

Chapter 3.5

Winning story

Brazilian Swimming Federation

**Coaracy Nunes Filho – President
Brazilian Swimming Federation**

“We work hard to maintain good relationships”

The Brazilian Swimming Federation (CBDA) is the national governing body for the following five Olympic sports – Swimming, Water Polo, Synchronised Swimming, Diving and Open Water Swimming. Originally founded in 1955 as the Brazilian Swimming Confederation, the CBDA is among the three most successful NGBs in Brazil in terms of technical results and sponsor support.



What activities have you undertaken over the years to create and manage your federation's brand?

Our federation's brand is the result of our experience and continuous improvement. My previous leadership experiences – as President of the Aquatics Federation of the State of Rio de Janeiro, President of the South American Swimming Confederation and President of the Latin Swimming Confederation – have provided practical knowledge and insight as to how to lead and manage our brand image in Brazil.

I have also continued to enhance my understanding of sports marketing by taking high-level courses at the Getúlio Vargas Foundation, which have helped me manage and attract greater financial resources for various CBDA projects.

How have you been able to use the values of your federation within your branding initiatives?

Because we want to increase awareness of and participation in aquatics sports across Brazil, our main strategy has been to decentralise activities and events. When I became President of CBDA in 1988, most Swimming activities and events were limited to Rio and São Paulo. Today we have opened up the market to make Swimming more accessible to all Brazilians. As a result, there are currently more than 2,000 clubs all over the country. We have recently implemented a similar strategy for Water Polo and Synchronised Swimming, and we hope to see similar results in the near future.

We also value cooperation and teamwork. As such, we work hard to maintain good relationships with our 27 federations. As evidence that relationship-building is an effective strategy that builds unity, I have been fortunate enough to be re-elected to my leadership post over the past 20 years. We want to promote teamwork and cooperation, and the way we operate internally reflects that vision.

What techniques and activities has your federation found useful to promote your brand?

Our sponsorship agreements are very useful in promoting our brand. CBDA has four primary sponsors. Our official sponsor is CORREIOS, the national mail service. In addition, we have agreements with Bradesco Bank, Gol Airline, and most recently, Speedo.

These sponsorship agreements provide financial resources that allow Brazilian aquatics athletes to participate in over 50 international events throughout the year. Our presence in these events is very helpful in promoting our brand and

increasing the international experience of our athletes. It is very important that sports managers have a solid understanding of sports marketing in addition to technical knowledge and experience in the sport itself.

What advantages/positive outcomes has your federation seen since implementing its branding initiatives?

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Before the 1990s, it was quite challenging to attract and retain good sponsorship agreements. However, as a result of broadening the reach of Swimming across the country over the past 20 years, Brazilian swimmers have achieved greater levels of success in international competition. By winning more medals at the Olympic Games and Pan American Games, Brazilian swimmers have helped swimming become an extremely popular sport in Brazil. As a result, we now have great sponsors and we look forward to continuing these achievements in the years to come.

Developing an effective media relationship can be a challenge. How did you manage to develop and sustain your media strategy?

We are very fortunate to have an excellent relationship with the press. The key to the relationship has been truth and transparency. The CBDA does not give special privileges to members of the press, and we publish our financial balances and have them audited by independent companies. This has generated mutual trust and respect between CBDA and the press and the relationship continues to grow even stronger over time.