

**COMPREHENSIVE EXAM:
COCA-COLA
THOUGHT LEADERSHIP**

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From Caffeine to Calm: Coca-Cola's Leap into the Wellness Era

By James Quincey, CEO of The Coca-Cola Company

If the past few years have taught us anything, it's that control is overrated. We've seen a huge shift in how people, especially Millennials and Gen Z, are choosing to live. They're no longer chasing productivity for the sake of it. They're chasing peace. They're learning that slowing down isn't falling behind. It's choosing balance.

At Coca-Cola, connection, joy, and shared moments have always been at the heart of what we do. But today, that connection means something deeper. It's about making sure the moments we create also contribute to people's well-being.

Wellness shouldn't be exclusive. Like our products, it should be for everyone, not something tied to income, access, or trend. Real wellness starts with everyday decisions: the small things that help you reset, breathe, and take care of yourself. That mindset is shaping how we innovate, exploring natural, functional ingredients and mindful experiences that meet people where they are.

CBD has often been misunderstood or oversimplified. It's not about escape. It's about ease. Research shows it can help reduce stress and promote relaxation without altering your focus or state of mind. For us, it's about reimagining what a "Coke break" can look like. Not just something to share with friends or enjoy on the go, but a moment of calm. Something that inspires you to take time to rest and enjoy the ease you deserve.

Of course, innovation without integrity doesn't mean much. We're committed to sourcing responsibly, maintaining transparent supply chains, and meeting the highest safety and sustainability standards. That means working closely with regulators, scientists, and wellness experts to make sure every step reflects transparency, trust, and care.

And because wellness should extend beyond the individual, we're also focusing on the planet. We're investing in recyclable packaging, supporting sustainable hemp farming, and pushing toward a smaller carbon footprint. A product that helps you feel better should also help the world breathe a little easier.

At the end of the day, wellness isn't just physical. It's mental, emotional, and social. It's how we care for ourselves and the spaces we share. As a global brand, we have both the reach and the responsibility to make that conversation bigger. Because while we can't control everything, we can control how we show up for ourselves, for each other, and for the planet we all call home.

Our goal for the future of Coca-Cola is to expand how people see our brand and its value. We've always cared about creating happy hearts, but we also want to nurture happy minds. This next chapter is about more than adding new products. It's about evolving what Coca-Cola stands for: joy that fuels calm, balance, and connection in a world that's learning to slow down.

Strategy Note

This piece expands Coca-Cola's values and intentions beyond what it's done as a legacy brand, meeting people and culture in today's era of wellness. Written from the perspective of James Quincey, CEO of The Coca-Cola Company, it connects the brand's sustainability goals to its shift toward balance, mindfulness, and accessibility. Mentioning CBD acts as a cultural cue, showing how Coca-Cola can create calm while staying rooted in joy. By centering mental health, responsible innovation, and care for the planet, it highlights the brand's commitment to showing up with empathy, transparency, and intention.