



Engineers took just one week to create a contactless option for the Freestyle machines, that does not require downloading an app first | Photo source [Coca-Cola Company](#)

Innovation > Food & Drink > 'Freestyle' beverage dispenser offers restaurants contactless pouring

## 'FREESTYLE' BEVERAGE DISPENSER OFFERS RESTAURANTS CONTACTLESS POURING

 FOOD & DRINK

### Engineers at Coke have adapted the companies' touchscreen dispensers to operate via QR codes and an app

**Spotted:** The coronavirus pandemic has upended the way in which companies do businesses and in some surprising ways. For example, people have a newfound suspicion of vending machines, due to the fact that their surfaces are touched by many hands. Coca-Cola has found a way around this.

The system works in Coca-Cola Freestyle machines, which can deliver 200 drink options from a single machine, using a touchscreen. The machines have been on the market since 2009, and use “micro-dosing” technology to allow individual users and restaurants to customise their drinks. Updated machines were introduced in 2018, which allow users to choose their drinks through an app.

The contactless option allows users to hold their camera up to the display to auto-scan a QR code which connects them to a user interface on your phone. The users can then select from the full menu of brands and flavours. One unique aspect of the new system is that it does not require users to download an app first to their phone, as it works via the cloud. A team working remotely developed the code in just one week, building off the machine’s existing software.

According to Michael Connor, chief architect of Coca-Cola Freestyle, “We intentionally designed this so anyone with a smart device could pour a drink. When you have a tray or a sandwich in one hand, you don’t want to deal with downloading an app. We took steps to make the solution super-easy, super-fast and super-reliable.” The team is also developing a contactless optical dispensing solution

for older-style fountain dispensers. These will use sensor-enabled levers to detect the presence of a cup under the nozzle and pour the drink.

It's not often that we see innovations in soda, but this is not the first time we have seen automation used in food or drink delivery. Previous innovations have included a robotic bar that lets users create their own [drink recipes](#) and an autonomous [pizza](#) chain run by robots.

Written By: Lisa Magloff

**Explore more:** [Food & Drink Innovations](#) | [COVID-19 Innovations](#)

30th July 2020

Website: [coca-colafreestyle.com](http://coca-colafreestyle.com)

Contact: [coca-colacompany.com/contact-us](http://coca-colacompany.com/contact-us)

[Download PDF](#)

### **Takeaway:**

On its introduction, the Coca-Cola Freestyle was a major disrupter in the fountain drinks market. Today, there are more than 50,000 Coca-Cola Freestyle units, installed in restaurants, cinemas, amusement parks and other locations, primarily in the US. Together, they pour around 14 million drinks a day. They also make it easier for people to choose low-calorie options because almost any drink can be made low-cal. The connected nature of the dispenser not only offers consumers greater choice, but it also allows Coke to more quickly adapt the machines to changes in consumer demands – such as the need for a contactless option.