

## How Global Brand Leader Steve Lesnard Tackled the Competitive Consumer Landscape



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Interview conducted by:  
Lynn Fosse, Senior Editor  
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**CEOCFO: What is your overall approach to Brand Marketing?**

**Steve Lesnard:** For me, brand marketing is about a holistic approach to

building a lasting brand in the consumer landscape.

It is anchored into a key product or service proposition that will add meaningful value to consumers' lives.

In my experience, Brand Marketing also has to be consumer centric, obsessing about your consumer target needs, and trying to exceed their expectations.

I feel that the most powerful brands look to build the best combination of a clear brand message and purpose with a sharp and [distinctive product](#) and/or service proposition that is tailored to their consumers.

**CEOCFO: How do you stay ahead of trends, technology and economic factors?**

**Steve Lesnard:** When you are in an organization that is truly consumer centric, it creates a culture which strives to exceed consumers' expectations, always innovating to deliver new and better solutions for a better consumer experience. Also, constant listening and learning from consumer feedback while being ready to react appropriately is paramount to staying relevant.

The technology today, and the data that consumers share with brands, provides incredible insight into consumer desires and needs, and the challenge for most organizations is to capitalize on this information in a timely manner within their organizational structures.

**CEOCFO: What attracted you to world of marketing; particularly sports?**

**Steve Lesnard:** Inspiring and connecting with people has always been something I was drawn to and sports is an incredible platform. It's truly is an international language to engage positively with consumers around the world.

I am a firm believer in the power of sports and how it can improve the lives of people and our society.

**CEOCFO: What did you learn working for one of the largest athletic brands in the world?**

**Steve Lesnard:** Working with likeminded people with a shared passion and competitive spirit to always do better has enable me to be part of amazing product and brand launches around the world.

Working with elite athletes has also taught me about the value of teamwork, preparation, resilience and not being afraid of thinking big and taking risk to reach your full potential.

**CEOCFO: Do you start trying to establish an iconic brand or does that develop as you grow and expand?**

**Steve Lesnard:** This is THE million dollar question.

From my perspective, iconic brands are built over time and the iconic status is inherited by repeated consumer trust. All the iconic brands that I can think of always have a clear and innovative product or service point of view, a clear brand strategy and identity, and they sustain the test of time by staying true to their values to deliver on their consumers' expectations.

**CEOCFO: Would you explain influencer marketing and why it's a part of your marketing approach?**

**Steve Lesnard:** [Influencer marketing](#) has become a really powerful tool in an overall marketing strategy.

If the concept is not new, the digital and social landscape has given it a new meaning and scale that can also create some confusion and mixed results, if not leveraged appropriately.

I personally believe that the essence of influencer marketing is establishing an authentic connection between a brand's product or service with an existing or potential super user...

A super user will be one of your most loyal consumers, who will not only help you think about how to best use or [leverage your product](#), but also recommend it genuinely to their "friends."

In today's social media age, establishing authentic connections with influencers, at a global or micro scale, can be really powerful to help present your brand or product to new consumers.

**"When you are in an organization that is truly consumer centric, it creates a culture which strives to exceed consumers' expectations, always innovating to deliver new and better solutions for a better consumer experience."- Steve Lesnard**

**CEOCFO: What do you understand about the role of big data that perhaps less experienced marketing leaders do not?**

**Steve Lesnard:** My take on big data is simply gathering better consumer feedback.

Technology is enabling us to obtain more personal data from consumers' journeys than ever before, unlocking for whoever is will to listen, extremely valuable insights to shape your overall strategy.

The stages that companies can access and analyze data may vary quite a bit, and sometimes it creates confusion in the role that data should play in the decision making process.

When data is placed into an overall consumer centric approach, as sometime data alone cannot offer the complete picture, it proves to be an indispensable asset.

**CEOCFO: How do you lead, especially when working with global teams?**

**Steve Lesnard:** In my experience, it's necessary to set a clear strategy with a sharp brand mission, a defined consumer target, and a developed brand and product strategy. These are some of the key responsibilities of an effective global brand team.

It's also crucial to establish the right framework and processes to start a two way conversation within your geography and countries to create the most relevant consumer connection and ensure that all their needs are met.

**CEOCFO: What is next for you?**

**Steve Lesnard:** Right now, I really enjoy working on [different projects](#), helping teams and organizations find or bring their next big ideas to life. It gives me an opportunity to explore the white spaces, working on very different projects that inspire and teach a tone.