



Message from Brian

SEPTEMBER 10, 2024

Back to Starbucks

An open letter for all partners, customers and stakeholders

As I step into my first week as CEO, I do so not only as a leader, but as a long-time customer. Over the past few weeks, I've spent time in our stores, speaking with partners and customers, and talking with teams across operations, store design, marketing and product development.

In each conversation, two truths emerged: First, Starbucks is a beloved brand with wonderful people. We are woven into the fabric of people's lives and the communities we serve. Second, there's a shared sense that we have drifted from our core. We have an opportunity to make the store experience better for our partners and, in turn, for our customers.

Starbucks was founded on a love for high quality coffee — handcrafted by our outstanding green apron partners and enjoyed with intention. Coffee is our heart. We own and operate Hacienda Alsacia, our coffee farm on the slopes of Costa Rica's Volcano Poás, which serves as the heart of our research and innovation efforts. From our network of Farmer Support Centers, Starbucks agronomists share research, education and best practices with local farmers. We invest in the finest quality beans. Our skilled team of roasters carefully prepare these beans in five Starbucks roasting facilities across the U.S., in Amsterdam to serve EMEA markets, in Kunshan for China, and in Karnataka, India, for that growing market. We also operate Starbucks Reserve Roasteries in Milan, Shanghai, Tokyo, New York City, Chicago and Seattle, where we roast small batch Reserve coffees. We design the best equipment for our stores and invest in training for our baristas to ensure every cup reflects our commitment to excellence. Each cup is more than a drink; it's a handcrafted moment, made with care.

Our stores have always been more than a place to get a drink. They've been a gathering space, a community center where conversations are sparked, friendships form, and everyone is greeted by a welcoming barista. A visit to Starbucks is about connection and joy, and of course great coffee.

Many of our customers still experience this magic every day, but in some places — especially in the U.S. — we aren't always delivering. It can feel transactional, menus can feel overwhelming, product is inconsistent, the wait too long or the handoff too hectic. These moments are opportunities for us to do better.

Today, I'm making a commitment: We're getting back to Starbucks. We're refocusing on what has always set Starbucks apart — a welcoming coffeehouse where people gather, and where we serve the finest coffee, handcrafted by our skilled baristas. This is our enduring identity. We will innovate from here.

We'll focus initially on four key areas that we know will have the biggest impact:

1. **Empowering our baristas to take care of our customers:** We'll make sure our baristas have the tools and time to craft great drinks every time, delivered personally to each customer. For our partners, we'll build on our tradition of leadership in retail by making Starbucks the best place to work, with career opportunities and a clear path to growth.
2. **Get the morning right, every morning:** People start their day with us, and we need to meet their expectations. This means delivering outstanding drinks and food, on time, every time.
3. **Reestablishing Starbucks as the community coffeehouse:** We're committed to elevating the in-store experience — ensuring our spaces reflect the sights, smells and sounds that define Starbucks. Our stores will be inviting places to linger, with comfortable seating, thoughtful design and a clear distinction between “to-go” and “for-here” service.
4. **Telling our story:** It's time for us to tell our story again — reminding people of our unmatched coffee expertise, our role in communities and the special experience that only Starbucks can provide. We won't let others define who we are.

To support this vision for our U.S. business, we're making investments in technology that enhance the partner and customer experience, improve our supply chain and evolve our app and mobile ordering platform.

This is our plan for the U.S., and where I need to focus my time initially. But Starbucks is a global company. We operate in 87 markets around the world, where thousands of talented green apron partners share their love of coffee with customers every day. I know I have much to learn from these outstanding teams and I look forward to getting on the road and spending time with them. In China, we need to understand the potential path to capture growth and capitalize on our strengths in this dynamic market. Internationally, we see enormous potential for growth, especially in regions like the Middle East, where we'll work to dispel misconceptions about our brand, and in Asia Pacific, Europe and Latin America, where the love for Starbucks is strong.

My focus for the first 100 days is clear. I'll spend time in our stores and at our Support Centers, meeting with key partners and suppliers, and working with our team to drive these critical first steps. Together, we will get back to what makes Starbucks, Starbucks.

On we go,
Brian

Brian Niccol
chairman & ceo