

AI in the soft drinks industry is set to grow

Coca-Cola has launched a new limited-edition Coca-Cola 3000 Zero Sugar within the Coca-Cola Creations platform, with the help of artificial intelligence (AI). The AI, in cooperation with humans, helped create both the taste and the design of the can, as Coca-Cola tries to identify what the year 3000 would look like for beverages.



Image by [2541163](#) from [Pxabay](#)

And it's not just Coca-Cola using AI in the soft drinks category.

Unilever, owner of PepsiCo, has developed AI tools to optimise various aspects of its business operations. Against this backdrop, the usage of AI in the soft drinks industry is set to grow for the discovery of new flavours and to enhance the efficiency of business operations, says GlobalData, a leading data and analytics company.

Coca-Cola started with a core question to its customers: What would the year 3000 look like?

Consumers were asked how they saw Coca-Cola in the year 3000 via the Coca-Cola Creations platforms. The company then used AI to analyse all the responses to create the framework for the futuristic product based on how people see the future through emotions, ambitions, colours and flavours.



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Phil Lewis 28 Sep 2023



Dragos Dumitrachi, analyst at GlobalData, comments: “Based on these inputs from consumers and its knowledge of beverage trends, the AI created a unique packaging and flavour profile for a carbonate in the year 3000. The packaging format is colourful, with a mix of spherical shapes blended in purple, pink, and blue colours with a pixelated logo, and the AI primarily perceived the future as being sugar-free.

This is to be expected as low-calorie carbonates recorded a 39% growth between 2015 and 2023 globally, with this growth set to continue over the next five years, as consumers increasingly focus on their health and wellness. According to the latest global survey by Global Data, 81% of respondents consider that it is nice to have or essential for a product to be good for physical fitness/health.”

Global Data expects the AI market to grow from \$81bn in 2022 to \$90bn by 2030, with a 35% compound annual growth rate (CAGR) during 2022-2030. Recent progress in machine learning (ML) on the back of improved algorithms (e.g., Google’s AlphaGo, OpenAI’s GPT-3/ChatGPT, Tesla’s AutoPilot) and increasing computing power have enabled AI to become more widely used in the soft drinks industry.

The AI-driven applications developed by Unilever leverage neural networks and the GPT API is aimed at enhancing the company’s ability to respond to the evolving needs of its consumer base and broader market dynamics.

On top of that, Unilever is using AI to identify alternative ingredients that can reinforce the resilience of their supply chains, making their products more sustainable and cost-efficient, and streamlining the number of ingredients without impacting the effectiveness or quality of the products.

Dragos concludes: “The AI market in the soft drinks industry is still in its infancy; the rules and laws that will govern it are still under debate. Global Data is forecasting that the use of AI for supply chain, administrative issues, and the discovery of new flavours and packaging formats in the soft drinks industry will only grow.”

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