

How a Coke machine brought India and Pakistan closer



Soft drinks giant does its bit for good relations

They are two neighbouring countries whose relationship has been severely strained for decades.

Despite sharing historical and cultural links, the borders of India and Pakistan are divided by barbed wire with both nations sharing mutual hostility and suspicion.

Yet one of the world's biggest multinational companies is trying to change all of that through a new advertising film.

Coca-Cola installed high-tech vending machines in two popular shopping malls in Lahore, Pakistan and New Delhi, India.

Despite the two cities being separated by just 325 miles, the people of both cities could not be any further apart thanks to decades of political tension.

However, using the 'Small World Machines', Coca Cola provided a live communications portal linking strangers in the cities.

The firm used 3D touchscreen technology to project a streaming video feed onto the vending machine screen while simultaneously filming through the unit to capture a live emotional exchange.

The technology used was similar to Apple's FaceTime.

The machines prompted shoppers in New Dheli to 'make a friend in Pakistan' while mall goers in Lahore were asked to meet someone from India.

People from both countries who engaged with the screens were encouraged to complete a friendly task together such as wave, touch hands, draw a peace sign or dance before they shared a Coca-Cola.

The firm said it hoped to provoke happiness and promoting cultural understanding around the world.

In order to produce the film, crews working for Coca Cola filmed through the night and captured more than 100 interactions between people of all ages and from all walks of life.

Saad Pall, Coke's assistant brand manager in Pakistan, said: 'The people of Pakistan and India share a lot of common passions and interests – from food and Bollywood movies, to Coke Studio music, to cricket.

'What this project did was connect people who are not exposed to each other on a daily basis, enabling the common man in Lahore to see and interact with the common man in Delhi. It's a small step we hope will signal what's possible.'

The poor relations between India and Pakistan are defined by the violent partition of British India in 1947 and also the territorial dispute over the Kashmir region.

There have been numerous military conflicts between both countries.

The Kashmir conflict is a territorial dispute between India and Pakistan over the Kashmir region, the northwestern most region of South Asia.

Full Story: Coca-Cola unites enemies India and Pakistan with interactive vending machines which encourage users in both countries to 'make a friend'

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