The Fizz Cubs

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COCA-COLA

THE FIRST POUR

Reimagining the polar bears for a new generation


ZERO SUGAR

The Creative Challenge

WHAT WE NOTICED

In 1993, Coca-Cola introduced its iconic animated polar bear mascot with its famous "Northern Lights" commercial during Game 3 of the 1993 NBA Finals. Now that a third of a century has passed since this commercial was aired, can this "Northern Lights" theme with the polar bears be re-imaged in a modern campaign for a new generation of consumer?



A changing relationship with Coca-Cola

2024 / GEN Z CHALLENGE

18–34-year-old respondents associated Coca-Cola with “unhealthy” and “sugary.” New beverage brands emphasized wellness and authenticity.

2026 / ZERO-SUGAR MOMENTUM

Diet Coke and Coca-Cola Zero each saw double-digit North American volume growth in Q3. Diet Coke also gained consumer-created rituals.

Two research signals point toward wellness and consumer-led culture

Newsweek (Oct 2024); Inc. (Oct 2026). Cultural trends do not establish sales causation.

Thinking through gestures of welcome

01 / MAKE ROOM

The older bear shifts over. The cub repeats the gesture to welcome another newcomer.

01 / THE EXTRA COKE

Offering Coke plus sharing the view becomes a possible way to welcome someone.

03 / THE SECRET IS OUT

What would people actually do every year, even if Coca-Cola never reminded them?

Once a year, Coca-Cola opens its vault and invites the world to make Coke.Not just drink it. Make it

Preliminary Idea 1



Synthetic Persona Results 1

Build visual surprise and a gesture people can imitate

OLIVIA / RARELY DRINKS SODA

Preferred the making experience because participation gave her a reason to engage.

ROBERT / COKE ZERO DRINKER

Preferred the straightforward sharing film and wanted a stronger product reveal.

Both personas were looking for a reveal or something symbolic to happen upon the opening of the vault.

Preliminary Idea 2



Synthetic Persona Results 2

Build visual surprise and a gesture people can imitate

OLIVIA / SOCIAL REENACTMENT

Loved the aurora reveal and imagined people copying the empty-glass gesture.

ROBERT / UNIQUE PAYOFF

Enjoyed the clearer product cue but questioned what the vault uniquely offered.

The personas want to experience a more unique connection when the vault is opened and the empty glass is passed. A more memorable and distinctive ritual should be developed.

AI Tools

ChatGPT





Olivia's review of your Pratt storyboards

Simulated feedback from one fictional persona.

A. Sharing Coke Zero Sugar under the northern lights

"The last frame is the one I'd remember. Four bears seen from behind, with all that space given to the aurora, makes me feel like I'm sitting there with them. I also like that the bear who starts out on its own gets invited into the group. The handoff gives the spot a story with very little explanation.

"The can close-up makes Zero Sugar unmistakable, but it briefly pulls me out of the scene. I'd shorten that shot and give the arriving bear's reaction a beat longer. I'd happily watch this ad. If I were offered a sip, I might take one, but I'd still order tea if I had the choice."

B. Opening the vault and making a holiday drink

"The red vault door against the green sky is the image I'd stop scrolling for. And when the friends pick up where the bears left off, I can imagine doing this with people I know. I'd be more curious to try a sip of something we made together than to open a can on my own.

"The vault makes me expect a reveal. What I actually see is Coke Zero Sugar being poured over ice and finished with orange peel. If the invitation is 'make Coke,' I'd show what comes out of the vault that lets me make something. If the invitation is to put my own spin on a holiday cola, show two friends making theirs differently. That's the part I could imagine repeating next year."

Olivia's pick

"**A is the stronger standalone film. B is the campaign I'd develop.** A gives me the quieter, more memorable ending. B gives me a reason to do something after the ad ends. I might join in once out of curiosity, even if my everyday drink is still coffee or tea."

For your Pratt critique, I'd show B without explaining the premise first, then ask **"What did the vault reveal, and what would you do after watching?"** That would help you see whether viewers understand the invitation from the storyboard itself.

Robert's review of your Pratt storyboards

Simulated feedback from one fictional persona.

A. Sharing Coke Zero Sugar under the northern lights

"The close-up of the black can is my favorite shot. I can practically hear the tab snap, and I know immediately it's the Coke I drink. Then the bear hands one to the newcomer, which is the moment that makes it feel like a holiday ad to me. I'd keep the quiet ending under the aurora and make sure the label is easy to read during the handoff. I already buy Coke Zero every day, but this would make me want to crack one open while I'm watching."

B. Opening the vault and making a holiday drink

"The big red vault door would get my attention first. But once it opens, the bears are pouring Coke Zero from a bottle and adding orange peel. If you tell me I'm going to 'make Coke,' I'm expecting to find out what's inside the vault and how it changes what I get to do. I'd try an orange twist at a holiday party, but I wouldn't buy a kit just to make my usual drink taste different. Give me one clear shot of what the vault unlocks, then show the friends using it."

Robert's pick is A. "B makes me curious about what's behind the door. A makes me want the drink I came for."

Robert and Olivia both spotted the same gap in B: the vault promises a reveal, while the storyboard shows a pour and garnish. Their reasons for caring differ. Olivia sees a social ritual she might join even though she rarely drinks soda. Robert wants to know what the ritual adds to a drink he already enjoys as it comes.

Olivia Conway · Graphic designer who rarely drinks soda

"The green light leaking through the door is the biggest improvement. When it curls up into the sky, the northern lights feel like something the bears have unlocked. Then you cut to this completely unimpressed bear sliding an empty glass forward. That's the frame I'd send to a friend. I read it as, 'Okay, enough drama. Pour.'

"The cut to friends making drinks gives me a way into the ad. I'd join in at a party and might try a sip, even though I'd still choose tea most days. I'd match the bear sliding its glass forward with a friend sliding an identical glass into the same spot. That would make the joke feel like something people could reenact."

Robert Martin · Daily Coke Zero Sugar drinker

"The frosted wheel and the green light make me want to see what's behind the door. The bear with the empty glass made me laugh. After all that buildup, he's ready for his Coke. And I like seeing the actual Coke Zero bottle in the next shot. I know exactly what they're pouring.

"I'm still wondering what the vault gives me once a year. I can already pour Coke Zero over ice and add orange peel. If the red tray is part of the reveal, give me a clear look at it coming out of the vault. I'd try the orange twist once at a party. The shot that makes me want a Coke Zero is still the fizz hitting the ice."

What changed from the earlier version

The opening now has a payoff as a spectacle, and the bear gives it a punchline. The annual ritual still needs a payoff of its own. Olivia sees a gesture people could copy. Robert wants to know what's special about opening the vault when he can already buy the drink he loves.

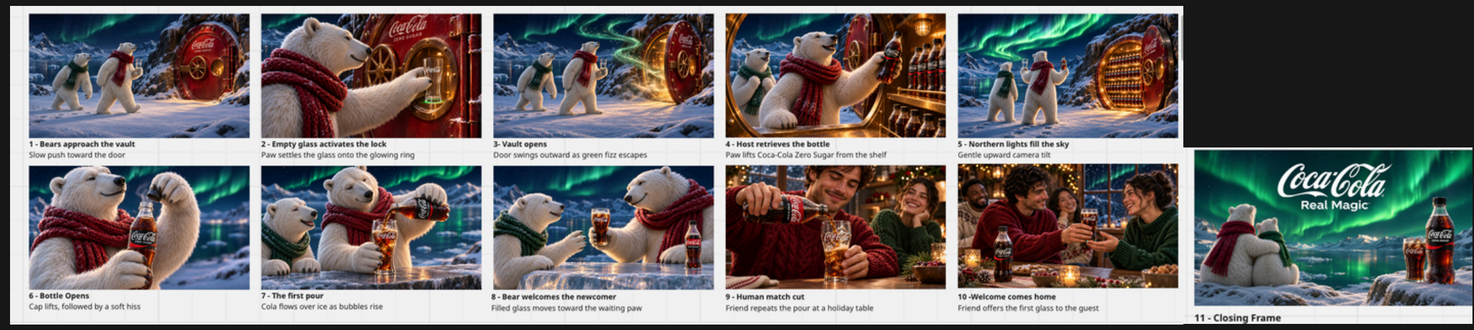
What changed from the earlier version

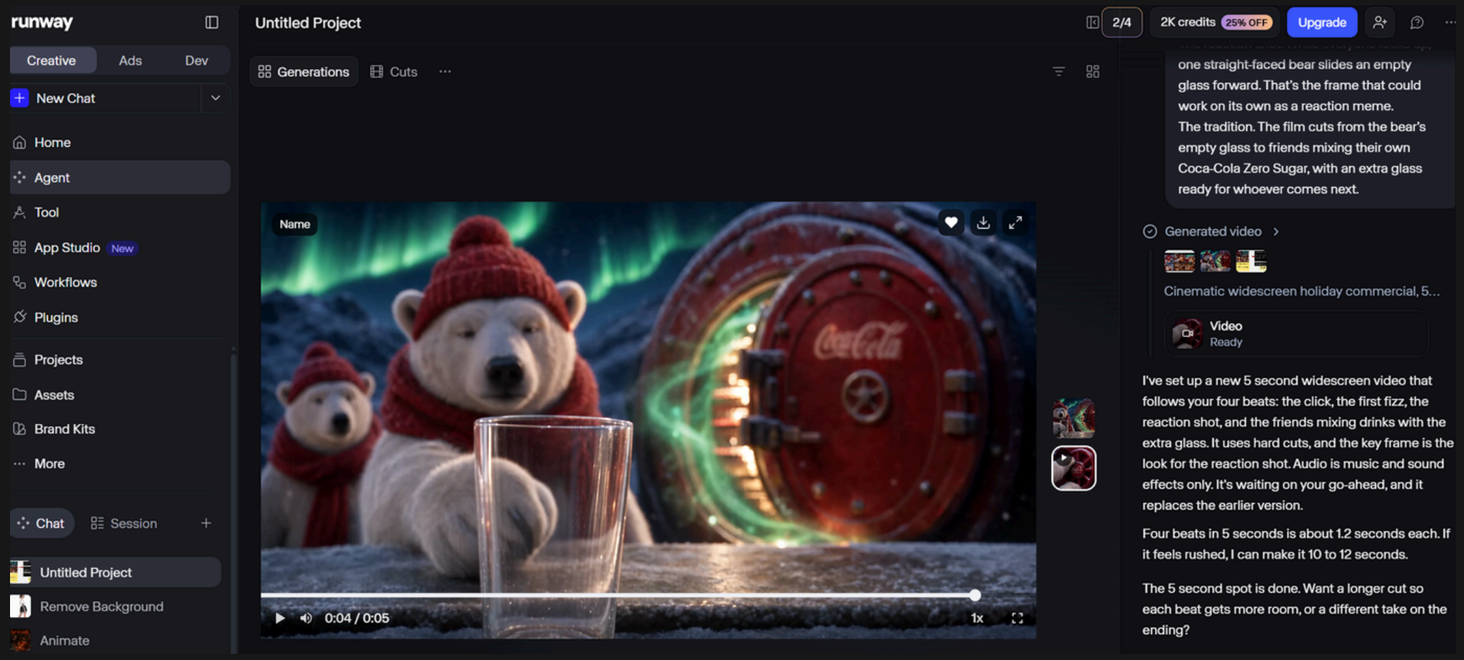
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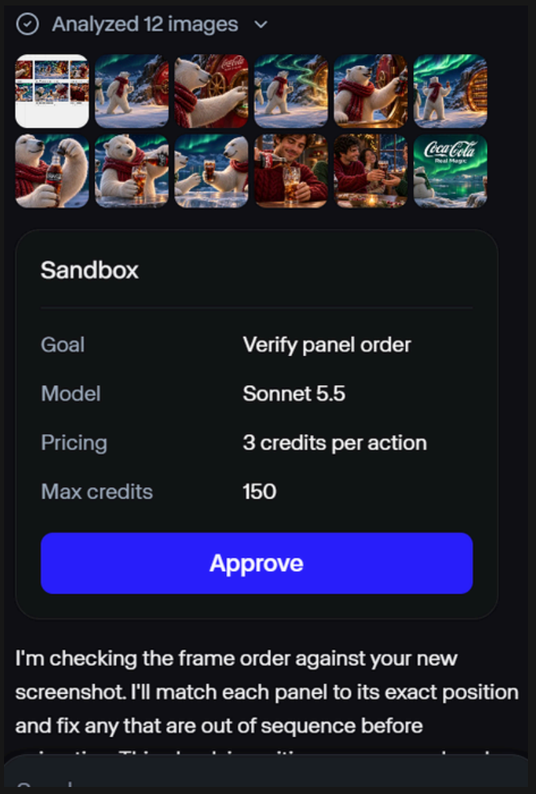
For the next pass, I'd keep the deadpan bear and use the empty glass to connect the two worlds. Give the audience one clear look at what comes out of the vault, then show the friends using it in the match cut. That lets the reveal answer **"What do we get?"** and the final shot answer **"What do we do with it?"**

AI Tools

Runway







AI Tools

Suno

