

# Music Component on TVCS : Coca-cola “Open Happiness” Campaign

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## Abstract

*Music is part of Coca Cola's life journey. Started in 1971 with the popular TVC “I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke”. Similarly, The “Open Happiness” Campaign was also using music as its strength to grab people's attention. The song which is titled is the same as its campaign, Open Happiness, then became the creative spearhead of Coca Cola's global advertising campaign. The above facts then raises questions which are how music being part of the creative communications strategy in advertising. Semiotics was used as the method to evaluate music as a creative communications strategy on Coca Cola “Open Happiness” TVCs campaign. It also analyzed based on type of music, lyrics and singers. This campaign used the 'dum-dum' beat on hip hop music which creates fun and happy feelings. Then its lyrics asked people to have fun with friends, share happiness with Coca Cola and forget about sadness. Also famous singers which have strong connections with their fans which make it easier for Coca Cola to get into that community. That component is then packed into one song which makes people enjoy it without having any feelings of being persuaded.*

**Key Words :** Music; TVC; Ad Campaign

## INTRODUCTION

The Coca Cola Company is the largest beverages company in the world. The product was invented by John Pemberton in May 1886, and gained its popularity by the late 1890s after Asa Candler bought the formula from its pioneer (Bellis). According to its official website, The Coca Cola Company has -been grown with 139,600 employees around the world, more than 3,500 varieties of products, distributed products to over 200 countries, increased dividends in the following 49 years, and sold 1.7 billion products in a day.

On January 21,2009, The Coca Cola Company launched their new campaign called “Open Happiness”. It was a sequence of integrated marketing campaigns including point of sales, print ads, television commercials, outdoors, online, also digital and music component. In addition, the campaign offered a refreshingly positive view which meant every difficulty and stresses in life

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might come into life's simple pleasures (Corporate 2009). Even though the campaign ran for more than a decade ago but until today, there was no other brands create global campaign using music as their main approach.

Music is part of Coca Cola's life journey. Started in 1971 with the popular TVC “I'd Like to Buy the World a Coke”. This ad gained success and the company received more than a hundred thousand letters. Moreover, people requested the song continuously on the radio at that time (Bellis). Similarly, The “Open Happiness” Campaign was also using music as its strength to grab people's attention. The song which is titled is the same as its campaign, Open Happiness, then became the creative spearhead of Coca Cola's global advertising campaign (Rutledge 2009). In addition, Umut Ozaydinli as the global music marketing manager for Coca Cola Company, said the song also sang in many different languages for other countries. This aim for connecting the consumers to the brand (Stelter 2009)

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## **METHODOLOGY**

The simple definition of semiotics is the study of signs, and this method works on how we give meaning to signs. Semiotics itself often immersed in textual analysis, but ‘text’ can be found in any form, like verbal, non-verbal, or both. Furthermore, text is aggregation of signs, such as words, images, sounds, and/or gestures, composed with reference to the conventions associated with a genre in a certain medium of communication (Chandler 2005). Moreover, Mazzola (1997, para.1) stated that “music is communication, has meaning and mediates on physical level between its mental and psychic levels”. Therefore, semiotics was used as the method to evaluate music as a creative communications strategy on Coca Cola “Open Happiness” TVCs campaign.

## **ANALYSIS**

The Coca Cola Company has made some versions of the 'Open Happiness' TVCs ad for some countries. However only the US version (the first released) was analyzed based on type of music, lyrics and singers.

### **Type of Music**

The rhythm of the music dominates by the “dum dum” sound, this could bring out the energy. Meanwhile, the song's genre is techno pop mix with rap, it will give a beat on the tone which creates fun and happy feelings. Both rhythm and genre relate to Coca Cola's audience characteristics, young and dynamic. Coca Cola itself is targeting downtown youth aged 18 – 26 who have active social life (Perch 2019). Clearly, this song as a whole becomes a communication tools in term of engaging to its audience. Based on the data of the number of viewers and comments on the Open Happiness Youtube video by April 2011, people gave positive response.

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Even, the US version views by more than 1.2 billion people with more than 5 thousand likes. Moreover, a study about how youth spend their money relate to their music preferences showed that individuals aged 14 – 24 who listened to anti-authority types of music like hip hop, rhythm and blues, rap, dance, techno, etc. tend to spend their money (Leung & Kier 2010). So, beside creating engagement, musical approach is definitely used by Coca Cola to create sales among its target consumer.

### Lyrics

The lyrics of the song “Open Happiness” take the form of conversation, such as inviting the listener to hear what is delivered by the singer. Some verses in the lyrics suggest/persuade. Below are details and interpretations of the lyrics:

Signifier	Signified
Well hello, is this thing on? Is anybody listening? A brand new day has begun The first thing that I want do Make sure that you feel it too So I'm not the only one	A greeting when meeting a friend (showing closeness) to share the same passion
C'mon and lift me up it's a brand new day Open up a little happiness today So I can be someone new (so I can be someone new) C'mon and lift me lip to a better way Open up a smile on another face So I can feel something new	Take the new Coca Cola and drink it so you can feel happy and become someone different (in a positive way)
Open up, open up some happiness Open up, open up some happiness Open up, open up some happiness Open up, open up some happiness	Gain happiness with Coca Cola
Let me clear my throat So you can hear clearly every word spoke Today I woke feeling lovely Happiness overflowin' knowin' Somebody loves me Just think yesterday I was down and out Now there's not a single thing for me to frown about	Coca Cola will help to overcome your sadness

<p>And the same thing can happen to you Smiling so hard my mouth look like a capital U I want the sun to shine All the time Is that too much to ask Oh, I want to have some fun I want all my friends to come 'Cause it's now or never Learn the words and sing together</p>	
<p>Your heart deserves your trust A choice made by all of us The sun will come back tomorrow There's a message in the bottle So come on I'll meet you there There's enough sunshine to share As long as you know The bridge between us is a rainbow</p>	<p>Something inside the bottle which is Coca Cola will create happiness, so don't hesitate to share it</p>

**Table 1.** Signifier-Signified of lyrics “Open Happiness”

**Source:** azlyrics.com

In a song, the delivery of messages starts with the lyrics. Lyrics can create stories that, when accompanied by music, immerse the listener. As stated by Harburg (in Alonso 2012), “Words make you think ... music makes you feel ... but song makes you feel thoughts” (Ransom 2015). So, when Coca Cola delivers messages through song lyrics in this “Open Happiness” campaign, it will indirectly make the listeners think about what is being said. From the results of the interpretation of the lyrics, it can be seen that Coca Cola positions itself as an important part of people’s daily lives. Coca Cola will help to get rid of sadness so that they will always feel happy, make them new (better) person, and also to share it with friends in need. Mood instability due to hormonal factors is often experienced by adolescents who are targeted by Coca Cola, so this product can be a solution to these problems. So, the message that conveyed through the lyrics will unconsciously make them think that they must ensure to have Coca Cola with them every time to be able to help solve their main problems.

**Singers**

The song “Open Happiness” is a collaboration between Cee-Lo, Janelle Monae, Patrick Stump (Fall Out Boy Lead Singer), Brendon Urie (Panic! At the Disco Frontman), and Travie McCoy (Gym Class Heroes). These musicians were well-known singers, but one of them were

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new comers to the industry. Malinowski (2009) mentioned that this was a win-win solution for both singers and also The Coca Cola Company, because singers can benefit from Coca Cola big name and Coca Cola itself will be helpful with its promotion. Here are the details of the singers' musical background:

Singer	Discography
<p><b>Cee-Lo Green</b></p> <p>Starting his career in 1991, together with Goodie Mop as a hip hop group. In 1999, he left Goodie Mop and join Arista to pursue a solo career. His second album peaked at number 2 on The Billboard Top R&amp;B/Hip hop Album chart. After that he formed a duo with DJ Danger Mouse called Gnarls Barkley. But since 2009, Cee-Lo focused on his solo career.</p>	<p><b>Goodie Mob albums</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Soul Food</a> (1995)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Still Standing</a> (1998)</li> <li>• <a href="#">World Party</a> (1999)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Age Against the Machine</a> (2013)</li> </ul> <p><b>Gnarls Barkley albums</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">St. Elsewhere</a> (2006)</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Odd Couple</a> (2008)</li> </ul> <p><b>Solo albums</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Cee-Lo Green and His Perfect Imperfections</a> (2002)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Cee-Lo Green... Is the Soul Machine</a> (2004)</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Lady Killer</a> (2010)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Cee Lo's Magic Moment</a> (2012)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Heart Blanche</a> (2015)</li> <li>• <a href="#">CeeLo Green Is Thomas Callaway</a> (2020)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Janelle Monae</b></p> <p>Although Monae just started her career in 2003, she received eight Grammy Awards Nominations and many more awards as a recognition of her musical works in no time. Her music styles are tended to sixties pop and jazz. Beside good at music, she also played role in some TV series and movies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">The ArchAndroid</a> (2010)</li> <li>• <a href="#">The Electric Lady</a> (2013)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Dirty Computer</a> (2018)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Patrick Stump</b></p> <p>Started his music career as a lead vocalist and rhythm guitarist on rock band called Fall Out Boy from 2001, Stump released his solo album in 2011 after the band break. His music has been described as funky and R&amp;B infused. He also worked on many music projects as a performer or producer.</p>	<p><b>Arma Angelus</b></p> <p>Main article: <a href="#">Arma Angelus discography</a></p> <p><b>Fall Out Boy</b></p> <p>Main article: <a href="#">Fall Out Boy discography</a></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <a href="#">Take This to Your Grave</a> (2003)</li> <li>• <a href="#">From Under the Cork Tree</a> (2005)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Infinity on High</a> (2007)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Folie à Deux</a> (2008)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Save Rock and Roll</a> (2013)</li> <li>• <a href="#">American Beauty/American Psycho</a> (2015)</li> <li>• <a href="#">Mania</a> (2018)</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Studio albums</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Soul Punk</u> (2011)<sup>[64]</sup> (Billboard 200 #47, UK #143)<sup>[138]</sup></li> </ul> <p><b>Extended plays</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <u>Truant Wave</u> (2011)<sup>[69]</sup> (Billboard 200 #67)</li> </ul> <p><b>Many collaboration singles with other artists</b></p>
<p><b>Brendon Urie</b></p> <p>Joined as lead guitarist on Panic! at the Disco, he soon offered to be their lead singer as he impressed all the band member with his singing ability. Beside worked on many music projects with other musicians, Urie also wrote a song for Spongebob Squarepants Musical.</p>	<p><b>Singles</b></p> <p><u>Love in the Middle of a Firefight</u> (2014) - <u>Dillon Francis</u> featuring Brendon Urie</p> <p><u>Roses</u> (2018) - <u>Benny Blanco</u> and <u>Juice Wrld</u> featuring Brendon Urie</p> <p><u>Me!</u> (2019) - <u>Taylor Swift</u> featuring Brendon Urie of <u>Panic! at the Disco</u></p> <p><b>Promotional singles</b></p> <p>Keep On Keeping On (2014) - <u>Travie McCoy</u> featuring Brendon Urie</p> <p><b>Guest appearances</b></p> <p><u>Molly</u> (2015) -It Remembers (2016)</p>
<p><b>Travie McCoy</b></p> <p>He is an American rapper, singer, and songwriter. McCoy started his career as a vocalist of the rock band, Gym Class Heroes. Until 2010, he began his solo career and collaborated with many artists.</p>	<p><b>Demo albums</b></p> <p>Hed Candy (1999)</p> <p>Greasy Kid Stuff (2000)</p> <p><b>Studio Album</b></p> <p>...For The Kids (2001) – Self Released</p> <p>The Papercut Chronicles (2005)</p> <p>As Cruel as Cool Children (2006)</p> <p>The Quilt (2008)</p> <p>The Papercut Chronicles II (2011)</p> <p><b>Solo Album</b></p> <p><u>Lazarus</u> (2010)</p>

**Table 2.** Singer List of “Open Happiness”

**Source:** Wikipedia.com

Lyrics are being part of messages, the singer is the communicator. As a source, communicators are expected to have credibility so they can create effective communications. Cornanental (2006) mentioned that there are three aspects of credibility, trustworthiness, competence and goodwill (Umeogu 2012). In connection to this, the selection of singers who collaborated on the song “Open Happiness” was suitable based on their track record. All, Cee-Lo, Monae, Stump, Urie and McCoy have a long history in the American music industry so there

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is no doubt about their love for music also their musical abilities. In addition, they have received various music awards in recognition to their works. These proved their credibility as communicators, thereby increasing audience acceptance and trust in the message conveyed through the song.

## **DISCUSSION**

Generally speaking, youth aged 18 to 26 are the main market of "Open Happiness" campaign. They have a unique character, and one of them is moody. That makes it easy for them easily to get depressed and feel upside down. Therefore, Coca Cola was using music to get close to its target market. The 'dum dum' beat of 'Open Happiness' song creates the fun and happy feelings. Moreover, the lyrics which are very persuasive might turn the emotion from sad to happy. It definitely urged people to forget the sadness, gather with some friends and take some bottles of Coca Cola so they will only feel happiness. Indeed, It applied emotional approaches which have now become more effective in persuading people. In addition, friends are more important than family for teenagers, they tend to believe their friends more than their parents. In that case, Coca Cola realizes it, and refers happiness more on a friendship relation. Moreover, using famous singers as a communicator to send the message is a big plus for the campaign, because most of its target audience are already engaged to them, and this will create a stronger relation between Coca Cola and its target audience. However, some experts still doubt that Coca Cola can really deliver happiness to its consumers, they consider that what Coca Cola has done with its campaign is just a promise to share happiness, but not the real happiness (Norton, Durgee, & VanDeVelde 2010, para. 16).

It is interesting to note that the campaign had created the integrated messages through the music component like type of music, lyrics also singers, and that was the focus of its creative communication strategy. As what Aristotle said that there are three critical elements on Rhetoric for effective communication, Logos, Ethos and Pathos. Basically, it is about how to use logical approach, choose credible speaker and accommodate psychological aspect of the target in order to communicate to the audience (Murthy & Gosal 2016). Coca Cola through its "Open Happiness" song occupies those three elements well.

## **CONCLUSION**

The Coca Cola Company had created a campaign called 'Open Happiness' that focused on the music component as its creative communication strategy. This campaign used the 'dum-dum' beat on hip hop music which creates fun and happy feelings. Then its lyrics asked people to have fun with friends, share happiness with Coca Cola and forget about sadness. Also famous singers which have strong connections with their fans which make it easier for Coca Cola to get into that community. That component is then packed into one song which makes people enjoy it without having any feelings of being persuaded. However, the happiness that Coca Cola is trying to share is not the real happiness, because consumers won't really feel happy when they drink a bottle of Coca Cola. So in order to bring the real happiness to its consumer Coca Cola needs to create

a real engagement to its consumer. The most efficient and effective way to construct an engagement is by using Social Media. So, the company will connect directly to its consumers.

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