

A THESIS

ON IMPROVING COCA COLA EUROPACIFIC
PARTNERS' VIP HOSPITALITY DAYS



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Chapter 1: Introduction

This section will provide background information on Coca-Cola Europacific Partners (hereafter referred to as CCEP). To help the reader understand why this study is conducted, the problem statement will be introduced. The problem statement will lead to the formulation of questions, which will be addressed throughout this study to understand the problems the Festivals and Events department of CCEP is currently experiencing. Finally, the aims and objectives of the research will be outlined to complete this section.

Chapter 1.1.1: Company and product analysis

CCEP is a renowned British multinational company specialising in producing, distributing, and selling non-alcoholic ready-to-drink beverages. The beverage industry operates in multiple regions, including Europe and the Pacific. CCEP's history can be traced back to The Coca-Cola Company's operations in Europe, including establishing a bottling plant in the Netherlands in 1931 (CCEP, 2021). This research will be focused on CCEP, not on The Coke Company.

CCEP's mission is to provide refreshing and high-quality beverages that inspire moments of happiness and wellbeing for consumers worldwide. They strive to leverage their scale and resources to lead in sustainability, promote economic growth, and empower their employees and communities. By focusing on innovation and maintaining solid partnerships, CCEP aims to be a sustainable and successful business (CCEP, 2022).

The Coke Company sells the Coca-Cola syrup whilst CCEP are responsible for bottling and distributing Coca-Cola's soft drinks portfolio worldwide. CCEP offers a diverse range of beverages under various brands, catering to different consumer preferences. The most popular drinks in their portfolio are Coca-Cola, Sprite, Fanta, Minute Maid, Fuze Tea, Capri Sun, Fernandes and many more (Coca-Cola Marketing Mix, 2019). Products from CCEP come in a variety of sizes and packaging. Coke, the company's flagship product, is offered in cans, glass, and plastic. CCEP also provides a variety of variations under the flagship brand, such as classic, diet, light, and zero-sugar options, so buyers can quickly identify the beverage (The Coke Company, 2020). With such a wide variety of products, CCEP ensures meeting the evolving demands of consumers in the non-alcoholic beverage market.

Chapter 1.1.2: CCEP Nederland

CCEP is based in South Holland, Rotterdam. The building is divided across four floors. Three floors belong to CCEP, and Coke Company owns the fourth one. The company employs 300 individuals. Jeroen van Vliet was inaugurated in March 2023 as the new vice president of CCEP. Please view [Appendix 1.1](#) for an overview of CCEP's organisational chart. Eleven directors report directly to Jeroen van Vliet. Arjan Wiertz is the director of the Cold Channel, and five associate directors directly report to him across several departments. Caroline Gaanderse is the associate director primarily in charge of the key accounts that CCEP works with, such as supermarkets and petrol stations. Supporting her, there are five key account managers (KAM) who report directly to her. Following the key account managers, you will have the national account managers (NAM). The national accounts can be described as several festival and event organisations. The researcher's role within the company is to report directly to NAMs. In total, CCEP has 5 NAMs.

Chapter 1.1.3: Competitive Landscape

In the competitive beverage industry, CCEP faces competition from both local and international players. Major competitors include PepsiCo, Celsius and Dr Pepper. Their capitalization, which represents the total market value of their outstanding shares, is currently USD 29.9 billion (CCEP, 2023). CCEP performs better than Celsius in considering revenues and earnings. While Celsius reported reduced gross sales and a net loss, CCEP reported gross revenues of EUR 18.25 billion and a net income of EUR 1.59 billion (CCEP, 2023).

Chapter 1.1.4: Market Values/Shares

The market value of CCEP has grown significantly during the last five years, rising by 80.67% (CCEP, 2022). The annual report for 2022 states that an increase in earnings can be attributable to this expansion. CCEP competes in a cutthroat industry, outperforms Celsius in terms of earnings and revenues, has favourable analyst assessments, and has had a substantial market capitalization increase over the previous five years.

Per the information from the 2020 annual report, CCEP served approximately 600 million consumers. The company's revenues in 2020 amounted to EUR 13.5 billion, with an operating income of EUR 1.5 billion. In comparison to the numbers mentioned in chapter 1.1.3, we can see that their revenue and operating income has increased. CCEP is committed to sustainable growth and responsible business practices. They prioritize environmental sustainability, community engagement, and employee wellbeing. By aligning their values with the expectations of consumers and stakeholders, CCEP aims to create long-term value for both their business and the communities they serve.

Chapter 1.2: Problem statement

CCEP holds individual contracts with various clients such as Albert Heijn and Shell. These contracts cover the specifics of the agreements to promote and sell the Coca-Cola portfolio within their stores. In return, CCEP offers various perks and benefits to maintain customer satisfaction and loyalty. One of the most common benefits CCEP offers is the VIP hospitality days experience. These are luxury experiences at festivals during the high season to increase brand awareness and maintain good relationships with CCEP's clients. The problem is that the customer experience is not measured before and after the VIP Hospitality days, leaving no space for possible improvements to create more brand awareness, customer loyalty and improved customer relationships.

Chapter 1.2.1: Extensive Problem Analysis

Table 1.2.1 contains the problem analysis of CCEP during the VIP Hospitality days.

Gap	Timeframe, location, trend
Manager D. de Koning mentioned that CCEP needs insight into the customer experience during the VIP hospitality days. This means customers' experiences are not registered, and essential clients' opinions and feedback are not considered. Recognizing that the VIP hospitality experience is a benefit offered to valuable clients in exchange for loyalty, CCEP could benefit from understanding the customer experience to identify any possible improvements to strengthen the relationship between CCEP and these clients.	The problem was identified during Lowlands last year; this was one of the first festivals after COVID-19. Employees of CCEP mentioned that customers were dissatisfied with the food and beverage and the communication before the event. CCEP's hospitality department then recognized the need for improvement on the VIP Hospitality days.
Impact of the gap	Importance
The effects of the problem impact customer loyalty and the Coke experience. By not investing in customer care before and after the events, the experiences cannot be measured or improved. This impacts the drive and motivation of the department because there is no consistent way of working. It causes delays and problems for jobs to be done before the VIP days due to customers cancelling because they don't think joining is worth it. Currently, there is not enough focus on customer experience as much as it should.	The problem is urgent and vital as it can improve the customer experience and create long-lasting customer loyalty. Since CCEP thrives on their customers, they could make a difference for the company.

Table 1.2.1: Extensive Problem Analysis

Chapter 1.2.2: 5W+1H Analysis

To examine the problem from all perspectives, the analysis tool in Table 1.2.2 was used.

Why	By investing in the customer experience – customer loyalty and relations can be improved.
What	The problem is that the customer experience is not measured before and after the VIP Hospitality days.
Who	The Hospitality department of CCEP.
When	The problem should be fixed by May 2023.
Where	The problem should be figured in the hospitality department, and then executed during the VIP Hospitality days that CCEP offers.
How	By sketching a customer journey map and working out the recommendations that come forward of the research.

Table 1.2.2: 5W1H Method

Chapter 1.3: Research questions

Based on the problem statement contained in chapters 1.2.1 and 1.2.2, a central research question has been formulated:

‘How can CCEP improve its customer experience before, during, and after the VIP Hospitality days’

In support of the research question, the following sub-questions will be answered:

- What does a VIP Hospitality Day hosted by Coca-Cola look like?
- What is the internal experience on the VIP Hospitality days?
- How do customers experience the VIP Hospitality days?
- What would a perfect VIP hospitality day look like, according to online sources?
- What can Coca-Cola implement to improve their VIP hospitality days?

Chapter 1.4: Project aim

This research aims to visualise the Customer Journey map for CCEP to convince the company to invest in customer experience to maintain customer loyalty and strengthen it. Furthermore, this research aims to identify any other improvements that will lead to efficiency within the hospitality department.

The following professional products will be delivered in June 2023:

- A Customer Journey Map from before the research and after the research with improvements/recommendations that can be labeled as SAFE.
- A proposal/design of a tool that will, if needed, improve the customer experience after the event.

These professional products will prove the author’s competence in the IB programme learning outcome of Operations & Supply Chain Management.

This project’s aim is defined in Table 1.4.1 using the SMART method.

Specific	Create a product that extends the customer journey and makes customers feel special and VIP.
Measurable	The researcher will collect evidence by sending out surveys and conducting interviews at different stages of the research.
Acceptable	The Hospitality manager and director of the team have agreed on a budget and the research proposal.
Realistic	The department works with various people, which makes it accessible to gain information from different perspectives – this creates realistic results for the research.
Time-based	For the research justification, there is limited time, which is only 20 weeks. The internship period is eight months, meaning ample space exists for a thorough research and implementation process outside educational deadlines.

Table 1.4.1: SMART Method

Chapter 2: Research Approach

This chapter describes the methodology and the rationale behind the research approach for this study. The process of creating and conducting structured interviews is also discussed. This includes an overview of the literature and details based on which participants were selected for the collected data. Finally, the study's reliability, validity and limitations are briefly discussed.

Chapter 2.1: What does a VIP hospitality day hosted by Coca-Cola look like?

Chapter 2.1.1: Review of relevant Literature

This subchapter introduces a new concept, which can be found below.

VIP Hospitality Days: A VIP Day is an exclusive and personalized experience companies offer to their high-value clients or stakeholders to strengthen the relationship and provide a unique experience (Parkes, 2023).

Chapter 2.1.2: Operationalisation

This part defines the specific operations or procedures used to answer the sub-question. The operationalization of variables can be found in Appendix 2.1. The following interview questions resulted from the operationalization:

- What distinguishes the CCEP VIP Hospitality Days from others in the industry?
- What is the aim/end goal for these special days?
- How does CCEP create and maintain partnerships with organizations?
- Is there space for customers to leave feedback after the VIP days for improvement (if needed) for next time?

Chapter 2.1.3: Units of Analysis

The interviewee is Doyna de Koning, the Hospitality Manager of CCEP. She is responsible for the pre-planning, execution, and aftercare of the VIP hospitality days of CCEP. These responsibilities make her the most experienced and reliable person to conduct this interview with. De Koning is the only person in the company that knows about these procedures from inside and out. Using this specific purposive selection method, the researcher expects the participant to provide unique and rich information of value to the study due to their knowledge and experience. To support the field research, desk research was done. External information was gathered from a study conducted by Jones and Moital in 2017 on what techniques corporations use to create value for their VIP guests. By a combination of de Koning her responses and the study by Jones and Moital (2017), the researcher will be able to form a conclusion for the first sub-question.

Chapter 2.1.4: Data Collection and Data Analysis

A combination of field and desk research addressed this sub-question. The questions from 2.1.2 were emailed to Miss de Koning in an interview format. This was the most beneficial way, as everything was accurately written down and on record.

Chapter 2.1.5: Expected limitations, reliability and validity

The expected limitations for collecting data on the sub-questions are contained in Table 2.1.

Validity	Reliability	Limitations
The interview measures what has to be measured. Both desk and field research were used to conclude the results.	To determine the trustworthiness of the sources found online, the researcher used multiple articles and compared each answer to formulate a conclusion. The reader gets a more reliable chapter by identifying the difference between opinions and facts. Another method the researcher used to gain reliability is complementing the desk research with primary research performed earlier.	The festival season officially started at the end of March, meaning this study was conducted during the year's busiest period. Due to time constraints, the interviewee could have had rushed responses to the questions. All interviews were performed in Dutch, meaning the translation to English may not always be accurate.

Table 2.1: Reliability, validity and limitations of sub-question 1.

Chapter 2.2: What is the internal experience on the VIP Hospitality days?

Chapter 2.2.1: Literature

The concepts that were introduced in this subchapter are stated below.

‘Only offered by CCEP’ experience: This concept was founded by the employees. Focusing on the customer experience, brand awareness, and VIP treatment.

Purpose of VIP Hospitality day: The concept covers various factors such as communication, customer wants and needs, feedback systems, and shaping the brand identity.

Chapter 2.2.2: Operationalisation

This part defines the specific operations or procedures used to answer the sub-question. The operationalization of variables can be found in Appendix 2.2. An interview amongst multiple employees of CCEP was conducted to fully understand the current ways of working. The structured interview questions are listed below.

- What was the purpose of the previous VIP Hospitality Day? Was this goal obtained?
- Are there any improvements for the organization towards the guests? What could be done better the next time?
- How did you like the F&B that was available on the previous VIP Hospitality Day?
- Was there a point of contact with the guests after the VIP hospitality day? Did they leave any feedback?
- How do you give the guests the experience that this is an ‘Only offered by CCEP’ experience?

Chapter 2.2.3: Units of Analysis

This interview was conducted across four different departments. The first employee manages the Key Accounts. This department has the highest authority in the festival teams, overlooking the most prominent clients such as Johan Cruyff ArenA. Then, two national key account managers who take care of smaller clients that are primarily the attendees at the VIP hospitality days. Lastly, the marketing manager is responsible for promoting and brand imaging during these VIP hospitality days. A clear conclusion was formed by bringing together three different perspectives to shape the second sub-question.

Chapter 2.2.4: Data Collection and Data Analysis

This sub-question was answered using field research. The questions stated under Chapter 2.2.2 were sent out to the employees from Chapter 2.2.3. They could answer the questions in an open interview and hand them in. This was the most beneficial as it gave the interviewees the time to prioritize and take their time to respond.

Chapter 2.2.5: Expected limitations, reliability, and validity

The expected limitations for collecting data on the sub-question are mentioned in Table 2.2.

Validity	Reliability	Limitations
The researcher can collect deeper data by conducting a structured interview (Gray, 2014). For this sub-question, a structured interview was essential to understand how the VIP Hospitality days of CCEP are experienced internally. The interviews were either recorded or written down. The interviews measure what has to be measured.	We can guarantee reliability by talking to employees from different departments and comparing their answers because the interviews have the same structure.	The festival season officially started at the end of March. This study was conducted during the busiest period of the year. Due to time constraints, the interviewee could have had biased responses to the questions. Another limitation is the language barrier. All interviews were performed in Dutch, meaning the translation may not always be perfect.

Table 2.2: Reliability, validity, and limitations of sub-question 2.

Chapter 2.3: How do customers experience the VIP Hospitality days?

Chapter 2.3.1: Literature

The following concepts were introduced in this subchapter.

Customer experience management: (CEM) is the process of overseeing and enhancing a customer's interaction with a business or its goods/services (Flickinger, D. 2020).

Service quality: According to the article found on Course Sidekick, the level to which a company's services meet or surpass customers' expectations. It fosters and sustains client loyalty, which is crucial for long-term commercials.

Consumer Behavior: The choices and behaviors people and groups make when they use and buy goods and services (OpenStax, 2020). It includes elements like perception, drive, attitudes, and decision-making capacity.

Chapter 2.3.2: Operationalisation

The specific operations or procedures used to answer the sub-question are defined in this part. The operationalization of variables can be found in Appendix 2.3. This sub-question is mainly supported by the answers of the customers who attended the VIP Hospitality Day. The survey questions are listed below.

- What did you think of the approach of CCEP before the event? Was everything clear beforehand?
- What did you think of the arranged dinner/lunch? Were your allergies/diet preferences questioned?
- Did you think the brand image/identity of CCEP stand out during the VIP day? So did you experience the 'Coca-Cola' feeling?
- Is this experience worth being labelled as 'VIP'?
- Which extra benefits would make this experience truly unforgettable?
- What are some cons/tips that should be considered for the next VIP Hospitality days?
- What are some cons/tips that should be considered for the next VIP Hospitality days?
- Would you recommend other people in your professional field to work/contract with CCEP and join their VIP Hospitality programs?

Chapter 2.3.3: Units of Analysis

A survey was conducted amongst those who had attended the VIP Hospitality Day at Paaspop in April 2023. Fifteen customers were invited to Paaspop, and only nine responded to the survey. The nine participants are customers from different companies operating in the Event Business in the Netherlands. Due to the low response rate, nonresponse bias has likely occurred. Therefore, the results are likely not representative of the target population as a whole. The customers were promised complete anonymity, so this research will not disclose their identities.

Chapter 2.3.4: Data Collection and Data Analysis

This sub-question was answered by field research. Nine customers shared their experiences through a survey. The questions mentioned in Chapter 2.3.2 were shared with the participants through the Survio platform. This tool then made a clear overview of all the results using tables and graphs.

Chapter 2.3.5: Expected limitations, reliability and validity

The expected limitations for collecting data on the sub-questions is mentioned in Table 2.3.

Validity	Reliability	Limitations
This survey measured what it had to measure, it only focusses on customers' experience during a VIP day.	Before conducting the survey, it had been internally tested and checked by Ms D. de Koning. To ensure trustworthiness, all the answers were reviewed by the participants. Anonymity was guaranteed to get the most honest responses from the participants, but there may still be a risk of participants not wanting to be fully honest to prevent conflict.	Due to time constraints, only a few customers were included in this study. This means the results could be different if the study is repeated with other customers. A low response rate was generated for this study so the researcher cannot generalize the results for the whole group. As experience is subjective, the study is influenced by this limitation massively. All interviews were performed in Dutch, meaning the translation may not always be accurate.

Table 2.3: Reliability, validity and limitations of sub-question 3.

Chapter 2.4: What would a perfect VIP hospitality day look like according to online sources?

Chapter 2.4.1: Literature

The concepts that need to be understood are listed below.

Hospitality marketing: The tactics and actions used to market goods and services to the hospitality sector are referred to as hospitality marketing (Revfine, 2023). Coca-Cola can promote its brand and goods to a large audience through partnerships and sponsorships, which improves brand awareness and recall (Singh & Sheoran, 2020).

Luxury consumption: Coca-Cola frequently donates money to or participates in prestigious high-end events, including fashion weeks, film festivals, and art exhibits. By participating in these famous events, Coca-Cola may improve brand perception and generate positive connotations with luxury, style, and refinement. As a result, customers may see Coca-Cola as being in line with their desires for opulent and exclusive events (Mulcahy, E., 2019, May 23).

Chapter 2.4.2: Operationalisation

The specific operations or procedures used to answer the sub-question are defined in this part. The operationalization of variables can be found in Appendix 2.4. This sub-question was addressed mainly by desk research to bring a more theoretical perspective to the study. The questions that shaped this research are stated below.

- What makes a VIP Hospitality Day unique for customers?
- How important is it to have significant branding/visual aesthetics present at these VIP Hospitality days?
- How important is good customer relationship management?
- How important is it to create an emotional/personal bond with customers on these VIP hospitality days?
- What functionality do these VIP hospitality days offer the customers?

Chapter 2.4.3: Units of Analysis

The data and information for this topic was collected through desk research. This will add a different perspective to the study with more factual information rather than internal opinions. By finding other research online, one can distinguish the difference between best practice VIP Hospitality days and identify differences and improvements for CCEP.

Chapter 2.4.4: Data Collection and Data Analysis

This sub-question was answered by a combination of desk and field research. By comparing VIP hospitality days from other companies and sources online, we can gain more knowledge on what a 'perfect' Hospitality Day looks like. Field research was used to compare the interview results with sources online.

Chapter 2.4.5: Expected limitations, reliability and validity

The expected limitations for collecting data on the sub-questions are mentioned in Table 2.4.

Validity	Reliability	Limitations
To check if desk research is valid, the researcher used various guidelines. Most important is to use credible sources from trusted websites, cross-reference from multiple sources, and deliver a clear and comprehensive record of all the sources used. Nonetheless, a 'perfect' experience is subjective to individual experience and may differ in theory and practice across sectors and organizations.	To determine the trustworthiness of the sources found online, the researcher used multiple articles and compared each answer to formulate a conclusion. The reader gets a more reliable chapter by identifying the difference between opinions and facts. Another method the researcher used to gain reliability is complementing the desk research with primary research performed earlier.	The festival season officially started at the end of March. This study was conducted during the busiest period of the year. Due to time constraints, the interviewees could have had biased responses to the questions. To lower the risk of this limitation, the interviews were conducted in a meeting where the researcher was also present. Another limitation is the language barrier. All interviews were performed in Dutch, meaning the translation may not always be accurate.

Table 2.4: Reliability, validity and limitations of sub-question 4.

Chapter 2.5: What can Coca-Cola implement to improve their VIP hospitality days?

Chapter 2.5.1: Literature

The concept that is introduced can be found below.

Feedback and evaluation: Feedback and evaluation are necessary procedures for acquiring data and evaluating performance across various business issues (SMPH Intranet). Feedback and evaluation are essential to Coca-Cola for several reasons. By examining feedback and evaluation data, Coca-Cola can find patterns, trends, and best practices that produce good results (The Coca-Cola Company, 2021). In an article by Mr. Cole(n.d.), he mentions that Coca-Cola can learn about new preferences, trends, and needs by actively soliciting customer feedback. This information can result in new products, flavors, packaging, or marketing tactics.

Chapter 2.5.2: Operationalisation

The specific operations or procedures used to answer the sub-question were defined in this part. The operationalization of variables can be found in Appendix 2.5. By gathering information from various studies online and conducting an interview with Caroline Gaanderse, the director of the Festivals and Events team, the possibility for improvement will be measured. The interview questions are listed below.

- Is there any need for improved organizational planning?
- Is the Coke-feeling displayed during these VIP Hospitality days?
- How well are the current bonds with the partners? Is it easy to promote a new product on festival fields?
- Is there any form of aftercare?
- Do the VIP Hospitality days match the expectations of the customers?

Chapter 2.5.3: Units of Analysis

The data and information for this topic will be collected through desk research and interviews. Some questions will be sent to Ms Caroline Gaanderse, the Director of Events and Festivals at CCEP, who has the most experience in this field, making her reliable in answering these questions. Desk research will help demonstrate to CCEP what other companies implement to satisfy their VIP customer thoroughly.

Chapter 2.5.4: Data Collection and Data Analysis

The interview questions under Chapter 2.5.2 were used in interviews with the individual mentioned in Chapter 2.5.3. This sub-question was answered using both desk and field research. The questions were sent out by email in the format of an interview.

Chapter 2.5.5: Expected limitations, reliability and validity

The expected limitations for collecting data on the sub-questions are mentioned in Table 2.5.

Validity	Reliability	Limitations
The research method was valid, as the employee tried to be as accurate as possible to contribute to improving the VIP Hospitality days. The limitations could have affected the validity.	Before conducting the interviews, they had been internally tested and checked by Ms D. de Koning. To ensure trustworthiness, all the interviews were reviewed by the interviewees.	The festival season officially started at the end of March. This study was conducted during the busiest period of the year. Due to time constraints, the interviewees could have had biased responses to the questions. Another limitation is the language barrier. All interviews were performed in Dutch, meaning the translation may not always be fully accurate.

Table 2.1: Reliability, validity and limitations of sub-question 5.

Chapter 3. Results

This chapter presents the findings of the interviews and desk research. The results are presented per sub-question and the interview data is presented in either tables or direct quotations. The interpretation of the researcher is briefly addressed in this chapter.

Chapter 3.1: What does a VIP Hospitality Day hosted by Coca-Cola look like?

The research participant is a current CCEP employee, overseeing the organization of the VIP Hospitality days. Table 3.1 below includes the key participant characteristics.

Participant	Position	Age	Years of Experience in the company
Doyna de Koning	Hospitality Manager Key and National Accounts	32	5 years

Table 3.1: Key Characteristics of the Interviewees

The research participant described how she currently manages the VIP Hospitality days. To understand her set of responsibilities, please observe the statement below.

D. de Koning: *“A CCEP VIP Days event requires thorough and meticulous planning and preparation before it is put together. The first step is to negotiate and finalise partnerships with festivals or other organisations. The next step after a partnership has been formed is to choose a good day and let our internal team know about it so they can make calendar preparations. Then careful preparation is started, including a variety of topics like catering arrangements, crowd control, and the marketing of equipment like setting up bars at the festival. A cordial welcome for visitors, guided tours, and a sufficient supply of cash or tokens for food and drink are all given special care throughout the event. Additionally, visitors are allowed free time to take advantage of the festival’s amenities and are invited to participate in meals, whether they are dinner or lunch.”*

Jones and Moital (2017) indicate that it is beneficial to primarily manage the event logistics in-house, aligning with de Koning’s responses. Jones and Moital (2017) found that no matter what type of VIP event they researched, there would most often be a ‘meeting centre’ where the company’s top executives could connect with other top executives from other businesses to develop business and close deals.

Identifying the characteristics of the CCEP VIP days is essential to answer the main research question. De Koning mentioned that “CCEP is associated with joy, unity, and happiness” and that they “aim for an intimate relationship between the customer and the company”. Jones and Moital (2017) state that delivering personal communication pre-event strengthens the bond between the VIPs and the company by making VIPs feel special that they are invited to such events and the dedicated events team considers their wants and needs. Interestingly Jones and Moital (2017) state that using words such as ‘exclusive’ and ‘limited’ to describe the event influences the event’s attractiveness.

Jones and Moital (2017) also found that customers want exclusivity and frequently purchase products or consume services with a limited supply to indulge in prestige consumption. The study states that event managers intentionally “try to give a sense of exclusivity to the area where the VIPs are” by designing special access sections for VIP event attendees (Jones & Moital, 2017). This relates to the response of de Koning when asked about the goal of the VIP Hospitality days that CCEP hosts. The interviewee stated: *“We like to go all out and provide a luxurious and memorable experience for our customers”*.

The flexibility to adapt and desire to change the current working system can be demonstrated by asking specific questions regarding possible improvement. Interviewee Ms De Koning knows there is no feedback mechanism, though she acknowledges the value it could add to the operations. Jones and Moital (2017) found that by extending the VIP experience, for example, by asking for feedback after the event, customers get a sense of preferential treatment and specialised attention. It is said that this can trigger VIPs to compare “the treatment they receive and the treatment of others” resulting in a feeling of prestige, reinforcing VIP status (Jones & Moital, 2017).

Chapter 3.2: What is the internal experience on the VIP Hospitality days?

The research participants are current employees of CCEP who organize VIP Hospitality days. Table 3.2 includes the characteristics of those participants.

Participant	Position	Age	Years of Experience in the company
Wouter Huisman	Key Accounts Manager	32	5 years
Lizan Bakker	Associate - Key Accounts Manager	31	8 years
Vincent van Schendel	National Accounts Manager	33	6 years
Stephan van Lanen	Marketing Manager	30	4 years

Table 3.2: Key Characteristics of the Interviewees.

For this sub-question, four employees were interviewed about their experience on the VIP days. Each interview provides insights into the preparation process, goals, areas for improvement, benefits offered, and the overall experience for guests during the previous VIP Hospitality Day. All participants have essential roles during the VIP Hospitality days, whether this is to visit with their customers or to plan the entire process from start to finish. The similarity detected in this part of the study is that the common goal is to improve and inspire CCEP customers. To demonstrate this, observe the four statements below in Table 3.2.1.

WH: <i>"The goal was to improve customer contact, though I wonder if this really left them impressed."</i>
LB: <i>"The goal was to create extra fans of Coke, and that was accomplished. Both Efteling and Kinopolis were enthusiastic, and there was good interaction between the customers."</i>
VvS: <i>"To show our customers the brand experience and create better relations for the future."</i>
SL: <i>"To inspire customers and prospects, maintain relationships, maximize business, extend collaborations, and provide a glimpse into a complete only Coke can do journey."</i>

Table 3.2.1: Responses of the participants

The 2017 study by Jones and Moital concludes that connecting VIP guests, is in most cases, the main goal for many corporations. Through these VIP experiences, they meet individuals they would not ordinarily get to network with, meaning guests can socialize and network with other VIP guests they see as having a high social standing.

Moital and James (2017) state that quick responses and constant communication create the feeling of 'being special'. The study also mentions that it is essential to deliver personalized communication to the guests from start to finish, this is to create a personal experience with the guests and to manage their expectations. The interview participants mentioned that the communication of CCEP needs to be improved. An important returning factor was that the invites should be sent out earlier. Please review Table 3.2.2.

WH: <i>"We need better communication. I don't agree with the current way of communicating."</i>
LB: <i>"It was quite last-minute last year. If you receive an email on time with all the information and details about what data you need to provide and you are kept informed about when you will receive more information, it helps keep everyone calm."</i>
VVS: <i>"We need to be more prompt with the communication. It is important to send out all the details in advance and keep on informing them about all the happenings, so they don't get left with surprises."</i>
SL: <i>"Send out the invites WAY earlier, we need better communication."</i>

Table 3.2.2: Responses of the participants

The topics that caused participants to share diverse opinions were whether there was a point of contact during the VIP Days and if the customers had left feedback. Some were positive, and some had negative experiences. Observe the statements in Table 3.2.4 below for an overview.

WH: <i>"No not really, I am just very convinced that our VIP days are not extremely luxury. I know that these will not leave a wow-effect at the directors of huge companies like Sligro or Shell. "</i>
LB: <i>"They were pleasantly surprised and very grateful. The tour is always enjoyable for people, and they always receive enough tokens. Also, they were impressed by our organizational skills and the amazing partners we work with. It also provided inspiration for their own business and brand activations. "</i>
VVS: <i>"No, but this would be a good addition. Especially to put certain points of contact from the parking to the VIP deck backstage where we welcome the guests."</i>
SL: <i>"They loved it! I was very happy with the results."</i>

Table 3.2.3: Responses of the participants

Chapter 3.3: How do customers experience the VIP Hospitality days?

To conclude the third sub-question, a survey was conducted amongst nine out of fifteen guests that attended the VIP Day on Paaspop in April 2023. The survey measured the overall experience of the guests during the VIP Day. This survey identified possible implementations that CCEP can consider to enhance the VIP days. The survey was sent to 15 guests, of which 9 responded. As previously mentioned, these findings can only be generalized to the subpopulation from which the sample is drawn, not the entire population.

A summary of the questions and results of the survey is listed below. The complete set of answers and graphs can be found in Appendix 3.3.

Chapter 3.3.1 Question 1: Which Coca-Cola VIP Day did you attend?

All respondents attended Paaspop Festival in Schijndel on the 7th of April, 2023.

Chapter 3.3.2 Question 2: What did you think of the approach of CCEP before the event? Was everything clear beforehand?

Five participants said that the approach of the VIP day was unclear and unstructured, four participants said the opposite and thought it was clear and structured. Figure 3.3.2 shows the results of this survey question.

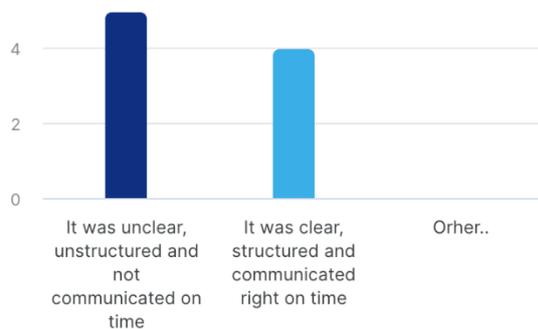


Figure 3.3.2: Bar chart results Q2.

Chapter 3.3.3 Question 3: What did you think of the arranged dinner/lunch? Were your allergies/diet preferences questioned?

The answers to the third survey question have been categorized below.

Positive:

- I thought it was nice! the ambiance was nice and we were not in the rain haha! Glad it was inside.
- It was good, they asked everyone what they wanted.
- Great, the service was nice. I felt taken care of.
- Delicious and great company.

Negative:

- The food options provided were limited and did not cater to my dietary requirements.
- My allergies and diet preferences were not asked. I was not happy with that since I follow a vegan diet. There was no options for people that eat vegan.

In between:

- The dinner/lunch was arranged fine, but the queue was way too long. I had to wait a long time for my food.
- Could have some improvement

Chapter 3.3.4 Question 4: Did you think the brand image/identity of CCEP stand out during the VIP day? So did you experience the 'Coca-Cola' feeling?

More than half of the participants said they did not think CCEP portrayed the brand image well or experienced the Coke feeling. Please view Appendix 3.3 for the bar chart of question 4.

Chapter 3.3.5 Question 5: Is this experience worth being labelled as VIP?

Four participants said they would not label the experience as VIP, the other four said they would, and only one participant was in between whether they would or not. Please view Appendix 3.3 for the bar chart of question 5.

Chapter 3.3.6 Question 6: Based on the scale below, -5 being the worst and 5 being the best, what would you rate your overall experience?

The average on the scale was between 0 and 1. Please view Appendix 3.3 to see the statistics on question 6.

Chapter 3.3.7 Question 7: Which extra benefits would make this experience truly unforgettable?

Six participants said goodie bags, two said earbuds, and the other two said they would appreciate other options. They mentioned either merchandise or extra coins. Please view Appendix 3.3 for the bar chart of question 7.

Chapter 3.3.8 Question 8: What are some cons/tips that should be considered for the next VIP Hospitality days?

Summarized survey responses:

- Better brand experience, from a company like Coca-Cola they expect more
- Overall an amazing experience but requires more communication because there was much chaos.
- Access backstage and to performers, exclusive guest networking in lounge, better bathrooms, shade VIP seating, mini spa treatments, festival hair and glitter treatments, and dedicated VIP concierge service.
- Perhaps celebrity chefs, Goodiebags, VIP giveaways, VIP shuttles to the event
- Make sure that the brand is visible

Chapter 3.3.9 Question 9: Would you recommend other people in your professional field to work/contract with CCEP and join their VIP Hospitality programs?

Four participants said they would not, three said they would, and two chose not to answer this question. Please view Appendix 3.3 for the bar chart of question 9.

Chapter 3.4: What would a perfect VIP Hospitality Day look like according to online sources?

The study by Rembacki (2019) suggests that allowing VIP guests to skip the line gives them a sense of exclusivity and importance. This unique privilege makes them feel valued and distinguishes them from the regular attendees. It saves time and enhances their overall experience by giving them expedited access to services or attractions.

Another point Rembacki makes is to take group photos as a memory for the day and experience. Offering the opportunity for a group photo with VIP guests can create a sense of camaraderie and exclusivity. It provides a tangible memory and a shared experience by capturing a moment together. By doing this, you not only let the guests feel special but also create a sense of unity between the customer and the company.

Offering a service or holding an event is just one aspect of creating an experience. In a study by McCollough (2021), the importance of creating an experience rather than just an event is explained. It seeks to arouse feelings and strengthen bonds with VIP visitors (McCollough, 2021). According to McCollough, the bond between guests and your business can be strengthened by carefully arranging features like ambience, entertainment, interactive activities, or surprise components.

Doyle (2023) discusses the functionality VIP days offer guests. These days allow customers to participate in exclusive networking events, Q&A sessions, picture opportunities, and meet-and-greets only through this service. If implemented accordingly, customers can develop lasting relationships and create original and once-in-a-lifetime experiences (Doyle, 2023).

Chapter 3.5: What can Coca-Cola implement to improve their VIP Hospitality days?

The Festival and Events department director, Ms Caroline Gaanderse, was interviewed for this section. With 15 years of experience in this field, she has much insight into all the changes within the last decade. In the following statements, the reader can observe her willingness to improve.

CG: *"I have been working at CCEP for almost 15 years; in my field of experience I have heard a lot of different feedback. Since CCEP is a very dynamic company our way of working is a consequently changing factor. I have a very motivated team that works very hard to create new partnerships and spread the Coke-feeling all over the Netherlands and Belgium. In my own humble opinion, I believe that everything can be done better, more sharp and more direct. From recent experiences and feedback from customers, it is safe to say that we need more attention towards our communicating system. The idea that you have mentioned earlier about the After Care packages could also be a very good asset. By doing this you can extend the feeling of being VIP."*

In 2021, an article was published by CCEP on their website discussing how they want to tackle their hospitality days after the COVID-19 pandemic. Here the willingness to provide comprehensive communication is emphasized. CCEP said they want to guarantee a "smooth and happy visit for their guests". This involves exchanging thorough itineraries, instructions, and any other information required. For any questions or issues VIP attendees raise, dedicated staff members should be able to provide, increasing customer satisfaction (CCEP, 2021).

The need for customer feedback came up regularly throughout this study. As Gaanderse mentions, CCEP is a dynamic company, and the ability for constant change should be present. In the statement below, you can observe the opinion of Gaanderse on this subject.

CG: *"We have known our customers for a very long time and have developed a special bond with them. For the new customers it can be different, they could have new needs. I think it is a good idea to invest in learning more about the wants and needs of customers – and even in investing in the aftercare packages you mentioned previously."*

In a study by Singh in 2021, maintaining customer satisfaction and fostering loyalty are crucial objectives in the hospitality industry. Singh stated that by providing effective aftercare, corporations could enhance the overall experience of their VIP guests, leaving a positive impression and increasing the likelihood of future engagements.

A study by Fung So (2020) implies that aftercare facilitates relationship-building and sustained engagement with VIP clients. He states: "VIP hospitality days serve as opportunities for corporations to establish personal connections and engage with their clients". By following up with personalized aftercare, such as thank-you notes, customized gifts, or exclusive offers, corporations could strengthen the relationship (K. Fung So, 2020).

Fung So (2020) also mentions that aftercare offers a platform for "insightful criticism" and development opportunities. From VIP visitors, businesses can learn more about their experiences during the hospitality days and get their comments. This feedback can pinpoint problem areas, hone upcoming products, and raise the overall standard of the hospitality experience. The study concluded that by aligning with these best practices, corporations could maximize the value derived from VIP hospitality days and enhance their overall business outcomes (Fung So, 2020).

Chapter 4. Conclusions

This chapter includes a conclusion on the various sub-questions to address the main research question: *How can Coca-Cola Europacific partners improve its customer experience before, during, and after their VIP Hospitality days?*

Chapter 4.1: What does a VIP Hospitality Day hosted by Coca-Cola look like?

The planning of the VIP Hospitality days involves meticulous planning, partnership negotiation, and careful preparation to create a luxurious and memorable experience for customers. This includes selecting suitable days, informing the internal team, making catering arrangements, ensuring crowd control, setting up bars, and providing guided tours. The goal is to strengthen the bond between VIPs and the company by offering personalized communication and exclusive access. The approach aligns with the study findings by Jones and Moital (2017), emphasizing the significance of managing event logistics, delivering personal communication, and creating a sense of exclusivity. Although feedback mechanisms are currently not implemented as advised in the study, there is a desire for improvement and adaptability at CCEP, as obtaining feedback can enhance the customer experience and provide a sense of preferential treatment.

Chapter 4.2: What is the internal experience on the VIP Hospitality days?

The interviews conducted with the four employees yielded valuable insights into the previous VIP Hospitality Day and identified areas for improvement. The common objective among all participants is to enhance and inspire CCEP customers. The employees emphasize the importance of improving customer contact, creating additional fans of Coke, showcasing the brand experience, and establishing better relationships for the future. However, there are specific areas that require attention, particularly communication. The participants agree that CCEP's communication should be improved by sending out invites earlier and providing timely and detailed information to avoid surprises. Furthermore, opinions vary regarding the presence of a point of contact during the VIP Days and customer feedback. While some participants express concerns about the luxury and wow effect of the event, others mention positive experiences, gratitude from guests, and inspiration for their businesses. Jones and Moital's 2017 study underlines the significance of connecting with VIP guests and delivering personalized communications to make VIPs feel special by providing unique access to a dedicated events team.

Chapter 4.3.: How do customers experience the VIP Hospitality days?

The survey conducted at the Paaspop Festival in Schijndel on April 7th, 2023, revealed various insights from the attendees. Participants were asked about additional benefits that would make the experience unforgettable. Most respondents expressed interest in receiving goodie bags, while others suggested earbuds or alternative options. These insights from the survey provided valuable feedback for improving future VIP Hospitality days organized by CCEP. Based on the survey responses, several areas for improvement were identified. These include enhancing the brand experience, improving communication, providing backstage access, and offering a dedicated VIP concierge service. These suggestions and others can help CCEP enhance their VIP days and address concerns such as dietary requirements and brand image. By implementing these improvements, CCEP aims to create an unforgettable experience for future guests at the VIP Hospitality Days.

Chapter 4.4: What would a perfect VIP Hospitality Day look like according to online sources?

Research by Rembacki (2019), McCollough (2021) and Doyle (2023) provides insights for creating a unique and memorable VIP Hospitality experience. Key aspects include offering VIP guests the opportunity to skip the line, creating a sense of exclusivity and saving their time. Moreover, group photos foster camaraderie and exclusivity, capturing shared memories. Furthermore, creating an experiential environment with carefully designed features strengthens the bond with VIP guests. Exclusive functionalities like networking events and meet-and-greets provide unique opportunities, fostering lasting relationships and "once in a lifetime" experiences. By incorporating these elements, businesses can ensure VIP Hospitality days leave a lasting impression, making customers feel valued and connected.

Chapter 4.5: What can Coca-Cola implement to improve their VIP Hospitality days?

The Festival and Events department director, Ms Caroline Gaanderse, emphasizes the need for improvement and attention towards the communication system and suggests investing in aftercare packages to extend the feeling of being a VIP. The article published by CCEP in 2021 also emphasizes the company's commitment to providing a smooth and happy visit for their guests by exchanging thorough itineraries, instructions, and other necessary information. Various studies conducted by Singh (2021) and Fung So (2020) support the significance of aftercare in enhancing customer satisfaction, fostering loyalty, and establishing personal connections with VIP clients. The studies suggest that personalized aftercare, such as thank-you notes, customized gifts, and exclusive offers, can strengthen relationships and provide valuable feedback for improvement. By aligning with these best practices, corporations can maximize the value derived from VIP hospitality days and enhance overall business outcomes.

Chapter 5: Recommendations

Important suggestions from the previous chapters' results and analysis are summarized in this chapter. To increase the overall efficiency of the VIP Hospitality days, these suggestions are meant to solve the concerns that have been highlighted as well as to improve the current situation.

Recommendation 1. Create aftercare packages for customers to receive after the VIP days.

This recommendation is **suitable** for the following reasons:

- In most cases, VIP customers often have higher expectations and anticipate receiving special treatment even after the event. Providing aftercare packages aligns with these expectations and demonstrates a commitment to maintaining a long-term relationship with VIP guests.
- Suitable aftercare packages can leave a positive and lasting impression, reinforcing that VIP guests are valued and their experience extends beyond the event.

This recommendation is **acceptable** for the following reasons:

- By providing additional value and personalized attention, CCEP can enhance the overall experience and show appreciation for the support of its customers.
- Many hospitality and event management businesses offer VIP guests aftercare services or packages. Extending the VIP experience beyond the event itself has become an accepted practice, ensuring a positive and lasting impression on customers.

This recommendation is **feasible** for the following reasons:

- The packages can be designed to align with the CCEP's branding, budget, and capabilities, ensuring that they are sustainable in the long term.
- It allows flexibility to adapt to the resources CCEP offers altogether.

The researcher is collaborating with CCEP to implement this recommendation from the study. In the Professional Product, the reader can read an extensive overview of the purpose and goal of this product.

Recommendation 2. Incorporate a 360-degree feedback mechanism.

This recommendation is **suitable** for the following reason:

- A 360-degree feedback mechanism can allow CCEP to gather feedback on the performance and skills of staff members involved in organizing and delivering the VIP hospitality days. This feedback can contribute to staff development and training initiatives, enabling CCEP to provide targeted coaching and support. By addressing any identified areas for improvement, CCEP can improve its VIP experience and enhance staff competence to deliver high-quality experiences to VIP guests.

This recommendation is **acceptable** for the following reason:

- VIP hospitality days involve interactions and experiences with various stakeholders, including internal teams, customers, partners, and event attendees. By implementing a 360-degree feedback mechanism, CCEP can gather feedback from all these perspectives, comprehensively evaluating the VIP hospitality experience. This feedback can cover customer satisfaction, event organisation, staff performance, and overall impact.

This recommendation is **feasible** for the following reason:

- Technological advancements have made implementing a 360-degree feedback mechanism increasingly accessible. Online survey tools and feedback platforms will allow for efficient collection and analysis of feedback. These tools also provide anonymity, ensuring confidentiality to encourage more honest feedback.

Incorporating a 360-degree feedback mechanism for VIP hospitality days enables CCEP to gain comprehensive insights to enhance the customer experience, drive continuous improvement, develop staff capabilities, and foster stakeholder engagement. By leveraging diverse perspectives and feedback, CCEP can refine their offerings, exceed customer expectations, and establish its position as a leader in providing exceptional VIP experiences

Recommendation 3. Personalize the experience for each guest

This recommendation is **suitable** for the following reason:

- Personalization allows businesses to cater to individual preferences and needs, resulting in higher customer satisfaction. By collecting and leveraging customer data, CCEP can tailor the VIP hospitality experience to match the preferences of each VIP guest. This customized approach can create a positive impression, build customer loyalty, and contribute to long-term relationships with VIP clients.

This recommendation is **acceptable** for the following reason:

- Personalization has become crucial for organisations to remain competitive in the market today. On VIP hospitality days, businesses may stand out from the competition and draw VIP visitors who value unique experiences by offering highly customized services.
- By personalizing the experience, CCEP can provide exclusive and high-impact results in a short timeframe. VIP guests will feel valued and appreciated when their preferences, interests, and needs are taken into account. This level of personalization contributes to creating memorable moments that leave a lasting positive impression.

This recommendation is **feasible** for the following reason:

- CCEP can utilize technology solutions such as customer relationship management (CRM) systems to collect and analyze guest data. This data can be leveraged to personalize the VIP hospitality experience, tailoring it to the specific preferences and needs of individual guests.
- By offering personalized experiences on VIP hospitality days, CCEP stands out from competitors who may provide more generic or standardized services. This differentiation can attract VIP guests and position CCEP as a preferred hospitality provider.

CCEP could collect guest preference before the event by sending out a survey to gather the information about dietary restrictions etc. They could create customized itineraries such as backstage access, meet and greet opportunities or access to special areas aligned with their interests. CCEP can assign dedicated concierge staff, these concierges can act as personal guides, ensuring that guests have a seamless experience and addressing any specific requests or concerns they may have. By implementing these recommendations, CCEP can create a personalized and memorable VIP Hospitality experience for their guests.

Appendix 2.1

Concept	Dimension	Indicator	Possible research Questions
VIP- Hospitality Days	Personalisation	Is there enough space for customisation to give guests the ultimate experience that is not available to general public.	What distinguishes the CCEP VIP hospitality days from others in the industry?
	Brand immersion	To what extent is an opportunity offered to guests to learn more about the brand, its history, values, and visions.	What is the aim/ end goal for these special days?
	Networking opportunity's	Possibility to network with other VIP guests or Industry professionals.	Are the invitees chosen randomly or is there a specific thought/ way of working behind it?
Coca-Cola's marketing and social strategies	Sponsorship and partnership	Actions that CCEP takes to form/create partnerships	How does CCEP create and maintain partnerships with organisations?
	Customer engagement	To what extend do they engage with customer feedback and prioritise it	Is there space for customers to leave feedback after the VIP days in order for improvement (if needed) for next time?
	Branding/Brand management	Extent to which Coca-Cola Europacific Partners is focusing on creating brand awareness and promoting the CC drink portfolio	Is there a special brand or drink promoted on these days?

Appendix 2.2

Concept	Dimension	Indicator	Possible research Questions
Pre Event Planning	Identifying potential risks and risk management	Is there room for developing contingency plans to mitigate risks	Did anything significant occur to you during the preparation of the previous VIP Hospitality day? If so, what were some last minute problems that cannot occur next time?
	Defining the purpose of the event	Does the event meet its purpose in the end	What was the purpose of the previous VIP Hospitality day? Was this goal obtained?
	Marketing and promoting the event	To what extent does CCEP generate enough interest and awareness about the event	Are there any improvements for the organisation towards the guests? What could be done better the next time?
Hospitality Management	Food and Beverage management	Importance of menu planning, quality dining experience for guests, and other benefits on festival/event grounds	How did you like the F&B that was available on the previous VIP Hospitality day?
	Financial management	Forecasting, is there budget for a greater experience, what is lacking in the experience and is this financially feasible, is there enough money for aftercare	What benefits did you offer the guests? Did they get free tokens, any ear protection, or any other free benefit?
	Customer Service	Responsiveness to guests, the presence of a hostess, anticipation to customer needs	Was there a point of contact with the guests after the VIP hospitality day? Did they leave any feedback?
Brand Management	Brand extension	Room for promoting new drinks introduced by CCEP. For example, Jack & Coke, Rosalia creations, Fuze Tea no Sugar	Is there enough space for promoting the new drink portfolio among the guests on these VIP days? Does this affect the customer interest?
	Brand messaging	The ability to create a consistent and compelling brand image.	How do you give the guests the experience that this is an 'Only offered by CCEP' experience?

Appendix 2.3

Concept	Dimension	Indicator	Possible research Questions
Customer Experience management	Personalisation	The extent to which tailoring the customer experience to individual needs and preferences is available.	What did you think of the approach of CCEP before the event? Was everything clear beforehand?
	Convenience	The presence of comfort, self-service, good assistance and ease.	What did you think of the communication during the event? Was a hostess present?
	Empathy	The extent to which the company understands the customer needs and emotions. Showing the company cares about emotions.	Was there a form of aftercare? Or a closing to the VIP day? What could be done better next time?
Consumer behavior	Personal	Lifestyle of the customer	Was the program of the day clear and exciting enough for you?
	Situational	The social setting the client is located in, the buying behavior.	What did you think of the present F&B?
	Cultural	The impact the event has on the customers' attitudes, beliefs, and values	What extra benefits would make this experience truly unforgettable?

Appendix 2.4

Concept	Dimension	Indicator	Possible research Questions
Hospitality marketing	Product-service	The tangible and intangible experiences, and how to meet the needs of customers	What makes a VIP hospitality day UNIQUE for customers?
	Presentation	To what extent is the company able to enhance overall customer experience by effective presentation	What is the main goal of the companies hosting these VIP days and how important is branding/visual aesthetic
	Communication	The extent to which the company is able to communicate with the customers in order to engage them	How important is good customer relationship management?
Luxury consumption	Individually centered	To what extent there is an emotional or personal association between the product/service and customer	How important is it to create an emotional/personal bond with customers on these VIP hospitality days?
	Socially centered	The social status/standing this provides to the customers	How do customers experience the VIP feeling?
	Objectives attributes/Features	The practical benefits and functionality this provides to the customers	What functionality do these VIP hospitality days offer the customers?

Appendix 2.5

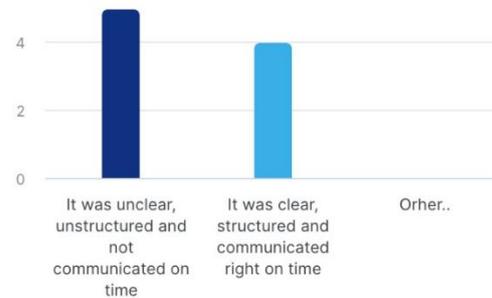
Concept	Dimension	Indicator	Possible research Questions
Event Marketing	Organisation	How well is the current organisation and what are possible problems	Is there any need for improved organisational planning?
	Brandpromotion	Does the experience align with the brand identity	Is the Coke-feeling displayed during these VIP Hospitality days?
	Partnerships	Ability to enhance their visibility and reach by maximising their exposure on events/festivals by these partnerships	How well are the current bonds with the partners? Is it easy to promote a new product on festival fields?
Feedback and Evaluation	Appreciation	Shoeing gratitude for customers and creating an emotional bond	Is there any form of aftercare?
	Evaluation	The extent to which the CCEP hospitality days meet the expectations of customers	Do the VIP Hospitality days match the expectations of the customers?

Appendix 3.3

1. Which Coca-Cola VIP Day did you attend?

ANTWOORD	ANTWOORDEN	RATIO
Paaspop	5	55.6%
Paaspop	2	22.2%
Friday	1	11.1%
PAASPOP in Schijndel	1	11.1%

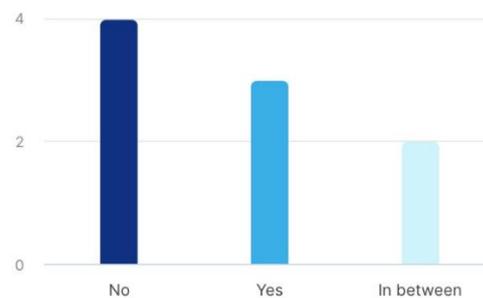
2. What did you think of the approach of CCEP before the event? Was everything clear beforehand?



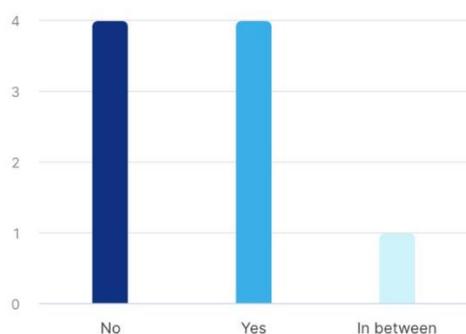
3. What did you think of the arranged dinner/lunch? Were your allergies/diet preferences questioned?

ANTWOORD	ANTWOORDEN	RATIO
Could have some improvement	1	11.1%
Delicious and great company	1	11.1%
Great, the service was nice. I felt taken care of	1	11.1%

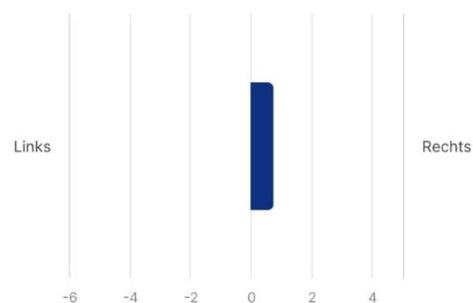
4. Did you think the brand image/identity of CCEP stand out during the VIP day? So did you experience the 'Coca-Cola' feeling?



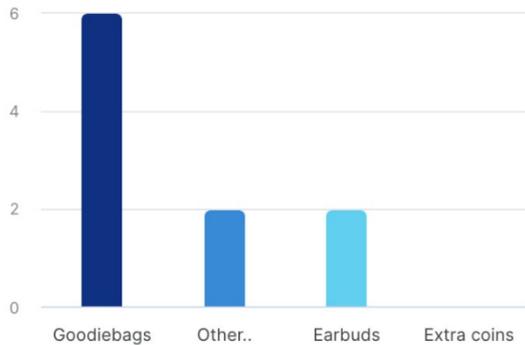
5. Is this experience worth being labelled as 'VIP'?



6. Based on the scale below, -5 being the worst and 5 being the best, what would you rate your overall experience?



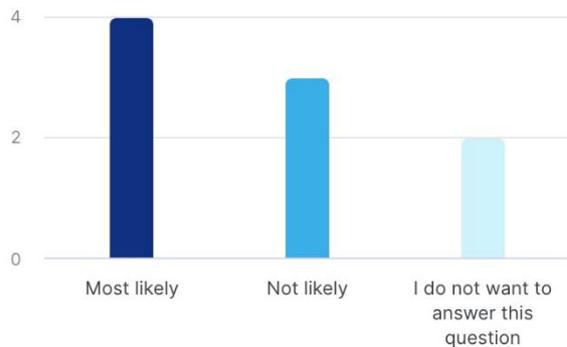
7. Which extra benefits would make this experience truly unforgettable?



8. What are some cons/tips that should be considered for the next VIP Hospitality days?

ANTWOORD	ANTWOORDEN	RATIO
Aftercare or being hyped for the event by the communication from CCEP	1	11.1%
Better communication!	1	11.1%
I would recommend better communication.	1	11.1%

9. Would you recommend other people in your professional field to work/contract with CCEP and join their VIP Hospitality programs?



Responses Q3:

- The food options provided were limited and did not cater to my dietary requirements.
- The dinner/lunch was arranged fine, but the queue was way too long. I had to wait a long time for my food.
- Not good, no varieties, no vegetarian or vegans options
- My allergies and diet preferences were not asked. I was not happy with that since I follow a vegan diet. There was no options for people that eat vegan. I talked with my colleagues who ate the lunch. They had the kroket broodje, and were not amused. The kroket broodje was cold and not tasty.
- It was good, they asked everyone what they wanted.
- I thought it was nice! the ambiance was nice and we were not in the rain haha! Glad it was inside
- Great, the service was nice. I felt taken care of
- Delicious and great company
- Could have some improvement

Responses Q8:

- Things that should be considered for the next VIP Hospitality should be that the food is better arranged, so the queues aren't too long. Overall for Coca-Cola there should be a better brand experience. I did not really feel a Coca-Cola experience. For a brand as big as Coca-Cola I just expected more.
- Nothing, it was amazing!
- More food options catering to all dietary requirements and better quality food offering - perhaps celebrity chefs, Goodiebags, VIP giveaways, VIP shuttles to the event, Access backstage and to performers, exclusive guest networking in lounge, better bathrooms, shade VIP seating, mini spa treatments, festival hair and glitter treatments, dedicated VIP concierge service
- More experience
- Maybe a bit more body to the day. So with a welcome, a mid-speech and an ending speech. Overall I enjoyed it a lot!
- Make sure that the brand is visible
- I would recommend better communication. There was almost no communication and that created a lot of chaos. VIP days are with a special treatment and I had the feeling that I did not get one because of how bad organized it was.
- Better communication!
- Aftercare or being hyped for the event by the communication from CCEP

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Appendix 3.1: Interview #1 → Doyna de Koning

S: Sinem Aydogan

D: Doyna de Koning

S: What does a typical CCEP VIP Days look like?

- D: A CCEP VIP Days event requires thorough and meticulous planning and preparation before it is put together. The first step is to negotiate and finalize partnerships with festivals or other organisations. The next step after a partnership has been formed is to choose a good day and let our internal team know about it so they can make calendar preparations. Then careful preparation is started, including a variety of topics like catering arrangements, crowd control, and the marketing of equipment like setting up bars at the festival. A cordial welcome for visitors, guided tours, and a sufficient supply of cash or tokens for food and drink are all given special care throughout the event. Additionally, visitors are allowed free time to take advantage of the festival's amenities and are invited to participate in meals, whether they are dinner or lunch.

S: What distinguishes the CCEP VIP hospitality days from others in the industry?

- D: Well, when you think about Coca-Cola, it's a beverage that is often associated with joy, unity, and happiness. Our goal during the VIP days is to embody these qualities. While every company has its own approach, at Coke, we strive to create a personalized and intimate experience for our customers. We aim for a close relationship between the customer and the company.

S: What is the aim/ end goal for these special days?

- D: The ultimate goal is to foster customer loyalty and showcase what we do and how we do it. These days serve as an opportunity to demonstrate why our customers choose to work with us and why CCEP is an exceptional company. We like to go all out and provide a luxurious and memorable experience..

S: Are the invitees chosen randomly or is there a specific thought/ way of working behind it?

- D: It depends per event, of course you know how it works with the divisions but to explain it briefly for the readers of your report – we can say it easily. Each department receives a certain number of tickets for different festivals. For example, the Sales and Horeca department might receive 20 tickets each for an event like Paaspop.

S: How does CCEP create and maintain partnerships with organisations?

- D: We prioritize constant communication, seeking continuous improvement, and exploring new deals. It's an ongoing effort throughout the day. We work with both large organisations like MOJO and smaller ones like Culinesse. We adapt our approach to suit the preferences and budgets of each partner.

S: Is there space for customers to leave feedback after the VIP days in order for improvement (if needed) for next time?

- D: Honestly, not really. Most customers perceive the VIP days as a generous gift, and they may not readily come forward with their opinions unless specifically asked. Personally, as a perfectionist, I tend to identify any issues during these days and try to address them before the next VIP day. However, incorporating a feedback system would be a valuable addition to our operations.

S: Is there a special brand or drink promoted on these days?

- D: It depends on the occasion. If we have a new drink on the market, we do promote it. Generally, our focus is on promoting brands like Coke Zero, Chaudfontaine, and Fuze Tea. However, we recently introduced a new drink called "Jack & Coke," a partnership with Jack Daniels. This will be a significant promotional asset during upcoming events and VIP days. It's the first time Coca-Cola is associated with an alcoholic beverage, so we aim to create a sophisticated image for our customers.

Appendix 3.2.1: Interview #1 → Wouter Huisman

W: Wouter Huisman

S: Sinem Aydogan

S: Did anything significant occur to you during the preparation of the previous VIP Hospitality day? If so, what were some last minute problems that cannot occur next time?

- W: Not really.

S: What was the purpose of the previous VIP Hospitality day? Was this goal obtained?

- W: The goal was to improve customer contact, though I wonder if this really left them impressed.

S: Are there any improvements for the organization towards the guests? What could be done better the next time?

- W: We need better communication. I don't agree with the current way of communicating.

S: How did you like the F&B that was available on the previous VIP Hospitality day?

- W: I did not like it. It was just a cold kroket and a dried bread. It did not give the VIP experience AT ALL! We need serious improvement for that. If I think of VIP I think of very good food and a nice ambiance. In my opinion it did not deserve the name VIP.

S: What benefits did you offer the guests? Did they get free tokens, any ear protection, or any other free benefit?

- W: They got 20 free tokens per person after dinner. This is quite a good benefit if you ask me.

S: Was there a point of contact with the guests after the VIP hospitality day? Did they leave any feedback?

- W: No not really, I am just very convinced that our VIP days are not extremely luxury. I know that these will not leave a wow-effect at the directors of huge companies like Sligro or Shell.

S: Is there enough space for promoting the new drink portfolio among the guests on these VIP days? Does this affect the customer interest?

- Yes, but only if it is contractually allowed. Our customers know about our constant improvement.

S: How do you give the guests the experience that this is an 'Only offered by CCEP' experience?

- By giving them access to free coke products during the festival.

Appendix 3.2.2: Interview #2 → Lizan Bakker

L: Lizan Bakker

S: Sinem Aydogan

S: Did anything significant occur to you during the preparation of the previous VIP Hospitality day? If so, what were some last minute problems that cannot occur next time?

- L: It would be helpful to have information about the activations and focus brands that will be highlighted during the VIP days when assigning customers. This way, you can bring the right customer along. The program and expectations could be described more clearly. If you're not involved, you're not sure what to expect, which leads to more questions. Is there food, free roaming, or a guided tour, etc.?

S: What was the purpose of the previous VIP Hospitality day? Was this goal obtained?

- L: The goal was to create extra fans of Coke, and that was accomplished. Both Efteling and Kinopolis were enthusiastic, and there was good interaction between the customers.

S: Are there any improvements for the organisation towards the guests? What could be done better the next time?

- L: It was quite last minute last year. If you receive an email on time with all the information and details about what data you need to provide and you are kept informed about when you will receive more information, it helps keep everyone calm.

S: How did you like the F&B that was available on the previous VIP Hospitality day?

- L: Some VIP days were VERY good and had a lot of options, but particularly at the last one the food was fried and less satisfying. It felt more like a free invitation with lots of tokens rather than a true VIP day in that sense.

S: What benefits did you offer the guests? Did they get free tokens, any ear protection, or any other free benefit?

- L: Yes they always get a lot of tokens and free time on the premises!

S: Was there a point of contact with the guests after the VIP hospitality day? Did they leave any feedback?

- L: They were pleasantly surprised and very grateful. The tour is always enjoyable for people, and they always receive enough tokens. Also, they were impressed by our organisational skills and the amazing partners we work with. It also provided inspiration for their own business and brand activations.

S: Is there enough space for promoting the new drink portfolio among the guests on these VIP days? Does this affect the customer interest?

- L: Yes! This is amazing to do on events like these.

S: How do you give the guests the experience that this is an 'Only offered by CCEP' experience?

- L: By showing off our amazing connections with our partners we can really demonstrate the power of Coke, which they can't get just anywhere.

Appendix 3.2.3: Interview #3 → Vincent van Schendel

V: Vincent van Schendel

S: Sinem Aydogan

S: Did anything significant occur to you during the preparation of the previous VIP Hospitality day? If so, what were some last minute problems that cannot occur next time?

- V: We need to be more consequent with the sign-up lists. A lot of organisations are very strict on names and birthdates, we need our customers to fill these in properly otherwise we have a lot of last minute work to do.

S: What was the purpose of the previous VIP Hospitality day? Was this goal obtained?

- V: To show our customers the brand experience, and create better relations for the future.

S: Are there any improvements for the organisation towards the guests? What could be done better the next time?

- V: We need to be more prompt with the communication. It is important to send out all the details in advance and keep on informing them about all the happenings so they don't get left with surprises.

S: How did you like the F&B that was available on the previous VIP Hospitality day?

- V: I didn't like the F&B, this is a serious improvement we need to consider.

S: What benefits did you offer the guests? Did they get free tokens, any ear protection, or any other free benefit?

- V: The guests always receive some sort of benefit, always the free entrance and parking ticket. They also receive free tokens for drinks!

S: Was there a point of contact with the guests after the VIP hospitality day? Did they leave any feedback?

- V: No, but this would be a good addition. Especially to put certain points of contact from the parking to the VIP deck backstage where we welcome the guests.

S: Is there enough space for promoting the new drink portfolio among the guests on these VIP days? Does this affect the customer interest?

- V: YES! Big fan of this. It worked out with Coca-Cola Zero Cherry last year.

S: How do you give the guests the experience that this is an 'Only offered by CCEP' experience?

- V: These are the experiences they can't get elsewhere, a lot of relations have been improved by these VIP days and we continue to do so. It shows them the power of Coke and how amazingly diverse our customer base is. From gymnasiums to petrol stations to wholesalers.

Appendix 3.2.4: Interview #4 → Stephan Lanen

L: Stephan Lanen

S: Sinem Aydogan

S: Did anything significant occur to you during the preparation of the previous VIP Hospitality day? If so, what were some last minute problems that cannot occur next time?

- L: Not really! I think stuff like coming late, or emails going to spam is something inevitable. A slight problem could be that customers can cancel very last minute.

S: What was the purpose of the previous VIP Hospitality day? Was this goal obtained?

- L: To inspire customers and prospects, maintain relationships, maximise business, extend collaborations, and provide a glimpse into a complete only Coke can do journey.

S: Are there any improvements for the organisation towards the guests? What could be done better the next time?

- L: Send out the invites WAY earlier, we need better communication.

S: How did you like the F&B that was available on the previous VIP Hospitality day?

- L: Yes it was fine!

S: What benefits did you offer the guests? Did they get free tokens, any ear protection, or any other free benefit?

- L: We always give them free tokens.

S: Was there a point of contact with the guests after the VIP hospitality day? Did they leave any feedback?

- L: They loved it! I was very happy with the results.

S: Is there enough space for promoting the new drink portfolio among the guests on these VIP days? Does this affect the customer interest?

- L: Yes.. It's a good way to show the customers what we do at coke! Even better to show them how we do our marketing.

S: How do you give the guests the experience that this is an 'Only offered by CCEP' experience?

- L: By personalising the event from start to finish, it starts by sending the CCEP labeled invites to seeing Coca-Cola drinks all over the festival fields.

Appendix 3.5.1: Interview #1 → Caroline Gaanderse

Q: Is there any need for improved organisational planning?

- I have been working at CCEP for almost 15 years, in my field of experience I have heard a lot of different feedback. Since CCEP is a very dynamic company our organisational plannings keep changing over the years. I believe that everything can be done better, more sharp and more direct. From recent experiences I think the communication style can be done way better and the save the dates and invites need more attention. I hope you can come up with a new set of ideas that can ease the planning and promotion of these VIP Days, that would be awesome.

Q: Is the Coke-feeling displayed during these VIP Hospitality days?

- Yes. We pay a lot of attention to detail by incorporating our Coca-Cola equipment all over the VIP deck. We have coolers, ice buckets, cups, and much more. Our team is enormously welcoming and polite so creating joy and feelings of happiness is key for our events.

Q: How well are the current bonds with the partners? Is it easy to promote a new product on festival fields?

- This is relatively easy. Since we have contractual agreements every 4 years.

Q: Is there any form of aftercare?

- No! Though it is no requirement for how much fun it was of course but it would definitely feel as an appreciation. As a customer, you feel more special. A photo always works well. This could work as a tool to extend the experience.

Q: Do the VIP Hospitality days match the expectations of the customers?

- In most cases, yes. This is because we have known them for very long and have developed a special bond with them. For the new customers it can be different, they could have new needs. I think it is a good idea to invest in learning more about the wants and needs of customers – and even in investing in the aftercare packages you mentioned previously.