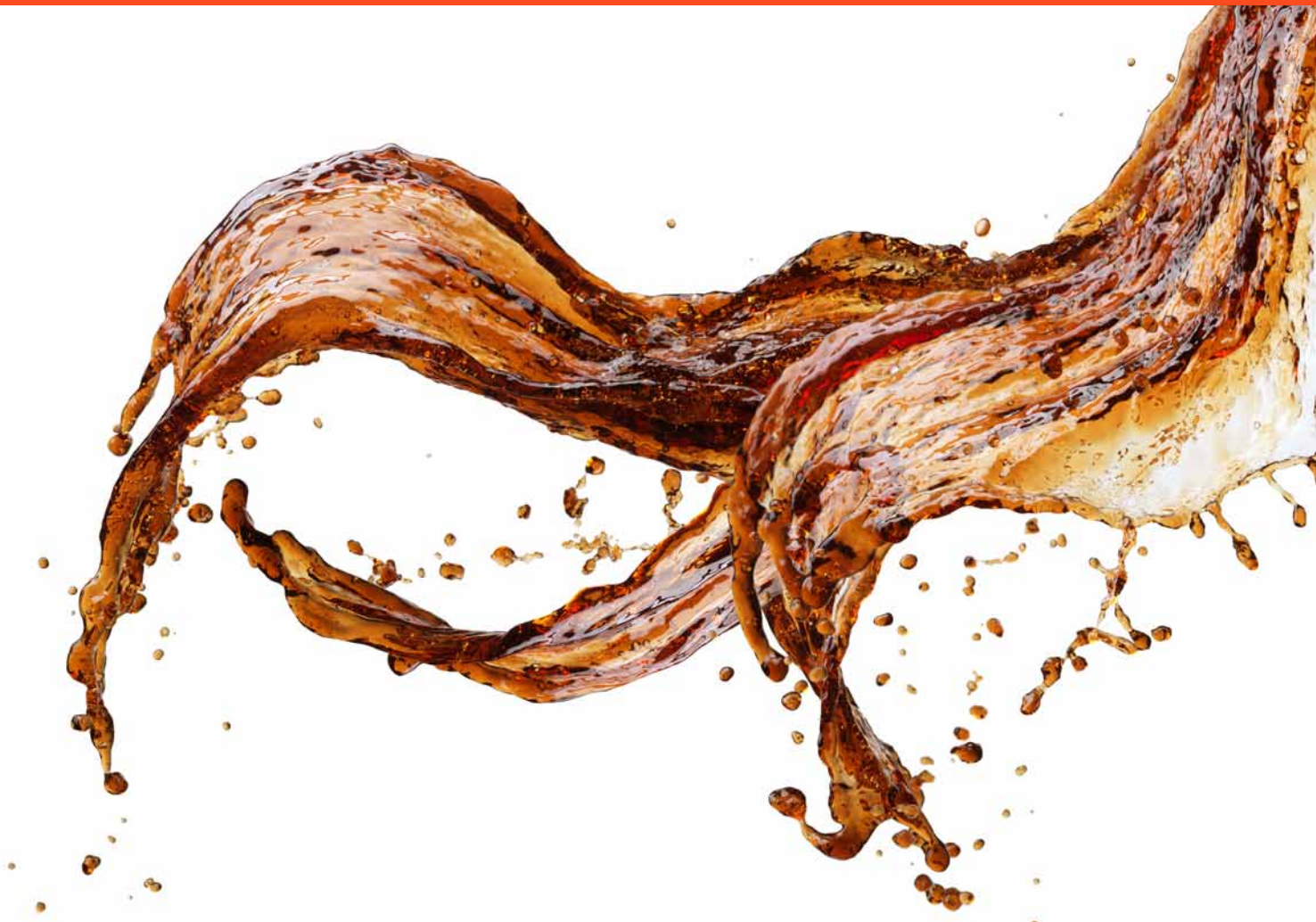


# COCA-COLA BOTTLING EGYPT

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*The Coca-Cola Company's 300 worldwide bottling partners are the powerhouse behind the global brand, as Becky Done finds out in discussion with Coca-Cola Bottling Egypt*

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# BOTTLING A BRAND

There can be very few people left in the world who are unfamiliar with Coca-Cola. From its almost casual creation in 1886, the company's iconic red scripted logo is now famous all over the globe, thanks to the power of its immense brand presence. Coca-Cola beverages sell in over 200 countries under a vast umbrella of more than 500 brands, so no matter the time of year or occasion, your location or lifestyle, it's likely you'll recognise Coca-Cola as a household name.

However it could be said that the brand itself is just one part of the picture. Most consumers opening a bottle of, say, Sprite, probably wouldn't give much thought to its back-story, but it is Coca-Cola's 300 bottling partners worldwide who largely drive the company's ultimate success, transforming the beverage from its base form into the final product.

The Coca-Cola Company manufactures and sells its concentrates, beverage bases and syrups to bottling operations, owns the brands and is responsible for consumer brand marketing initiatives. It then hands over the baton to its bottling partners, who manufacture, package, merchandise and distribute the final branded beverages to customers and vending partners, who sell the final products to the consumer—at a rate of 1.7 billion servings a day. All bottling partners work closely with customers; that is, virtually





anywhere that might sell a soft drink, from supermarkets, sporting venues and restaurants to cinemas, music venues and theme parks. The Coca-Cola Company and its bottling partners form what is termed The Coca-Cola System: and this alone is acknowledgment that the bottling companies play no small part in the global success of the Coca-Cola brand. Like anywhere else in the world,

the Middle East is thirsty for Coca-Cola products; and Coca-Cola Bottling Egypt (CCBE) is the largest soft drinks bottler in the region. A joint venture between the Coca-Cola Company and the MAC Beverages Group, the company employs 11,500 people across eight manufacturing plants and 27 strategically located distribution centres throughout Egypt. The company bottles Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta and DASANI (a premium natural water), in addition to Schweppes and Schweppes Gold (a non-alcoholic malt beverage).

“Our passion to meet consumer needs is reflected in our uncompromising commitment to total quality for our brands,” states CCBE’s president and chief operating officer, Salam El Hammamy. “We are pleased to say that we have recently launched our latest innovative product, Cappy Juice with fruit pieces. Our vision is to be the number one beverage company in Africa and the Middle East.”

CCBE bottles and packages the carbonated and non-carbonated beverages that make up its portfolio before distributing them to the Egyptian market, either via its direct distribution fleet or a third party (indirect sales distribution). “The synergy of operations along the supply chain is one of our major keys to success, as all the pillars in the system achieve harmonious dynamics,” says El Hammamy. “The operation umbrella includes utilization and effective performance, in addition to the technical support function that gives assistance to production and maintenance in terms of logistical and production planning,

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spare parts assessments and availability. It also includes attentive quality control on products and packaging, with a strict quality assurance system.”

The Coca-Cola Company itself focuses effort on protecting and preserving the planet, which encompasses areas such as water, energy use, packaging and emissions—and it encourages its bottling partners to do the same. In line with this, all of CCBE’s new machinery and equipment is environmentally friendly, and is operated

in accordance with high safety standards. One of the company’s mega plants has been awarded Best Performing Plant 2010 for Environmental Management within the Eurasia and Africa arm of the group. This was achieved in part by a medium-term plan set up in 2005 to replace all old lines and under-utilized assets, which saw almost 75 per cent of old lines

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and old machinery replaced with brand new equipment.

“We do strive to have the latest production lines and equipment installed in our plant,” confirms El Hammamy. “Our Upper Egypt plant, inaugurated in 2009, is state-of-the-art among all Coca-Cola plants in the Middle East region. Our main equipment suppliers are European

companies—predominantly German—which are ranked very highly worldwide within the beverage sector, and they supply us with the latest technology and updates on all of our equipment.” Suppliers provide anything from machinery and plant equipment to logistics, glass, labels and glue.

Of course, highly skilled operatives are always needed to drive maximum return on investment from the latest equipment. “Generally, we don’t have trouble finding skilled labour at most organizational levels, especially as most of our vacancies are filled through internal hiring or through sourcing and interviewing carried out by our designated HR staff. We don’t tend to refer to external recruitment agencies or head hunters,” comments El Hammamy.

However, he admits that a consistent challenge facing CCBE’s hiring managers is the sourcing of front-line sales executives—sales representatives and sales drivers—due to very high local market demand as well as the fact that Egypt is considered an attractive candidate pool for Gulf hiring managers targeting such positions. “Another challenge that we share along with

many companies operating in Egypt is the shortage of female talent at executive level, which is one of the development priorities that CCBE is currently working to address.”

CCBE is proud of its diversified portfolio of training and development

programmes. “Due to the unique nature of our company and the beverage industry, this portfolio consists of a lot of internal training programmes that are carefully designed by our senior managers with the support of our Capability Building team, and delivered by certified internal trainers from within CCBE. And all internal training programmes are conducted in our Coca-Cola Academy,” explains El Hammamy.

That said, the company is always seeking to enrich its people development programmes with additional content from other areas within The Coca-Cola System as well as via collaboration with a number of local and international

well-known and highly-regarded training and development providers.

For now, CCBE is targeting steady growth, and is focusing on expanding its sustainability projects across all plants and distribution centres. “Our company is committed to its corporate social responsibility programme, with values that are directed to serve and benefit the wider community in Egypt. These principles are embedded in our day-to-day business,” he concludes. **BE**



For more information about Coca Cola Bottling Egypt visit: [www.cocacolaegypt.com](http://www.cocacolaegypt.com)

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## Global Strength, Local Passion

Rexam is a global beverage can maker. Our worldwide network provides the platform to build close partnerships with customers such as Coca-Cola. But it is the commitment of our local teams and the investment we put into our plants that make the difference.

Behind our products, there is a team that care intensely about what they do and achieve, and who are passionate about delivering the best customer service.

It is this passion that enables us to grow with our customers and continue to provide the best packaging solutions for their products.

We are proud of our relationship with Coca-Cola and its bottlers, and congratulate the Coca-Cola Bottling Company in Egypt on their continued success. With our partnership and passion, together we are at the forefront of shaping the beverage industry.



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