

STICKY TICKERS

How To Tell Which Coca-Cola Is the “Real Thing”

One of the most frequent problems SMG Coordinators encounter in The Stock Market Game is how to train teachers and students how to locate the official Ticker Symbols for the companies whose stocks they wish to purchase in the game. These are the 1-5 letter symbols used by the industry to identify companies being traded on the three major exchanges, as well as mutual funds, options, preferred stocks, etc. In the SMG, however, only securities on the three major exchanges—NYSE, AMEX, and NASDAQ—can be traded, so it is important to develop an easy way for the students to locate the appropriate tickers.

There are a variety of places to look up the ticker symbols, including Investor Research on the SMGWW site and the “Ticker Lookup” feature on the Enter a Trade page of the portfolios. A problem with most methods is that many parent companies have multiple listings, from which students have trouble deciding which symbol is the popular stock.

One very effective way to find the correct ticker symbols is to use the NASDAQ site (accessible from the “Outside Links” icon on the opening portfolio page, Investor Research ticker lookup, or go directly to <http://www.nasdaq.com>). Walk through the following exercise with your students to discover how to tell which Coca-Cola is the real thing:

Press “Symbol Search” just below the grid entitled “Get Up To 10 Quotes.” A small Symbol Lookup window will appear. Type “Coca-Cola” in the box provided, then press “Go.” The next screen shows 11 symbols for the various Coca-Cola companies, but notice that only four of them are traded on the NYSE. Have the students write down the four possible tickers—KO, CCE, KOF, and CCH. Close the small window and return to the main page.

Enter the four tickers in different boxes on the “Get Up to 10 Quotes” grid then press “Flash Quotes.” The next screen lists current price quotes for these four stocks, along with the change in price (in both dollar amounts and as percents) since the previous day’s closing prices. The last column lists the “Share Volume.” From the volumes listed for each stock, it should now be evident which is the most popular stock, or which Coca-Cola is the real thing.

There are some cases where the differences in trading volumes are smaller, making the choice less obvious, so the students may need to perform further research on each of the stocks. Notice on the NASDAQ listing that each ticker symbol is underlined, meaning that it is linked to more information. The students can click on the ticker symbols and learn more about each stock to determine the correct symbol.

HOT TIP: Hoover’s Online is a good site for locating a parent company when only the brand name is known. Using the “Outside Links” icon (or <http://www.hoovers.com>), perform a search “By Company Name” and type Frito-Lay in the box provided, press “Go,” then “View Free Search Results,” then a screen will appear with the search results. If you do not see a ticker symbol by the name of the company, just below it will be “Related Company Names” with the name and ticker of the parent company, in this case, PepsiCo, Inc., with the exchange and ticker, NYSE: PEP.