

CLIENT: Coca-Cola **PROJECT:** Coke Brand and Coke Refresh Recycling Bin

(Re) Use It, Don't Lose It

STRATEGY:

- Define clear avenues for licensing opportunities that will reinforce the iconic nature of the Coca-Cola brand as well as capitalizing on licensing revenue sources
- Develop a company-wide sustainability platform that promotes the closed loop system of RPET and generates design solutions which use RPET as their main component
- Design a variety of products and apparel which could take advantage of the new sustainability approaches and materials

BRAND/PACKAGING:

- Identify the key brand message and platforms that have built the Coca-Cola brand and fuse those with the new needs for reuse, recycling and RPET.
- Develop a new sustainability icon for Coca-Cola products, which encompass RPET and other sustainable practices.

PRODUCT:

- Design the first generation product born out of these RPET and sustainability platforms which is iconic and will bring recognition to the new Coca-Cola programs

RECOGNITION:

- International Design Awards, 2009
- IF Product Design Award, 2008
- Chicago Athenaeum – Good Design Award, 2008
- Spark Award – Bronze Award, 2008
- ID Magazine Annual Design Competition “Equipment”, 2008
- Red Dot Design Award, 2008



“We're working with Yves on several macro packaging initiatives where we can move the needle not just in terms of sustainability, but in adding something back to the planet. We wanted to help build a true company wide design culture, from merchandising strategy to the integration of new technology to new types of drinks and ways to dispense them.”

› David Bulter,
VP of Design, Coca-Cola



THE BACKGROUND

Enjoy!

Coca-Cola is one of the top five brands in the world. It is also one of the largest producers of plastic bottles, most of which are never recycled. Thus Coca-Cola wanted to explore a larger company-wide sustainability approach in order to create a closed-loop system for RPET.

Additionally, Coca-Cola is an iconic brand and in order to remain so, they need to engage in a more strategic licensing plan in order to avoid dilution of the brand.

Lastly, they wanted to engage in new strategic design initiatives, which would promote their brand and new sustainability objectives. fuseproject was brought in to engage in all of these new efforts.

THE STRATEGY

Brand Mission

fuseproject was given two tasks by Coca-Cola. The first was to re-strategize the brand-licensing program. For years, Coca-Cola has licensed its brand to manufacturers who splashed the familiar Coca-Cola name and colors across beach towels, coffee mugs, t-shirts and a huge assortment of other products. While the licensing practice had always proved lucrative, it was diluting the value of the brand. Second, Coca-Cola had seen the sea-change taking place in America around recycling and sustainability. Bottles and cans are some of the most recycled products on the market and Coca-Cola saw an opportunity to help improve recycling and conceive new approaches to a corporate sustainability strategy.

THE DESIGN SOLUTION

Mixed Messaging

fuseproject helped articulate the value of curating its brand-licensing portfolio. We identified specific markets that offered true relevance for the Coca-Cola brand and limited the spaces Coca-Cola could or should appear. Hence, products imbued with a sense of recreation and refreshment could continue to license the Coca-Cola brand, but products that bore no discernible connection to the core Coca-Cola brand could not. fuseproject developed design examples to help Coca-Cola codify its usage and we created a style guide that would enable them to manage its brand licensing in the future.

Refreshment in a Can

Next, we saw a major opportunity for Coca-Cola to increase recycling in America. While most major metropolitan areas in the U.S. offer some form of curbside recycling, the country's rural areas and ex-urbs generally do not. The major gathering places in these rural districts are mostly event and sports arenas and shopping areas, which are dominated by Wal-Mart and Target. By giving visitors easy access to recycling, it could change the culture in those locations. Thus was born the Coca-Cola Refresh Recycling Bin.

Made entirely from post-consumer recycled PET soda and water bottles, the bin serves two simultaneous functions: first and foremost it encourages people to recycle, but it also showcases the exceptional design potential of recycled plastic. Furthermore, the Refresh Recycling Bin has a friendly posture that reaches out to the user. This unique profile combined with the bold use of color and modern graphic treatment aims to draw the attention of those passing by and encourage frequent,



habitual use. The production of the Refresh Recycling Bin is amazingly simple and energy efficient: it can be shipped flat and assembled on site, drastically reducing the carbon footprint of each container. From beginning to end, the Refresh Recycling Bin achieves a high level of environmental design and implementation, which will encourage the consumer to do the same.

RPET Strategy: Regift, Reuse, and Recycle

To define, analyze, formulate, and execute the RPET strategy, the team first studied the current flow of the PET stream within Coca-Cola as well as the shift in the future of closing the material loop within the organization. Given the recent acquisitions of recycling programs throughout the country and a growing effort to produce new products in the distribution chain from the raw material, we set out to identify the environmental leadership opportunity for Coca-Cola through a strategic RPET effort.

This was followed by a study of the cultural stigma with recycling, both in curbside and inter-institutional, to dig down to the consumer perception and value of recycling. These findings were cross-referenced with other seismic shifts in consumer thinking to develop a consumer connection strategy and brand positioning for Coca-Cola recycled PET products.

The use of RPET in design objects, like the Refresh bin, is unique because it not only encourages people to recycle, it also showcases the exceptional design potential of recycled plastic. Additionally, we designed other objects, clothing, bags, etc that could be used from RPET and then branded as a recycled Coca-Cola product. The design of these objects is part of Coca-Cola's broader effort to become the global leader in PET recycling.



THE BUSINESS IMPACT

Helping Hand

The RPET strategy was developed to lead and inform the design and production of products using RPET material. The Refresh bin is the first output of this RPET strategy, which showcases Coca-Cola's effort in closing the loop on their material use and reuse system.

The Refresh Recycling Bin was launched on "World Recycling Day 2007" and now bins are in place within several Coca-Cola cooperate offices, and a full production run of the bins are being used in outdoor and indoor events and venues, as well as with partners such as Wal-Mart and Target.

The new RPET recycling bin is more than just a container; it is a symbol of Coca-Cola's commitment to the environment. Reinforce this notion with design that is unique, memorable, and unmistakably Coca-Cola.