

Soft drink industry



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A soft drink is a non-alcoholic beverage typically containing water often carbonated water and a flavoring agent. Many of these beverages are sweetened by the addition of sugar or high fructose. They may also contain ingredients such as caffeine and fruit juice. They are called "soft" in contrast to "hard drinks" that is, alcoholic beverages. Small amounts of alcohol may be present in a soft drink, but the alcohol content generally must be less than 0.5% of the total volume if the drink is to be considered non-alcoholic. Soft drinks are usually served chilled or at room temperature, are rarely heated, and generally do not include milk or other dairy beverages. Beverages that are typically not considered soft drinks include hot chocolate, hot tea, coffee, pure juice and milkshake.

History of soft drinks.

Soft drinks trace their history back to the mineral waters found in natural springs. Ancient societies believed that bathing in natural springs and/or drinking mineral waters could cure many diseases. Among the earliest soft drinks were sherbets developed by Arabic chemists and originally served in the medieval Near East. Dandelion & burdock, a naturally carbonated drink made from fermented dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) and burdock (*Arctium lappa*) roots, was first made in England in around 1265.

The first marketed soft drinks (non-carbonated) in the Western world appeared in the 17th century. They were made from water and lemon juice sweetened with honey. In 1676, the Compagnie des Limonadiers of Paris was granted a monopoly for the sale of lemonade soft drinks. Vendors carried

tanks of lemonade on their backs and dispensed cups of the soft drink to thirsty Parisians.

In late 18th century, scientists made important progress in replicating naturally carbonated mineral waters. In 1767, Englishman Joseph Priestley first discovered a method of infusing water with carbon dioxide to make carbonated water when he suspended a bowl of distilled water above a beer vat at a local brewery in Leeds, England. His invention of carbonated water, (also known as soda water), is the major and defining component of most soft drinks. Priestley found water thus treated had a pleasant taste, and he offered it to friends as a refreshing drink. 🎬 1881 The first cola-flavored beverage introduced.

For the Cricket World Cup 1996, Pepsi was not the official sponsor of the tournament, Coke was. But Pepsi had a whole pool of best players roped in as brand ambassadors from the sub continent and abroad. The ad campaign of “ Nothing Official About it” rocked the country and despite Coke being the official sponsor, it was Pepsi which hogged the publicity. In 1998, with the release of blockbuster movie “ Kuch Kuch Hota Hai”, Pepsi took out another ace from its sleeve, featuring Shahrukh, Rani and Kajol in its ad.

The punch line was “ Yeh Dil Maange More” which was an iconic line and struck a chord amongst the people. Coca-Cola countered by spoofing the ad, using Sprite, to hilarious effect. Pepsi responded with a spoof of its own, starring Azhar and Jadeja hitting on the Coke line of “ Eat Cricket, Sleep Cricket, Drink Only Coca Cola” with the punch line of “ More More Cricket, More More Pepsi”. Coke again hit back, this time with Thumbs Up ad. They

portrayed the cricketers as monkeys and ended the ad with “ Don’t be a bunder (monkey) Taste the Thunder! Situation turned ugly with Pepsi going to court and finally ended with Coke withdrawing the ad.

The Cola wars went on full-fledged till 2003, when a pesticide controversy forced Coke and Pepsi to fight on the same side in so called “ India's New Cola Wars”. TheControversies Presence of Pesticides: In 2003, the Centre for Science and Environment (CSE) findings stirred the beverage industry in India. CSE claimed to find dangerous levels of pesticides in all the 57 samples of 11 soft drinks brands collected by the organization from 25 different manufacturing units of Coca-Cola and PepsiCo spread over 12 states.

The study found a cocktail of three-five different pesticides in all the samples - on an average 24 times higher than norms laid down by government-run Bureau of Indian Standard (BIS). Rajasthan, Madhya Pradesh, Chhattisgarh, Gujarat and Kerala banned the sale of Colas in schools, colleges and government departments, and other states also took adversarial measures. The day after the CSE’s announcement, Coke and Pepsi came together in a rare show of solidarity at a joint press conference.

The companies attacked the credibility of the CSE and their lab results, citing regular testing at independent laboratories proving the safety of their products. They promised to provide this data to the public, threatened legal action against the CSE while seeking a gag order, and contacted the United States Embassy in India for assistance. They roped in major film stars to explain their purity to public. Despite all these measures, sales dipped by as

much as 80% in some regions. The soft drinks industry took over a year to get back on the growth track.

Ground Water Crisis: Coca-Cola was recently accused of ground water depletion in many areas of the country. Coca-Cola's bottling operations – which extract hundreds of millions of liters of water from the groundwater resource – have significantly worsened the water crisis as groundwater levels have dropped sharply since Coca-Cola started its operations. The company was also accused of indiscriminately dumping its toxic waste into the surrounding areas – polluting the water as well as the land. The Coke reiterated its commitment to trim down water usage and take steps towards environment sustainability and farmer's welfare.

However, activists retort that Coca Cola is in the business of water usage and wasting, creating a luxury product largely for the middle class. Amidst various allegations and controversies, the soft drinks industry in India, supported by its booming economy, strengthening middle class and low per capita consumption, is growing at a cruising pace. The focus has shifted from carbonated drinks to Fruit drinks, with both the companies launching Lemon drinks in 2009-10. In the next few years, the fruit juice category is likely to carry the growth flag forward as consumers become more health conscious.