
Why should I choose you?

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Before anyone buys anything, they ask themselves two questions:

- 1 Is this the product (or service) I want?**
- 2 If so, is this the place to buy it from?**

Both questions are important, but nearly everyone in sport thinks only about the answer to the first one. They spend time, money and effort making their product better. They focus on the facilities and the quality of the equipment, and on making sure everything runs to plan.

I'm not suggesting you shouldn't pay attention to this. But don't make it your primary focus at the expense of building your brand and doing great marketing.

Why not? Because everyone else is doing the same thing.

They are all making their products just a little better, tweaking things to get them just right. They would get better results if they focused on finding a great answer to the second question, and so would you. You need a great answer to the question: "Why should I choose you?"

Think about McDonald's.

I use McDonald's as an example because everyone knows the brand. No one goes to McDonald's for a five-star meal. We know exactly what the food will be like before we go in, and because they are so consistent, we are never surprised.

Be honest: would slightly improving the quality of the food at McDonald's lead to a significant increase in sales? I doubt it. The food is not the main reason we go.

We go because our kids want a Happy Meal, or because we want a rest while they play, or because we want a quick and easy McCafé coffee, or sometimes because we just want a quick feed and don't care too much what it tastes like.

We know we will always get the same thing, it will cost the same, and it will be served in an environment we know and trust. McDonald's has answered the second question by creating an experience, and marketing itself accordingly.

So don't just focus on providing a product. Make sure your potential customers see your organisation as the place to buy that product from.

You need a branding and marketing system.

The more closely you look at high-performing teams or players in any sport, the clearer it becomes that they have a system: a set of structured routines they follow to get a better result. It covers positions on the field of play, the way team members work together, and the way practice sessions are structured.

Look closely enough and you'll find systems just about everywhere in sport, business and life. They may not be obvious, but they are there.

They are most obvious in the highest-performing teams. If you walked into an Olympic training centre tomorrow, would you expect to see people moping around, wondering what to do next? No. There will be a system for everything, with plans and training routines on wall charts, meetings and sessions starting on time, and everyone very clear about what is going on.

And so it is with branding and marketing for you and your sport. Whether you know it or not, you already have a brand and a marketing system. Chances are it isn't as good as it could be, and it may even need a total overhaul.

But there are solutions: simple, logical solutions that people in business all over the world use every day to stand out from the pack and succeed.

Effective branding and marketing is about having a structured plan and executing it well.

You should certainly have a budget for branding and marketing, but it's the execution of a good plan that makes the difference. Not only having a plan, but executing it: taking action.

NED COTEN

**Don't seek to be a person of
Importance.
Seek to be a person of Value.**

Email

ned@nedcoten.com

Website

nedcoten.com

LinkedIn

linkedin.com/in/nedcoten

Ned Coten AM is an investor, board chair, and passionate volunteer in basketball & other sports. He has over 30 years of experience at every level of business, sport & technology within Australia and globally, based in Melbourne, Australia.

nedcoten.com