



Today's Top Stories

[Global media habits evolve](#)
[Innovation models change](#)
[New warc.com launches](#)
[Starbucks moves beyond coffee](#)
[UK mobile adspend to rise](#)
[Coke, Pepsi well placed in India](#)

News

[7 Day Round-Up](#)
[News by Email](#)
[RSS Feed](#)

Starbucks moves beyond coffee

SEATTLE: Starbucks is set to broaden its reach beyond coffee after unveiling a redesigned logo, a move observers suggest provides opportunities and risks.

The company's insignia no longer features its name or the word "coffee", and now solely depicts a female "Siren".

"The world has changed and Starbucks has changed. The new interpretation of the logo at its core is the exact same essences of the Starbucks experience," Howard Schultz, Starbucks' ceo, [said in a statement](#).

"That is the love we have for our coffee, the relationship we have with our partners and the connection we have built with our customers."

In an effort to ensure this strategy delivered the desired results, the organisation studied examples such as Nike and Apple, which place images at the heart of their branding.

Moreover, it noted the travails of Gap, the apparel retailer forced to withdraw a modified emblem in October 2010 following harsh public criticism.

"This new evolution of the logo does two things that are very important: it embraces and respects our heritage, and at the same time evolves us to a point where we feel it's more suitable for the future," said Schultz.

"In March 2011, we will celebrate the 40th anniversary of our company. There's some symmetry, I think, of being able to do this at that time."

Schultz argued emphasising the "Siren", originally intended to mirror coffee's maritime history, had a wider objective.

"We've allowed her to come out of the circle in a way that, I think, gives us the freedom and flexibility to think beyond coffee," he said.

Having reversed falling sales when the downturn began, Starbucks started selling Via coffee in grocery stores, and is expected to branch out into areas including food.

"Starbucks will continue to offer the highest-quality coffee, but we will offer other products as well," Schultz continued.

"Our new brand identity will give us the freedom ... to explore innovations and new channels of distribution that will keep us in step with our current customers and build strong connections with new customers."

According to John Quelch, a Harvard Business School marketing professor, this

SIMILAR NEWS

[Big brands collaborate to innovate](#)

[Big brands focus on customer service](#)

[GE, IBM lead green social media efforts](#)

FOLLOW US ON TWITTER

No tweets found

approach made logical sense.

"The brand is now evolving to a point where the coffee association is too confining and restrictive," he said.

"Starbucks is fundamentally selling an experience, but by no means is coffee the only part of the experience."

Robert Passikoff, the founder of consultancy Brand Keys, asserted this was the single rational motive for updating such a well-known symbol.

"If it isn't [for this purpose] and they're just trying to freshen stuff up, no one cares," he said.

A number of unfavourable comments were posted in response to Schultz's official blog, and social media sites like Twitter also contained negative feedback.

"It's easy for people to demean a logo change. Does that really reflect their genuine perception of Starbucks? I don't think so," said Tony Spaeth, president of consultancy Identityworks.

However, James Gregory, ceo of CoreBrand, described the decision as "nuts", and warned moving into the retail arena carrying a somewhat undifferentiated badge on packaging may be unwise.

"There you're dealing with people who aren't enthusiasts. You're looking at something that's almost generic and it's not shouting out as something that is Starbucks," he said.

Data sourced from Starbucks, Reuters, AdAge, Associated Press; additional content by Warc staff, 7 January 2011

