

# Coca-Cola Hellenic Serbia: Applying Innovation in New Ways to Support an Expanding Product Range

Coca-Cola Hellenic Serbia is the country's leading soft drinks producer. Working together with more than 3,000 partners, it is a major contributor to the Serbian economy through its production and distribution of an expanding range of carbonated, non-carbonated and water brands.

The company is a member of the Coca-Cola Hellenic Group, one of Europe's foremost non-alcoholic beverage producers with operations in 28 countries, serving a population of more than 550 million. A key objective of the Group is to meet consumer refreshment and hydration needs by offering a constantly expanding variety of beverages.

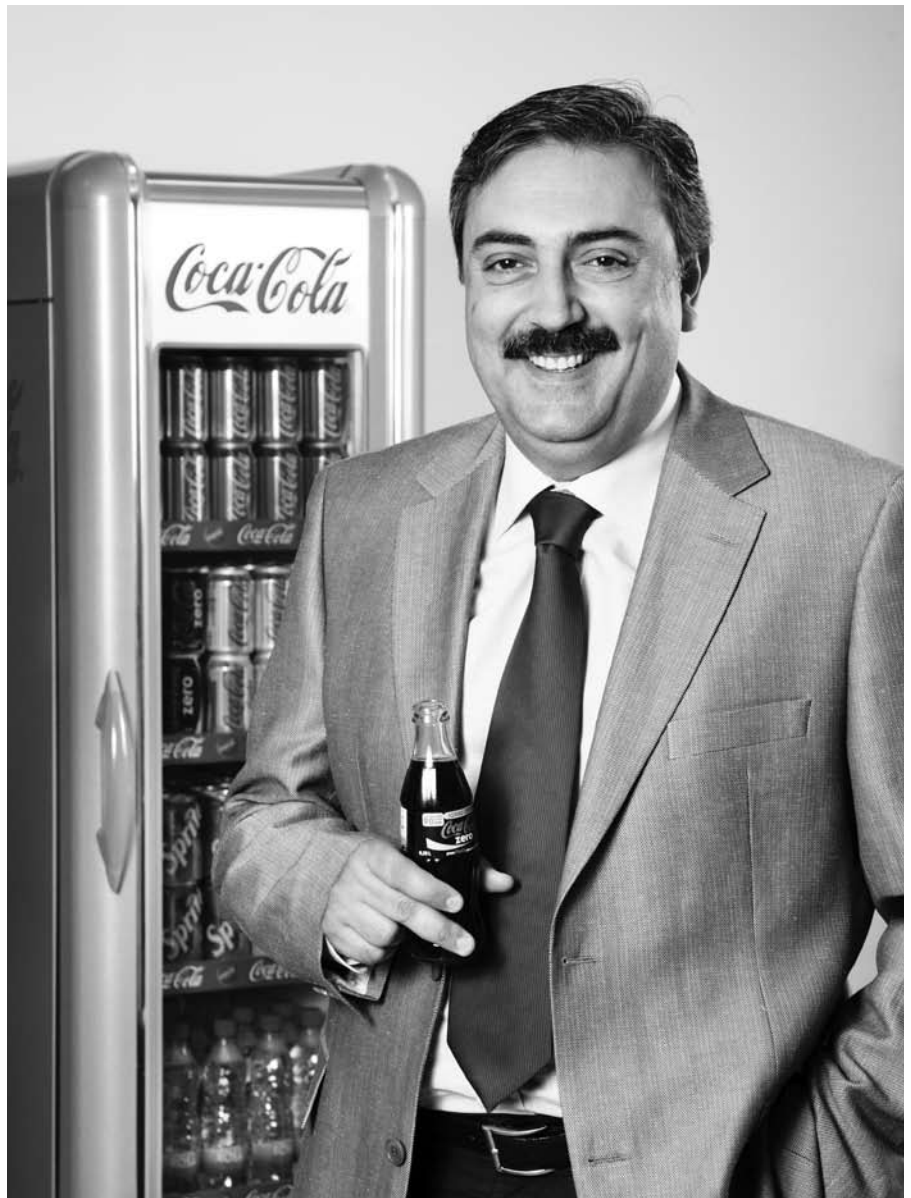
## The Challenge

In Serbia, the drive to offer increasing choices has extended the range produced by the company beyond the traditional carbonated beverages through the introduction of new drink categories such as water, juices and energy and sports drinks.

Coca-Cola Hellenic Serbia's Capability Development Manager determined that in order to maintain the growth of well-established products, including brand Coca-Cola, Coca-Cola Light, Fanta and Sprite, while realising the full potential of newly introduced drinks such as Rosa water, Next and Su Voće juices, a new and more productive way of interacting with customers was required.

## Development and Solution

The expertise of MCE was called upon. The first step undertaken in proposing a solution involved an MCE Associate becoming fully immersed in the Coca-Cola Hellenic Serbia business and the way the company operates and how key people in sales, marketing and logistics interact with customers and development relationships.



In carrying out this process, the MCE Associate examined key factors of the operation, including the business environment in which the company operates, its priorities, business areas in which there is customer contact and the "people" issues related to implementation of its strategy.

Following in-depth discussions, and guided by the General Manager of Coca-Cola Hel-

lenic Serbia, who emphasised a requirement for approaching the market in a fresh way, and having new tools and techniques to use in the daily contact with customers, a proposal was put forward.

It was recommended that a carefully focused workshop be conducted to study ways in which innovation can be applied to daily responsibilities and when interacting with



**“Our people are now better equipped to support our daily challenge of finding ways to do things better, faster and more effectively.”**

Stefanos Vafidis, General Manager,  
Coca-Cola Hellenic Serbia



customers, and then to apply the knowledge to real-life business projects developed together with line managers.

The key elements in the training exercise were:

- Innovation in the workplace
- Tools and techniques of innovation
- Application of tools and techniques

The business projects spotlighted involved three occasions which had already been scheduled in the company’s calendar:

- Innovation Day
- Counting Stocks Day
- Career Day

Although participants in the workshop divided into three teams comprising employees engaged in planning and conducting the events, progress and findings were shared among all parties. At the conclusion, everyone made their own personal action plan which was reviewed and discussed individually by the Capability Development Manager who also continued to monitor adherence and performance.

When those attending the workshop evaluated what they had learned, they concluded that:

- There was a need to expand innovation opportunities beyond new products or new packaging

- Innovation is a process that can be managed, and the outcomes are measurable
- It is important to understand the difference between process-oriented innovation and disruptive innovation, and the ways in which innovation should be used
- Involving customers in innovation can improve relationships, understanding – and results.

### Results and Benefits

By working together to understand and implement appropriate innovation approaches, employees involved in different areas of responsibility gained a heightened sense of teamwork and purpose that enabled more productive outcomes.

With a greater understanding of innovation tools and techniques, participants have greater confidence in devising and developing ways to strengthen relationships with customers. An elevated sense of purpose is enabling members of different departments to unite in presenting the increasingly wide range of beverages into the marketplace in ways that bring genuine, sustainable benefits to all parties.

**For further information, please contact:**  
[www.coca-colahellenic.com](http://www.coca-colahellenic.com)

### How MCE can help you align your people to your strategy for innovation

MCE is an experience and insights-based company. We focus on the people issues related to innovation and getting the strategy done. We have a core team of successful managers and leaders from the real world of business. All of them have lived through and learned from changes that happen regularly in business.

To learn more about how MCE can help you stimulate innovation and align your people to your strategy, contact our Director of Customer Specific Solutions, Patrick Faniel.

Let us show you how we can work together to find the answers to your specific needs.

Director of Customer Specific Solutions  
Telephone: +32 2 543 21 20  
Email: [pfaniel@mce-ama.com](mailto:pfaniel@mce-ama.com)  
Or visit our website