

Plans for the Future: Fast Company is looking for ways to integrate FC Now content more fully into the rest of the magazine Web site, beginning by pulling FC Now posts onto topic-related pages of the magazine Web site and by automatically generating topic newsletters from blog posts. As Fast Company expands its Readers' Network — an on- and offline social network of readers — it plans to offer a blog to every member (there are currently 10,000) and then help members with related interests meet and exchange ideas.

Business Advice: Heath Row: “Be part of the broader community. Don’t approach a business blog as a stand-alone blog. Figure out how the Web and the blog world works before you get started. Wade in the water for a while before launching.”

Members sign in | Not a member? Sign up

font size: ▾

FAST COMPANY How Smart People Work

SUBSCRIBE > current issue customer service

home magazine archives guides **blog** book club readers' network fast 50 fast companies events

FC NOW THE FAST COMPANY WEBLOG

The opinions of individual Fast Company Now contributors don't necessarily reflect the editorial position of FAST COMPANY magazine as a whole.

December 02, 2004

Juan More Time

Remember Juan Valdez, the donkey-toting cafetero (that's coffee farmer to the uninitiated) and official representative of the Columbian Coffee Federation? Well, the famed fictitious character, created in 1959, has finally returned. For the 21st Century, the brand has evolved into sleek, modern coffee bars, complete with Latin American coffee menus and Spanish-speaking baristas. The first outlet opened recently on East 57th Street in Manhattan, and it is a refreshing antidote to the *Starbucks* takeover of cafe life. Not only is it a cultural experience just to read the menu, but the space itself, filled with Wi-Fi users, curved blond wood, stainless steel and a green/orange/blue color scheme, is equally transformative in its simplicity and warmth. Can it be long before "nevado arequipea" rolls off the tongue as easily as caramel frappuccino?

Juan Valdez literally gives its Seattle-based counterpart a run for the money. My macchiato arequipa, a blissful concoction of espresso combined with a touch of caramel-flavored milk, set me back a mere \$1.75. Better yet, I ordered a "medium" ? nothing venti about it. But the real draw is that the new retail outlet represents yet another step forward for Columbian coffee farmers. Because the CCF is fully owned and operated by the *farmer collectives*, all of the profits from the shop go directly to the 300,000 farmers, not the middlemen retailers that Columbian coffee is typically channeled through.

Posted by Lynn Moloney at 05:59 PM | Category: social

Click Here.

Seeing small business differently.

HOOPER'S