John Harkins

Gracie Fowler

GC101 History of Graphic Communications

14 December 2015

<div align="center">Corporate Identity Assignment - Coca-Cola</div>

Coca-Cola is a carbonated soft drink that is produced by The Coca-Cola Company of Atlanta, Georgia. In 1886 the drink was founded by John Pemberton, a pharmacist trying to create an elixir for medicinal purposes. The syrup was to be mixed with seltzer water from soda fountains, which were very popular back in the late 1900's. "The first servings of Coca-Cola were sold for 5 cents per glass. During the first year, sales averaged a modest nine servings per day in Atlanta. Today, daily servings of Coca-Cola beverages are estimated at 1.9 billion globally"[5]. The Coca-Cola logo was designed and penned by Pemberton's bookkeeper Frank Mason Robinson in 1885. Robinson suggested the name "Coca-Cola" after the two main ingredients, cocaine which was taken from the coca leaves, and caffeine taken from kola nuts. He suggested to Pemberton that instead of a "K" that they use a "C" because the two "C"s would appear catchier in advertising (Boney, 1987). Pemberton started marketing the drink using a serif font. The next year, he turned again to Robinson for help with a more professional logo. Robinson penned the script himself using Spencerian Style script which was very popular at the time; it was even used in schools when teaching children how to write.

In 1892, the Coca-Cola formula and brand were acquired by a business man named Asa Griggs Candler. His marketing tactics led the distribution of Coca-Cola to expand to soda fountains beyond Atlanta, then to its dominance of the world soft-drink market throughout the 20th century [23]. In 1894 Mississippi a shop owner named Joseph A. Biedenharn was impressed by Coca-Cola that he bottled it in what was a common glass bottle at the time called a "Hutchinson" and sent a case of it to Asa Griggs Candler. At first Candler was polite and thanked him, but never accepted Biedenham's initial offer to bottle the drink because he thought bottling would not take off [4].

Bottling was a challenge in the first decade of the twentieth century. Because of the success of Coca-Cola, there were imitators; basically other bottling companies were trying to copy-cat Coke by imitating the look of the bottle, or by playing off the name. Also there was the issue that the packaging was inconsistent among the 1,000 bottling plants at the time. So the bottlers agreed that a distinctive beverage needed a standard distinctive bottle. Benjamin Thomas, co-founder of the Coca-Cola Bottling Company, came up with a solution to the problem Coca-Cola was facing, he stated, "We need a bottle which a person can recognize as a Coca-Cola bottle when he feels it in the dark." The Coca-Cola Company decided to launch a competition among bottle suppliers. The objective was to come up with a distinctive design [15]. Earl R. Dean who worked for the Root Glass Bottling company came up with the winning design. He based it on the same two ingredients that inspired Robinson for the name, but this time the shapes of the kola nut and the coca leaf were the inspiration.

The Coca-Cola Company started with one drink, Coca-Cola (also known as "Coke). In 1886 and over the years the ownership evolved into a corporation that owns thousands of drinks and branding today. Even though the company itself has its own logo, the history of its flagship product Coca-Cola is what is documented more than anything else. In fact the company logo uses the same script for "The Coca-Cola Company". That is a great example of how recognizable and unique the branding of "Coca-Cola" really is. For the company logo they simply insert the words "The" before the Coca-Cola logo and "Company" after it. There are various logos that are currently being used that make up Coca-Cola's corporate identity system. However the main logo consists of "Coca-Cola" which is written in Spencerian script which is now a modernized version of the original script logo scripted by Robinson. Over the course of its history, it has evolved many times. Today at least four elements that were introduced over Coca-Cola's history are in use, both interchangeably and separately. The main components of the current identity are made of five elements: the lettering, the colors, the "dynamic wave", the bottle shape, and of course the "Coke" nickname.

The base logo uses a script type font called Spencerian script which was a popular style in the late 1900's. This was the original logo except it is now more refined whereas originally it was handwritten.

The script spells out the words "Coca" and "Cola" with a hyphen in the middle. The first "C" has a tail on the bottom that underlines the "oca". The second "C" has a tail on top that swoops over the top of "ola" and it threads through the "l". This can be used with and without any of the other elements, and is at the forefront of their corporate website. The main two colors used are red and white. The primary logo currently in use is the red lettering with either a transparent or white background. But it is more commonly used on packaging and advertising as an inverted version, with the red for the background and white is used for the lettering.

In addition to the main logo, Coca-Cola uses a few more designs to represent the brand and they are very important to the corporate identity. The "dynamic ribbon" or "dynamic wave" is another element that usually is placed below the lettering. It is called many things such as the swirl, the spiral, the wave, and the ribbon. The color of the wave matches the color of the lettering. It basically starts to the left of the lettering and curves downward below the word "Cola" where it becomes much thinner, and then it curves upward and thickens as it goes to the right of the lettering. This element is so recognizable that with the recent "Share a Coke" campaign, the wave can be used with ideas or names in place of the "Coca-Cola" script. It was introduced with "Arden Square" version of the main logo in 1969 [14].

The bottle design is another alternative logo that is widely used today as a graphic element because of how recognizable it is. The bottle itself was originally designed with the soda's two main ingredients in mind, the coca leaf and the kola nut. The coca leaf is narrow at the stem and widens in the middle and curves to a point. The kola bean typically has ridged shell which causes lines that go from end to end. The "contour" bottle, as it is commonly known, reflects the combination of both. The shape of the bottle represents the coca leaf. The base is wide, then it curves in, then widens as you reach the middle part. The middle is wide for approximately a third of the bottles height so that it can be held easily, then it curves inward towards the bottle opening where it is capped. The Coca-Cola logo label or embossed logo goes in the middle area. There are raised vertical ridges that appear around the bottle that represent the kola bean. The label goes across the middles section which is flat and free of the ridges. The logo can be a label, or white lettering, or embossed lettering, and all three versions use the Spencerian script with and

without the wave. Besides being used in print advertising, the bottle has been used as a graphic on cans. In fact the second can used the bottle graphic to help people recognize that Coke was now in a can. Then in the 1990's it was used again on cans with the "Always" campaign. Starting back in 2009, the bottle shape has been used frequently used as a simplified graphic of the bottle's silhouette colored red or white and the Spencerian script stretched across the middle.

The disc is also an alternative logo. It is just a circle with a flat red color and the white Spencerian script inside of it. The latest version does have a slight shine on the left edge and a slight shadow on the right edge. Back in 1947 Coca-Cola designed a Red Disc, also known as the "button" sign and has been using from time to time since 1947. In 1948, the discs were mostly used by shop owners were Coca-Cola was sold, as a source of advertising and decoration. The Red Disc appeared in print advertising up through the 1960's until the Arciform or "fish tail" signs began to be used. [16]. There have been many variations of the disc where it includes just the white Coca-Cola script logo, then they added the contour bottle illustration behind it, then in the 1990's they reused it with the slogan "Always" above it in a green (sometimes blue) banner that followed the curve of the circle on top. In the 2000's it was made flat with no metallic shine and displayed the main script logo along with the wave in it. Most recently they dropped the wave and brought back a subtle shine to simplify it.

In 1966 Coca-Cola started using another alternative logo that also can stand on its own, one to represent the nickname for the drink that is most commonly used, "Coke". This uses a serif font and spells "Coke". This has been updated many times. In the 1980's is was bolded, then slanted in the 1990's, and streamlined in the 2000's.

The identity system and logo has evolved to reflect society quite frequently to go along with the times. Some of the most effective ways the product has evolved is through campaigns, in which they usually rebrand the products slightly or dramatically. Most of the time there is a new slogan to go along with the campaign. Some notable slogans that really stand the test of time are ones like 1963's "Things go better with Coke.", 1970's "It's the real thing.", 1982's "Coke is it!", 1985's "America's real choice.", 1986's "Red, white & you." (for Coca-Cola Classic), 1986's "Catch the wave." (for New Coke), 1987's

"You can't beat the feeling!.", 1990's "Can't Beat The Real Thing.", 1993's "Always Coca-Cola.", 2000's "Enjoy", 2009's "Open Happiness", and 2014's "Share A Coke". There were even a few that actually were included in the Coca-Cola logo such as "Drink", "Enjoy", and "Always". The overall theme that Coke prompts is happiness, relaxation, good times, and sharing. These are wonderful messages and really affect people from all around the world.

Regarding the history and development, the first version of the Coca-Cola logo was capital serif letters in the first newspaper advertisement for the drink which appeared in the Atlanta Journal on May 29th, 1886 [7]. The original version of the Spencerian script was reportedly first used in June 16, 1887 but it took over 5 years to register it. The trademark registration was granted on January 31, 1893, but until this point the logo was always hand written so it was not always consistent in design in regards to the flow and thickness of the letters, the slant may have been a little off, and the tail to the left of the first "o" was not always drawn in, which was dropped anyway in the more modern versions [7]. However just before the Spencerian script version was granted its first trademark from the patent office, in 1890-1891 a fancy serif font version was used sometimes. The "C"s both had tails on the bottom and the tops of them swirled into itself like a spiral. Below the lowest part of the spiral on the inside there were two swirls that dangled from it [8]. There was another variation with diamonds floating inside the "C"s instead of the dangling swirls in 1892.

But once the Spencerian script version was trademarked that is all that was used and the word trademark would appear on the tail of the first "C" underneath because a new law in 1903 required companies to re-register their trademarks [6]. In the early twentieth century, the colors red and white were prominent in the adverts while green was an accent color used quite frequently. The ads consisted of both graphic design that focused on just typography with shapes and then other ads included illustrations where the center piece was either the contour bottle, or soda fountains, or sophisticated looking women holding the glasses or bottles of Coke.

By the 1920's, the lettering and symmetry of the base logo was closer to what the modern version looks like except for the Trademark in the tail. In the mid-1920s the word "DRINK" would also appear

above the logo in much of their signage and advertising, along with the infamous "5 cents per glass"

pricing [6].

By the 1940s, the word Trademark was removed from the tail and placed underneath the logo and

the script had evolved to its most familiar design in which the script was slightly altered to be even and

more circular, meaning that each letter had the perfect slant and the form of each letter is more rounded.

This is the form that we still see today. Also in 1941 the public saw the first use of the nickname "Coke"

as an official trademark (Logopedia). Up until 1957 the words Coca-Cola were blown into the glass of

the contour bottles, but in 1957 they began printing just the white lettering on glass [11]. The fishtail

design was introduce d in 1958 and lasted until 1969. The script was placed in a red "arciform" shape

with a triangular cutout on both the left and the right which made it look like fish tails.

The first aluminum cab, dubbed the diamond can, was first introduced in 1960. The body was red

with a white diamond as the center piece outlined in silver with the Script logo was inside of the diamond.

The second version had a line drawing of the contour bottle behind the script so that people would

recognize that it was Coca-Cola in a can [9] In 1966 the Coke can received its first overhaul and is

commonly known as the "Harlequin design", because it was made up entirely of a small red and white

diamond pattern (Coke Can History). By now the logo for "Coke" started appearing in on the aluminum

cans too, and one of the first slogans to be used with the new graphic was the "Things Go Better With

Coke" from the campaign of the same name in 1965. In 1969 Coca-Cola introduced the "Arden Square"

as their brand new logo. It featured the classic Spencerian script in white with the famous 'Dynamic

Ribbon, or 'White Swirl' for the first time. Above the script in sans-serif was the word "Enjoy". All three

elements were enclosed in a red square. This logo lasted for almost 20 years until Coke was re-branded in

1987 [6].

By 1970 the can reflected the "Arden Square". This is when the most common look of the can

was introduced. It was all red, the script was sideways on one side of the can with the wave

accompanying it, and on the other side was the Coke logo along with another wave. In 1971 a song from

a Coca-Cola commercial called "I'd Like to Teach the World to Sing", produced by Billy Davis, became a

hit single and was featured in the famous "Hilltop" television commercial. Soon after, in 1977 the bottle itself was granted registration as a trademark because of its presence and since an earlier study showed that only less than 1% of Americans could not identify the bottle by shape alone [17].

The "cola wars" occurred in the 1980's, and *"*For the first time in its history, Coca Cola was no longer the most popular soft drink. By this point Pepsi's popularity and sales had surpassed their own and the company was in full damage control mode. In response, the company changed its formula and launched a bold new brand, snubbing its script logo in favor of a thick slab serif font to accompany their rebrand as Coke (The History of the Coca-Cola Logo). Enter "New Coke" which was Coca-Cola's solution to beat out Pepsi. The company changed the formula hoping to win the cola war. It also used the Coke log instead of the traditional Coca-Cola. They also added silver to outline the word "Coke" and added another layer to the wave which was silver. In addition to that, they slapped a silver label on the top of the can with the word "New" in it. Despite all their efforts and regardless if the drink tasted good, many long time Coke drinkers and fans created such a backlash that Coca-Cola was forced to bring back the original formula. So they brought back "Coca-Cola Classic". The word "Classic" was added to the name to differentiate the two sodas, and New Coke was renamed to Coke II, both required redesigns. Coke II took on a slanted thinner version of the "Coke" serif font, and both the logo and the wave were accented with blue outlines. Then Coke Classic updated the traditional red can with the words going up sideways on the can as it had done for a while, but instead of the wave, then used the word "Classic" and they also added a new icon indicating "Original Formula".

By the 1990's the look was updated again whereas the ribbon graphic was integrated further into the script itself, intersecting with the "o" in Cola (The History of the Coca-Cola Logo). In 1993, with the "Always" campaign, the wave was dropped again on cans only and Coca-Cola focused on bringing back traditional imagery such as the red disc, the contour bottle and bottle caps onto the can. In 1993 a 20 oz PET bottle is created to help distinguish the plastic bottles from other soft drink bottles just like the glass version did so many years before, by making a plastic "Contour" version [17].

In the 2000's the wave came back but with a bubble pattern and yellow outlines added to the wave, making it much thicker and more dynamic. The "Coca-Cola Classic" name was reverted back to "Coca-Cola" since there was no longer any "New Coke" production. In 2007, the disc became simplified as a "minimal version of the classic red disc was reintroduced for corporate and retail purposes" (The History of the Coca-Cola Logo). The wave had an overhaul as well, it became simpler like it was before the New Coke era so now the can looked like it did in the early 1980's with the simple red coloring, white lettering, and simplified wave. Open happiness campaign paid homage to an earlier campaign "The Pause That Refreshes" from 1929 inviting people all around to world to relax with the refreshment of a coke (Coca-Cola History).

Currently the "One Brand" campaign refreshed the look for Coca-Cola's branding. They are combining all related "Coke" products under the Coca-Cola umbrella as far as branding goes. For instance the original script (of the flagship product) is now displayed horizontally across the can like it has always has been on the bottles and it spans across the can once while taking up the top half of the can. Below it is the white dynamic wave. The other three main "Coke" related products: Coca-Cola Life, Coca-Cola Zero, and Diet Coke follow the same design, all now just display Coca-Cola on the upper half of the can just like the flagship except Diet Coke which displays Diet Coke (but now in the same Spencerian script) to match better. This really ties the four products together and if your place them side by side and turn them just right, all four can spell out "Coca-Cola". Each can does have a unique color and accent color that they retain from previous designs. The Coca-Cola Life's can is green and the accent color, that includes the wave color and font color are both white just like regular Coke's. The Coca-Cola Zero's can is black with accent color being red, and the Diet Coke can is silver with red as the accent color, with the exception of the word "Diet", which has been black for many years now. Below the main logo and above the wave in much smaller font are mini logos and descriptions that identify the differences of each product. Overall this helps the product identity to signify that they are really part of the Coca-Cola family.

The branding has some constants that are so important to their identity being so recognizable, that for approximately 125 years Coca-Cola is a brand that most anyone can recognize in any country of the world because of the distinct lettering of the Spencerian script, which has been consistent over the lifetime of the product. The colors, red and white, are so recognizable that there is no mistake what soft drink it is. One of the younger additions to the famous visual identifiers (50 years young) is the use of the "dynamic wave". The "contour" bottle alone without any label is recognizable by most everyone due to its unique shape. Even throughout the course of history, the contour bottle has been updated several times due to advancements made to the glass, or the plastic bottle taking the contour form, to the newest modernized aluminum version. The "hobble-skirt" bottle, as it was referred to a century ago has outlasted the test of time.

Throughout the history of Coke, their advertising has been cherished by many. Four periods that stood out were the sophisticated looking women in ads from the early twentieth century going back to Hilda Clark, who was a famous singer and actress from the late Nineteenth Century. From 1899-1903 her image was used on a wide variety of advertising materials such as serving and change trays, signage, trading cards, and clocks, among other things (Nestor, 2014).

Santa Claus has been an annual holiday tradition for Coca-Cola. Beginning in the 1930s "the Coca-Cola company was looking for ways to increase sales of their product during winter" to increase sales since the end of the year was a slow period of business "and they turned to a talented commercial illustrator named Haddon Sundblom, who created a series of memorable drawings" which were inspired by Clement Clark Moore's 1822 poem "A Visit from St. Nicholas" (The Claus That Refreshes). Common myth is that Coca-Cola is credited with inventing the modern image of Santa Claus as an old man in a red-and-white suit, but illustrations from the early twentieth century prove that they were not the creators of Santa Claus, they only helped shape Santa for the modern audience.

Polar Bears are part of the holiday season as well. They were used from time to time going back to a 1922 in French print ad, however in 1993 Coca-Cola started using them consistently when the "Always Coca-Cola" campaign began. The campaign began with the Creative Artists Agency (and later

Edge Creative) with an initial run of 27 commercials designed to appeal to specific audiences. It was a world-wide campaign using computer animation. Typically in the commercials, the polar bears would watch the Northern Lights as if it was a movie and they drank from bottles of Coca-Cola.

Technology influenced the evolution of Coca-Cola and the development of their corporate identity and logo in various ways. In regards to the cocaine originally used in the drink, Coca-Cola started using spent leaves instead of fresh ones after 1904 because of the controversy regarding the subject. The spent leaves only had trace levels of cocaine left in them yet still provided the necessary taste. Since then, Coca-Cola uses cocaine free coca leaf extract prepared at a Stephan Company in Maywood New Jersey. Printed materials were the first form of advertising until radio commercials and then television commercials. Most recently with the new age of the World Wide Web, Coca-Cola has taken a strong presence online. Their websites are full of everything from their corporate information, their stance on real world issues, history of their company. It has been a great medium for advertising in many ways including their campaigns published with social media and Coke related apps accessible on smartphones. Coca-Cola has taken advantage of technology to reach out to the public in order to establish their presence and show that they are modern, hip, that they produce refreshing drinks, and they are all about caring.

In terms of physical property and how manufacturing technology has affected them, since the glass bottles were used and although they remain as part of the product line, advancement in technology has allowed them to be current with the times, to incorporate aluminum cans in the 1960's, plastic bottles in the 1990's, and the most recently aluminum bottles in the 2000's. These advancements allowed for more real estate for advertising as well. Some of the choices such as cans are much more affordable to most people, others like glass bottles because of the nostalgia, while their plastic bottles have a big presence for convenience, and the aluminum bottles are the new and hip.

As society is more self-ware of how bad sugar is, Coca-Cola has pushed to make lower calorie drinks such as Diet Coke which is very successful, but the taste was always different, so advancement in science has allowed Coca-Cola to release Coke Zero which is stated to taste more like Coca-Cola.

In the 1990's "Coca-Cola introduced the world to the two liter PET plastic bottle. It became popular for a lot of reasons: it doesn't break; it's re-sealable, lightweight and recyclable".(100 years of the Coca-Cola Bottle). Most recently the company has started to promote the PlantBottle which is made of packaging that uses a process to turn sugarcane in a key component of the bottle. It is said that "The material looks and functions just like traditional PET plastic, but has a lighter footprint on the planet and its scarce resources" (PlantBottle).

What makes the logo and identity unique is the script plays a big part, it is classy and nostalgic, recognized by the whole world even if it is not translated. The bottle is unique that even though it has evolved it is still recognizable. The script is very versatile and can be used with various elements and never be overshadowed. When the colors are inverted they are actually even more powerful and striking as the red really stands out. The script and wave can be updated (like in the 1990's to 2000's) to show more flare and yet can easily be reverted back to its simplest form and look even more modern than ever.

Coca-Cola marketing is always trying to reach out to the world and show that Coca-Cola cares about the world. The Coca-Cola Company has a huge portfolio including various flavors and variations of the flagship drink that have come and gone and still have many still in production such as Diet Coke, Coke Zero, Cherry Coke, Caffeine-Free Coca-Cola, Diet Coke Caffeine-Free, Coca-Cola Cherry, Coca-Cola Zero, and Coca-Cola Vanilla. In an effort to maintain branding, all these variations follow closely to the identity branding based on the flagship Coca-Cola's current look. Their identity is universal in a way that individual components of the logo can be used separately. Coca-Cola identity has always stayed true to the original design.

Bibliography

[1] Boney, F.N. First Atlanta and then the World: A Century of Coca-Cola. "The Georgia Historical Quarterly" 71, no. 1, 1987: 91

[2] "Coca-Cola." *http://logos.wikia.com.* http://logos.wikia.com/wiki/Coca-Cola

[3] "Coke." *http://logos.wikia.com.* http://logos.wikia.com/wiki/Coke

[4] Journey Staff. "Contour Bottle History." *Coca-Cola.* http://www.coca-cola.co.uk/stories/history/heritage/contour-bottle-history/#

[5] "Coca-Cola History" https://www.worldofcoca-cola.com/about-us/coca-cola-history/

[6] "The History of Coca-Cola." http://fineprintnyc.com/blog/the-history-of-the-coca-cola-logo

[7] Martin, Blaine. "Logo Through The Years." *Early Coke.* http://earlycoke.com/logo-through-the-years.html 2014

[8] "The Logo Story." *Coca-Cola.* http://www.coca-cola.co.uk/stories/history/advertising/the-logo-story/

[9] "The Evolution of the Coca-Cola Contour Bottle" *The DieLine.* http://www.thedieline.com/blog/2009/11/17/the-evolution-of-the-coca-cola-contour-bottle.html

[10] Hobbs, Alexis. "This Is How the Coke Bottle Got Its Distinct Shape" *Woman's Day.* http://www.womansday.com/food-recipes/food-drinks/news/a50944/this-is-how-the-coke-bottle-got-its-distinct-shape/

[11] "100 years of the Coca-Cola Bottle" *Coca-Cola.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/timeline-the-evolution-of-the-coca-cola-bottle/#1957

[12] http://inventors.about.com/od/advertisingmedia/ss/Coca_Cola_Comp.htm#step2

[13] May, Clifford. "How Coca-Cola Obtains Its Coca" *New York Times.* http://www.nytimes.com/1988/07/01/business/how-coca-cola-obtains-its-coca.html] July 1, 1988

[14] "Coke Lore: Trademark Chronology" *The Coca-Cola Company.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/coke-lore-trademark-chronology/ January 1, 2012

[15] "1915 Coca-Cola Prototype Bottle and Concept Sketch" *The Federation of Historical Bottle Collectors.* http://www.fohbc.org/2011/11/1915-coca-cola-prototype-bottle-and-concept-sketch/ November 8, 2011

[16] Fletcher, Justine. "The Coca-Cola Red Disc" *The Coca-Cola Company.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/2014/03/the-coca-cola-red-disc/ March 25, 2014

[17] "The Evolution of the Coca-Cola Bottle." *The Coca-Cola Company.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/timeline-the-evolution-of-the-coca-cola-bottle/#1960

[18] "Coke Can History" *Collectable Soda Cans.* http://www.collectiblesodacans.com/Cokepg1.htm Nestor, Steph. "Hilda Clark." *The Coca-Cola Company.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/2014/03/hilda-clark/ March 25, 2014

[19] "The Claus That Refreshes" *Snopes.* http://www.snopes.com/holidays/christmas/santa/cocacola.asp December 18, 2013

[20] Conversations Staff. "5 Things You Never Knew About Santa Claus and Coca-Cola" *The Coca-Cola Company.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/stories/coke-lore-santa-claus/ January 1, 2012

[21] "Coca-Cola History." *World of Coca-Cola.* https://www.worldofcoca-cola.com/about-us/coca-cola-history/

[22] "PlantBottle." *The Coca-Cola Company.* http://www.coca-colacompany.com/our-company/plantbottle/

[23] "The Revolution of Coca-Cola Logo and The History of the Bottle" *Sureewoong.* http://www.sureewoong.com/uncategorized/coca-cola-logo/