

Dylan Macy | Spring 2025
USC MA in Public Relations and Advertising: Comp Exam
Thought-Leadership Piece

The following thought leadership piece, written from the perspective of Celsius CEO John Fieldly, will be pitched to Fortune, Fast Company, and Food Dive for placement in their opinion sections.

Companies Shaped the American Health Crisis – It's on Them to Provide Solutions.

America has a health problem, and it is intimately linked to the food and beverages we consume. Poor diets [kill more Americans each year than smoking](#), and are responsible for [surging rates](#) of diabetes, obesity, chronic diseases, and cancers.

However, when it comes time to think about solutions, we often fall into a trap set by food and beverage companies: we place blame entirely on the individual consumer for making “unhealthy lifestyle choices” and disregard the companies that are knowingly making America sicker.

In the same way tobacco companies concealed evidence of the harms caused by smoking, the companies whose products line the aisles of American grocery stores have actively sought to [divert attention away](#) from their highly-processed and sugary ingredients for decades. The beverage industries in particular are notorious for this – integrating their products into daily American life through [highly successful and targeted marketing efforts](#), while obscuring the astronomical amounts of sugar in a single serving. Consumers are often unknowingly consuming dangerous amounts of sugar and are left without affordable alternatives.

A New Food and Beverage Health Paradigm

We need a new paradigm centered around healthy individual lifestyles *and* commitments from food and beverage companies to provide products that genuinely fit these lifestyles. That means products made from real ingredients and more transparency about what is in the food and beverages we are consuming. Everyone deserves to be provided with products that benefit their well-being.

To be clear, these better-for-you products do not need to compromise on flavor or refreshment-induced joy – even the healthiest people still want to enjoy what they are tasting. At Celsius, we remain one of the few energy drinks with clinically proven functional benefits, but we always center bold and enjoyable flavors in the products we develop. We want to help Americans live healthier lives without ever sacrificing flavor for function, and we know that all food and beverage companies are capable of doing the same.

A Desire for Foods and Beverages that Improve Well-Being

Whether companies would like to acknowledge it or not, American consumers are raising their voices in support of this new paradigm, [demanding through their dollars functional products](#) that boost performance while aiding overall wellness and health. At Celsius, we have been fortunate to experience exceptional growth in recent years because of this desire for products focused on health, functionality, and better-for-you ingredients. The lesson we can offer fellow brands is to prioritize the health and well-being of your customers – it's the right thing to do, and it's good business.

Celsius doesn't have all the answers for forging a new health-conscious paradigm, but we listen to our customers, encourage dialogue, and remain committed to meeting the health and changing consumption needs of consumers everywhere. In the process, we have helped to cultivate a movement centered on health, wellness, and the enjoyment of life. It is my genuine hope that companies throughout the food and beverage industry tap into this movement in the coming years and develop better-for-you products so that more Americans have opportunities to live healthy and free lives.