

How to be the Tiger Woods of your Market

By David Brewster

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When you're a hack golfer like I am, it is easy to appreciate the awesome talent of a champion like Tiger Woods. Tiger has skill, flair and a feel for the game which most of us can only dream of. He has something else too: something which equally separates champion golfers from 'also-rans' and well run businesses from their competition.

Now, having admitted I'm a hack golfer it wouldn't be right if I didn't mention in passing the time I chipped one in from 20 yards. Or the other time I was only 6 inches from a hole-in-one. Or the... Sorry. I digress.

Yes. I've done all these things. Once. Tiger's done them too but he does them all the time - even when he is playing for real money, under intense pressure. He does so because he's got the 'something' I haven't: CONSISTENCY.

Consistency is simply fundamental to good golf. Professional golfers dedicate enormous amounts of time and effort to building a consistent swing because their livelihood depends on it. A consistent swing leads to consistently landing the ball on target. Doing that more often than their competitors leads to a good income.

It's exactly the same in business. Your target is a consistently happy customer. Your 'swing' is made up of the various activities which work together to deliver your service or product. If your swing isn't consistent, your shot will, from time to time, miss the mark. Your customers will be disappointed and may not return, which leads to a poor income.

Achieving consistency in your business requires the same commitment, clarity of purpose, focus and practice that characterise champion golfers.

Consistency comes from coordination. All the parts of your business need to work independently but together – just as Tiger Wood's head, arms, hips and legs do.

Consistency comes with a measured approach. Tiger operates his swing at about 70% of full power because he values consistency over power. (One of the joys of weekend golf is being beaten by someone twice your age and with only half a swing; someone whose ball doesn't go far but goes dead straight every time.)

Consistency comes from routines and systems – even for the easy parts. Watch a few professional golfers hit a round and you'll notice each has a unique, routine approach to addressing the ball.

Making the preparatory steps routine increases the chance of the swing being 'routine' too.

And consistency comes from doing what you're good at. Tiger Woods knew from the age of four that he was good at golf. I'm sure he has other interests, but his time and energy is focused, even today, on further perfecting his golf swing – and its consistency – all the time.

Consistency is a classic win-win. It will make your customers happy and it will drastically simplify your business. It's got to be better than the pain I go through on the golf course.

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