

# Clear hai: Sprite knocks Pepsi off No. 2 perch

## THIRST-SLAKER: Coca-Cola's Lemon Drink Overtook Rival's Sales In October '08

Ratna Bhushan  
NEW DELHI

**H**ERE'S how to celebrate a lemon in a slowdown. Sprite, the clear lemon drink from the Coca-Cola India stable, has trounced PepsiCo's flagship Pepsi to emerge as Number 2 in the pecking order of soft drink sales in India.

Thums Up, the age-old brand which Ramesh Chauhan of Parle sold to Coca-Cola India, retains the top slot, according to latest market data compiled by AC Nielsen. The clear lemon segment accounts for about 21% of the Rs 7,500-crore sparkling beverage industry in India, show industry

estimates.

The AC Nielsen data, subscribed to by both PepsiCo and Coca-Cola, shows that with a market share of 14.6%, Sprite overtook Pepsi's 13.6% in October 2008. Since then, its market share has inched upwards while that of Pepsi has slipped. Figures for December 2008 show that Sprite has a share of 15.6% against brand Pepsi's 13%, closing in on Thums Up's 16.16%.

When contacted by ET, a PepsiCo spokesman said: "In 2008, brand Pepsi remained the No. 1 selling beverage brand across all categories based on shipment data that we share on a regular basis. Last year has been good for PepsiCo with our

beverages portfolio gaining significant momentum despite the economic downturn and growing at over 20% in the second half of 2008."

"All our brands are doing well in their respective categories. However, due to strategic reasons we do not disclose market shares of any of our brands," said a Coca-Cola India spokesman.

Last week, Coca-Cola and PepsiCo had announced extensive marketing plans for their respective clear lemon drinks Sprite and 7 Up for the season.

Both companies are also learnt to be working on introducing branded lemonade in the country.

ratna.bhushan@timesgroup.com

### THUMS UP STILL AT TOP

Thums Up, the age-old brand that Ramesh Chauhan of Parle sold to Coca-Cola India, retains the top slot, according to latest market data compiled by AC Nielsen. Both PepsiCo & Coke subscribe to this data

**BATTLE  
ZONE**

Market Share In Dec '08

(Figure in %)

**16.16**  
THUMS UP

**15.6**  
SPRITE

**13**  
PEPSI