



The development of Coca-Cola Advertising Campaigns 1886-2007

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**The Development of Coca-Cola
Advertising Campaigns
(1886 - 2007)**

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INTRODUCTION

The major purpose of this thesis is to present how the Coca-Cola Advertising Campaigns have developed since the birth of the Coca-Cola Company in May, 1886 till now, 2007.

From the beginning of civilisation we are exposed to the influence of advertising in variety of forms. Advertising is everywhere: in the sky, at home, in the street, at school, in hospitals and so on. Having the essential knowledge in the field, advertising campaigns are an efficient tool in the hands of companies that gain more power in a global market. They want to attract more and more consumers who buy and remember their products.

Well-known advertising campaigns such as those created by Coca-Cola are a key to success on the international market only if they are constantly being brought up to date and if they take into consideration the changing needs of consumers. One of the most popular companies, Coca-Cola, has scored a success that one has never ever dreamt about before.

The First Chapter presents basic concepts of advertising including: a definition of advertising and advertising campaigns, major types and objectives of ads. Moreover, it contains a brief history of advertising: its first forms, effects of industrialization in the field of advertising and product promotion in modern world.

The Penultimate Chapter depicts a brief history of the “Coke” and focuses on the Coca-Cola Advertising Campaigns development from very early forms in the first campaigns through newer campaigns in Colombia, India and UK till the time of “The Year of Zero Coke: 2007”. Moreover, this chapter presents a general overview of the

beverage industry activity during the last fifty years and the case of changing the national symbols such as Santa Claus which is transparently emphasized.

The Third Chapter is devoted to the language analysis in advertising campaigns. In this chapter we can find the information what the roots are and what DA is, we can count some uses and rules that govern Discourse Studies. We discuss the reliability and validity issues, advantages and disadvantages of DA, a short description of the language of advertising and language analysis in Coca-Cola slogans from 1886 to 2007.

Early advertisements were not very attractive because of their colours (black and white). They were also not very convincing because they were addressed to receiver that was unknown. Now, there is a wide spectrum of numerous attractive advertisements that were created for the purpose of the new advertising campaigns. They are being changed and matched to the tastes and needs of consumers all the time.

Coca-Cola has become an international company that has flooded many markets with its products. Both advertising theory and practice were included in Coke advertising campaigns. New ideas and new attempts to reach some interest of the audience are aimed to evoke the desire in the mind of consumer and to leave something in a memory- something that will be remembered by the next generations. The success of Coca-Cola campaigns, its slogans, songs, products etc. is a cultural phenomenon and tradition.

Chapter I: The Basic Concepts of Advertising

„Advertising is the principal reason why the business person has come to inherit the earth.”

James R. Adams ¹

1. Brief History of Advertising

Advertising is more than just giving publicity to products. It is one of the stages, comprised by marketing, between creation of the product and the after-market which follows the subsequent sale. According to Frank Jefkins *advertising* is hence as vital as every other level or link, and each relies on the other for success.²

The promoted service or product itself, its distribution, naming and pricing, are all considered in advertising, the field which is very often called the lifeblood of an organization. Existence would be difficult for companies without advertising. Certainly, the goods and services would not move to manufacturers or vendors and to the consumers and users.

¹ James R. Adams, Quotes: Available on: <http://www.answers.com/topic/james-adams>

² Frank Jefkins, *Advertising*, the M&E Handbook Series, Second Edition, 1991

1.1. Preliminary forms

The contemporary industrial world has been changing over the years to become the industrialized advertising territory. Many years ago when a shopkeeper could only present and tout his or her products to ordinary passers-by, advertising in the present form hardly appeared.

Some of the initial forms of advertising were very simple, for instance signs such as the apothecary's jar of coloured fluid, the inn sign, the red-and-white striped barber's pole etc. Some of them exist still today.³

1.2. Result of urban growth

The need for advertising developed with the expansion of population and the growth of towns with their shops and large stores.

It was further developed by mass production in manufactures. Roads and railways that convey goods, and popular newspapers in with advertisements. The large quantities of goods produced were made known by means of advertising to unknown customers who lived far from the place of manufacturing.

Frank Jenkins says that advertising grew with the development of media, such as the coffee-house newspapers of the seventeenth century, and the arrival of advertising agencies nearly 200 years ago, mainly to handle government advertising.

1.3. Advertising in Modern World.

Looking back at the late nineteenth century London one would notice that the horse buses carry adverts for products popular nowadays. It stands for effectiveness of advertising.⁴ The modern world depends bravely on advertising. Without it

³ Frank Jenkins, *Advertising*, the M&E Handbook Series, Second Edition, 1991

⁴ Ibid.

producers and distributors would be unable to sell their products, and buyers would not know which products or services to choose. Perhaps the modern industrial world would collapse.

If factory output is to be maintained successfully, advertising must be influential and efficient. Mass production needs mass consumption which in turn depends upon advertising to the mass market over mass media. The level of advertising marks the development and affluence of a country.

2. Variety of Definitions

2.1. What is Advertising?

Being used as the means of communicating the desire to buy and purchase goods, advertising has become the representative of society of the time. Advertising for a very long time has represented new services and new products. Nowadays, doubled with methods for communicating over the mass media it is perceived as an important, influential and ever-changing process.

Advertising shall be a representation of the economic progress of societies, and in this case it varies from the old-fashioned styles of life in the industrialized world to the modern life-styles of developing countries. A country's abundance is considered at the level to which the advertising is used.⁵

Non-personal character of advertising means that it's not conducted by the company representatives but instead, it makes use of many means of communication. The subject of the field includes such products as materials or services and even ideas which create company's identity.

⁵ Frank Jeffkins, *Advertising*, the M&E Handbook Series ,Second Edition,1991

Chapter II: The Development of Coca-Cola Advertising Campaigns

1. Brief History of Coca-Cola



Figure 2. Coca - Cola Company - Red Spencerian Script⁶

In May, 1886 a pharmacist from Atlanta, Doctor John Pemberton invented Coca Cola.⁷ The 'Coke' formula was discovered in a brass kettle in his patio. The name was only a proposition given to John Pemberton by his accountant Frank Robinson. Atlanta's prohibition law convinced Dr. John Pemberton to change the name and write again the recipe for his popular nerve tonic, energizer and remedy for a headache, "Pemberton's French Wine Coca," was exchanged for money by bulk of the city's pharmacists. Since the new 'Coke' made her debut in the same year,

⁶ Image: CocaCola.png, Available on: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:CocaCola.png> (last access on 27.05.2007)

⁷ Coca-Cola History, Available on: http://www.solarnavigator.net/sponsorship/coca_cola.htm

having "the valuable tonic and nerve stimulant properties of the coca plant and cola nuts," as well as sweetened with sugar replacing wine.⁸

It was not only advertised as a "delicious, exhilarating, refreshing and invigorating" cooler but also as the excellent "temperance drink."

Coke is said to have been invented when one American called De Luise, having worked at a soda fountain in 19th century, hit the soda water spigot by chance and added carbonated water to the mixture in the glass. The effect was a "happy accident": the discovery of Coca-Cola. Although Pemberton passed away two years later, he managed to fill for inclusion of the first Coca-Cola Company in March 24, 1888.⁹

The inventor and his partners brought to life the trademark formed more than one hundred years ago. Nowadays, it is one of the best widely recognized brands in the world. Moreover, 'Coke' beverage is now called the most popular soft drink in the world and its unit sales figured close to 3,200 servings in 1886 ("nine drinks per day" in accordance with the number of gallons of mixture sold to chemist's by Pemberton Chemical Co.).¹⁰

According to Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, many historians of Coca Cola describe him as "a local pharmacist" who invented the world's most desirable soft-drink mixture in a three-legged kettle in his patio. The archivist, Monroe Martin King¹¹ said: "He's occasionally portrayed as a wandering medicine man, but Dr. Pemberton worked in a fully outfitted laboratory and claimed to manufacture every chemical and pharmaceutical preparation used in the arts and sciences."¹²

Of course, Pemberton¹³ has had skillful successors in Roberto Goizueta, Asa Candler, Robert Woodruff who created the product and then the company into a picture of profit and pleasure.

Pemberton in the eyes of King remained captivated in widening the market for French Wine Coca, a product dependent on the formula of another coca-based beverage, Vin Mariani which had been invented in Paris in 1863. One year after the

⁸ Ibid.

⁹ Coca-Cola History , Available on :http://www.solarnavigator.net/sponsorship/coca_colo.htm

¹⁰ Ibid.

¹¹ Jack Hades, *Nation's Restaurant News*, 30 (February 1996):p. 120-121

¹² *Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopaedia*, Available on :http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/The_Coca-Cola_Company

¹³ *Dr. John S. Pemberton (inventor of Coca-Cola) by Jack Hayes* Available on: <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/ccmphtml/colainvnt.html>

passage of Atlanta's prohibition act Pemberton had to reassume manufacture as well as sale of his original patent medicine. He left his son, Charles to supervise the production of Coca-Cola.

Even though Pemberton may have visualized a future for his soft-drink invention, inducing six Atlanta tycoons to invest in the new Coca-Cola business for unexplained reasons. He shortly started exchanging for money his interest in the formula.

Frank Robinson was the first person who scripted "Coca Cola" into the flowing letters which has evolved the popular symbol of our times. At the soda fountain in Jacob's Pharmacy in Atlanta on May 8, 1886 Coke was sold for the first time. Each day there were about nine servings of Coke. During first year of sales there were more losses than profits.

Until 1905, Coke was known as a tonic that had some extracts of cocaine plus the caffeine-rich kola nut. In the late 1890s, Coke was one of America's most favourite soft drinks. The Coca-Cola Company raised syrup sales between 1890 and 1900 by over 4000% thanks to another pharmacist from Atlanta, Asa Griggs Candler. Advertising was a vital ingredient for the success of Pemberton and Candler. Later on, Coke was sold across Canada and the United States.¹⁴

Around the turn of the century, the company started the sale of syrup to independent bottling firms that had a license to sell the drink. This principle exists even today in the US soft drink industry. According to King¹⁵, Asa Candler who had worked for Pemberton, owned all of the Coke business by 1891. One of Pemberton's first missions was to modify the original formula so that "to improve the taste of the product, to ensure its uniformity and its stability."¹⁶ Asa Candler's son said that Candler had employed Pemberton's onetime partner, Frank Robinson. According to Asa Candler's son, Candler hired Pemberton's former partner, Frank Robinson. Charles Candler said that the two of them "by adding essential ingredients and taking others out perfected the formula".

Undoubtedly, the man who established the Coca-Cola name and script logo was Robinson. He also persuaded the company to bind the classic slogan "delicious

¹⁴ *Dr. John S. Pemberton (inventor of Coca-Cola) by Jack Hayes* Available on: <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/ccmphtml/colainvnt.html>

¹⁵ Jack Hades, *Nation's Restaurant News*, 30 (February 1996):p. 120-121

¹⁶ *Coca-Cola History*, Available on :http://www.solarnavigator.net/sponsorship/coca_cola.htm

and refreshing" with advertising that will appear in the future. Following the turn of the century, Coca-Cola counsels discussed that their syrup had only a small flavor extract of the coca leaf, because federal and state authorities started writing legal documents to forbid the purchase of coca products since of they were supposed to be contaminated with the cocaine. Attorneys of 'Coke' Company were called to fight against rivals who said that the product name is obviously misinterpretation, whether its major components were not the kola nut and the coca leaf that were said to be the cure for headaches. Despite many different problems, Candler's braveness as a businessman had taken the advertised Coca-Cola drink into "every state and territory in the United States" by 1895.

Taking into consideration first coupon promotions, Candler suggested two gallons of Coca-Cola mixture "to any retailer or soda fountain man" who would dole out 128 free portions of the drink to buyers who turned up with one of his cards. Many syrup manufacturing appliances began business in such cities as Los Angeles, Dallas or Chicago , in addition, a web of bottlers was being developed nationwide shortly.

Since 1923 till 1981 Coca-Cola rose its dominance from local to international under Woodruff's administration.

Close to 1928 fountain sales had been dimmed by bottled sales owing to initial presentation of a box so called the six-pack. One year after 1928 the company launched metal open-top coolers. In 1933 there was a debut made by automatic fountain dispensers at the Chicago World Fair. Firstly, Woodruff increase Coca Cola brand into forty-four countries by the start point of World War II. Secondly, after fifteen years of the war's termination Woodruff had succeed in doubling that number.

Contemporary director and chief executive of Coca-Cola announced what follows: "Now the saying is you have to be global". Goizueta also added : "We were global when global wasn't cool."

The ten-day period later, the company was to start a financial quest to be one of the best-performing companies in America. Under the power of Goizueta mean year-long fountain-sales growth has carried forward to fluctuate. Consumers were not willing to the attempt of the Coke company to reformulate Coca-Cola but it was done in 1985, moreover, the introduction of the new formula under

the name 'Diet Coke' was proclaimed the most successful product inauguration of the past ten-day period. Neither of the company's strides in international expansion nor product change or profit growth might have happened had it not been for John Pemberton, Coca-Cola's designer.¹⁷

One among other chemist's from Atlanta, Asa Candler closed his shop on Pemberton's funeral day. According to some magazines records from that period Candler and other druggists "attended the services in mass as a tribute of respect". "On that day," announced archivist Monroe King¹⁸, "not one drop of Coca-Cola was dispensed in the entire city."¹⁹



Figure 3. Asa Griggs Candler²⁰

¹⁷ *Coca-Cola History*, Available on: http://www.solarnavigator.net/sponsorship/coca_cola.htm

¹⁸ Jack Hades, *Nation's Restaurant News*, 30 (February 1996):p. 120-121

¹⁹ *Coca-Cola History*, Available on the website: http://www.solarnavigator.net/sponsorship/coca_cola.htm

²⁰ Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia, Access on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Asa_Griggs_Candler

2. The Beverage Industry During the Last Fifty Years

The name of Bottling Industry was changed into Soft Drink Industry between 1960 and 1970 and then it changed the name itself to Beverage Industry.

When the World War II was coming to an end in 1940s²¹ and America had an economic return, however, the bottling industry continuously felt the results of the destroying war.

When the war ended they started appearing suddenly at industry plants, supermarkets, garages and other retail outlets. Due to the Cold War, in 1950s American culture was under a great impact of television. 1951 was the date important for sponsoring television programs by Coca-Cola Bottling Co.

In 1955, Schools were to let soft drinks be available and marketers were publicizing their soft drinks close to the schools. After 1960 low-calorie soft drinks were indicated by a survey to be more popular among teenage girls than fruit drinks, tea or coffee. Beverages with carbon had appeared to be No. 2 behind coffee since 1967, but were finishing the gap and could be the No. 1 drink choice by 1977. Other leading beverage picks were milk, beer, tea, juices, etc.

Then in 1975 diet soft drinks became popular. The quickest growing facet of the beverage industry in 1980s was chosen the bottled water industry.



Figure 4. Coca Cola 75TH Anniversary Bottle(1975)

²¹ *Beverage Industry: Celebrating 50 Years of Service*, Available on <http://www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/ccmphtml/indsthst.html>

Chapter III: The Discourse Analysis and Advertising

1. Discourse Analysis

When we want to find a comparison between the analysis of discursive data and the bulk of other methods, Discourse Studies²² is not a regular and informative example of undoubtedly shown procedures, yet a broadly expanded hypothetical approach, which gives a cover over a wide range of methodological devices. A commonly used term for many plans to analyzing written, spoken or signed language use is known as *discourse analysis* (in short, DA) or *discourse studies*.

In contemporary linguistics the term relate to *“the full text of an oral or written situation”*.²³ (Kinneavy, 1971:4).

According to *“The Kinneavy Papers: Theory and the Study of Discourse”*, DA would also *“comprise an intelligible framework of different types of discourse, with a treatment of the nature of each type, the underlying logic, the organizational structure of this type and the stylistic characteristics of such discourse”*²⁴ (Kinneavy, 1971:5).

Barbara Johnstone in her book “Discourse Analysis” says that *“the name for the field ‘discourse analysis’...says nothing more than the term ‘linguistics’, the study of*

²² Wikipedia, the Free Encyclopedia , Available on: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Discourse_analysis

² Schiffrin, D., Deborah Tannen, & Hamilton, H. E. (eds.). (2001). *Handbook of Discourse Analysis*.

²³ Lynn Worsham, Gary A. Olson, and Sidney I. Dobrin *The Kinneavy Papers: Theory and the Study of Discourse, 2000*

²⁴ Ibid.

language”²⁵ (Tannen, 1989:6). Then she concludes that “*discourse analysis is In everyday sense in which most people use the term*” (Johnstone, 2002:2).²⁶

There is another way of thinking about the discourse studies, namely:

*“Discourse analysis is the examination of language use by members of a speech community. It involves looking at both language form and language function and includes the study of both spoken interaction and written texts. It identifies linguistic features that characterize different genres as well as social and cultural factors that aid in our interpretation and understanding of different texts and types of talk. A discourse analysis of written texts might include a study of topic development and cohesion across the sentences, while an analysis of spoken language might focus on these aspects plus turn-taking practices, opening and closing sequences of social encounters, or narrative structure.”*²⁷

DA is more commonly perceived like an approach than a method.²⁸ It takes into account the hidden messages that continue to appear in the text plus “*enables to reveal the hidden motivations behind the text or behind the choice of a particular method of research to interpret that text.*”²⁹ The next definition should be considered:

“Rather than providing a particular method, Discourse Analysis can be characterized as a way of approaching and thinking about a problem. In this sense, Discourse Analysis is neither a qualitative nor a quantitative research method, but a manner of questioning the basic assumptions of quantitative and qualitative research methods. Discourse Analysis does not provide a tangible answer to problems based on scientific research, but it enables access to the ontological and epistemological assumptions behind a project, a statement, a method of

²⁵ Deborah Tannen, *The Handbook of Discourse Analysis*, 2001

²⁶ Barbara Johnstone, *Discourse Analysis* 2002

²⁷ *Discourse Studies*, Access on: <http://www.cal.org>

²⁸ Information Service, Access on: <http://www.fiat.gslis.utexas.edu>

²⁹ Ibid.

*research, or - to provide an example from the field of Library and Information Science -a system of classification.”*³⁰

The above piece of information ought to make the reader aware of the fact that the process will not give the analyst definite answers to a specific issue, but rather help to comprehend the “conditions” *plus* “essence” *behind it. In this way one can assume that* “the purpose of discourse analysis is not to provide definite answers, but to expand the personal horizons and make people realize their own shortcomings and unacknowledged motivations-as well as that of others”.³¹

To precisely define the term “discourse” itself we must better understand the concept of “discourse analysis”.

As it is widely accepted, language is used by people simply to communicate. The term “discourse” is from time to time defined as “*the language that is used by an individual in a communicative situation*”³² (Bednarek, 2004:7), which can be also described as “*a specific ensemble of ideas, concepts, categories that are reproduced, transformed in a particular set of (institutional) practises through which meaning is given to physical and social realities*”.³³

According to George L Dillon³⁴ some analysts are less concerned with language but more related with discourse .

George L Dillon perceives language as “a set of units and the rules for combining them to make well-formed sentences”.³⁵ For him the term ‘discourse’ “*is not sets of formally identified structures, but a type of social action*”.³⁶

Barbara Johnstone thinks about the language as an “*abstract system*”, where men and women are likely to be interested in what is going on when they draw on the knowledge about language on the basis of their memories of things they have said, seen, heard, or written before, in order to: express their feelings, exchange information or just entertain themselves and others, and so on. (Johnstone, 2002:3)³⁷

³⁰ Information Service, Access on: <http://www.fiat.gslis.utexas.edu>

³¹ Ibid.

³² Adam Bednarek, *Discourse Analysis of Candidate Speeches during the 2004 US Presidential Elections*

³³ Information service, Access on: <http://www.codesign.scu.edu>

³⁴ George L.Dillon, *My Words of an Other*

³⁵ Press, Access on: <http://www.press.jhu.edu>

³⁶ Information service, Access on: <http://www.codesign.scu.edu>

³⁷ Barbara Johnstone, *Discourse Analysis* 2002

For the author, this knowledge is “a set of generalizations, which can be sometimes stated as rules, is often referred to as “language” (Johnstone, 2002:3). Taking this into account, it can be considered that

“discourse is both the source of this knowledge (as people’s generalizations about language are made on the basis of the discourse they participate in) and the result of it (people apply what they already know in creating and interpreting new discourse)”³⁸
(Johnstone, 2002:3).

³⁸ Ibid.

CONCLUSION

People of any age: children, adults, old men welcome Coca-Cola beverages into their lives over 1.3 billion times per day. The Coca-Cola Company is present in consumers' everyday lives not as a casual drink giving refreshment, but also business partner, a global citizen, an employer or a major branch of the community. 'The Company of people's dreams' value very highly these tight relationships taking them in view of accountability and the trust for their consumers. Coca-Cola Co. says with one accord:

*"That's why every day we strive to ensure that our actions in the **workplace** make a positive contribution to the **marketplace**, the **environment** and the **communities**. It's not enough to conduct business responsibly; we endeavor to go beyond this by improving the lives of those who are touched in some way by our business. Our efforts don't have an end date -- corporate responsibility is an ongoing journey. It will continue to evolve as long as we exist."*³⁹

Starting from the invention of the Coke as a 'cocaine-containing' patent cure in the Age of Gild to its ever-present existence as the symbol of capitalism entering the twenty first century, Coca-Cola's history emerges as the best business saga.

As we may have learnt from the case of Coca-Cola, all parts of cultural origins are taken into account while playing a very important role in whether Coke advertising campaigns are successful or not.

³⁹ <http://www.thecoca-colacompany.com/citizenship/overview.html>

Coke Company has emerged to such a valuable American and international symbol that it is frequently hard to distinguish where the omnipresent substance finishes (its recipe is kept secret) and its excellently overwhelming marketing starts.

Language used in both advertisements: 'Home of Fame for Coca-Cola...' and 'Happiness Factory' is saturated with adjectives and verbs that stimulate our perception: new, good, wonderful, taste, see, look, need, choose, etc. Coca-Cola posters, spots, etc. convey a message: 'make yourself at home and relax with a bottle of Coke'.

At the very beginning of Coca-Cola business only black and white posters with written slogans were used, but later when the advertising language developed and the high-tech equipments appeared, they gave birth to animations and color movies. As a result, our dreams partly came true. We have always wanted to live in the world of peace and joy, and Coca-Cola advertisements give us what we need, a moving picture of a wonderful world with people's smiling faces and 'colorful', pleasant language that gives us choices. Coca-Cola Company is a 'Happiness Factory'.

New concepts, strategies of launching campaigns strengthen the position of the company to such an extent that Coke has reached much of interest of the audience and the desire to stay with consumers in their everyday lives. The key to success of Coca-Cola campaigns was its language: catchy slogans, songs and pictures of tailor-made world of peace and harmony depicted in very precisely conducted advertising campaigns. This 'Soft Drinks' Company gives us an entertainment and a paradigm of a successful business that one may want to achieve.

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