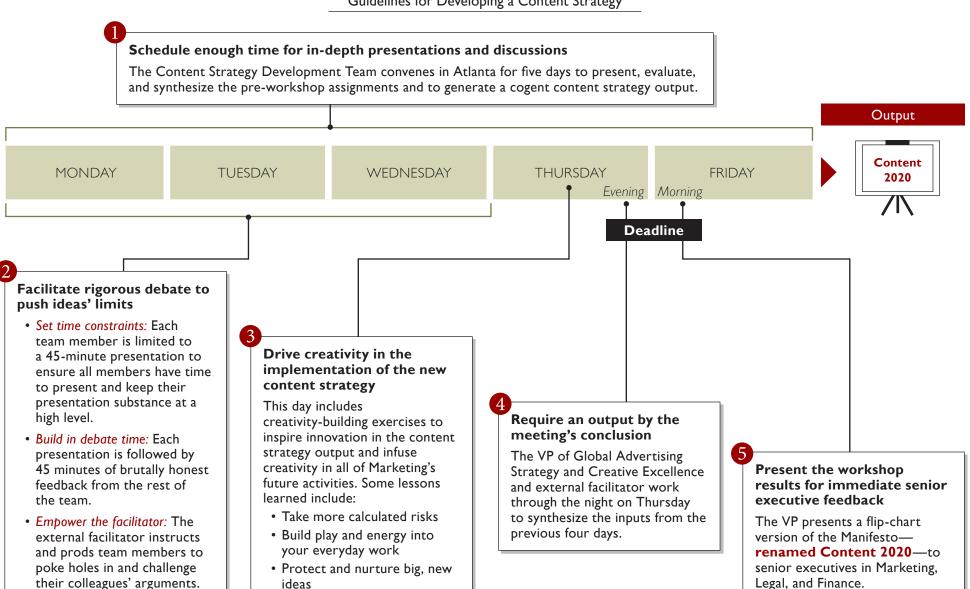




### **KEY TAKEAWAY:** Embed debate and deadlines to drive a revolutionary content strategy

Content Excellence applies specific workshop guidelines to facilitate the development of its content strategy

Guidelines for Developing a Content Strategy





# KEY TAKEAWAY: Transform the launch of your content strategy into compelling content itself

Content Excellence approaches the content strategy launch as a marketing exercise

#### Content Strategy Launch Guidelines

#### Content 2020 Video:

Part I: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LerdMmWjU\_E

Part 2: http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fiwIq-8GWA8

#### **Select the Best Content Vehicle**

#### Content Excellence:

- Uses Whiteboard Animation to tell the story of Content 2020
- Engages the audience by using creative chapter names and a lighthearted tone to describe the strategy's key elements

**CONTENT 2020** 

Table of Contents\*

Content Excellence Approach "Liquid and Linked" Content

• Chapter 2: The Case for Change

Purpose into Our Storytelling

• Chapter 3: The Evolution of

• Chapter 4: Baking Social

• Chapter I: How Does

Development?

Storytelling

Plans

# Make the Content Dynamic

#### Content Excellence:

- Encourages feedback by sharing all iterations of the strategy internally, which demonstrates the strategy's dynamic nature and Coca-Cola's willingness to evolve it
- Implements feedback and ensures that stakeholders are aware of the changes they drive

#### Drive Awareness of the Strategy

Content Excellence shares Content 2020 publicly at the 2011 Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity and on YouTube, which:

- Generates positive buzz
- Bolsters internal confidence about the strategy
- Demonstrates the Company's commitment to the strategy
- Inspires internal and external stakeholders to generate higher quality communications

<sup>\*</sup> See the Tools & Resources section for the full Content 2020 table of contents.



## KEY TAKEAWAY: Create a content ideology that matches consumer behavior

Content Excellence uses "liquid and linked" ideas, which reflect consumers' propensity to share information, as the foundation of content creation

Liquid and Linked: A Content Ideology

#### Recognize Changes in Consumer Behavior

Consumers interact with an array of sources and participate in many conversations that influence purchase behavior, which a company cannot control.

#### **Develop a New Content Ideology**

Coca-Cola needs to develop a content ideology—a shared perspective on how its brands communicate—that reflects consumers' increasing control over the purchasing process.

#### **Liquid and Linked**

Liquid: ideas so compelling, they cannot be controlled

Linked: ideas that are relevant to Coca-Cola's business objectives, brand objectives, and consumer interests



· Coca-Cola selects an additional 50 names (e.g., Kayla, Martin, and Maddy) for its cans/bottles and places kiosks throughout Australia for consumers to customize their Cokes

Control of the Conversation: Coca-Cola and consumers

# Objectives

Understanding Linked

The Challenge

- Increase penetration of Australian market
- Boost brand awareness
- Share Coke-inspired moments of happiness as widely as possible

#### Results (within the first three months)

- · Coca-Cola's volume in Australia increases by 4 percent
- Young adult consumption of Coke increases by 7 percent
- Facebook traffic increases by 870 percent
- Coca-Cola kiosks print 378,000 customized cans

\* See the Tools & Resources section for information on Coca-Cola's consumer-generated content. *Source*: The Coca-Cola Company; Growth Team Membership<sup>TM</sup> research.

conversations...

...which Coca-Cola

must react to 365

days a year...



# KEY TAKEAWAY: Manage the risk level of content to ensure continuous innovation

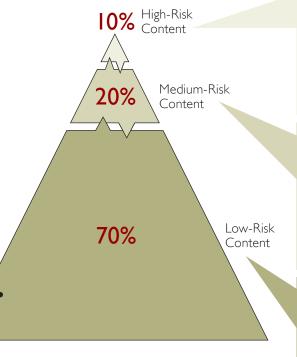
Content Excellence applies 70/20/10 investment principles to create a mix of high-, medium-, and low-risk content to maximize productivity and creativity

#### Content Portfolio Composition

# 70/20/10 INVESTMENT - PRINCIPLES

- 1. Predicate your content portfolio on the concept of risk
- 2. Categorize risk
- 3. Mandate the amount of content that each category accounts for
- 4. Stipulate the percentage of work you should devote to each type of content

These categories can shift over time—i.e., today's 20 percent content can become tomorrow's 70 percent, and today's 10 percent can become tomorrow's 20 percent.



Definition: Brand-new ideas that break new ground

Example: Chok Chok TV commercial: consumer-generated content

Why is this high risk? Consumers eventually control the conversation—by posting the commercial on YouTube, using the mobile app on their computers, and posting videos of themselves discussing the promotion.

Time Commitment: 25 percent

Definition: Innovating upon something that has worked before

Example: Chok Chok TV commercial: the mobile app

Why is this medium risk? Coca-Cola enables consumers to interact with the brand via a mobile app during the TV commercial to win prizes—Coca-Cola's first interactive TV gaming promotion using a mobile app.

Time Commitment: 25 percent

Definition: "Bread and butter" content

Example: Chok Chok TV commercial

Why is this low risk? The TV commercial is a tried-and-true

medium.

Time Commitment: 50 percent

#### CONTENT PRIORITIZATION PROCESS



- 1. All content ideas—in the proof-of-concept stage—are illustrated on playing cards
- 2. All creative staff reviews the playing cards
- 3. The staff sorts the ideas into the 70, 20, and 10 percent categories on a board
- 4. The staff prioritizes each idea through a voting-based selection process



## KEY TAKEAWAY: Prioritize organizational learning, not business impact, when evaluating high-risk content

Content Excellence recognizes that traditional metrics cannot assess cutting-edge ideas

#### Assessing Content's Impact

#### 10 Percent: High-Risk Content

By definition, breakthrough content necessitates experimentation. This focus on testing and learning precludes the use of metrics designed for conventional content

#### 20 Percent: Medium-Risk Content

Traditional Coca-Cola metrics—Brand Love and Brand Value

#### 70 Percent: Low-Risk Content

Traditional Coca-Cola metrics—Brand Love and Brand Value

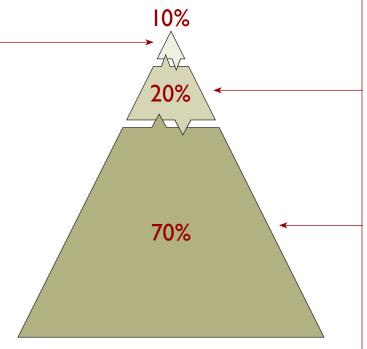
#### - CASE IN POINT: -"SHARE A COKE" AUSTRALIA, 2011

*Idea:* Feature the most popular names in Australia on Coke cans and bottles.

*Content Category:* 10 percent (high risk and cutting edge).

Appropriate Metrics: The objective is to determine the viability of a liquid idea; therefore, no traditional media and campaign metrics are applied.

Outcome: The "Share a Coke" concept and execution are validated through measures like a volume increase. (This concept is explored further on the right.)



# "SHARE A COKE AND A SONG" JAPAN, 2013

*Idea*: Feature the most popular names in Japan on Coke cans and bottles, but build upon the original idea.

Content Category: 70 percent (the idea is viable). However, Japan enhances the original concept—labeling Coke bottles with a specific year and enabling the consumer to download hit songs from that year—so it becomes a 20 percent idea.

Appropriate Metrics: Business impact can be measured through Brand Love and Brand Value.

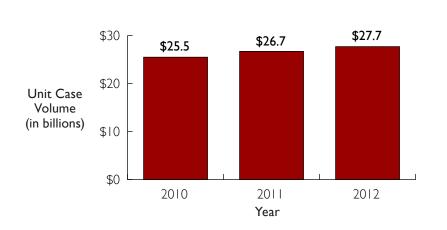
*Outcome:* The "Share a Coke and a Song" concept resonates and drives a 17 percent volume gain.

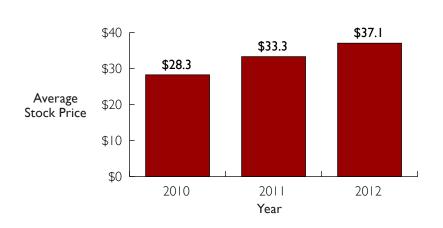
#### **Business Results**

During this timeframe, Content 2020 contributed to Coca-Cola's strong growth and stock price performance...

#### Global Unit Case Volume (in billions)

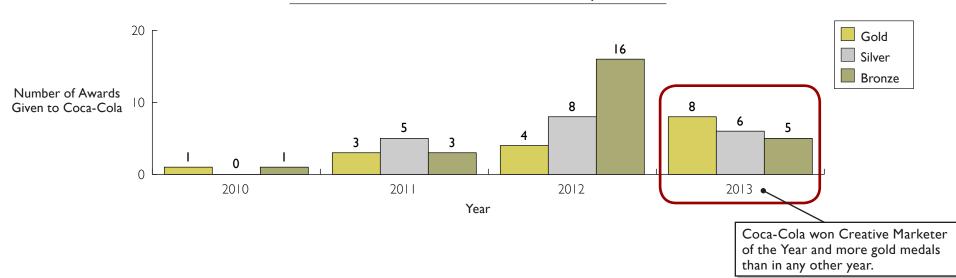
#### Average Stock Price (in U.S. dollars)





...and key marketing awards

#### Cannes Lions International Festival of Creativity Awards



### Key Lessons Learned

#### **Profiled Company Perspective**

- Storytelling is a powerful tool to use within a company, just like it is for your target audience. It is
  all too frequently overlooked by companies. Businesses need to use persuasive storytelling to create
  cultural change, which can galvanize a new strategy, like Content 2020, and align companywide
  stakeholders.
- When creating a new strategy, collective inputs are important to ensure cross-functional perspectives are incorporated. That said, it is crucial that the final output has one primary author and voice. This ensures the narrative of the strategy has a consistent tone and flow, which invariably strengthens the message and enhances receptivity.
- It is critical to have a compelling visual depiction of a new idea or strategy. The narrative of Content 2020 is brought to life with dynamic Whiteboard Animation illustrations, which create a visual story that keeps the audience interested in the manifesto from start to finish. A consistent and captivating visual story is especially important for a global, multinational company, as it can cross cultural and language barriers.

# Supporting Tools & Resources

Content Strategy Development Team

#### **Production Directors**

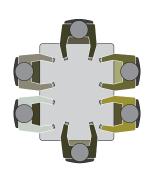
Produce the work once a script is developed, securing the best production partners and ensuring partners deliver high-quality work.

#### **Creative Directors**

Steward the overall creative content of each global brand, while the wider team executes the creative vision.

#### **Creative Strategists**

Build the Company's overall communication strategy, manage consumer data and build system-wide confidence that the creative work will be successful.



#### Global Director, Creative Asset Management

Manages all creative assets, including people; co-facilitator of the Content Manifesto Meeting; producer of the Content 2020 film.

#### **External Facilitator**

Co-facilitator of the Content Manifesto Meeting.

#### **Communications Managers**

Act as the conduit between the creative and brand management teams.

### Supporting Tools & Resources

Managing Consumer-Generated Content

Consumer-generated content accounts for the majority of content about Coca-Cola. Coca-Cola encourages consumers to create liquid ideas by identifying and curating quality content.



#### **Audit Consumer-Generated Content**

Marketing conducts an audit of all Coca-Cola-related content on YouTube.



80 percent of Coca-Cola-related content is user generated.



#### **Curate Consumer-Generated Content**

Coca-Cola continually monitors and shares quality consumer-generated content.

#### PRINCIPLES OF EFFECTIVE -CONTENT CURATION

- Establish a relationship with the audience
- Educate or entertain the audience
- Encourage authors to produce additional content of comparable quality
- Cultivate thought leadership

#### Case in Point:

#### "Love is in the Air: A Coca-Cola Valentine," 2013

To encourage valuable consumer-generated content, Coca-Cola holds an open-source competition for content featuring consumers celebrating moments of happiness with Coke, in connection with a holiday.

- Coca-Cola selects (and awards an \$8,000 prize for) a short video, entitled "Love is in the Air: A Coca-Cola Valentine," and features it on American Idol on Valentine's Day.
- This American Idol episode has more than 12.5 million viewers, which is the biggest stage ever given to Coca-Cola's user-generated content.

#### Love is in the Air Film:

http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CtW2tw-OzL0



# Supporting Tools & Resources

#### Content 2020

# **Table of Contents** CHAPTER I: How Does Content Excellence Approach 'Liquid and Linked' Content Development **CHAPTER 2:** The Case for Change **CHAPTER 3:** The Evolution of Storytelling **CHAPTER 4:** Baking Social Purpose into our Storytelling Plans **CHAPTER 5:** From Insights to Provocations—The Big Fat Fertile Creative Brief **CHAPTER 6:** Developing Liquid Content CHAPTER 7: Applying the 70/20/10 Investment Principles for Liquid Content **CHAPTER 8:** Researching Liquid Content **CHAPTER 9:** Applying The Dollar Multiplier and the Iterative Production Process CHAPTER 10: In Summary