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International Marketing: Principles and Practices

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Introduction

Coca-Cola Company is a globally recognised consumer brand. It is active in numerous cultural, economic and regulatory contexts. Balancing between a powerful international brand and efficient local adaptability will determine its long-term success. This report will examine the marketing techniques of Coca-Cola in two extremely different markets, the home market and the most developed in the United States, and in Japan, one of the most innovative and localised international markets. Comparing macro-environment differences, segmentation, targeting and positioning, the report reveals that Coca-Cola reflects different consumer expectations and market conditions. It also assesses performance, ethical matters and future priorities, and provides evidence-based advice to promote sustainable international development.

2. Overview of the company

Coca-Cola is a highly recognisable beverage enterprise with a substantial portfolio of over 200 brands spread across over 200 countries, such as Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Minute Maid, and Dasani (The Coca-Cola Company, 2025). Its marketing philosophy is a blend of standardised brand identity, which is focused on happiness, sharing and refreshment, plus high levels of localisation to adapt to diverse cultural, social and economic environments (Coca-Cola, 2024).



Figure 1: Coca-Cola

Source: (The Coca-Cola Company, 2025)

2.1 Coca-Cola's operations in the USA

The US is the domestic market of Coca-Cola and one of its biggest revenue generators (The Coca-Cola Company, 2025). In the US, Coca-Cola has a diversified product range like the classic Coca-Cola line, Diet Coke, Coke Zero Sugar, flavoured versions, and pre-prepared drinks like Minute Maid juices and Smart Water (The Coca-Cola Company, 2025). According to Chu (2020), the marketing model of the brand in the US is based on emotional narratives, sport sponsorships, and large-scale advertisement campaigns like the Share a Coke campaign.

The US market has a highly competitive consumer behaviour that is determined by lifestyle choices, brand loyalty, and convenience. Coca-Cola is offered in a large variety of supermarkets, convenience stores, fast-food chains, restaurants, vending machines, and online delivery systems (Coca-Cola, 2024). The US is also one of the largest markets in the world with regard to carbonated soft drinks, but the consumption has deteriorated over time with increasing health awareness (Tahmassebi and Banihani, 2020).

2.2 Coca-Cola's operations in Japan

The Coca-Cola brand landed in the Japanese market in 1957, and since that time, it has become one of the most winning international beverage brands in the country (Chan, 2025). Demand of the Japanese market is characterised by great focus on variety, convenience and consumption by seasons (Cabezas, 2024). Coca-Cola responds to these preferences by adjusting its marketing and distribution tactics through frequent innovation, as well as engaging in joint ventures with local cultural events and the use of the developed vending machine ecosystem in Japan (Coca-Cola, 2024). Some country-specific product ranges are Georgia Coffee, Ayataka Green Tea, sports drink Aquarius, Coca-Cola Peach and Coca-Cola Clear seasonal or limited-edition beverages (Chan, 2025). The collaboration between Coca-Cola and convenience stores is another distribution channel that is reinforced by the fact that convenience stores are among the key channels through which consumers make their daily purchases (Coca-Cola Bottlers Japan Holdings, 2024).

3. Comparison of the socio-cultural context of the USA and Japan

Marketing strategies play a critical role in the success of a business. Businesses formulate their marketing strategies based on the socio-cultural context of the market (Kotler and Keller, 2016). This section analyses the socio-cultural context of the USA and Japan, and analyses its marketing strategies in these two countries:

3.1 Comparative cultural analysis: Hofstede's dimensions

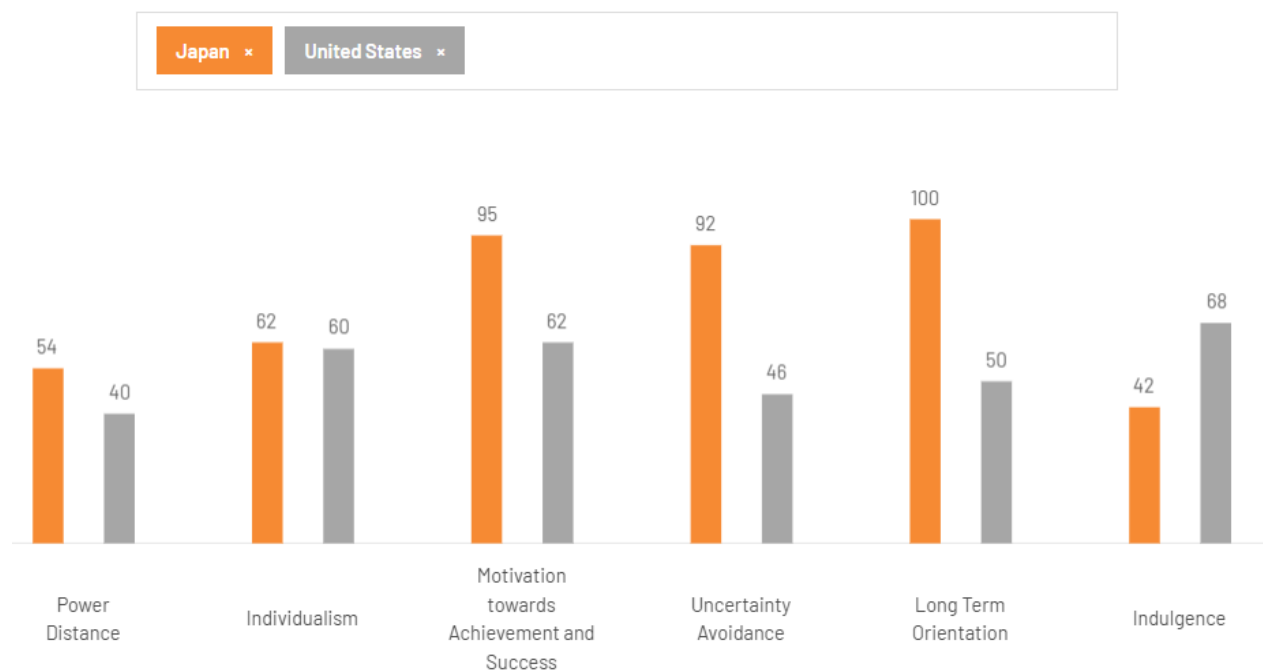


Figure 2: Hofstede's cultural dimensions of the USA and Japan

Source: (The Culture Factor, 2025)

The United States and Japan have vast cultural differences that define consumer behaviour and marketing expectations.

Power distance: The fact that Japan (54) has a higher power distance compared to the USA (40) means that the Japanese society is more accepting of hierarchy and formality, and therefore, structured communication, emphasis on social roles can be said to have a stronger impact on Japanese marketing (Bergiel et al., 2012).

Individualism vs Collectivism: Individualism (Japan 62; USA 60) is high in both countries, in which branding is largely affected by individual choice, self-expression, and self-reward (Postolov et al., 2019). That is why emotional and self-centred appeals are more effective in the USA, whereas Japan needs low-profile and socially harmonious messages.

Masculinity vs femininity: Japan has an extremely high masculinity score (95), which is an indication of an achievement-oriented culture that has respect for competition and excellence (The Culture Factor, 2025). On the contrary, the USA, a masculine society as well (62), has a more equitable orientation towards success and personal fulfilment.

Uncertainty avoidance: The uncertainty avoidance of Japan (92) is very high, and unlike the USA (46), which means that Japanese consumers prefer to be consistent, more reliable, and have detailed information about the product (Postolov et al., 2019). Such a preference prompts Coca-Cola to label its products, ensure quality and conduct regular updates of its products in Japan.

Long-term orientation: The long-term orientation of Japan (100) implies the focus on planning and perseverance, whereas the mediocre score of the USA (50) denotes the results-oriented and rather short-term culture (The Culture Factor, 2025).

Indulgence: Finally, the indulgence disparities (Japan 42; USA 68) demonstrate that the American consumers are more conservative towards pleasure, impulsive buying, and sweet tastes, whereas the Japanese consumers are conservative and risk-averse (Bergiel et al., 2012).

3.1.2 Advantages and disadvantages of Hofstede's model

The cultural model by Hofstede assists organisations in adapting the marketing strategies and comprehending consumer behaviour (Kotler and Keller, 2016). It is also easily and pragmatically compared across countries in terms of quantitative aspects. The model, however, has its limitations as it simplifies cultures to a national homogeneous entity. It uses old data that is only provided by one organisation, and it is not necessarily dynamic and changing as modern societies (Minkov and Kaasa, 2021). There is a possibility of

variations in cultural behaviours among countries, and so the model is not only useful as a guide but also not comprehensive enough on its own.

3.2 PESTEL analysis

PESTEL analysis provides a holistic view of the macroenvironment of a business. This model helps analyse critical environmental factors that have a significant direct and indirect impact on operations and marketing of a company (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

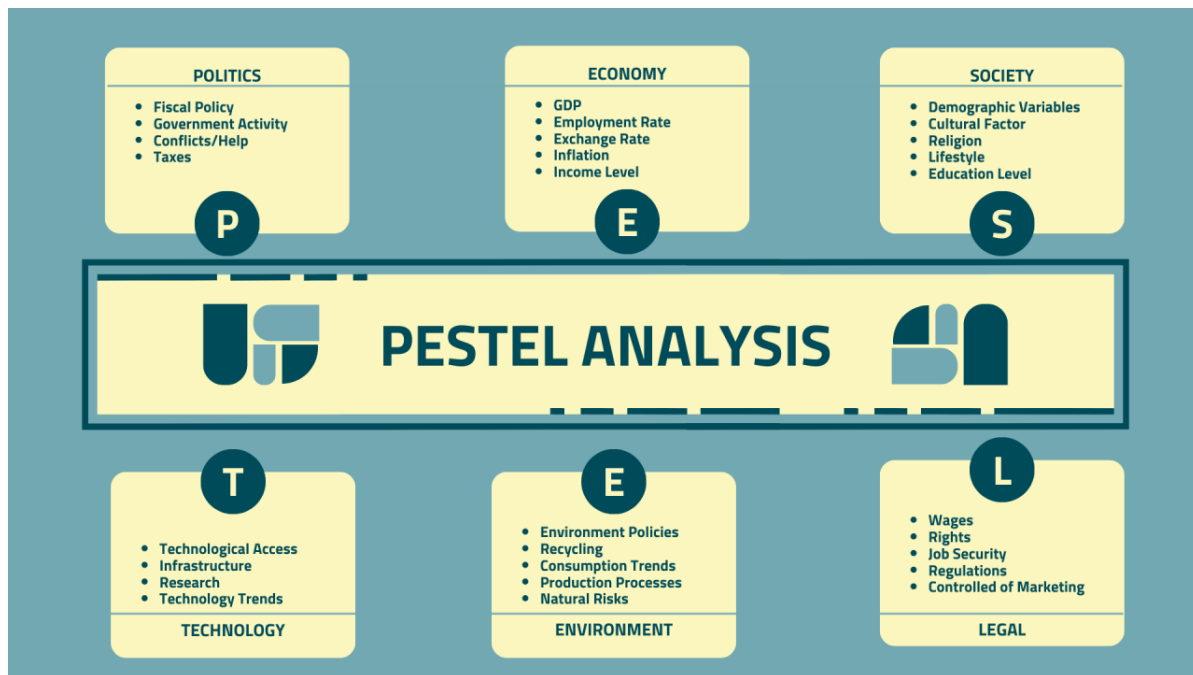


Figure 3: PESTEL analysis

Source: (Addon Skills, 2023)

PESTEL element	USA	Japan
Political factors	The USA has a highly developed political system having clear legal and regulatory systems that can provide Coca-Cola with predictability in doing business (World Population Review, 2025). This is favourable for	The political environment in Japan is typified by stable governance that is a constitutional monarchy and parliamentary democracy (Calder, 2021). The business continuity and foreign investment are stressed in the

	Coca-Cola. New tariff regulations have upset importation and exportation and could affect the supply chain cost and sourcing strategy used by Coca-Cola (Vanzetti, 2025). These factors are not favourable for Coca-Cola.	public policy, yet the regulatory background concerning health, safety, and consumer protection (Ishino, 2018) is the forces that shape the product formulation and labelling regulations in the beverage industry (Wad, 2025). Trade policies and tariffs, particularly to its current partners such as the US, can influence the cost of imports (Vanzetti, 2025). Overall, the political condition is favourable in Japan.
Economic factors	The USA has the largest economy in the world, with a steady growth rate. Real GDP increased at approximately 2.8 in 2024, while consumer purchasing power is stable as the unemployment rate is relatively lower at around 4.2-4.3% rate. Inflation is decreasing and is between 3% (Panday et al., 2025). Nevertheless, inflation remains an ingredient, and this might lead to an inflation of input prices, such as e.g. sugar, packaging, etc. (Vanzetti, 2025). Thus, the overall economic condition in the USA is favourable for Coca-Cola.	Japan has the fourth-largest economy in the world, which has a high GDP per capita, but it has experienced low growth in recent years (Wolf, 2025). This is in case of dampened local demand and foreign cross-breeze of international trade parameters. Japan has undergone inflation of 2-2.8% and the Unemployment level is also low, which assures a minimum consumer spending (Wolf, 2025). Japan's non-alcoholic beverage market is expected to rise, while demand for healthy and sugar-free variants will dominate as the Japanese are highly health-conscious

		(Nippon.com, 2025). These forces altogether are favourable for Coca Cola.
Social factors	Increased awareness of the health impacts of sugars has changed consumer preference to the low-sugar and zero-sugar drinks, which has compelled Coca-Cola to differentiate the product lines (Thomson, 2024). The US has a wide range of demographic groups which enable it to be marketed to specifically, e.g. Hispanic campaigns, youth marketing (Korotkikh, 2023). The growing fascination with convenience and premade consumption favours the mass use of cakes and vending stores by Coca-Cola.	According to Shinsugi and Takimoto (2025), Japan has a population structure that is a significant determinant of consumer markets. The purchasing behaviour is affected by health consciousness and established culture with regard to moderation. The speeding up of the ageing population has an implication on its consumption pattern, where older age groups will tend to take tea, water or drinks which are considered to be healthier (Shinsugi and Takimoto, 2025). Social trends in Japan are challenging for Coca-Cola.
Technological factors	Technological and data analytics allow Coca-Cola to customise campaigns, e.g. personalised advertising, participation in social media (SUR, 2024). Retailer app-based e-commerce, direct-to-consumer strategies and distribution channels have also been changed by e-commerce development by	Japan has emerged as a highly technologically advanced market in the world (Zhang, 2016). In the case of Coca-Cola, technology facilitates the availability of distribution channels which are very efficient. Retail and supply chain automation through digital innovation, as well as marketing analytics, is possible, facilitating

	utilising online delivery (Chotisarn and Phuthong, 2025). The technologies of supply chains assist in managing the inventory and minimising waste. Thus, these factors are favourable for Coca-Cola.	targeted marketing and procurement optimisation (Coca-Cola, 2024). Moreover, improved production technologies help in the diversification of the products and quality checks.
Environmental factors	The environmental issues have developed into a major force that shapes the strategies of Coca-Cola in the United States (Petrenko et al., 2024). Regulators, environmental and consumers are mounting pressure on the company in terms of its input towards plastic waste and carbon emissions. Besides, rising concerns about single-use plastics have resulted in the need to seek more sustainable packaging (Peterson et al., 2021). Moreover, the policies on climate stimulate companies to reduce their environmental effort, which affects the production processes of Coca-Cola, transportation, and sourcing patterns (Petrenko et al., 2024).	In Japan, environmental sustainability is becoming critical. Both government and consumers will prioritise corporate commitments that can help to minimise plastic waste, enhance recycling rates, and lower carbon emissions (Petrenko et al., 2024). The packaging is affected by measures like the initiative of the Sound Material-cycle Society and high recycling goals (Asim et al., 2022). The high industrial electricity costs and logistic difficulties of large vending network coverage affect efficiency and distribution in Japan (Asim et al., 2022).
Legal factors	The legal situation in the United States makes broad	Japan has a strict legal system with regard to food safety and

	commitments to the manufacturers of beverages. Government regulations affect the packaging and marketing of Coca-Cola. These are regulated in the labelling, advertising claims, and disclosure of sugar content by the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) and the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) (Coca-Cola, 2024). Furthermore, the fact that different states have different types of laws impacts the pricing and distribution of the company as well as compliance expenses of the company operations in the U.S (Vanzetti, 2025).	labelling that is monitored by the Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare (Wad, 2025). The strict rules regarding the disclosure of ingredients, nutrition labels and claims regarding health benefits require beverage companies to perform innovations related to their products and advertising campaigns (Wad, 2025). The law of advertising forbids misleading arguments and makes marketing truthful, whereby global marketing needs to be culturally adapted.

3.2.1 Similarities and differences of socio-cultural factors

According to the PESTEL analysis, the USA and Japan have some similarities in terms of macro-environmental factors such as political stability, well-developed regulatory frameworks, and modern technological systems that enable Coca-Cola the distribute on a mass scale and through online marketing (World Population Review, 2025; Calder, 2021). Increasing environmental stress associated with plastic waste and sustainability is also a challenge in the two markets (Petrenko et al., 2024).

There are, however, substantial differences. The USA has greater growth and stronger consumer spending, whereas Japan has slower growth and an ageing population with more conservative consumption (World Population Review, 2025). The USA is more

indulgent and inclined to sweeter drinks, whereas Japan is more moderate, seasonal, and health-conscious (The Culture Factor, 2025). Japan has a high uncertainty avoidance and long-term orientation compared to a flexible and short-term consumer orientation, which is typical of the USA (Postolov et al., 2019).

4. STP analysis of Coca-Cola in the USA and Japan

4.1 STP strategies in the USA

4.1.1 Segmentation

Segmentation involves the subdivision of a large group into smaller, identifiable units of consumers in accordance with common traits like demographics, behaviour, lifestyle, or psychographics (Kotler and Armstrong, 2018). The Coca-Cola Company uses one of the multi-segment segmentation strategies, which is to accommodate the different traits of the US beverage market:

Demographic segmentation: According to Kotler and Armstrong (2018), demographic segmentation refers to dividing the broader market based on features like age, income, gender, etc. Coca-Cola's demographic segmentation is evident in the fact that it targets different age groups, such as teenagers, young adults and families, as well as broad income groups with affordable prices (Wang, 2021).

Psychographic segmentation: Psychographic is a segmentation that aims at those consumers who value enjoyment, convenience and emotional attachment, which Coca-Cola supports with brand identity and lifestyle-oriented messages (Zhang, 2024). This psychological behaviour is in line with VALS personality types. It matches with experiencers who are energetic and impulsive and seek excitement and convenience (Carducci, 2020).

Behavioural segmentation: Behavioural segmentation also differentiates between heavy drinkers of carbonated beverages, health-conscious consumers who seek low or no-calorie beer and those who favour on-the-go and convenient packaging (Zhang, 2024).

In addition, in developing a global marketing strategy, geographic segmentation is also applied, in which the company segments the market in EMEA, Latin America, North America and Asia Pacific (Coca-Cola, 2024). This universal strategy goes hand in hand with a heterogeneous consumer market and the variety of beverage tastes in the USA.

4.1.2 Targeting

Coca-Cola applies a differentiated targeting strategy and chooses various groups of consumers, catering to them with its offerings. The flagship Coca-Cola brand serves traditional cola consumers, and Diet Coke, Coke Zero Sugar, and other varieties of reduced-calorie formulations serve health-conscious segments (Sarich et al., 2016). Powerade and Smartwater products are targeting consumers who have an active lifestyle. Besides, younger audiences are reached through digital campaigns, music partners, and social media engagements (Datta, 2024). This strategy allows Coca-Cola to increase market penetration as the demand grows towards healthier and functional drinks.

4.1.3 Positioning

Coca-Cola defines itself as a brand of happiness, sharing, and emotional connection, with the help of such slogans as Open Happiness and Share a Coke. Through big sponsorships and recognisable advertisements, the brand focuses on fun, social connectedness and cultural proximity (Zhang, 2024).

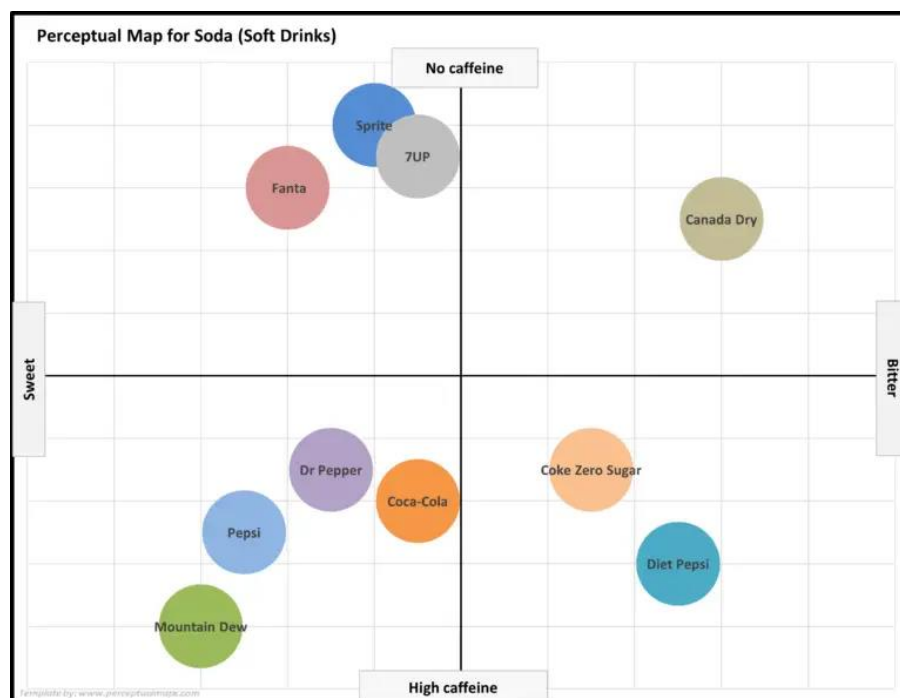


Figure 4: Perceptual map of Coca-Cola

Source: (Fripp, 2023)

It markets its no-sugar options as nutritious alternatives without compromising on taste and targeting those consumers who are cutting back on sugar consumption (Sarich et al., 2016). Coca-Cola also makes itself a stable element of the American lifestyle, playing off nostalgia, heritage and ubiquity.

4.2 STP analysis in Japan

4.2.1 Segmentation

Coca-Cola uses a multi-dimensional strategy of segmentation, which is specific to the Japanese consumer environment:

Demographic segmentation: The age factors and interests related to the beverage tastes of the teenagers, young people, and an ageing population show a demographic segmentation (Zhu, 2024).

Psychographic segmentation: Psychographic segmentation is used to focus on the consumers who attach importance to convenience, innovation, and functional attributes of health as crucial values identified in the Japanese beverage culture (Zhu, 2024). This segmentation follows the VALS personality types and matches with experiencers types of personality (Carducci, 2020).

Behavioural segmentation: In behavioural segmentation, there are frequent buyers of ready-to-drink beverages, commuters who depend on vending machines, and health-conscious consumers who buy low-sugar or vitamin-fortified or even functional drinks (Zhang, 2024).

This market segmentation strategy represents the mature beverage market in Japan, whereby the demand is based on novelty, quality and health consuming trends.

4.2.2 Targeting

Coca-Cola employs the differentiated targeting approach to market in Japan, producing special products to target specific consumers (Cabezas, 2024). To the general soft drink drinkers, Coca-Cola continues to sell its traditional bottle of cola. In case of health-intended segments, the company is selling drinks like Coca-Cola Zero and dietary drinks that are fortified with vitamins or are used to support health (Chan, 2025). Hurried urban

professionals and commuters are also the target of the brand by the numerous networks of vending machines and ready-to-drink tea and coffee products adapted to the local taste (Sarich et al., 2016). Special flavours and seasonal products are aimed at serving the consumers who take pride in new impressions and cultural adjustments to increase the stakes and involvement in the Japanese market (Chan, 2025).

4.2.3 Positioning

Coca-Cola presents itself as a company that is unique across the globe and local at the same time in Japan. It has focused on quality, reliability, and innovation and has ensured that its products are aligned with Japanese tastes regarding products that were healthy, convenient, and culturally sensitive (Chan, 2025). This stance will help the company to retain a highly competitive advantage in the extremely dynamic and high-end driven beverage market in Japan.

4.3 Similarities and differences of STP strategies between the USA and Japan

The STP strategies of Coca-Cola in the USA and Japan are similar in terms of application of multi-segment and differentiated targeting in reaching its diverse consumers (Wang, 2021). In both markets, the company focuses on low-calorie products for health-conscious consumers and benefits as a recognisable, globally-relied brand (Coca-Cola, 2024).

Nevertheless, there are major distinctions between the segmentation approach used by the U.S., with its focus on the diversity of lifestyles and online presence, and Japan, which prioritises functional drinks, novelty, and consumption on the way to work (Cabezas, 2024). The Japanese market suggests targeting with a high level of localisation by offering tasteful and specific flavours and selling in vending machines (Chan, 2025). Such differences would depict the cultural and consumption dynamics of each country.

5. Marketing Mix Analysis of Coca-Cola in the context of the USA and Japan

5.1 Product width and product depth:

Product breadth Coca-Cola has numerous carbonated products, such as Coke Classic, Coke Zero/Zero Sugar, and Diet Coke, water, such as Dasani in the US and I LOHAS and local brands in Japan, juices (Minute Maid), coffee/tea, energy and functional beverages (Coca-Cola, 2025).

The depth is greater in each line in Japan, such as a variety of flavours, seasonal small editions, functional versions like Coca-Cola Plus, a FOSHU product. In the US, they focus on core SKUs and zero-sugar choices, with the occasional limited-edition flavours (Cognitive Market Research, 2023).

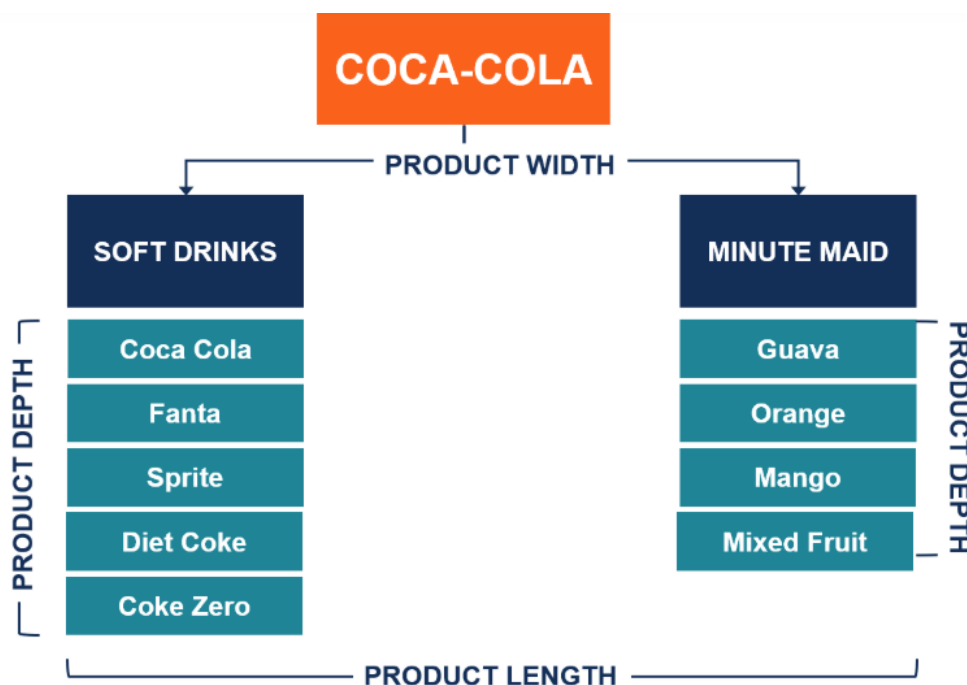


Figure 5: Coca-Cola product width and length

Source: (CFI Team, 2020)

5.2 Product Dimensions

Core products: Its core product is refreshment and enjoyment. Coca-Cola also provides convenience and functional benefits in Japan (Beverage-Digest, 2025). In the US,

emotional brand heritage and (sharing) moments remain the central focus, but lower-calorie variations are currently more forthcoming.

Packaging: Japan tends to employ smaller container sizes, such as 280-500 ml PET bottles, 250-300 ml cans, special glass bottles and bare-minimum labels in seasonal promotions. Wrappers used in vending machines and special limited-edition wrappers are common (CCBJI, 2019).

Large value sizes, such as bottles 2 litres and multipacks 12 or 24 pack, are prevalent in the US, with national labels commonly used; glass premium and retro packages are offered during campaigns (Cognitive Market Research, 2023).

Auxiliary products: The technical auxiliaries of Japan include app-based vending via the Coke ON app, subscription, and integrated cashless/QR payment. Seasonal displays are a common feature of store-level merchandising (Matsuda and Sato, 2021). In the US, auxiliary features concentrate on large-scale sponsorship deals, loyalty programmes with retail partners, and e-commerce listings. These extras increase convenience, perceived value and trial.

5.3 Marketing Mix

Coca-Cola balances brand equity across the globe as well as local adaptability. It maintains uniform brand icons, red, script logo, Coke, but modifies product formulation, packs, distribution channels and promotion mechanism to meet local requirements (Newman, 2025).

Marketing Mix	USA	Japan
Product	The product strategy of Coca-Cola in the United States is flagship carbonated beverages, including Coca-Cola Classic, Diet Coke, and Coca-Cola Zero Sugar. The company focuses on taste consistency and brand familiarity	Conversely, Japan has a high product innovation and SKU turnover. Coca-Cola Japan has a broad range of non-Coca-Cola ready-to-drinks, such as canned coffee, green tea, and functional drinks with recognised health

	(Newman, 2025). Innovation targets to correspond to the demand for zero-sugar versions and expand the range of beverages through acquisitions like Costa Coffee. Product line extensions can be obtained, but are too few and are normally introduced in the country rather than at the regional levels (Shah, 2021).	claims, including Coca-Cola Plus (CCBJI, 2019). The product is occasion-based and seasonal, with frequent limited-edition flavours that promote trial and adjust to the changing consumer preferences.
Price	Coca-Cola has a competitive, volume-based pricing strategy in the United States. Multi-packs. Regular price offers and retailer slotting concessions safeguard markets in the very competitive and mature soft-drinks industry (Venditti, 2024). Current reports indicate that revenue is increasing due to price and mix adjustments despite a falling per-capita consumption of sugary carbonated beverages.	In Japan, Coca-Cola has a more premium and flexible price. Functional beverages, novelty products and limited editions have increased unit prices, particularly when vending machines are used (Beverage-Digest, 2024). Convenience, innovation, and product differentiation are the three reasons why Japanese consumers are ready to pay this premium.
Place	In the United States, Coca-Cola has a wide distribution network that includes supermarkets, convenience stores, food-service outlets, vending machines, and even online grocery retailers (CFI Team, 2020). The franchised	The distribution network in Japan is remarkable due to its dense grid of vending machines and great penetration of convenience stores (konbini) and supermarkets. Vending machines provide Coca-Cola with direct contact with

	bottling system ensures that national coverage is efficient and that the products are always available in all the retail channels. Market entry mode: The initial market development of Coca-Cola relied on direct distribution, franchise bottlers, and national advertising. The brand has grown both naturally out of its headquarters and via partnerships with retailers and foodservice chains (Coca-Cola, 2025).	consumers, real-time sales information and strong visibility in classic urban life (Beverage-Digest, 2024) Market entry mode: The company has ventured into Japan through partnership and subsequent investment in local bottlers, through joint ventures and by acquiring bottling operations. Since 1957, Coca-Cola has relied on local bottlers and extensive local research and development and investments in vending machines to customise products and distribution, creating one of the most advanced ready-to-drink networks in the world (CCBJI, 2019).
Promotion	The Coca-Cola promotion strategy in the United States targets the mass-media adverts, big sports events sponsorships, digital storytelling and influencers. Happiness, nostalgia, and shared experiences through campaigns usually increase long-term brand equity (Cognitive Market Research, 2023).	The promotion in Japan is product-centred and dynamic, based on regular co-operations, limited-edition releases, vending-machine promotion, app-based promotions, as well as local star promotion (Horton, 2024). Promotion stimulates experimentation within a large range of SKUs as opposed to focusing on one flagship product.
People	Marketing takes the central brand teams, agency partners, and celebrity ambassadors as its	Direct customer service jobs, including bottler, vending technician and retail merchandiser, are

	drivers. Major retailers collaborate with the sales teams to attract shelf space (Matsuda and Sato, 2021).	essential; customer service is supplied by app interfaces and localised field staff (Newman, 2025).
Process	Production processes in the United States are very standardised. The manufacture of concentrate is centrally acquired, and quality assurance, manufacturing, and logistics are undertaken by franchised bottlers, which achieve efficiency and scale in operations (Shah, 2021).	Product development and replenishment activities at Coca-Cola in Japan are fast. Smart vending machines enable restocking based on data and adaptation to consumer demand rapidly, backed by prevalent cashless and QR payment systems (CCBJI, 2019).
Physical Evidence	The physical presence of Coca-Cola in the United States is characterised by iconic red branding, standardised packaging, in-store point-of-sale materials, and prominent sponsorship displays (Venditti, 2024).	Physical communication in Japan involves localised packaging, localised seasonal displays in stores, and every vending machine throughout Japan carrying Coca-Cola-branded products, which are both distribution venues and brand identifiers (Beverage-Digest, 2024).

5.4 Advantages and disadvantages of Coca-Cola's marketing mix

Advantages: In the USA, brand leadership and strong sales are supported by scale economies, global branding, solid retail relationships, and massive advertising expenditures (Cognitive Market Research, 2023). The latest financial reports reflect good revenue growth owing to price and mix improvements. In Japan, there has been exceptionally strong local responsiveness, strong serving in convenience stores, high SKU innovations, and digital integrations like Coke ON help in triggering trials, capturing data, and loyalty and their relevance in the market (Beverage-Digest, 2024).

Disadvantages: USA Heavy dependency on historic carbonated SKUs in a market that is health-conscious is under regulatory and social-health-research pressure of sugar and plastic waste (Horton, 2024). These scandals can hurt the company's image. In Japan, SKU complexity is high and raises the costs of manufacturing and logistics. Excessive dependency on vending machines exposes margins to both the density and the cost of technology in the urban environment (CCBJI, 2019). In certain segments, premium prices reduce the penetration.

6. Evaluation of Coca-Cola's marketing strategies' success

6.1 Market Performance- United States

Sales and market share: According to the Coca-Cola Company, the total net revenues for the full year 2024 amounted to \$47.1 billion, of which the North American market took a substantial portion of the global results (Companies Market Cap, 2023).

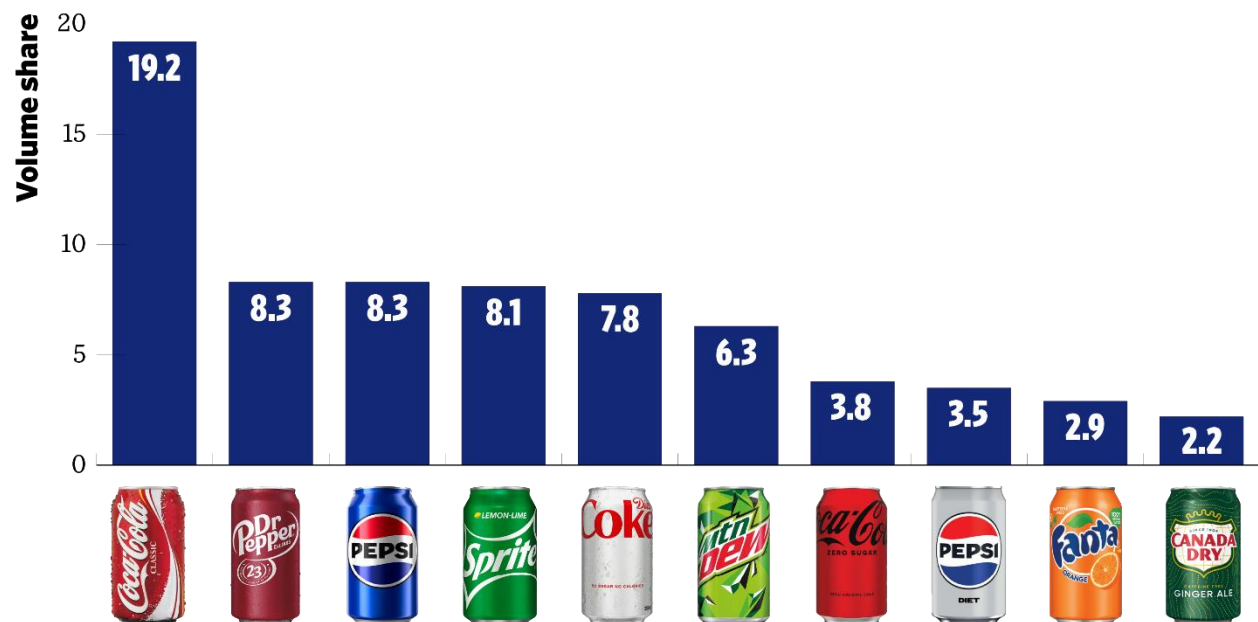


Figure 6: Coca-Cola Market Share in the US

Source: (Springer, 2024)

According to recent industry studies, Coca-Cola continued to hold the biggest stake in the domestic carbonated soft-drink market, holding more than 19% market share (SEC, 2024).

Social media engagement: Coca-Cola has maintained the top position in the beverage market of the United States, and this ranking is supported by its high brand awareness and its wide network of retail distribution (Dey, 2025). The social media page, especially the Facebook page of Coca-Cola Cola has millions of followers.

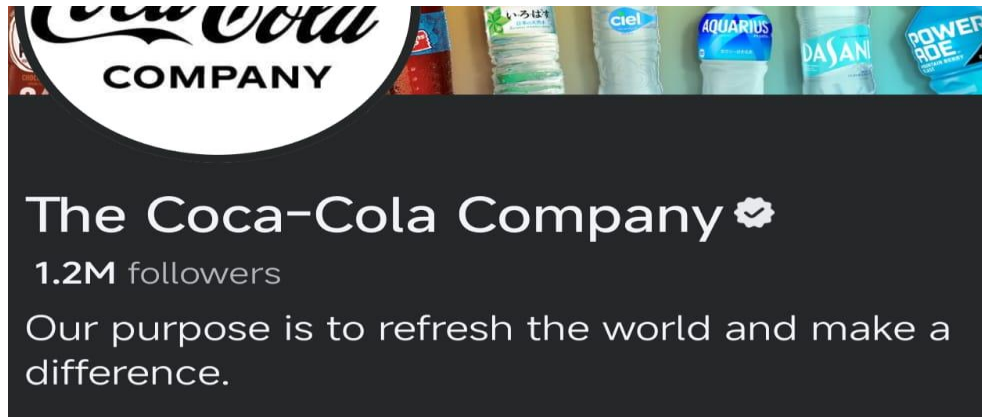


Figure 7: Facebook Profile of Coca-Cola

Source: (Author)

6.2 Market Performance- Japan

Sales performance: Coca-Cola Company's marketing mix has led to sustained success in the Japanese market (Market.us, 2022). Recent reports by Coca-Cola Bottlers Japan record multibillion-dollar revenues and growing profitability, which are positive price adjustments and strong sales of local brands, such as Ayataka tea (McColl, 2024).

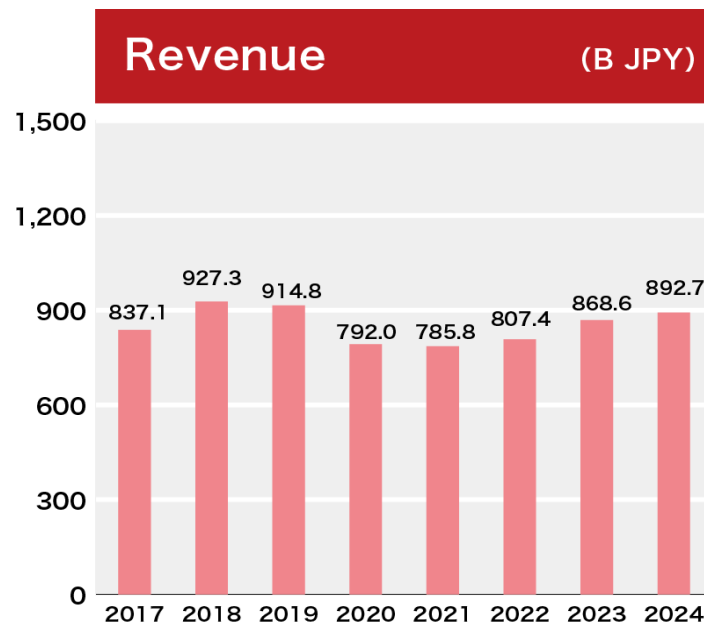


Figure 8: Revenue in Japan

Source: (Coca-Cola Bottlers Japan Holdings, 2025)

Social media engagement: The Japanese subsidiary of Coca-Cola is also very active in social media. The Facebook page of Coca-Cola Japan has millions of followers each post connecting thousands of people.



Figure 9: Facebook Profile of Coca-Cola Japan

Source: (Author)

7. Evaluation of ethical issues

In Japan, Coca-Cola sells health-function-claimed products, such as Coca-Cola Plus, that are FOSHU-approved. Even though such products are legally approved, they raise ethical issues as to whether consumers view such beverages as healthy options in lieu of using them as an occasional functional product or as they begin to do so in addition to purchasing those beverages (DING, 2024).

The use of single-use bottles made of plastic by Coca-Cola has received long-term criticism and lawsuits in the United States and in campaigns by global non-governmental organisations (NGOs) who point to plastic pollution (Serodio et al., 2020). The municipalities, such as Los Angeles County, have brought legal claims alleging misleading statements about recyclability. These concerns indicate ethical packaging design, transparency and producer responsibility (UCS, 2025).

Ethical concerns exist in both markets, but are dissimilar in nature. In the United States, the key concerns revolve around selling to vulnerable consumers or product development and transparency of packaging and in Japan, the problems revolve around functional-food positioning and consumer misconstruction (Serodio et al., 2020). The two settings require increased levels of transparency, better personal efforts to meet the promises of responsible marketing, and faster shifts to reusable or truly circular packaging.

8. Recommendations

This part presents strategic advice to enforce the international marketing strategy at Coca-Cola in markets like the United States and Japan.

Health-forward portfolio expansion

Coca-Cola must emphasise a health-forward portfolio by researching and developing truly less risky drinks. This involves remaking low-sugar beverages, fortifying with fibre and making functional beverages (Mahase, 2019). Consumer trust needs to be maintained by open communication of the advantages and drawbacks of non-sugar sweeteners. In other markets, successful products like the Coca-Cola Plus in Japan can be modified with care as per the WHO diet provisions (WHO, 2025).

Packaging and Circularity

Coca-Cola should re-invest in reusable and refillable packaging systems and establish specific goals for recycled content in packaging and circularity. Enhanced collaboration with bottle-deposit and collection programmes, particularly in the U.S., will improve collection targets and minimise the censure by the environmental NGOs (Asim et al., 2022). Matching these measures with the World Without Waste framework and reinstating previous reuse promises will help in reducing reputational risk.

Transfer Japan's rapid-innovation model.

The company must implement the rapid-innovation concept in Japan by massifying high-frequency SKU turnover, smart vending solutions, and loyalty programmes such as Coke ON with app technology in additional high-density urban areas (Cabezas, 2024). This will enhance product trial, enhance data capture, and facilitate regionally adapted product launch.

Responsible marketing and transparency

Social accountability and transparency should be strengthened. More restrictive measures against child-targeted advertising, more explicit functional claims and publication of independent reviews of health-related messages will decrease regulatory and legal risks (Kotler and Keller, 2016).

Conclusion

According to the report, Coca-Cola's international marketing is most effective when it incorporates global and robust local responsiveness in its brands. Coca-Cola defends its lead in the US market by scale, heritage branding, and a diversified product line in a mature, health-conscious market. In Japan, the corporation focuses on fast innovation, high-end and very localised distribution, including vending machines and seasonal products. The two are commercially viable strategies that present ethical and sustainability challenges of health, packaging and responsible marketing. In the future, the future success of Coca-Cola will be determined by quicker health-centred innovation, enhanced circular packaging structures and transparent, accountable promoting practices across all markets.

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