

Coca-Cola attacks the « healthy » drinks market: Green washing or a success story?

A market position deciphered by DYNVIBE

Coca-Cola hasn't finished quenching its thirst! Since the end of the year 2014, the American firm is looking to conquer the drinks sector known as "healthy" or "natural" with two new products: a new declination of the famous soda, sweetened with stevia called Coca-Cola Life in Europe, and the milk drink, Fairlife in the US. DYNVIBE, the Social Media Intelligence specialist, has collected and analysed the consumer comments following the launch of these two products in order to understand their perception of these two drinks and the legitimacy of the soft drink king in this sector. Analysis.

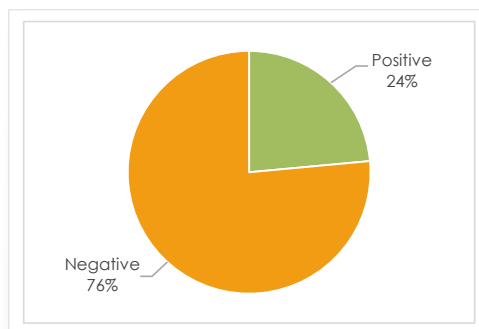
Coca-Cola Life : not up to the French taste!



Based on stevia, without aspartame and dressed in a 100% natural package, the new bubbly drink Coca-Cola life is widely diffused in France since January 2015. DYNVIBE has sieved a panel of **600 comments** posted on the social medias in order to decrypt the perception of the French cybernauts regarding this new product.

- In the beginning the comments where: the Coca-Cola firm clients are extremely present in the social medias and prompt to declare their attachment to the drink. **The announcement of the new product, Coca-Cola Life was relayed very rapidly on the social medias, and the media campaign surrounding it aroused extreme curiosity.** It is to be noted that the persons that express themselves are in their great majority, faithful consumers to the Coca-Cola brand and not, consumers attracted to a more natural and less sweetened drink.

- A taste that does not create a unanimous reaction: 76% of the comments concerning the taste of this new drink are negative. Amongst these disappointed cybernauts, 80% expected a similar taste to the original Coke version, and regret **the pronounced taste of stevia (sometimes having a bad after taste) as well as a lack of gas.** The other 20% of disappointed consumers seemed to expect a different version of the drink, similar to that of Coca-Cola Cherry for example. These clients find this drink too similar to the original drink and judge it "without interest", going as far as calling it a "scam" and "buzz marketing". However, 24% of the consumers that have tested the product said that they've appreciated it, defending the new recipe and supporting the brand.



Taste perception of Coca-Cola Life

The screenshot shows three tweets from Twitter:

- Vivien Taupas (@vivientaupas):** "J'ai goûté le nouveau #CocaColalife : c'est plutôt décevant! Peu de bulles, un arrière goût d'anis et toujours du sucre avec le stevia #Fail" (11:19 - 29 déc. 2014)
- Princess ✨ (@CrushForLouis):** "J'ai goûté le Coca-Cola Life, clairement c'est du foutage de gueule et on nous prend encore or des cons Mdr ça a le même goût que le zéro." (16:24 - 29 déc. 2014)
- stay away (@July02387993):** "mais arrêtez dire qu'il est pas bon, il est top le #CocaColalife" (11:44 - 28 déc. 2014)

- The false promise of the “100% natural”: the extraction of rebaudioside –pure stevia being forbidden in Europe – and phosphoric acid going into the preparation of Coca-Cola, pushes many consumers to doubt the so-called “natural” composition of the drink. Furthermore, many a cybernaut protests against Coke’s launching practices of this product, calling them **“green washing operations”** and assimilating the use of a descriptive green packaging as “marketing lie”.



Anne-Cécile GUILLEMOT’s opinion, co-founder of DYNVIBE and director of the « study » hub:

"The large volume of the conversations on Coca-Cola Life reflects the interest of customers for the brand’s news. If consumers express their enthusiasm in trying out the firm’s new products, **they remain extremely demanding with regards to the taste of the drink and remain very attached to the original recipe.**

In addition, the speech by the brand regarding the healthy and natural side of the product generates a lot of scepticism. Indeed, the image of Coca-Cola remains associated with the sodas it distributes and to the lack of transparency regarding the ingredients it uses in producing its drinks. If the Coca-Cola brand is highly appreciated by its customers, it still suffers from a lack of credibility when it wants to enter the market of natural or “better for health” products.

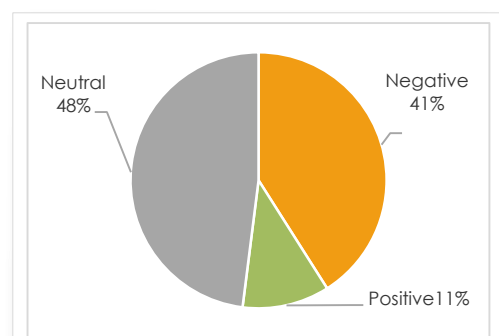
Fairlife : not exactly « nectar of the gods » for the Americans...



Launched last November in the US, the drink, Fairlife, contains according to Coca-Cola, 50% more proteins and calcium and less than half of the sugar found in normal milk, without lactose and produced with milk coming from farms that are « committed to sustainability ».

The recipe wants to appear healthy and tempting, but what about the consumer’s perception? In order to answer this question DYNVIBE, the specialist in Social Media Intelligence, has analysed **a panel of 1000 comments, posted by American cybernauts** on the social networks, and reveals hereafter the key points:

- A large defiance: the launch announcement of this product has created numerous reactions on the Social Medias of which, **41% of the cases they are negative.**



- An extremely criticized composition: approximately one third of the studied comments by DYNVIBE, are related to the composition of the drink, and in 53% of the cases, negatively, (against 15% of positive perceptions). A large number of cybernauts do not perceive milk as a "healthy" product or "good for one's health". On the contrary, many believe that milk consumption is not advisable for adults.
- Controversial production: numerous cybernauts believe that the fact that the milk is filtered and then recomposed in order to bring to it all the nutritional "values", **is in total contradiction with the "healthy" and "natural"** aspect of the product as it is brought forward by the firm. Some consumers go even further in mentioning that these processes could have extremely harmful results to health. Furthermore, the community was outraged by Coca-Cola pretending that the milk came from farms that are "sustainable breeders" and reminds that in 2012 the company was opposed to the automatic labelling of products issued from GMO agriculture, qualifying this pitch as "**propaganda**" in order to mask their pro-GMO actions. Finally, the fact that the Fairlife products are manufactured using Monsanto products, the well known firm for its recurring food scandals, has not escaped the detractors of the soda giant naming the Fairlife products "**Monsantomilk**" and of course they are not hesitating in calling for a **boycott** of the latter.



A raunchy bad buzz of: staging « pin-ups » dressed in milky gowns, the firm's publicity campaign has been bitterly criticized for the "sexist and degrading" image it conveys of women. Even though the firm, due to this controversy, **had stopped its campaign in the summer of 2014**, these visuals still represent 20% of the conversations

Anne-Cécile GUILLEMOT's opinion, co-founder of DYNVIBE and director of the « study » hub:

"The study of digital conversations around this product launch shows that the **credibility of Coca-Cola in the "healthy" beverage market is far from certain**. Although these new products are marketed under the brand Fairlife, consumers remain aware that Coca-Cola is behind this launch, in the eyes of many, the brand remains associated with the idea of "junk food". In addition, consumers are now very aware regarding their health and consumer choices are based more on an accurate knowledge of food and not just on the brand marketing speech. In conclusion, the evolution of the offer and the positioning by Coke to "healthy" products, won't go without difficulties ... "

Regarding Dynvibe

Created in 2009 by Anne-Cécile and Nicolas Guillemot, Dynvibe is a pioneer and leader in business intelligence in the social media. At the forefront of innovation, the company produces and delivers, through its strategic analysis cell, extensive consumer research from data available on the social sphere.

Dynvibe collects and analyses this information thanks to two simple and complementary platforms available to its customers:

-Dynvibe Sphere: an array of intuitive and powerful dashboards used for listening, observing, monitoring and analysing the social sphere.

-Dynvibe Pages: a measurement tool of Facebook pages, to track performance and compare them with those of its competitors.

Dynvibe has many international clients such as L'Oreal, PUIG (Paco Rabanne, Nina Ricci, etc.), Luxottica (Ray Ban, Oakley, etc.), Dior, Galeries Lafayette, La Redoute, Walt Disney, etc.

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