



**Great Cups of Coffee Company**  
*a great cup of coffee at a great price*

***Marketing Supplemental Timeline***

## ***Supplemental timeline of Marketing Issues***

### **Year One**

Coffee Hut shops were gradually re-branded as Great Cups of Columbus. Signage (exterior and interior) was the first thing changed. Inventory of imprinted disposables (e.g., cups, napkins) were used up rather than discarded.

### **Year Two**

A “business card” website was established, with a store locator, hours and customer feedback functionality.

### **Year Three**

The marketing team in Columbus added a mail order service to their offerings via the Web site. This operation, although new, had already raised a few supply issues. Each morning, staff in the roastery were responsible for printing the email orders, pulling the product, bagging and boxing it and then shipping via UPS. GC3 prided itself on a 72-hour turn around, but the systems were just not in place for Web orders to be processed, filled, shipped, and delivered in 72 hours.

### **Year Four**

Bruce oversaw a modest marketing budget, most of which went to an outside marketing firm. The stores relied mostly on word of mouth advertising.

### **Year Six**

The Marketing function was divided into two separately operating departments – Marketing (that handled strategy and traditional media) and eMarketing (that handled implementation of the web and other eMarketing initiatives).

Store signage at Rod’s was changed to Great Scoops. The day the first sign changed, a local television station picked up on it and interviewed RJ. The broadcast story included a sound bite from RJ who described the name change as “the death of an institution, but I want all of Pittsburgh to know I am going to make it my mission to make sure the new owners don’t do anything to mess up my dad’s recipes.” A local PR firm was engaged to do damage control and an extensive paid television and radio campaign was undertaken.

Within two months, same-store sales had nearly recovered to that of the previous year.

### **Year Seven**

Sales increased as an aggressive couponing campaign was undertaken for Great Scoops and Great Cups.

### **Year Eight**

Larger Great Cups of Coffee retail stores began a test-market study of higher-end coffee makers and grinders.

**Year Nine**

The Marketing director in Columbus was often at odds with the strong marketing department in Chicago and often brought these issues to the executive table. Chicago was very aggressive in their marketing techniques while Columbus and Pittsburgh were traditionally more bottom-line focused. Discussions with the Chicago marketing team rendered complaints of what were called “backwoods marketing techniques” of the Columbus-based team. Pittsburgh fared even worse in the eyes of the Chicago team. Overall, the Chicago team was accustomed to local campaigns built to address specific store clientele and resented the generic Great Cups model that had been used since the company’s inception. Bruce pointed to the success of that model repeatedly and wanted to find a way to use it for all three companies, despite their different product lines.