



Coca-Cola Pan African System Council – Alignment of a continent-wide franchise system



Square Peg Support

Pan African System Council - setting the stage

We were engaged to develop the framework and facilitate the council where 16 President's/COO's were the key participants. We interviewed each participant individually to identify their hopes and fears for the council, using our findings to tailor a first meeting agenda that got the council off to a flying start.

Launching the Council – gaining consensus on Council objectives

With our facilitation at the Council's inaugural meeting in 2004 the members confounded the expectations of some by jointly ratifying a clear charter and principles. Square Peg went on to facilitate the subsequent six-monthly meetings of the Council. As its esprit de corps continued to grow, the Council quickly established its reputation as a worthwhile body, commissioning business specific initiatives to support the franchise system continent-wide.

Independent support of the Council Process - more than just a meeting

From the outset we have managed the Council as a *process* rather than a round of meetings. As independent partners we conduct confidential feedback interviews with all Council members and draw on our in-depth understanding of our clients' businesses continually to ensure agendas, meetings and activities meet objectives. The pre-work process we developed and managed also optimises members' time together ensuring all parties have an even share-of-voice and remain engaged.

Practical support – ensuring focus and consistency

We have also played a role in introducing guest contributors and in co-ordinating the logistics of market-visits in venues as diverse as Cairo, Buenos Aires & Atlanta. Square Peg has provided consistency as Council membership has evolved.

Result

As a result the Pan African System Council has gone from strength to strength since its inception over four years ago. It is recognised to be a forum for frank and truly open dialogue Company-to-Bottler, Bottler-to-Company and Bottler-to-Bottler. With its focus on Africa-wide impact the Council's best-practice sharing and collegiate approach has resulted in concrete improvements to the businesses concerned and to the communities in which they operate. Leading Alex Cummings (ex President Coca-Cola Africa) to state: ***'The achievements of the Council have quite simply been above and beyond our expectations and that is in no small part due to the professionalism and attention to detail of the Square Peg team'***.

The Challenge

The Coca-Cola Company's Africa SBU (Strategic Business Unit) utilizes a franchise model for its product bottling and distribution across 54 African markets.

To drive more value for all the stakeholders within its System The Company wanted to better align its work with that of its franchisees.

A system wide council was the preferred framework for the desired alignment. Such a forum was generally believed to be "A Good Thing" but there were some doubts among members as to how it might actually work and what it might reasonably achieve. Several members represented competitor companies, creating an obstacle to truly open dialogue. Our challenge was to provide design and facilitation support to the initiative.



Coca-Cola Pan African System Council – The Council’s Perspective



A shared enterprise

The Council represents bottlers from very different types of organisations (family owned businesses and multi-national conglomerates, brewers and soft drink specialists, Europeans, North Africans, Southern Africans and others). But despite the many interests, we do feel ownership of the forum and that we have an equal say on the agenda and in the room.'

Javier Altayó, General Manager – Equatorial Coca-Cola Bottling Company

Applying our system knowledge & synergies

Square Peg have a thorough understanding of our very particular business model and their insight and global System connections have been useful. For example, they helped to set up a round of competition-focussed sessions that provided a welcome reality check.'

Fanus Nothnagel - Chief Executive Officer, Coca-Cola SABCO Ltd

At the outset the council clearly defined its purpose and objectives and we've reviewed them together from time to time to ensure they still hold true. It takes a formal process with agreed actions and dates for us to achieve our strategy together and everybody involved has to be open and take an active part if we are all to benefit as a system. So the Council provides a great opportunity to come together to network and share knowledge. We're often dealing with similar issues – particularly with competition and channel drifts - so shared views and experiences are invaluable.'

Ken Hitchcock, formerly Managing Director, Amalgamated Beverage Industries.

Strategic Insight

'The council is an important strategic undertaking for us as a franchise system in Africa and we have benefited from Square Peg's involvement. Their approach is that the Council is a process and not just a series of meetings and they have helped us keep the spirit of the endeavour alive in between gatherings. Additionally, their independent insights and challenges to us have helped the Council to remain true to its objectives and to make a concrete difference to our business in Africa.'

Paul Fourie. Group Strategy & Business Planning Director – Coca-Cola Eurasia & Africa