

## **Dasani (UK): Brand Under Attack**

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**Abstract:**

This case study examines the Dasani brand crisis facing The Coca-Cola Company (UK) in early 2004. In late February 2004 Judith Snyder, Brand PR Manager for Coca-Cola's newly launched Dasani brand water in the United Kingdom, is facing a potentially disastrous situation. Coca-Cola's UK launch of Dasani, which has already been a great success in the United States, has been met with a barrage of criticism from the local press. This criticism centres on the fact that Dasani water is sourced from municipal supplies. Why, British newspapers such as The Daily Mail asked, should consumers pay up to 95 pence for 500 millilitres of Dasani when the product is based on London drinking water that costs less than 0.03 pence for the same amount? Then, within weeks of the hostile press coverage, the entire UK supply of Dasani is pulled off the shelves because studies by the UK's Drinking Water Inspectorate (DWI) find that Dasani is contaminated with bromate, a cancer-causing chemical. About 500,000 bottles of Dasani, launched just three weeks before, are immediately removed from sale. The case asks: How should Coca-Cola respond to this brand crisis in the UK? Might Coca-Cola be able to relaunch the Dasani brand in the UK or would it be better to return to the market with a fresh product? What if any impact will the UK brand crisis have on the French and German launches planned for the coming month?

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