

A Digest of Corporate Astrology

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After I passed the exams of the Faculty of Astrological Studies with a gold medal back in 1977, I started to feel that I didn't want to be a personal counsellor, sun sign newspaper cheerleader nor anything else touchy feely or ego trippy. After a spell editing Transit in the early eighties, I decided that I would develop the relatively uncharted field of corporate astrology. Between 1982 and 1998 I lived far from England and developed my interest using large quoted American businesses and small local Oriental ones. It steadily became apparent that the overlaps with personal, mundane, horary and financial astrology were going to be very much less than I had hoped. It wasn't going to be simple matter of the company's date of incorporation being its birth. I was going to have to draw on my accounting and general business knowledge to make sense of it all. In this article I summarise the essential elements I have pieced together.

Financial astrology is about stocks, shares and financial markets. A number of good books have appeared on the subject in the wake of Commander Williams' groundbreaking book. Most of them make passing reference to company chart lore but few have been evidence based. Corporate astrology is about companies. Companies are artificially born but organically evolved entities. The date of incorporation may be like a personal birth *if and only if the company trades actively from that date*. Usually it does not, so the date of incorporation is often more akin to conception than to birth. The equivalent of the first breathy cry of a baby is the first day of being open for business. This is rarely apparent from public records. Rectification is therefore a normal requirement for adequately useful business astrology.

Many household name businesses such as IBM, Microsoft, Coca Cola and MacDonald's have histories or biographies written about them. From these it is often possible to identify the key early turning points and to erect a radix from the earliest of them. As with mundane astrology's choice of foundation charts for countries, so with corporate astrology, the test of a chart is its ability to show sensitivity to later key events.

One requires, for example, the following crises to be clearly associated with progressed and transiting hits on the radix: - changes of charismatic chief executives at the helm, investor crises of confidence, market breakthroughs and disasters, mergers and major acquisitions, bankruptcy and rescue, the fortunes of the key products and services sold by the company, major industrial action, government or legal restriction, very good and very bad years for the bottom line, and of course bankruptcy.

The mission statement of a company is what it wants the world to believe it stands for. Whether this points to the Ascendant or to the Midheaven depends on whether the mission statement is about the company's present activities or, more usually, about its aspirations. Just occasionally it will be about its roots (IC) or its interactive "role" in the wider world (Descendant). The placement in the ecliptic of the mission statement angle is apt to be the position of the Sun on the date the mission statement was

adopted by the company, usually at an AGM. This can give rise to dissonance between the sentiments of the mission statement and the astrological energies projecting it into the world. For example, a major software provider for web writers whose mission is to be the market leader for web design would be helped in achieving that objective if its AGM to reaffirm took place while the Sun was in electronic Aquarius or pernickety-design-oriented Virgo but hindered in stubborn Taurus or spread-too-thinly Sagittarius.

Today's giants tended to incorporate after the business was got going and represented a firm commitment by the owner founder to establish the business permanently. Coca Cola, for example, is a drinks giant and we would expect it to have strength in cardinal water and we expect a product whose formula has been a well-kept secret ever since its foundation to show a strong Scorpio influence.

Before examining the Coca Cola chart and how it reflects key turning points in its history, a brief glossary of corporate astrology keywords may be helpful for most readers.

Houses

- 1 Corporate identity, how it sees itself, how it projects into the world
- 2 Production and resource capacity, solvency and reservoir of competencies
- 3 Advertising, ability to spin messages, economic resonance
- 4 Roots in the community, influence of the founder's vision, weight of history
- 5 Economic fertility, ability to grow and diversify, predisposition to accept risks
- 6 Working conditions, employees and unions, cohesiveness and goal congruence
- 7 Marketing, market feedback, business battlefields, ability to control image
- 8 Investors, stock market ups and downs, creditworthiness, stewardship ability
- 9 Ethics, philosophy, trustworthiness, reputation offshore
- 10 Chief executive, strategic focus, ability to implement vision
- 11 Board strength, standing in league tables, accountability and transparency
- 12 Patents, copyrights, executive secretaries, firewalls, security issues generally

Planets

- Sun Essence of the company's character, what it does and how it does it
- Moon Much more important than in a personal chart – all stakeholders including regular customers
- Mercury All carriers of messages but also speed, efficiency and intelligence
- Venus Ability to relate to customers, allies, agents and rivals
- Mars Ability to conduct competitive activity in the marketplace
- Jupiter Rainmaking, ability to generate income, relationship control
- Saturn Ability to control costs, relations with regulators, taxmen and inspectors
- Uranus Role of IT and the Web, relations with unions and hostile pressure groups
- Neptune Ability of Board to distinguish fact from opinion, dream weaving, entropy
- Pluto Brittleness, sensitivity to signals in the environment, crisis management.

Signs

- Aries Metallics, Individual sports, cars, rail, entrepreneurship, England, Germany
- Taurus Food, farming, music, adhesives, realism, bank deposits, stability, Ireland
- Gemini Media, visual arts, communications, children, field research, the USA
- Cancer Property, propellants, hydraulics, maternity, memorabilia, diet, Scotland

Leo Entertainment, royalism, tycoons, gold, electricity, heating, France
 Virgo Lab research, instrumentation, accounting, radio, service industries, Japan
 Libra Law, partners, fair trade, China
 Scorpio Finance, sex, medicine, chemicals, mining, oil, gas, Middle East
 Sagittarius Travel, consultancy, luck, green issues, gambling, Australia
 Capricorn Offices, strategy, building, downsizing, GM, refrigeration, India
 Aquarius Electronics, software, plumbing, proletariat, inventions, Russia
 Pisces Drink, the Internet, escapism, libraries, hospitals, Latin countries

A company may do only one thing. A large corporate conglomerate, however, does many things, and each product has its own astrology that may be in harmony or in conflict with the corporate chart. On any corporate chart, a reasonable relationship between the sun and moon is associated with success. Unlike in a personal chart, squares between the two are not character building, just erosive. *No relationship at all is better than one of friction.*

Applying the above to two household names, Levis and Coca Cola, we will soon see if the fit is natural or contrived. What might we expect of their charts?

The key chart for Levi's jeans, the day the patent was granted, would be expected to show ruggedness, fortitude, perhaps an association with the outdoors, with youth or with work. As jeans came to become the uniform for teenagers we would expect progressions of the major radix planets to show a youth or rebel characteristic.

Coca Cola is probably the best known branded drink in the world, so its key charts should show water dominance. The original drink had real coca leaf extract in it and was sold as a medicinal tonic, but its formula remains secret to this day. We therefore will be sceptical of any chart for Coca Cola not showing a Scorpio focus with reinforcement from Pisces or Cancer. We also need to see from the chart the marketing flair and the global economic empire of this Atlanta enterprise, so Leo/Aquarius and Sun/Neptune should be making a relevant contribution.

On 20th May 1873, Levi Straus and his partner, Jacob Davis, received a patent for the riveted denim overalls that eventually became known as jeans. Their innovation was metal rivets across the seams to make for longer lasting wear. The chart for this patent has Sun on the cusp of Gemini right at the end of Taurus trine Saturn in Aquarius which itself is opposed by Uranus in Leo and squared in a Grand Fixed Cross both by Mars on the cusp of Libra/Scorpio and Venus conjunct Mercury in Taurus and by Neptune in late Aries. Moon in Pisces quintiles the Sun, and Jupiter in Leo squares Pluto in Taurus. All in all an awful lot of squares but with a strong Sun Saturn trine in air and a fixed cross polarised both by Mars to Venus and by Saturn to Uranus, we have a very strong framework showing strength and fortitude and plenty of potential for action. Strength is shown also by the stellium in Taurus. The Sun just into Gemini is a youth indicator, the Mars Venus opposition a sexual power one and a Saturn Uranus opposition is of course going to involve power and rebellion. When Pluto by transit crossed the chart's Uranus in Leo, the first baby boomers were born and for them jeans would be the global uniform first of teenage rebellion, later of the global idealism of Saturn in Aquarius triggered by transiting Uranus. The weak link in an otherwise strong chart is the Sun Mars quincunx from Taurus/Gemini to Libra/Scorpio indicating possible sickness in the male expression of energy. This is accentuated by the crucial role of the Mars in the Grand Fixed Cross and suggests

jeans do not fit well with giving orders or exercising authority or with military ventures. As transit Neptune crossed the radix Mars we saw the birth of rock n roll. When Uranus Neptune Pluto crossed the Mars point Vietnam had changed the relationship of war to the US Male maybe irreversibly. This all adds up to confirmation of the meaningfulness of of the 1873 chart as the radix for Levis jeans.

Coca Cola was patented on 28th June 1887 near midday in Atlanta, Georgia. Instead of the expected statements in Scorpio or Pisces we have instead Sun and Saturn in Cancer in Tenth, Sun squaring Uranus conjunct Moon in Libra in First, Saturn squaring Jupiter in Libra still in First. Venus in Leo in Eleventh sextiles Jupiter and also sextiles Mars in Gemini in Ninth. Finally Neptune in late Taurus applies to Pluto in early Gemini, both in Eighth trined by Mercury in Leo in Tenth. This is not as expected. It is not unreasonable for a world beating drink to be strong in Cardinal Water, or for the source of marketing strength and achievement to show well aspected mars in Gemini in Ninth, but can we also find the success with keeping secrets somewhere? The Moon Uranus conjunction in Libra is disposed by Venus in Leo itself disposed by Sun in Cancer (and so back to the Moon). So, the law (Libra) is used with effective authority (Leo) to guard secrets (Cancer). This is perhaps stretching things a little. The Taurus Neptune would be useful if something in Scorpio or Aquarius were there to trigger it into secret guarding activity. Perhaps the square from Venus in Leo acts that way. More likely however, is that our initial expectation of an emphasis on Scorpio because Coke has kept its formula secret over the last century is misplaced. Perhaps that is only a minor factor in the drink's success. The family friendly sextiles all over the chart and the motherly Sun and Saturn in Cancer challenged but strengthened by the square from Uranus Moon in Libra may capture better the essence of the product. It is after all, a SOFT drink.

The patent for the distinctive Coca Cola bottle was taken out on 16 November 1916. This gives a Scorpio Sun in exact trine to the previous chart's Saturn in Cancer and a Grand Water Trine between Sun, Saturn and Jupiter. The bottle patent chart, indeed, fits our initial expectations better than the drinks patent chart. Mercury in Scorpio is trined by Pluto in Cancer, excellent for secrets.

Progressing both charts to 1985 when public and market opinion forced Coke to reintroduce classic Coke after dropping the original formula, we would expect a strong indicator if either chart is adequately valid for the firm or the principal product. When Coke dropped its classic formula, Pepsi-Cola's sales increased significantly. Even after classic Coke was reintroduced in 1985, Pepsi held on to some of its recent inroads into Coca Cola's market share. The transits and progressions to 1985 for the 1887 and 1916 Coke charts should show clear indicators of this marketing disaster. Do they in fact do so?

The 1887 chart has a Cardinal T Square levered on the Moon Uranus conjunction around 9 Libra, and discharging near to Juno's position in Aries. In 1983, progressed Sun crossed radix Uranus, probably near the time Coca Cola first discussed at its divisional meetings the possibility that the classic formula drink should be discontinued. The chart ruler, the Moon, progresses from the discharge point of the T Square in 1983 to the very well aspected Neptune in 1986 when the restoration of classic Coke was clearly going to be successful. Transit Saturn at 22 Scorpio conjoined the 1916 radix Sun in late 1985 when the reintroduction of Classic Coke

was first implemented. There are several other progressed and transit indicators but space is limited and the most convincing signals are those already described. As a general rule in corporate astrology a conjunction is worth far more than any other aspect, including the opposition, and aspects weaker than sextiles have no discernible effect. Moreover, only conjunctions reliably indicate actual events as opposed to changes of culture, ambience, image and other nebulous manifestations.

Hopefully, this article shows that corporate astrology has something to say worth listening to and that corporate charts can be as useful to the corporate analyst as natal charts are to the personal astrologer. I cannot refer the reader to any individual book, as there are none yet focused on this particular bit of financial astrology. Before Neptune finally exits Aquarius I will write one, but until then the occasional article and talk may whet a few astrological appetites.

Illustrations

1 Insert Coca Cola Chart for 28/6/1887 at noon at Atlanta (with pr and tr for 28/6/1985 outside)

2 Insert Coca Cola bottling chart for 16/11/1915 for noon at Indianapolis (with pr and tr as above)

3 Insert Levis jeans chart for 20/5/1873 for 10 am at San Francisco with no pr and tr (as the period is too long for those.)

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