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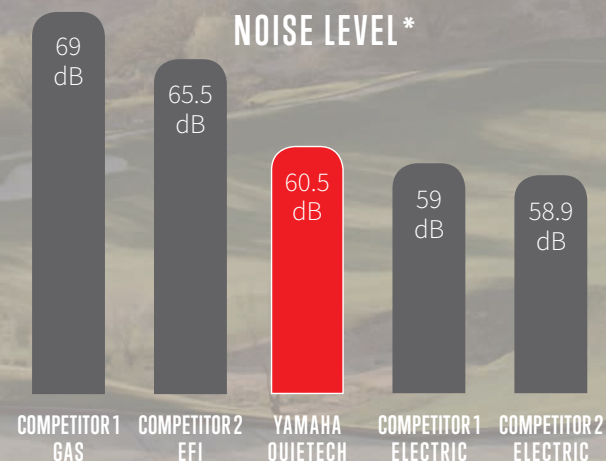
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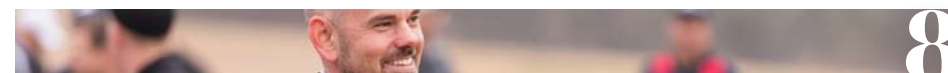
Buying Into the Game
The golf industry has made strides in attracting women to the game, making them significant players in the revenue stream. So, how are golf courses working to capture those dollars?

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From the CEO Vantage Point

By Jay Karen
CEO
NGCOA

Reclaim the Game

Every town in America has dead retail space. You know what I'm talking about. The place that used to be a Walgreens. It's been sitting empty for months – or years – with the “For Sale or Lease” sign in overgrown landscaping in the parking lot. Every time I see these vacant spaces, I think of golf. I think of the burgeoning “golf entertainment” business. I think of places like Beyond Golf Bar + Kitchen in La Vista, Nebraska. Or Venue on Main in Columbia, South Carolina. Places where the general public comes to play, eat and drink, or where the serious golfer can practice or play some amazing virtual golf on high-end simulators. Beyond Golf, by the way, has been doing this 10 years!

And then I think about owners and operators of the legacy businesses – the “real” golf courses. I think about how they perpetually look for top line growth in a relatively flat-demand environment. They do this through “revenue management” and marginal price adjustments to tee times, or maybe new events and outings. It's tough finding new revenues in a legacy business. But, what if course owners and operators started to think about their businesses as something that could exist beyond the acreage they've been managing for years? What if the owners and operators of the legacy businesses went “off campus” and into those dead retail spaces? What if they breathed new life into those spaces with fun, food, beverage and golf?

Think about it. The owners of these dead retail spots are probably more than tired of never receiving a rent check. I bet they're ready to strike a good deal with just about anyone. Imagine five, eight or 10 bays of simulators on the inside perimeter, with bar and food in the center. People of all ages, banging balls, laughing,

having fun and paying an hourly rental fee. Who better to operate such a thing than the owners, managers and golf professionals of America's existing golf courses? It's a far stretch for some random entrepreneur to get into this business, but it's barely an arm's length reach for people who have been running courses for years.

The cross-pollination possibilities excite me the most. The golf course could promote their “off campus” business as a place to go at night or when it's raining. A place where you bring groups for an hour or two of fun. A second location where the PGA professionals set up shop to teach lessons and engage those groups. A place where the high school team could practice, and then come back with their families on the weekends. And the folks who come through the off-campus location learn all about the golf course, how to make a tee time, how to transition to the green-grass experience, etc.

With a little gumption and a lot of understanding of lease agreements, code requirements for this kind of space, and access to people with an enthusiasm for the game of golf, this could be a reality. The legacy golf courses out there don't have to lose out to someone else building and benefiting from “golf entertainment.” If they reach out their arms and grab it, existing course operators can be the ones who benefit (and who can probably run them better than anyone).

American Golf is doing it with Drive Shack. ClubCorp is doing it with Big Shots. Even a muni in Helena, Montana, is in on the action! Why can't the Steve Graybills of the world do it with the Fox Chase Golf brand? Steve and his family run a very robust public golf operation a few miles outside of Ephrata, Pennsylvania. I bet there's a 5,000-square-foot dead retail space somewhere near downtown Ephrata itching for this. Imagine, if you will: “Fox Chase Golf on Main.” I'm looking at you, Steve!

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A View From the Industry My Take

By Roberta Bowman
Chief Brand & Communications Officer
LPGA

70-Year Journey To Drive On

On March 20, the LPGA introduced its new brand positioning that embraces its history and pushes toward the future with two simple words: Drive On.

“Drive On” is clearly rooted in golf, but it’s a bigger idea. It captures the power and potential in each of us and celebrates the hard work, focus and tenacity that it takes to achieve our goals.

That the LPGA has refined its brand positioning isn’t remarkable. What is remarkable is the process that led us here.

Over the past few years, the LPGA has had more new corporate partners come on board than at any time in its history. The growth of the LPGA and the strength of these partnerships reflect the quality of our tour, the approachability of our athletes, the expertise of our teaching and club professionals and the relentless dedication of everyone that is connected through our networks and associations.

But there’s more to this story. In a very real sense, our sponsors, players and fans have led us to “Drive On.” Businesses are known for the company they keep and the organizations and causes they support. More and more companies want to be associated with what the LPGA and its members stand for – on and off the golf course. They see our athletes as positive, visible leaders and role

models who represent the important values of diversity, authenticity, a commitment to excellence and fierce determination. And, they appreciate our nearly 70-year track record of “driving on” to break barriers and provide opportunities for women.

This year, nearly half of our LPGA Tour events also will host conferences or events focused on women’s leadership. It’s a natural coupling of achievement on the golf course and in business. There’s always been a special relationship between golf and business – and these events are a terrific way for women to be introduced to the game.

But “Drive On” isn’t just about golf and it isn’t just about women. It’s for girls and boys, women and men. It’s about the fire that burns inside you when you discover your passion. It’s about the motivating power of big dreams and the resolve to defy convention and stereotypes. It’s about finding the vision to see beyond what has already been done and to believe something greater is possible.

We think the time is right to celebrate that spirit of determination – that drive – within. This is the moment to shine a light on the stories of dedication, resilience and sheer grit that it takes to excel.

For nearly 70 years, the LPGA has been “driving on” to create greater opportunity for women. Standing on the shoulders of our 13 founders and the other outstanding women who came before them, the members of the LPGA today are fully prepared to carry the future on their shoulders.

Drive On.



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Addressing The Issues

By Ronnie Miles
Director of Advocacy
NGCOA

Taking on the Tax Codes

Today, more than ever we receive reports of states attempting to pass legislation that specifically targets a single business entity, GOLF! Why is this? As many of you have read or heard by now, the state of New York has introduced a bill in the Senate and Assembly that would encourage their taxing districts to change their current method of assessing golf courses from “current use” to “highest and best use.” (Golf Business, May 2019, *New York Proposes Costly Tax Bill for Golf Courses*) As a golf course owner you can clearly see how devastating this would be to any golf course or country club.

These bills were introduced by a senator and assemblywoman who serve a state and districts where President Trump’s golf courses are located. It is well known he has been battling local tax assessors over their assessment of his properties. So, it seems that in an effort to help local officials in this fight, the members at the state level have decided they needed to provide local tax assessors with more tools in order to combat this type of argument from a landowner in the future.

NGCOA has reached out to our members in New York as well as other golf course owners and operators and encouraged them to connect with their representatives and let them know the impact this bill will

have on their business and communities. As of this publication date, the bill was forwarded to committees but has not been scheduled for a hearing or debate.

While this may appear to be a New York issue, golf course owners and operators in other states need to monitor this issue. If approved in New York, we can only assume that other state governments will consider similar legislation where budgets are tight and new sources of revenue are sought.

Like in Connecticut, where the governor has introduced a budget measure that would require sales taxes on green fees. Golfers in Connecticut already pay sales tax on membership fees and cart rentals, and with a rate of 10 percent, the price may cause many golfers to further limit the rounds they play. Owners and operators across the state are not only engaging with the representatives, but are educating and encouraging their golfers to do the same.

Many of our political leaders fail to realize the impact golf has on local and state economies. It is our role as industry representative and golf course owners and operators to continue to share our message in our communities and all the way to Washington, D.C. Many of our states host State Golf Day events. As owners and operators you are the influencers in this industry. Your engagement with your state and local representatives can go a long way in changing the narrative that golf is for the elitist and the industry is over subsidized by the current tax codes.

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Coalition Concerns

By Jared Williams
Managing Director
GOLF USA TEE TIME COALITION

Relationship Status: It's Complicated

While you might see some language like this headline when you login to various social media networks, this column is about the business relationships that exist between third parties and golf courses. Although the current status may not be visible to all in the industry, one needs only take a cursory glance of the present landscape in tee time distribution to quickly determine that these business relationships are very complicated.

So the theme for this column is "Business Relationships." Here we will be putting under the microscope those business practices of third parties that directly impact the golf course.

Think about relationships in general. What are some of the most important aspects of any successful relationship? Trust. Honesty. Respect. Communication. Loyalty. Happiness. Compromise. In a romantic relationship, some might argue these words are more important to the success of a relationship than love.

To take it a step further, even if you love a vendor and its software or services, the relationship will break down without trust, honesty, respect, communication, loyalty, happiness and compromise. And despite, the tendency for third parties to refer to golf courses as their partners, many third parties are unwilling to offer all of these.

Let's look at two definitions for relationships.

1. The way in which two or more

people or groups regard and behave toward each other.

2. The way in which two or more concepts, objects or people are connected, or the state of being connected.

If third parties want to change the narrative, then they must immediately start being honest with golf course operators and respecting their wishes. There has to be some compromise in order to truly make the customer happy. That starts with consistent and thorough communication of all data for barter rounds sold.

That creates the disconnect in the relationship between golf courses and third parties – when third parties elect not to provide the course with detailed reports on total barter sales. To put it bluntly, there is currently no way for customers to find out how much the software costs (how much they actually paid for it) if they engage in barter. They can't determine it before, they can't look at any comparative data, and they can't find out their actual payment in barter rounds sold.

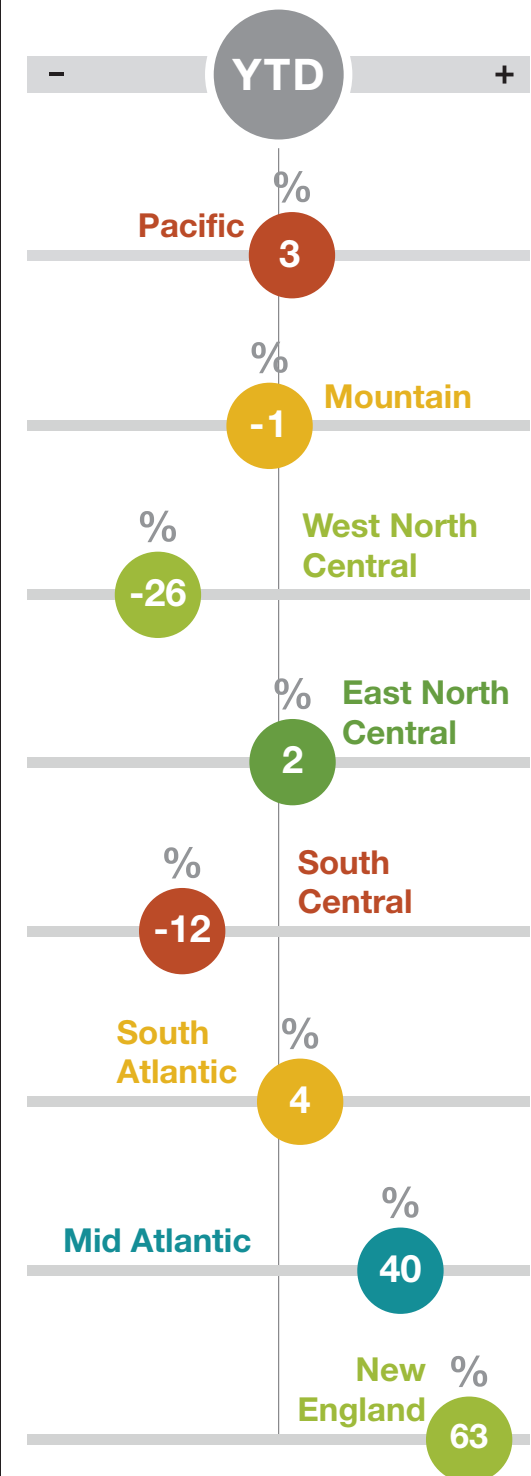
Thus, the two parties in a business relationship are not at all connected, based on the way they regard and behave toward each other. The vendors don't trust customers with the barter sales data. Perhaps it will reveal some eye-opening insights about the cost of software and distribution. Perhaps it will equip the operator with the requisite information to negotiate better deals.

Fair warning: All companies accepting barter must create a detailed report on total barter sales and provide that to the golf courses engaging in barter. Those that do not elect to share this information with their clients should expect the Coalition to inform the industry of your decision to withhold.

Rounds Played

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Data percentage compared to same period last year.



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NEWS & VIEWS TO PROPEL YOUR BUSINESS

Greens or Green Space? By Steve Eubanks

Louisville Conservancy Bids To Take City Courses Back To Nature

Developing RFPs for city courses can be a complicated minefield of hidden agendas, political theater and unknown encumbrances. Almost never is the process as straightforward and simple as showing municipal leaders how much money can be saved through professional golf management.

Louisville, Kentucky, golf courses are facing budgetary problems that could result in closures.



In Louisville, Kentucky, the process got more complicated in the spring when the Fredrick Law Olmsted Parks Conservancy offered to take over one of the city's six municipal golf courses and return it to open space. Spokesmen for the conservancy said that the body is "ready and willing" to take over Cherokee Golf Course, which opened in 1895, to help the city through a budgetary crisis.

According to public records, the course lost \$98,000 in 2018, the biggest loss among city-owned courses. Louisville mayor Greg Fischer has been public about the need to either turn the golf courses around or shutter all of them at the end of the 2019 season.

"We very much appreciate (the Olmsted Park Conservancy's) interest, and as we told them, we will review their offer as we decide over the next few months how to proceed with the city's golf courses during this difficult budget climate," the mayor said in a statement.

Layla George, president of the Olmsted Parks Conservancy, called the potential closures an "opportunity to restore this historic landscape and expand public access to all of Cherokee Park."

Therein lies the problem. The mayor has publicly stated that he will open the city's golf operations up for

an RFP. If professional managers can save Louisville \$550,000 throughout six golf properties (Cherokee Golf Course is 9-holes), none of them will close. If not, all of them might.

But like most political decisions, there will likely be more to the Louisville saga than numbers on a balance sheet. George said her conservancy group would create a plan for the "best use of this critical public green space in the heart of our community." She went on to say, "We recognize the difficulty of the current budget situation and are ready to take on more responsibility in order to alleviate some of the pressure on our public partner, Louisville Parks and Recreation."

"Golf is supposed to be a revenue producer for the city," said city councilman Brandon Coan, who represents the district in which Cherokee Golf Course sits. "I can understand why the course is endangered."

The Louisville courses might be irredeemable money losers that should be shuttered. Or they might be mismanaged hidden gems with great upside potential. The problem, as happens far too often in municipal situations, is that the truth may never be known. 📌

Steve Eubanks is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and New York Times bestselling author.



Photo by Patrick Pfister

"Golf is supposed to be a revenue producer for the city. I can understand why the course is endangered."

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By Steve Eubanks

What has been the biggest factor holding women back from committing to game improvement programs and playing on a regular basis?

Preisinger: Two reasons that tie together: Women have to feel like they belong and they have to feel comfortable. For that reason, they have to be invited. They aren't going to wake up one morning and say, 'I'm going to learn to play golf,' and come out to the course. They are more self-conscious about the game. Once they are invited or have a support group with one or two friends, they are more likely to keep coming back. They're more likely to get instruction and play the game, because they feel safer. Even corporate women feel like they need an invitation.

Puett: Intimidation is the main reason that women do not get into golf. It's the fear of missing the ball and looking foolish. Men,



Carol Preisinger

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION,
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Barbara Puett

DIRECTOR OF INSTRUCTION
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AUSTIN, TEXAS

for whatever reason, don't seem to care as much about how they look when they're trying something new. Women have a lot of anxiety about how they will look if they can't play. So I always tell a woman who is new to golf: bring a friend. When a woman shows up with a friend, it helps her overcome intimidation.

What do you do to help women overcome their initial anxieties once they are at the golf course?

Preisinger: We greet them. We want to be there the second they arrive at the facility. Meet them in the parking lot before they've gotten out of their cars and show them how glad you are to see them. Greet them like they've walked into the best hotel and been met by the nicest doorman in the world. You have to pay

attention to them and make them feel comfortable. Engage them. Get to know them.

There also has to be some introductory time, some warm-up time, and not just warming up the body, but warming up the mind and the heart.

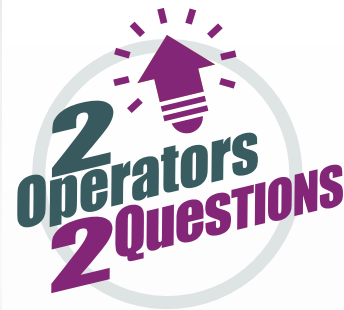
Puett: The first thing I tell women is: The reason we love golf is because how well you play does not determine someone else's good time.

The second thing I tell them is: It's not how good you are, it's how good you are to play with.

Then I always tell them - and they love this one - something Harvey Penick said. "No pretty woman has ever missed a golf shot without a man there giving her bad advice."

That one always loosens the mood considerably.

Steve Eubanks is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and New York Times bestselling author.



Innovation Insights

BY SCOTT KAUFFMAN

Japanese Summit Looks to the Future

For decades, Japan has been at the forefront of technological advances, management discipline and operational efficiencies. Tokyo also is the host city for the 2020 Summer Games, featuring the second-ever Olympic golf tournament.

So, it was only fitting that this year's fifth USGA Golf Innovation Symposium was co-hosted by this innovative, golf-mad nation and the Japanese Golf Association last March in Shinjuku, Tokyo. As it turns out, the main challenge U.S. course owners are facing in growing the game is no different in Japan - where an aging population continues to outpace the number of younger people picking up the sport.

According to Tagmarshal CEO Bodo Sieber, whose course optimization and pace-of-play management system has tracked seven million rounds and growing, one of the main takeaways from this year's symposium might be a familiar-sounding narrative for most operators: Run "smarter, leaner operations to counter escalating costs and position oneself for a sustainable future-proof" business.

The other key message that came out of the conference was a need to better understand the player experience from both "revenue and growing the game opportunities." Consequently, the USGA set a challenge for the industry to achieve a 25 percent reduction in the consumption of key resources and a 20 percent increase in golfer satisfaction by 2025.

"We need to improve the player experience to better serve and retain the current player base and importantly attract new and younger players," says Sieber, whose company was featured at the Tokyo symposium. "Technology obviously has a big role to play in both, on-course as well as in the back office."



For instance, Tagmarshal has collected nearly one billion data-points through its various mid-tier and upscale golf partners like Whistling Straits, allowing operators to better manage pace of play and field flow time, which, turns out to be one of the two most "important factors crucial to players' enjoyment," according to a 2016 USGA study discussed at the summit. Course conditioning, not surprisingly, was the most important factor to golfers (82 percent) with time being second (74 percent).

Interestingly, these two factors are more important to golfers than course design and clubhouse amenities, the study added, which might surprise some course owners placing more marketing efforts into these latter elements of the business. That disconnect in understanding what golfers really value and need as "consumers" is critical to golf's future as much as anything.

Perhaps that is one reason the U.S. golf industry has a distinctively low 69 percent satisfaction score in the eyes of consumers, according to Rand Jerris, USGA senior managing director, public services. That puts golf course experiences at the low end of 48 industries polled - in the same family as airlines and the post office.

"Full-service restaurants on the other hand are highest ranked at 82 percent," Jerris added. "This is where we need to get to as an industry to retain existing players and attract new ones."

Basically, one of the paramount messages shared at this year's USGA innovation summit isn't all that innovative after all. Instead, it's just simply embracing tried and true practices from so many other successful hospitality and retail-oriented businesses where a warm, welcoming environment and personal attention goes a long way.

Pillsbury and Harbin Join NGCOA Board

ClubCorp CEO David Pillsbury and OnCourse Operations President Cathy Harbin have been named to the NGCOA Board of Directors.



"The experience and passion for industry success that David and Cathy bring to NGCOA's Board of Directors is second to none," said Jay Karen, NGCOA CEO. "The association, and in turn, our owner and operator members, will benefit from their vision and leadership."



David Pillsbury became CEO of ClubCorp nearly one year ago, the largest owner operator of private golf and country clubs in the country, and manager of more than 200 golf and country clubs, business, sports and alumni clubs across the globe. He has held numerous leadership roles in the golf industry over the past 30 years, including co-CEO at American Golf Corp., general manager of Nike Golf, president of PGA TOUR Golf Course Properties Tournament Players Clubs, president of PGA TOUR Championship Management, and executive vice president of PGA TOUR Tournament Business Affairs.

Cathy Harbin, president of OnCourse Operations, also is the owner of Pine Ridge Golf Course. She has held a Class A PGA of America membership since 1992 and PGA Master Professional status since 2000. She also is a member of the LPGA and CMAA. In addition to 20 years of experience in golf course operations, she served as executive director of Golf 20/20, and lead the successful launch of Get Golf Ready, and served as vice president of Public Golf, Golf Academy and Programming for ClubCorp. This excellence in golf leadership led her to be named by Golf Inc. magazine as one of the Most Admired Golf Course Operators, Golf News magazine as Woman of the Year, and United Athletes Foundation as Athlete of the Year.



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ONLINE More golf industry news from the web



The Numbers are In

The National Golf Foundation has released its 2019 Golf Industry Report. According to NGF's data, golf has seen a stabilization of on-course participation post-Great Recession, with around 24 million golfers. Learn more at ngf.org.



MCOR19

The NGCOA's annual multi-course owners and resort operators gathering is slated for July 23-24 in Monterey, California. To learn more about this event, go to mcor-retreat.com.



Plenty of 'Green'

If you missed this feature from the May issue of Golf Business magazine, check online at golfbusiness.com to learn about how investors are still turning a profit in golf real estate.

WHAT'S HOT In My Shop



Linda Mortarotti • Director of Retail
Marin Country Club • Novato, California



Johnnie-O Men's apparel

I would have to say that in the past two years, we have seen a significant increase in sales with Johnnie-O. The casual "West Coast" look, tagged with superior quality and fit has really helped put this line in the front of our shop. The men are realizing that most of the apparel from this line cannot only be worn for golf, but also for casual workdays or social gatherings.



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When looking for that extra special item for the men, I was introduced to Antas Belts – a family owned and operated business providing quality apparel products with high-class customer care. These belts are made of the finest leather, in all sorts of different colors and grains. Each staff member is taught how to cut and measure the belt to fit that member. It is not only a very high quality product but creates a special buzz and personal touch.



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Marin CC has quite a large membership that uses pull carts. The Sun Mountain Speed Cart GT has become quite popular with our members. The EZ latch system simplifies folding and unfolding the cart, as well as providing a sufficient bag bracket to hold several kinds of stand bags.

What's Hot In My Shop is produced in cooperation with the Association of Golf Merchandisers (agmgolf.org)

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Featured clockwise from top: Bear Trap Dunes Golf Club, Ocean View, Delaware; Entrada at Snow Canyon Country Club, St. George, Utah; Lake of Isles, North Stonington, Connecticut.



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Lake Toxaway Country Club owner Reg Heinitsh III (left) and General Manager John Schoenbeck (center) are starting more revitalization projects for the club.



“You’ve got to evolve and be a place where people want to hang out and have fun.”

JOHN SCHOENBECK

Fresh Perspective

Lake Toxaway revives its heritage, plans for the future

By Scott Kauffman

M

More than century ago, Lake Toxaway Hotel and its namesake North Carolina lake were considered one of the most luxurious places in the country. Situated just south of the beautiful Blue Ridge Parkway not far from the borders of Georgia, North Carolina and South Carolina, it quickly became a mountain escape for many of America’s privileged class after the five-star-caliber hotel opened in 1895. Among the hotel’s famous turn-of-the-century regulars were Henry Ford and Harvey Firestone, the Vanderbilts, Thomas Edison and iconic actress/singer Lillian Russell to name a few celebrities. But this exclusive getaway became short lived after the lake’s original dam burst, flooding the area and forcing the hotel to shut down in 1916.

After sitting abandoned for 44 years, the lake came back to life in 1960 after Reg Heinitsh Sr. and a group of investors purchased the surrounding 9,300-acre tract and set out to resurrect the magic of this once-great mountain retreat. Six decades after reviving the empty lake bed and building a golf course in 1963, the owners of Lake Toxaway Country Club are creating quite a second act in the life of the lake's long and rich history.

Indeed, 10 years after Donald Ross restoration-specialist Kris Spence topped off a \$9 million project to completely redesign the course, Lake Toxaway is in the midst of putting another \$10 million into more club enhancement projects and new amenities. If all goes according to plan, the latest round of capital improvements will not only transform the gated mountain enclave into a livelier multi-generational destination but one that remains sustainable for decades to come.

In many respects, it's the ongoing evolution many aging private clubs are facing from coast-to-coast – especially those well-capitalized clubs willing to embrace the demographic and societal changes influencing golf and country clubs of the future.

The dramatic shift in leisure-time lifestyles at private clubs is especially pronounced inside Lake Toxaway's newly renovated \$7.1 million clubhouse. Where private clubs once were the bastions of mostly golf and card-playing men being boys a generation ago, today's clubs have the look and feel of some of the trendiest restaurants, coolest nightclubs and family-friendly Four Diamond resorts.

Yes, this isn't your father's or grandfather's country club anymore. At least that's how the contemporary Kuo Diedrich Chi team of architects envisions the changing look and feel of many 21st-century private clubs. In a nutshell, today's clubs have to incorporate places where all generations of family members are equally as comfortable being and experiencing, time and time again.

For Lake Toxaway general manager John Schoenbeck, Lake Toxaway's newly imagined Firestone Bar & Grille is



This 1907 postcard from the collection of the Rowell Bosse North Carolina Room at the Brevard library shows a regatta race on Lake Toxaway.

Photo: Courtesy of Transylvania County Library

symbolic of that new-age KDC-inspired leisurely space. Featuring an expansive indoor and outdoor bar, casual grille area and a sweeping covered dining porch with scenic lake and golf course views, the success of the dining venue goes far beyond some of the award-winning interior design work contributed by Traci Rhoads and noted landscape architect, Mary Palmer Dargan.

"Everybody is just piling into the new area," says Schoenbeck, who opened the newly transformed clubhouse a year ago. "We still get one or two requests for tables inside the older dining room, which really isn't older anymore because it's been completely revamped as well. Just because they maybe want some quiet time.

"But everybody else wants to be joining the party in the other place. ... We've more than doubled our outdoor seating. It's so beautiful up there, everybody just wants to look at the mountains. It's a great vibe with the craft beers, the cool specials, TVs in the bar ... Clubs need to hang onto some of the traditions and golf is obviously still very important. But you've got to evolve and be a place where people want to hang out and have fun."

For Lake Toxaway, whose average member is in their 60s, the new clubhouse is just phase one of the strategic plan to help attract much younger members with families that might have bypassed it for other clubs geared to "modern families," according to Reg Heinitsh Jr., Lake Toxaway Co. president and chairman.

When Lake Toxaway begins construction this August on the second phase of the club's strategic plan – a multi-million-dollar resort-style pool complex alongside North Carolina's largest man-made lake

– Heinitsh Jr. anticipates the residential development and club life to be even more youthful in the years to come.

"What we're doing is making all of our property owners and club members think 'I really don't need to leave Lake Toxaway to do anything,'" says Heinitsh, whose son, Reg Heinitsh III, is now active in the Lake Toxaway Co. as a vice president and broker, along with several other family members. "(The newly enhanced clubhouse and Firestone Bar & Grille) is the focal point for their social culture. And they are wearing it out.

"With our new upscale modern clubhouse and the variety of different eating venues, we're preparing for the future. We've got to attract the 45, 50-year-old people. Our older members love it, and they're extremely happy; we're attracting people who ultimately will be taking their places as we move forward. ... The multi-generational pool complex is yet another major step."

It's something Heinitsh seems genuinely excited to experience with his own grandchildren.

"A lot of our people are out on the lake," Heinitsh points out. "Now you're going to be able to take the float boat and go into the club and park; walk about 75 steps and we'll have several pizza ovens and a new grill by the water. The kids will have their own entertainment room. ... You'll have a lot of parties on Lake Toxaway in the float boats with (this new complex).

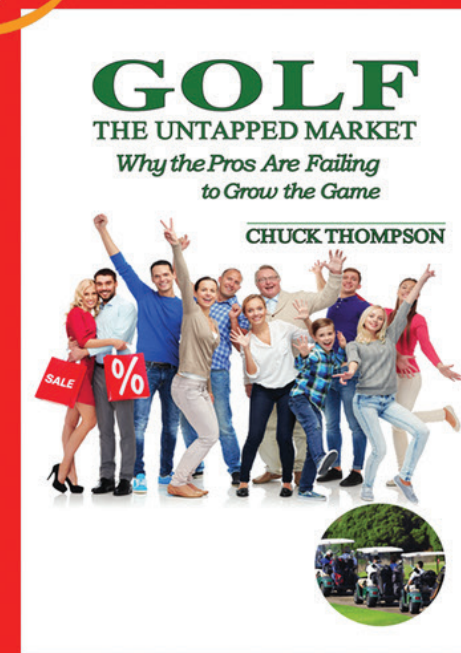
"We'll end up having a great balance (of amenities). These days a country club has absolutely got to do both." 🏌️

Scott Kauffman is a golf business writer and the managing director of Aloha Media Group.

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Chuck-

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I commend Chuck Thompson on his insight to the Golf industry. As a former PGA President, I learned more from Golf: The Untapped Market than I have in 43 years of operating and owning golf courses.

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The Idaho Club's new building is under construction and slated to be open late summer 2019.



Idaho Club Gets Haberman Makeover

By Scott Kauffman

Two years after reopening under new ownership, there is more evidence the Idaho Club is fully recovered from years of financial distress and legal uncertainty.

The latest sign of the club's full-scale recovery is a new 9,200-square-foot "modern mountain" clubhouse under construction and scheduled to open late this summer.

When Idaho's only Jack Nicklaus-designed signature course opened in 2008, the luxury golf and lakefront residential development was positioned to be one of the top private clubs in the Northwest. But soon after it opened, the community's original developer fell on hard times and the Idaho Club became just another golf club casualty of the 2008-09 financial crisis.

Ten years later, however, the property is recapitalized under new owners, Valiant Idaho LLC, which knows a thing or two about saving distressed high-end residential golf properties. Prior to taking over the Idaho Club, Valiant Idaho principal William Haberman was part of an investment group that acquired Thistle Golf Club six years ago in Sunset Beach, North Carolina, when the Myrtle Beach-area, daily-fee development was mired in similar financial problems.

Though Haberman's two golf investments are polar opposites in appeal, the Orlando-based developer sees similar opportunity from a real estate investment perspective. To be sure, Haberman is particularly passionate about his latest venture in Idaho, situated near the small town of Sandpoint about 60 miles due south of the Canadian border.

For instance, Haberman notes residents and guests have the rare opportunity to play the state's only Nicklaus-designed championship course, enjoy pristine Lake Pend Oreille, one of the deepest and longest lakes in America, and visit the nationally-acclaimed ski resort at Schweitzer Mountain all in one weekend. Or, as Haberman describes it, the once-distressed Idaho asset represented the "perfecta trifecta" of outdoor amenities and natural beauty.

EXCLUSIVES

Not to mention Sandpoint, which is just a short drive away, is being discovered as one of the "best small towns in America" by numerous publications. For other well-known markers, the Idaho Club is located just 45 minutes north of famous Coeur d'Alene and 90 minutes from Spokane.

Haberman says the new clubhouse represents a "significant development, not just for current and future property owners at The Idaho Club, but for the surrounding area." The new multi-million-dollar clubhouse is coming out of the ground in the same footprint and foundation as the previous clubhouse, which was destroyed by a fire not long after the course opened in 2008.

When completed, the new anchor amenity will feature a restaurant and bar with seating for up to 100, pro shop, member-only fitness area, outdoor spa and fire pit. The clubhouse was designed locally by John Hendricks of Mountain Architects; it's being built by Ivan Rimar's Spokane, Washington-based Mountain Construction Management.

Another exciting addition to the Idaho Club, according to Haberman, was last year's hiring of Jeff Gove as the new director of instruction and head golf pro. A regional native from Seattle, Gove brings 24 years of tour golf experience, including eight years on the PGA Tour and 16 on the Web.com tour.

The soon-to-be opened clubhouse and Gove's arrival are just two key building blocks Haberman hopes will spur more golf club memberships and real estate sales in the low-density development planned for approximately 350 luxury lodge homes.

"We are very excited about the ongoing progress we've made to restore the Idaho Club and positively impact the greater Sandpoint community," says Haberman, whose Valiant Idaho group also has plans for a future lake club and marina. "We want to get the word out about the revival of The Idaho Club, and that the club and community are back and healthy again."



West Bay Club Executive Chef David Schue teaches a cooking class where a three course meal was prepared featuring fresh ingredients from the club's garden.

By Scott Kauffman

West Bay Academy offers Community ‘Edutainment’

In one of the marketing videos highlighting West Bay Club in Estero, Florida, the tagline for this private member-owned community describes the club as having, “Endless Possibilities Under the Sun.”

Take a trip to this 20-year-old southwest Florida club and the catch phrase couldn’t be closer to the truth.

Among West Bay’s main amenities to enjoy “under the sun” are a championship course originally designed by Pete and P.B. Dye and completely renovated last November for \$4 million by Dana Fry and Jason Straka; resort-style swimming pool with tiki bar, kiddie pool and adult spa; tennis courts; and brand new 2.3-acre Sports Park, featuring pickleball courts and a dog park. Then, for boating and beach enthusiasts, club members have the River Park with private boat launch and storage, and rare private beach club on the Gulf of Mexico with a fully staffed/equipped restaurant.

But one of the more unique amenities or experiences for West Bay members is something that can’t be built: West Bay Academy. Based indoors at the club’s Bay

House, a separate facility which features additional dining/meeting space for members, West Bay Academy is a growing series of club programming inspired by members, “who believe in lifelong learning,” according to longtime member Glara Yi-Powell.

Acclaimed aforementioned amenities notwithstanding, Yi-Powell says this community-based programming is one of the more compelling aspects of West Bay and one way to share the wealth of knowledge and experiences various members bring to the club. Held during peak member season, which is typically the fall and winter months, the West Bay Academy has organically grown into a very popular weekly “edutainment” series of presentations.

EXCLUSIVES

Usually held on Friday afternoons at the Bay House, one recent session involved a West Bay couple with a passion for photography and they conducted a walking photography class throughout the club’s “campus” – many members in tow with their cameras or iPhones, gaining tips on nature photography.

Other speakers have been brought in to discuss topical health or societal issues, and one session was held by a West Bay couple discussing their experiences doing the Camino de Santiago, or pilgrimage trail into Spain and France. This type of engaging programming is just one more way the West Bay Club continues to bond. This connection becomes even more valuable for those older widowed residents, which Yi-Powell knows first-hand from living next to a couple.

“What’s really important, irrespective of the age of your homeowner, is the ability to continue to live in your home,” says Yi-Powell, who moved to Florida 16 years ago for work-related purposes with her husband. “(West Bay) has some older homeowners and the longer they can live in their homes and live independently, it’s really important to them. To be able to provide a mix of not just amenities but activities that keep people engaged and enthusiastic about living where they’re at. ...

“One thing that was really encouraging about a couple of my neighbors is after both of their husbands passed, they still wanted to keep their second home here (at West Bay). They were still interested in coming here for the season because they had their friendships. They were engaged in the community; it went beyond just a golf club or just a house.”

For course owners and operators like Troon, which now manages West Bay Club and the community association, it goes to show some of the most valued amenities at a private club or course can be “built” at no cost right from within the club’s membership itself.

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Cathy Harbin went to Indiana State University on a golf scholarship, where she earned her business degree.



“Go back many years to 1988, I was this kid in the golf business, but I thought that one day I’d love to buy my own golf course.”

CATHY HARBIN

© 2019 Photo by Tony Cato

By Steve Eubanks

Role of a Lifetime

A Three-Decade Career Prepared Her For The Job She Always Wanted



It started with a simple question, one she had never considered. Cathy Harbin had done almost everything you could do in the golf business – head professional with a large management company; director of golf at one of the world’s most recognizable resorts; executive director of Golf 2020 with the World Golf Foundation; vice president of golf at the world’s largest club management company – but the question from one of her old bosses stopped her in her tracks. Bob Barrett, who had hired Harbin as a director of golf and then general manager at the World Golf Village in St. Augustine, Florida, said, “Cathy, when were you happiest?”

“If I didn’t do something today, we might have zero golfers tomorrow. I had to get smart about marketing pretty quickly.”

- CATHY HARBIN

At first Harbin didn’t understand. So Barrett expounded. “At what point in your career, with all you’ve done, were you at a spot where you couldn’t wait to get to work in the morning?”

Harbin thought about it and said, “When I was at the World Golf Village, getting out every day and being a part of the operation.”

Barrett said, “Then that’s what you need to do.”

The question hadn’t come out of the blue. At the time, Harbin was in the market to buy a golf course. That search had been prompted by another question, this one from an old friend. Harbin, who was vice president of golf at ClubCorp at the time, was driving through Florida on the way to a course the company had just acquired.

“Go back many years to 1988, I was this kid in the golf business, but I thought that one day I’d love to buy my own golf course,” Harbin said. “So, when I was an assistant golf pro I went to a ‘Buying and Selling a Golf Course’ seminar at the PGA Show. I can’t imagine now what all those guys thought about this young woman in the seminar.

“Fast forward a few decades, I was at ClubCorp and we had just bought a portfolio of six golf courses. I was on my way down to Bradenton, Florida, to check one of them out and was on the phone with a

friend. I said, ‘Now this is the kind of golf course I want to buy. It’s got a little clubhouse, a big driving range,’ and I went through all the things on my list. My friend said, ‘Cathy, you have been talking about buying a golf course for the 20 years that I’ve known you. When are you finally going to do it?’

“I thought about it and she was right. I had been talking about it for that long. The next week, I called a broker.”

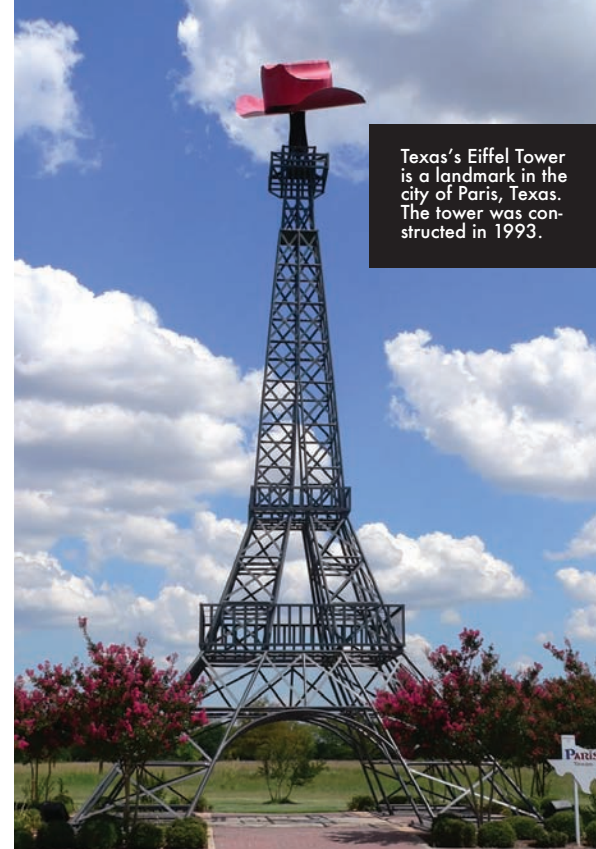
By that time, Harbin had done almost everything you could do in the golf industry, a lifetime of experience that prepared her for the job she’d wanted since her assistant pro

days in Indiana.

“I went to school on a golf scholarship at Indiana State University and got a business degree,” she said. “When I got out, my thought process was that while I figured out what I wanted to do with my life I’d go to work at a golf course since I thought I knew how to do that. That process led to the fact that I never left golf.

“I played mini-tours a few years and then spent eight years in the Fort Lauderdale (Florida) area, a little more than half of that working for American Golf. That is where I really got my education. I’ve said many times, most people have to pay for an upper-level education, but I got paid by American Golf to learn how to run golf courses. From operations, finance, marketing: across the board the training was exceptional.”

In 1997, Harbin took the World Golf Village job where she learned about marketing under pressure. “With American Golf we had coupons and advertising and we did all kinds of marketing,” she said. “But there were a certain number of people who were going to show up no matter what. Then I got to the World Golf Village – and I was there before it opened and brought it online – and because of where it was located and the fact that it was new, I realized that if I didn’t do something today, we might have zero



Texas’s Eiffel Tower is a landmark in the city of Paris, Texas. The tower was constructed in 1993.

golfers tomorrow. I had to get smart about marketing pretty quickly.”

That trial by fire eventually led Harbin to run Golf 2020 before moving on to ClubCorp where she shifted much of the operational focus. “When I got (to ClubCorp) 20 percent of the golf professionals and regional directors spent their days thinking about how to increase and improve instruction,” Harbin said. “That completely flipped. When I left 80 percent were thinking about lesson business.”

All those experiences – managing 10 regional directors of golf and hundreds of professionals – landed Harbin at the place where she is happiest: running her own course, Pine Ridge Golf Club, in Paris, Texas. She also has a management contract with nearby Paris Country Club, which gives her multiple facilities. But it is a far cry from the 150 courses she was responsible for at ClubCorp.

“The pace is still there,” she said. “I’m still at this 15 hours a day. But now that I have my head around Pine Ridge and Paris Country Club, I’m ready to expand out and get a few more management contracts.

“But now I’m all about operations. This is what I do. This is what I love.”

*Steve Eubanks is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and New York Times bestselling author. *Editor’s note: Cathy Harbin was recently named to the NGCOA Board of Directors.*



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Photo © 2018, Dave Sansom



“Golf with a purpose.” That’s the motto that drives this historic and philanthropic club, located just five miles from downtown Atlanta. And what drives Ralph Kepple, Director of Agronomy, and his staff is a commitment to excellence. According to Ralph, John Deere has helped in that endeavor. “In the twenty-plus years East Lake has partnered with John Deere, I am always impressed by their commitment to improve and enhance their equipment. The quality of cut on their mowers has always been outstanding.”

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Streamsong Finds Right Merchandising Mix For New Market

By Steve Eubanks

How have merchandisers responded to the surge in women golfers in the last decade? Many haven't. And the numbers show it. Even though women make the majority of household purchasing decisions in America, golf operators trail most retailers in adjusting to women.

While data is rudimentary, women still only account for 10 percent of golf merchandise sales despite making up 38 percent of all golfers.

Just compare a typical golf retail outlet with a women's boutique store and you see why those numbers don't fit. It's not just the type of merchandise the golf stores carry: it's the lighting, the coloring, the music, the displays, the use of floor space, and when and how a customer is greeted by the staff.

"Making the shops more appealing for women and enticing those women in as customers is on the forefront of almost every (golf) buyers' mind these days," said Megan Kiley, the director of retail for Streamsong resort in Florida, which has three of the most highly-ranked courses in the state. "Most of the golfers



who come here (to Streamsong) are very serious, even the women. So we have to not only cater to their needs, we have to be mindful of the market."

The market for Streamsong has traditionally been men. The resort was built as a "guy trip" retreat in the mold of Bandon Dunes and Cabot Links, a far-off-the-beaten-path spot where cell service is spotty and the golf is unforgettable.

But with women now making up more than a third of all golfers, Streamsong had to adjust. The lodge now has a spa and a swimming pool along with hiking trails, fishing, archery and a sporting-clay club.

"We still skew our (merchandise) buying toward more high-performance, high-end lines," Kiley said. "But because of all the other activities, and the fact that some women are here for the outdoor activities or the spa, we turned our golf shop into more of a resort store. Much of the merchandise is not logoed. You can still get a polo or a pullover that has the logo but you also have the option of a dress or a purse or a piece of jewelry. Women who buy those items might be playing golf but they aren't buying specifically for golf. They want a piece to remember Streamsong, but it doesn't need the Streamsong logo or even have to be a golf item."

On the whole, women who shoot, while a smaller percentage of the population, spend more on apparel and accoutrements than women who play golf. Custom ear protection alone can run in the hundreds of dollars. Headwear, scarves, vests that can hold multiple shotgun shells, gun oil, and accessories: for the typical golf shop those items are foreign as a Titleist would be in a gun store. But when your clientele plays golf in the morning and shoots clays in the late afternoon, you adjust.

"When we find that we have the right product mix, they love it," Kiley said. "They go crazy. Over time, I've found what works and expanded on that. Now that we have been open longer, we have trends we can follow."

As for the traditional golf purchases, Kiley said, "Much of the time, guys are buying guilt gifts for their wives or girlfriends. I can always spot a nervous male walking in the women's section. When I ask if the woman in their life plays golf, it's 50/50.

"But those are the easiest customers to please. The challenge is making sure you have the right products for everyone else."

Steve Eubanks is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and New York Times bestselling author.

Women's Golf Month Sparks Year-Round Initiatives

BY STEVE EUBANKS



A lot of operators throw out an event or two for women in June. Their message couldn't be clearer: "See, we're not anti-women. We gave the gals a Thursday afternoon scramble during Women's Golf Month on the hottest day of the year. Yea us!"

Most golfers and all women see those efforts for what they are: placating pats on the head; condescension that turns more women away from the game than if the operators had done nothing at all.

But some multi-course owners are willing to admit that they blew opportunities in the past. And they are rectifying those mistakes.

"It was about five years ago that we shyly admitted that we didn't even know that June was Women's Golf Month," said Wes Forester, director of Golf at Reynolds Lake Oconee, a MetLife property with a mix of five private and resort courses in Georgia.

"After that, we tried to make up for our (ignorance) by doing a lot of special things to encourage women to play

during June," Forester said. "We set up a number of clinics, had special events for women, and offered substantial discounts. In some cases we completely waived the guest fee in the month of June if the guest was a female."

During those June initiatives, Forester discovered that many of the events and programs did not have an expiration date.

"What we realized is that this approach isn't a one-month thing," he said. "It's a holistic effort. If we're trying to get our members to invite and encourage their daughters, their wives, their friends, their significant others to play golf, what can we do to help them on a permanent basis to make women feel welcome?"

The answer came through trial and error. First, Forester realized that while the one-and-done women's clinic might attract a big crowd, it was not a long-term model for bringing women into the game. So, Reynolds instituted multiple clinics, held on different days, different times and with different instructors. Women pick and choose the times, days and coaches that work best for them.

They also coordinate with their friends to be in the same clinics. The sessions are more intimate, more social and more lasting than the larger one-off clinics. There is also a food-and-beverage component in all Reynolds clinics now.

"Pamela Shelly (head golf professional at the Creek Club, one of Reynolds' private clubs) created a four-hole women's league," Forester said. "That proved to be so successful that we started events like '9-and-Dine' and 'Sip-and-Chip,' which are scrambles and short up-and-down events. They're over in a flash. Then you have a nice dinner."

Once women reach a comfort level in the game, Reynolds has plenty of competitive outlets. The ladies golf association has 200 members and 33 events a year. There is also a nine-hole association that plays 30 times a year.

But a large number of women have no desire to ever play a competitive round. Forester realized that he needed to cater to those customers.

"The most terrifying things for women are a fear of embarrassment and the fear that they might hold somebody up. Women are much more attuned to those feelings than men are. So, we gave those women fun events, social events, disarming events, events that have attracted more women into the game.

"For a larger number of women, at least out here, the game is about camaraderie, not competition. We are a better operation for having recognized that."

"It was about five years ago that we shyly admitted that we didn't even know that June was Women's Golf Month."

Buying Into the Game

Women are now
significant players
in revenue stream



"Women are feeling much better about being invited to the game," said Suzy Whaley, the first female president of the PGA of America.

Photo courtesy of the PGA

40%

Number of
married women
in America now
earning more than
their husbands

\$10-\$15
trillion

Purchasing
power of women
in America

60%

Number of
all household
purchasing
decisions made
by women

It was one of the most talked-about scenes in golf history, and arguably one of the greatest moments for women in the game.

Those who were there called it one of their most memorable experiences. All because a group of talented young women, athletes in skirts, marched down the fairways of Augusta National in an amateur event for the first time. Confident. Happy. Historic.

Prior to Tiger Woods weekend at the Masters, the talk in the game was about the Augusta National Women's Amateur and the final-round duel between eventual winner Jennifer Kupcho and Maria Fassi. So compelling was the event that the winner and runner-up, two 21-year-olds, appeared on TODAY as well as the Tonight Show with Jimmy Fallon – not exactly golf-centric outlets.

Another overlooked, but equally important, aspect of that event was found outside the ropes where a large percentage of the spectators ("patrons" in Augusta vernacular) were mothers and daughters.

What you also didn't see unless you were there was how Augusta National capitalized on the women's event. No numbers are available – the National guards those like the nuclear codes – but the merchandizing sales of items bearing the Augusta National Women's Amateur logo were astronomical. Every register in the merchandise area was packed. Most of the purchasers were women.

"We are
working to
change the
vocabulary,
to have
women say,
'Oh, yes,
I'm a golfer.'
I love golf."

Suzy Whaley

THERE ARE A MILLION THINGS THAT NEED TO HAPPEN FOR YOUR COURSE TO BE PLAYABLE.

AND YOUR GOLF COURSE SUPERINTENDENT IS THINKING ABOUT THEM ALL.

17. Average tee size: 500 sq. ft. Fairways: 15,000 sq. ft. Greens: 1,000 sq. ft. Bunkers: 10,000 sq. ft. Rough: 100,000 sq. ft. Source of water: Pond, lake, well Acres of rough: 120

6. WILT DISEASES - THOSE DISEASES THAT INFECT THE CONDUCTING TISSUE AND BECOME SYSTEMIC

18. PIN PLACEMENT CHANGES EVERY YEAR SUMMER: 35/45 OFF-SEASON

36. Average green size: 6,500 sq. ft. Greens: Mini-Vardes, Bermuda-grass

100. Source of water: Natural Lake, ponds

WATER PRESSURE / SPRINKLER

378. AVERAGE PER FAIRWAY/TEE BOX

Marker Min. 8-4 ft apart

Average tee size: 500 sq. ft.

TECHNOLOGY ADVANCEMENTS

CANKER DISEASES - THOSE DISEASES THAT INFECT THE WOODY TISSUE BUT ARE NOT SYSTEMIC

Wildlife conservation efforts sustain deer population, peacocks, houses for birds and food, flowers for bee pollination

Brinage conditions: Poor

1. IRRIGATION BY SOURCE

Sodium absorption ratio 2.86 5.32

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The pH of this.

The growth of that.

Too much moisture.

Not enough moisture.

Managing resources.

Balancing an ecosystem.

And that's just over coffee.

So say thanks to your golf course superintendent. Or make that, thanks a million.



“You can walk into a place and know immediately whether or not you’re wanted. For a long time, women weren’t wanted.”

Diane Whitman

The same has been true at Country Club of Charleston, host site of this year’s U.S. Women’s Open, where event-specific merchandise, from headcovers to handbags, T-shirts to Tiffany glassware, have flown off the shelves faster than managers can get them in. And not just during the event itself. Women buy merchandise for women-centered events months prior to the first competitive shots getting airborne, a trend that exceeds most men’s events not held at iconic locations like Pebble Beach.

Mario Guerra had just stepped into the role of head professional at Quaker Ridge Golf Club in Scarsdale, New York, when the club hosted the 2018 Curtis Cup. He was floored by the brisk sale of logoed merchandise.

“Our buyers did fantastic job of anticipating the demand from women for merchandise related to a women’s event like this,” Guerra said in the club’s teaching center next to the 18th fairways as the matches took place. “I wasn’t here for the (1997) Walker Cup (which was played at Quaker Ridge during the height of Tiger-mania) but I understand from those who were that the demand here (for the Curtis Cup) is greater than it was then.”

The lesson is clear: Women reward operators and institutions that care about women. If Augusta National, Quaker Ridge and Country Club of Charleston, all high-end private clubs, could offer one takeaway to mom and pop operations everywhere it would be: cater to women and they will come in droves.

It should surprise no one that women are the primary purchasers in all house-

holds. According to statistics compiled by the Federal Reserve, Nielson and Gallup, the purchasing power of women in America is between \$10-\$15 trillion (\$20 trillion worldwide) annually with 60 percent of all household purchasing decisions being made by women.

What might come as a surprise is the fact that 40 percent of the married women in America now earn more than their husbands, double the number from a generation ago and quadruple the number from 1970. That trend line continues to move in the direction of women earning more, living longer and remaining more active outside the home than men.

That has a direct impact on golf. As Stephanie Peareth, the LPGA Girls’ Golf director for Miami put it, “[Nationally,] We had 5,000 young girls playing golf in 2009. In 2019, we have 86,000 and counting. That is what you call a trend.”

Ten years ago, women and girls made up 18 percent of the total golf population.

Today, that number is a conservative 38 percent. In any other industry, that kind of shift in the customer base would generate international headlines. In golf, some people still haven’t noticed.

“Women are feeling much better about being invited to the game,” said Suzy Whaley, the first female president of the PGA of America who was one of the patrons in Augusta watching Kupcho have the best back-nine finish since Jack Nicklaus in 1986. “We at the PGA of America have had an allied campaign to not just invite women to the game – PGA professionals have tried to do that for years and we’ve been talking about it for years – but we have put tangible efforts behind it, now. We’re making it a real invitation. We’re not just saying to women ‘You’re welcome at our club.’ We’re inviting you to our club on Thursday at 5:00 for six holes of golf and a social gathering afterward. We have off-course sites that are making golf really fun. Women are seeing that they can enjoy



Diane Whitman is an instructor at several ClubCorp facilities in metro-Atlanta.

“We had 5,000 young girls playing golf in 2009. In 2019, we have 86,000 and counting. That is what you call a trend.”

Stephanie Peareth

the game with their families.”

Smart operators are doing more than inviting. They are harnessing the tsunami of women golfers for greater profits. Whether it is retooling the merchandise to cater to an active and athletic women’s market, adding fitness classes that are both golf- and women-centered, or doing things as simple as retooling the bar menu to women’s tastes. Savvy club owners see women as the future of their business. And they are responding accordingly.

“I can’t tell you how impactful women and girls have been in merging golf and fitness,” said Jamie Arion, a nationally recognized physical wellness coach and personal trainer specializing in golf fitness. “Women and girls don’t just pick up golf clubs and decide they’re going to play. We enter the game with a plan. Lessons, practice, and a big part of it for women is fitness because, in a lot of cases, they are getting into golf for the social interaction, family interaction, but also to be more active; to be healthier. It’s a lifestyle thing.”

How’d it all begin?

So, how did this women’s movement happen? The initiatives Whaley described, the business shifts that Arion mentioned, and those initiatives the LPGA has in place with its Ladies Amateur Golf Association, were in their infancies when this demographic shift



Stephanie Peareth is the LPGA Girls’ Golf director for Miami.

Photo by Bianca Pierre

occurred. What drove women to golf in such large numbers?

It was a confluence of forces. In 2009, when the female participation rate was 18 percent and 5,000 young girls in the entire country played golf, the game was in crisis. Because of the Great Recession, operators had to innovate. Survival depended upon generating new customers. Women and girls should have been the lowest hanging fruit.

Still, many operators missed it. They tried leagues; they relaxed dress codes; they piped music onto their ranges and put kegs on the 10th tee in an attempt to bring out the millennials. All the while, a huge under-served market was right in front of them.

“Look, a lot of operators have made women feel more welcome now, but we still have a long way to go,” said Diane Whitman, an instructor at several ClubCorp facilities in metro-Atlanta. Whitman and her fellow instructors have the largest lesson business in the entire ClubCorp network. A big percentage of that business comes from women and girls. “In the old days, whether it was a local muni or the best country clubs, gals simply knew that they weren’t welcome. You can walk into a place and know immediately whether or not you’re wanted. For a long time, women weren’t wanted.”

The Great Recession changed all that.

Operators realized that, with time as the biggest constraint on play, the abbreviated round was a good revenue source. Public operators began charging by the hole. Play three, pay for three. Play six, pay for six. Suddenly a round of golf wasn’t 18 holes with a 9-hole option late the afternoon. A family could go out at 5:00 for four holes and dinner afterward. The USGA even got into the act, promoting shortened rounds with their Play 9 campaign.

“That is huge in bringing women into the game,” Whaley said. “Golf doesn’t have to be 18 holes. You don’t have to play 18 holes and play well in order to be a golfer. A lot of women say to me, ‘Oh, no, I’m not a golfer.’ What they are really saying is, ‘I’m not a good golfer,’ or ‘I’m not a competitive golfer.’ We are working to change the vocabulary, to have women say, ‘Oh, yes, I’m a golfer. I love golf.’”

“Golf is so much more than performance. It’s about going out with your friends for three holes or four holes or six holes and having a social hour afterward. It’s about going out with family and maybe hitting two putts and one drive but being outside and enjoying all the benefits that go with that.”

Growing the Initiative

The other two programs that facilitated growth in the women’s game were PGA Junior League and the LPGA-USGA Girls Golf.

“The girls programs are hugely successful,” Peareth said. “Those girls want to be here seven days a week because the golf course is where their friends are. I grew up with no other girls playing golf. I played on the boys’

teams and in the men’s events. Today, I have 200 girls in my girls’ program. And my ladies’ program is successful because of my girls’ program.

“A lot of women I teach are moms of my girls. I’m seeing exponential growth potential there because the girls want to be here (at the course) every day. Moms want to spend time with their daughters. If you want to spend time with your kid who is playing golf every day, you’re going to learn to play golf.”

Successful operators are taking advantage of that trend. Father-daughter events have become mother-and-child outings with a meal afterward that includes vegetarian stir-fry along with traditional burgers and hotdogs.

One club in the mid-Atlantic saw a huge spike in its food and beverage revenue after doing nothing more than adding flavored vodka to the bar menu.

“It’s not about any one big thing,” said Tim Dunlap, who manages two courses in southern California. “It’s a feeling. You do something that makes women feel welcome – whether it’s adding an item to the menu or putting some thought into the merchandising beyond the skirts in the corner of the shop. It’s your music choices; it’s the color of the chairs. Women know when you’re being mindful of them. As a rule,

they reward that mindfulness.”

Some of that stems from how women were introduced to golf. One of the biggest drivers in putting clubs in women’s hands was the game’s first nightclub: TopGolf.

“Places like TopGolf have lowered inhibitions,” Whitman said. “What I’m seeing from some of the younger women that I’m working with, they didn’t think they would ever play golf. Then they went to TopGolf and were like, ‘Hey, this is alright.’ So, it has been great initial exposure for a lot of gals.”

Whaley agreed. “Any time you can open the ramp as big as possible, it’s a good thing,” she said. “We (at the PGA) are partners with TopGolf. We want to make sure that people who are enjoying TopGolf understand the next step if they want to play golf at a facility nearby. But nobody feels that they need to be tremendous at the game to have a good time at TopGolf. We have to translate that same feeling to green grass facilities.”

Getting with the Program

Operators need to recognize the seismic shift in their markets and make the most of it. Whether it’s tables, chairs, wine and cheese on the range during a clinic; a three-hole event followed by a healthy meal, or something as simple as moving a forward tee to a location that makes more sense for women, course owners will be rewarded for listening to the fastest-growing segment of the game and responding to their needs.

“Sometimes it’s as simple as adding a female instructor,” Peareth said. “Golf for women, taught by women, that’s a big part of it. I have a lot of ladies say to me, ‘I wish I’d had you 10 years ago when I was with a man. I’m starting to enjoy it now.’ Having a women’s perspective can make all the difference. We let women know that this isn’t an old-man sport. It can be fun; it can be colorful; it can be creative. That’s what we’re changing.”

And, according to Peareth, it is what will continue to change. “Not only

can (women’s participation continue to grow), I think it’s inevitable that it will,” she said. “Girls programs are growing by the day. Those girls are going to grow up into women. Some of them might leave the game. But a good many will be in it for life.”

Those changes can be seen everywhere from mom-and-pop courses to some of the largest companies in the industry. John Solheim, the chairman of Ping, attended the launch of the LPGA’s new branding campaign “Drive On” in Phoenix, not because he wanted to be seen as part of a trend, but because his company has been in the women’s space for decades.

The Solheim Cup was created by his father, Karsten, and mother, Louise. And for years, a Ping set of clubs tailored for a woman looked no different than the set a man would play. There were no pink butterflies or flowery stamps on the clubheads – features women recognize as condescending. “We support golfers,” Solheim said. “Women, men, young, old: this is what we do. It’s what we’ve always done.”

For operators to thrive, they must do likewise.

“Women aren’t just the Thursday morning ladies day,” Whitman said.

“When I work the KPMG Women’s PGA golf clinics, I’m meeting the director of this, the chief executive of that, the lead counsel for the other. Those women are seeing golf as a business tool. The four women who sat at my table at the last KPMG PGA clinic I worked were all in the financial sector. And as we sat there they were like, ‘Hey, when can we go tee it up? Let’s go. We can discuss this project over golf.’ It’s incredible to see that in the women’s world now.

“The conversation has changed dramatically,” Whitman said. “For the better. And hopefully for good.”

Steve Eubanks is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and New York Times bestselling author.



by Joe Dysart

More Than Just Words

YouTube's a Swiss Army Knife for Business Communication

While YouTube has emerged as a marketing juggernaut for golf course owners, many are also discovering the free video-sharing service has scores of other uses – all of which are also free for the taking.

Employee recruiting, client communications, product/service how-to's and dissemination of news are all increasing in popularity on YouTube, as golf course owners and others transform the medium into a Swiss Army Knife of business communications.

“You Tube is a great way to showcase the course, especially the flyover showing each individual hole,” says Tim Allen, director of golf at Cowdray Golf in West Suffix, United Kingdom.

Mike Hill, director of operations at The Links at Terranea in Los Angeles, agrees. “We find that video is the most effective format that supports our storytelling initiatives and communicating the resort's offerings and programming. We feel that YouTube is the preeminent platform to showcase and distribute our video content to compel visitors to choose Terranea,” he says.

“If you've never visited the YouTube website, you've missed out on the hottest thing on the internet today,” adds Michael Miller, author of “YouTube for Business.”

Unquestioningly, one of the major reasons golf course owners and others are flocking to YouTube is its runaway popularity. Just a blip on the web a decade ago, the video-sharing service has since rocketed to one of the most visited sites on the internet.

In fact, YouTube currently boasts 1.9 billion users each month according to, Larry Page, CEO of Alphabet, YouTube's parent company. More than 70 percent of videos on YouTube are viewed on mobile phones. And the online video-sharing service has been localized in 91 countries and made available in 80 languages.

Indeed, among consumers ages 13-24, online video is now more popular than traditional TV, according to a recent study by Hunter Qualitative Research.

The age group studied – Millennials – spends 11.3 hours per week watching free online video, as compared to 8.3 hours a week watching traditional TV.

Besides its unquestionable popularity with young people, YouTube's ease of entry and low-cost also makes it hard for business people like golf course owners to resist. Virtually anyone with

basic PC skills can upload a video to YouTube – for free – in a matter of minutes.

And since YouTube's videos are generally viewed on small screen mobile phones, there's no reason for golf course owners to endure painfully large budgets for video production. In fact, the subtleties of high-end video production are generally lost on YouTube, according to Miller.

Plus, golf course owners are saving significant coin using YouTube by shifting hosting responsibilities for their company videos to the online video service. The rationale: Ordinarily, a golf course needs to pay additional transmission charges anytime a website visitor views a video hosted on the business' website. But when that same video is uploaded to YouTube's servers, golf course owners need never pay transmission costs – no matter how many times that video is viewed.

All told, it's a frothy mix of remarkable popularity, ease-of-entry and non-existent hosting costs that have the wheels of innovation spinning at countless golf courses.

So far, here are the top 10 uses they've forged:

• **Marketing:** This is without doubt the most popular golf course use of YouTube, and can be wildly successful. Businesses with shoestring promotional budgets have become overnight stars on the service, often with zany and off-the-wall marketing pitches.

Besides using humor, golf course owners can also use the marketing side of YouTube to give video tours of their facilities. Or, they can feature video interviews with key staff to reassure current and prospective customers that they're going to be doing business with a highly professional, highly people-friendly staff.

• **Recruiting:** Given that many golf course owners already have videos touting their businesses as inviting places to work, posting those same productions on YouTube is a no-brainer. “Don't limit yourself to a single, long puff video,” Miller says. “Produce separate videos for individual departments, as well to illus-

trate company values, employee benefits, facilities and the like.”

• **Company Video FAQs:** Any golf course can leap well beyond the image of faceless, industry player with on-the-fly videos, which feature charming customer service people answering frequently asked questions. Sure, many businesses already have written FAQs on their websites. But there is something to be said for going the extra mile and offering the personal touch that's inherent in video.

• **News Video Clips:** The beauty of posting your golf course news to YouTube is that your information is not sliced, diced or in any other way whittled down to a mere shadow of its former glory. Plus, if you have a Facebook or Instagram site, you can cross-promote the two online presences by posting your golf course news on Facebook with a link to your supporting video on YouTube.

• **Focus Groups:** Many sophisticated users of YouTube are also using the service as a free testing ground for commercials they plan to run on cable and broadcast TV, and elsewhere on the web. Specifically, they use YouTube's free analytical tool, YouTube Analytics, to test the marketing punch of their commercials. The tool's metrics include the overall popularity of your video, who's viewing your video, where those viewers are coming from, and what keywords they're using to find your video.

• **Customer Communications:** When an email or friendly phone-call simply doesn't cut it, many golf course owners are posting videos to YouTube to connect in special ways with their customers.

• **Product/Service How-To's:** These videos can of course serve a dual purpose, educating customers while subtly marketing your brand.

• **Employee Training:** Any golf course with multiple locations across town, across the U.S. – or even across the world – can immediately see the benefit of posting training videos on YouTube, and having the appropriate staff dial in. And by using YouTube's “private broadcast”

“We find that video is the most effective format that supports our storytelling initiatives and communicating the resort's offerings and programming.”

option, your business can ensure the training videos stay internal.

“Many companies find that YouTube is a fast and effective way to disseminate all kinds of employee information,” Miller says. “Done right, it gets information out there in near-real-time, with all the benefit of face-to-face communication.”

• **Savings on Business Travel:** All the videos sent for staff use are also enabling many golf course owners to rack up substantial savings on business travel. Granted, there are plenty of instances where true face-to-face interaction is irreplaceable. But in many other situations, a video overture via YouTube is a bulls-eye compromise between basic email and an all-expenses paid business trip for one or more employees.

Joe Dysart is an internet speaker and business consultant and writer based in Manhattan.

Tiger Woods Design Project Has Chicagoans In An Uproar

It's a debate as old as sports itself. Does a new facility (or the expensive renovation of an existing one) really spark the economic revitalization promised by those who profit from the project?

In recent years, the answer is most often: No. From new, domed stadiums that displace dozens if not hundreds of urban residents, to Olympic complexes that look like props from The Walking Dead within a few short years, urban landscapes are replete with billion-dollar monuments to broken promises. Sochi's Olympic Village is a ghost town and the Rio facilities from the 2016

Games lay in crumbling ruins.

The most recent example is the America's Cup on the island of Bermuda. Brought to the island nation with great fanfare and the promise of renewed tourism, the yacht race underwhelmed in every respect, from room occupancy to projected rounds of golf. Two years later, Bermuda is still reeling from the costs of hosting a party for the richest yachtsmen in the world.

With that history, it's no wonder that Chicago residents are taking a close look at the new championship golf course proposed for Jackson Park and South Shore on the edge of Lake Michigan in some of Chicago's more economically desperate neighborhoods.

The plan, which was originally pulled

together by Chicago native and NBC golf analyst Mark Roling, was to take the 100-year-old Jackson Park municipal course and the nine-hole South Shore course and merge them into one dynamic 18-hole facility designed by Tiger Woods and Gil Hanse.

"I hope this course will be more than just golf and also make a positive impact in the community," Woods said at the time the project was announced.

But at a community meeting be-



Google Maps



Photo from Flickr

tween the Chicago Park District supervisors and local residents in late April, the rhetoric became more heated than anyone could have imagined.

Loud, angry neighbors, many of whom worry about the economics of a high-end public golf course in the area, demanded the involvement of newly elected mayor Lori Lightfoot. According to one activist, Lightfoot had voiced reservations about the Tiger Woods project.

"Golf courses are monocultures, very cultivated areas," said Anne Holcomb, an environmental activist and resident in the area. "They look green but they aren't green."

Holcomb went on to argue that, "The cost of using the

course will rise significantly for the public if the course is made over. We need to build up our business corridors. And the Tiger Woods course won't bring in more investment."

Adding to the complexity, the Obama Presidential Library will also be a part of the new Jackson Park project. How this course – the first built in the Chicago area in the new millennia – shapes up will say a lot about the future of golf in all urban areas. And it will say a lot about whether residents have had enough of the "trust us, it'll be great," promises from political leaders when it comes to sports-related capital projects.

Steve Eubanks is an Atlanta-based freelance writer and New York Times bestselling author.



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Connecting through a Digital Content Experience

BY MEGAN WENZL

Golf courses have been struggling to keep their doors open since the Great Recession, according to the United States Golf Association (USGA). In part because of a declining rate of new players from a younger generation, while there's a natural attrition as players age.

So, how can golf course operators get young people not only interested in playing the game of golf, but also get regular golfers to book a tee time more frequently at their golf course?

Every form of entertainment is competing with golf, so golf courses have to be entertaining – in all experiences.

If that's the case, then golf course operators need to make their digital experiences as entertaining as possible. One of the first digital places a golfer begins interaction with your golf course is your website.

How One Colorado Golf Course is Changing the Game

Mile High Golf Trail, located in the greater Denver area, is an example of a group of golf courses that has created an interactive experience that gets golfers excited when first visiting their website.

When Mile High Golf Trail wanted to put the four separate courses they own into one golf experience they knew they needed a new website to rebrand and show golfers that they were four courses under one name. Before, Mile High marketed themselves as four separate courses with four separate websites.

To further emphasize they were one experience, they created a pass that gave golfers access to all four courses with one purchase called the "Trail Pass." The pass has increased sales



significantly for Mile High Golf Trail.

"The Trail is creating buzz," says the team at Mile High. Before

the new website, the courses were four separate courses. Now, golfers are curious about the golf experience of all four courses.

The Mission

Mile High wanted to make sure their website stood out from the competition. The design team they hired to come up with a website idea that united four golf courses into one to create the Colorado destination for golf – all while creating a website experience to interest any golfer in booking a tee time.

The website also needed to reflect the Trail's mission: "Bring golf back to families."

Maggie Fischbach, marketing director for Mile High Golf Trail, explains: "Golf used to be something that was thought of as the father of the house's sport. Now, golf is expanding to a whole family experience due to the way family dynamics are changing. Our mission also speaks to the way we treat our customers. We want everyone from the customer to the employee to feel like family."

The Website

What is the golf experience like when playing a beautiful 18 holes? It's interactive, it's detailed, and it's connecting with nature. That's exactly what the design team thought about while designing Mile High Golf Trail's website.

The design team considered what elements about a golf course that golfers would be interested in and let that lead

where the content would be viewed. Knowing that avid golfers are "data nuts," and interested in the details of the holes, the design a similar experience to what players would find in a golf cart.

For example, on the website, there's a display of different elevations and yardages of each of Mile High's courses – The Colorado National, Riverdale, Plum Creek and Bear Dance. Each is shown as the viewer scrolls down the homepage.

Users truly get an interactive experience throughout the entire website. They can click on each individual golf course and get an interactive course tour. When a user clicks on each of the holes they get exact yardages to the hole from each color tee. No need to wait until you get a scorecard from the pro shop – the yardages are right there on the website.

The Takeaway

Golfers buy things like every other customer. They go online and search for the product or service they feel is best for them.

They'll play at a golf course that they think will be fun and rewarding. But how do they know whether or not your golf course is the best choice if they've never been there? The golfer's decision to book a tee time will likely be based on the type of interaction they have with your website.

"[The website] is the first impression of the golf course," says Fischbach. "I think our website makes us different and stand out from other courses."

Megan Wenzl is community outreach associate with Clique Studios. For more information she can be reached at mwenzl@cliquestudios.com.

Final THOUGHTS

Kristine Botelho

COO, ST. CROIX NATIONAL GOLF AND EVENT CENTER
SOMERSET, WISCONSIN

It was a tough winter. How has the extreme weather impacted your facility?

We are located on the Wisconsin border near the Twin Cities. We had heavy snow. This was followed by extreme cold temperatures, which hammered the greens in some courses. Fortunately, our greens are 99 percent bentgrass, and what little Poa Annua we have (a non-desirable species in greens) was stunted and the bentgrass is thriving in its place.

Do you think owners should be concerned about the changes in weather patterns?

Golf owners should be concerned about any elements that could affect business and play for golfers. In the Midwest, we are used to extreme changes in the weather. Some years we open in March and some in May. This means that we need to make every day count as two.

Who is the new golfer you're trying to attract?

Our goal is to attract the any golfer who wants to have fun with family and friends, to be the place where people can come and enjoy golf, the scenery and the ambiance. Our marketing is anything but typical in the industry. We strive to be bold, funny, edgy and energetic in our messaging. If it isn't bold, it blends into looking like every other golf course marketing.

How do you feel about alternative ways of play vs. traditional golf to bring in more revenue?

Last year we were open for golf for only 4.5 months. In the Midwest, embracing winter sports will enable us to build other revenue streams. This past November we installed four golf simulators and are expanding our clubhouse to have golf all year and keep our trained workforce. Fortunately, we have on our property a famous abandoned ski hill, Snowcrest, and we are beginning to design a tubing hill, skiing and snowboard park. This investment will help secure other additional winter revenue.

What do you think is the biggest misconception that the golf industry is fighting today?

There are many misconceptions such as expensive, hard to play and taking too much time. The simulation golf is helping break those misconceptions. Our focus will be on bringing golf and fitness to our guests with the importance of warming up, stretching and strengthening to improve your game. Further, offering healthy food options as well as the staple food of hotdogs, fried cheese curds and Salted Nut Rolls.

Who do you see as your biggest competitor?

Our biggest competition is always other golf courses. All golf courses need to do well without having to slash rates. Our goal is to differentiate ourselves and offer an attractive proposition for all players. We strive to make our public course feel like a very personal course for all players with better conditions and customer service. Topgolf entered this market and we hope they will help convert non-golfers to play more and to have fun with the sport while increasing the simulator business.



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☐ Yes ☐ No

Signature X _____ Date _____

2) Which one option best characterizes your organization? (check one only)

- 01 ☐ Golf Course Facility/Group of Facilities
02 ☐ Off-Course Golf Retailer
03 ☐ Golf Industry Manufacturer/Vendor/Distributor
04 ☐ Golf Course Consultant

3) What one option most closely matches your job function/title? (select one only)

- 01 ☐ President/CEO
02 ☐ Owner/Operator
03 ☐ Chairman of the Board
04 ☐ CFO/Financial Manager
05 ☐ General Manager
06 ☐ Club Manager
07 ☐ Director of Golf
08 ☐ Executive/National/Regional Director/Manager
09 ☐ Purchasing Manager/Buyer
10 ☐ Golf Professional
11 ☐ Golf Superintendent
12 ☐ Member, Board of Directors
13 ☐ Marketing/Sales Manager/Director
15 ☐ Other (please specify) _____

4) Which one best describes the nature of your organization? (select one only)

- 10 ☐ Private
11 ☐ Privately-Owned Daily Fee
12 ☐ Semi-Private
13 ☐ Resort
14 ☐ Municipal/State/County
16 ☐ Military
17 ☐ University/College
18 ☐ Driving Range/Practice Facility
20 ☐ Development Company
28 ☐ Golf Course Builder
21 ☐ Other (please specify) _____
21 ☐ Not Applicable

5) Are you affiliated with a golf course management company?

01 ☐ yes 02 ☐ no

6) How many facilities, in total, are you personally responsible for?

80 ☐ less than 2 83 ☐ 10 or more
81 ☐ 2 - 4 99 ☐ Not applicable
82 ☐ 5 - 9

7) What is the average greens fee for a typical round of golf at your facility? If you work at multiple facilities, please indicate the average greens fee across all facilities.

- 01 ☐ nothing/private 05 ☐ \$75 - \$99
02 ☐ o less than \$25 06 ☐ \$100 - \$149
03 ☐ \$25 - \$49 07 ☐ \$150 or more
04 ☐ \$50 - \$74 08 ☐ not applicable

8) What is the total annual budget or expenditures for which you are responsible?

- 50 ☐ less than \$99,000 53 ☐ \$500,000 - \$999,000
51 ☐ \$100,000 - \$249,000 54 ☐ \$1,000,000 - \$2,499,000
52 ☐ \$250,000 - \$499,000 55 ☐ \$2,500,000 or more

9) In which ways are you personally involved in your organization's purchasing decisions?

- 60 ☐ Determine annual budget expenditures
61 ☐ Authorize final purchases
62 ☐ Determine needs of the operation
63 ☐ Specify/recommend vendors or suppliers
64 ☐ Specify/recommend specific brands
65 ☐ Evaluate brands for purchase

10) Which products/services listed below do you specify, recommend, buy or approve the purchase? (select all that apply)

- A ☐ Golf Cars
B ☐ Turf Equipment
C ☐ Course Design/Construction/Renovation
D ☐ Irrigation & Drainage
E ☐ Chemicals, Fertilizer & Seed
G ☐ Clubhouse Design/Construction/Renovation
H ☐ Financial Services
T ☐ Legal Services
F ☐ Course Accessories
J ☐ Insurance
U ☐ Marketing Services
L ☐ Pro Shop Apparel
M ☐ Pro Shop Equipment
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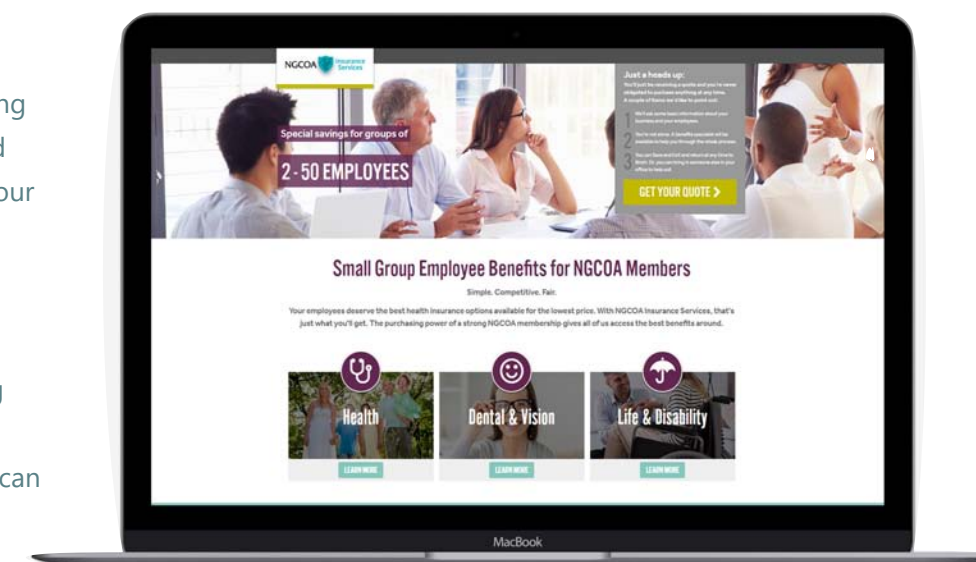
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Record-High 244 Meetings with Members of Congress from 41 States Showcase the Game's Value & Importance Across U.S.

Golf industry leaders participated in a record-high 244 meetings with members of Congress representing 41 states to discuss the game's economic, social and environmental contributions to the United States.

Coordinated by a coalition of golf's leading associations and industry partners under the banner of WE ARE GOLF, National Golf Day brings together more than 300 industry leaders from across the U.S. to support the game's \$84.1 billion economy, nearly \$4 billion annual charitable impact, close to 15,000 diverse businesses and 2M jobs impacted.

"We are here to educate our elected officials that the golf industry is made up of many small businesses that contribute to our national economy," said Jay Karen, NGCOA's CEO and Chair of the WE ARE GOLF Board. "The importance of fair and good taxation policies is paramount to the success of our businesses."

Read the official announcement at wearegolf.org/national-golf-day.



SAVE THE DATE for Golf Business Conference 2020, January 20-22 in Orlando, FL!

Mark your calendar TODAY for Golf Business Conference 2020, at the Orange County Convention Center in Orlando, FL. Expert speakers, relevant education, the annual Yamaha Golf Outing and Celebration & Awards Dinner, full access to the PGA Merchandise Show exhibition hall, and abundant opportunities to connect with hundreds of your peers, industry suppliers—and this year, PGA professionals—all in one exciting place! **Bookmark golfbusinessconference.com**; we'll let you know when registration opens!



NGCOA Hosts Technology Forum at 2019 PGA Fashion & Demo Experience

Taking place during Las Vegas Fashion Week, the annual PGA Fashion & Demo Experience is a trade-only event where PGA Professionals and buyers come



PGA
2019 FASHION &
DEMO EXPERIENCE

together on the west coast to discover the latest in golf apparel & athleisure, accessories, equipment, technology and more. The show features two days of exhibits, an exciting live Fashion Show & Networking Reception at TAO (new venue!), and educational programming at the upscale Venetian Hotel as well as the PGA Demo Experience at Topgolf (now being held on Wednesday, August 14.) New this year, NGCOA will present two Technology Forum panel sessions on the Show Floor Stage, on Tuesday, August 13 at 1:00 p.m. and again at 4:00 p.m. This is the place to meet face-to-face to **drive your business forward**. Learn more and register at pgalasvegas.com.

PARTNERSHIPS



Get significant savings from NGCOA Insurance Services, no matter the size of your staff or the size of your course



NGCOA's newest member benefit, **NGCOA Insurance Services**, makes comprehensive and flexible insurance services affordable and available to golf courses of all sizes.

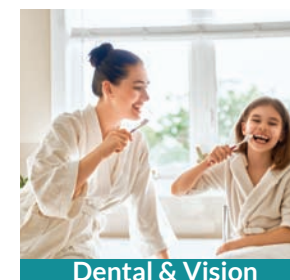
NGCOA member golf courses and their employees will have access to best rates on:

- **Medical & Pharmacy:** (includes Dental, Vision, Life and Disability insurance). NGCOA members can save an average of 10% on their healthcare and pharmacy spend.
- **Property & Casualty Insurance:** NGCOA members eligible for captive solutions can earn an average 30% of premium, less for guaranteed cost plans.
- **Flood Protection Solutions:** NGCOA members receive a detailed flood risk assessment, 24/7 flood monitoring, and 24/7 flood mitigation and defense.

Consider your business' insurance needs today! Then **visit the NGCOA Insurance Services website at ngcoainsuranceservices.com to learn more and get a risk-free quote!**



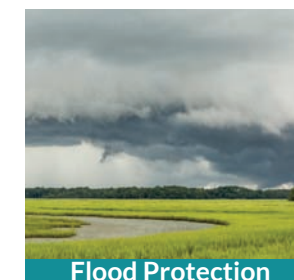
Medical & Pharmacy



Dental & Vision



Property & Casualty



Flood Protection

SAVINGS WITH SMART BUY



Do you already use any of these suppliers?

You might already be using products and services found in the NGCOA Smart Buy Marketplace—shouldn't you be paying less for them? NGCOA's relationships with industry-leading golf operations suppliers give you **discounted rates, rebates and value-added packages not available anywhere else**. Visit ngcoa.org/smartbuy to discover which products and services you're already using, and hundreds of companies you may not have considered yet. Don't you want to **get the very best price from a supplier that supports your industry?**



NGCOA In Action

COMMUNITY



What are Other NGCOA Members Talking About on Accelerate?

Did you know there are Accelerate Members-Only Communities you can join, based on your interests, needs and engagement with NGCOA? **Visit accelerate.ngcoa.org to read more about and add to the discussion of critical issues in golf business.**

- Accelerate (General) Community for all NGCOA members
- Supplier Community for NGCOA's Corporate Members
- Advocacy Issues & Alerts
- Golf Business TechCon and Golf Business Conference for event attendees
- Trading Post where members can buy and sell used equipment

Here is a sample of recent discussions; reply to these, or post your own for member feedback!

Credit Card Processor

“ Anybody else having problems with their new credit card processor? It has been 15 days now with no credit card remittance. ”

Play and Stay Packages

“ I have been approached by a local hotel about developing a play and stay package. I'm very interested, but don't know where to begin. I don't even know what questions to ask here. Could someone get me started by pointing me in the right direction? ”

Driving Range Ball Dispensers

“ We have used Range Servant ball dispensing machines and ball washers for many years at our two golf courses but are now having major customer service issues with this company. Do you have any other recommendations for driving range equipment? ”

NGCOA Member Trading Post

Did you know Accelerate Member Community has a “Trading Post” where you can buy and sell used equipment? Visit accelerate.ngcoa.org/communities and join the Trading Post community today.



NEW! GBC19 attendees can now access speaker presentation materials and begin post-conference discussions in the 2019 Golf Business Conference community!

Have You Listened to the Latest Episode of the Golf Business Podcast?

In each Golf Business Podcast episode, you'll enjoy a selection of segments on Inside Golf Business, Owner to Owner, and House Chat—original, curated, informative content to help your golf course business thrive and grow. **Listen now at ngcoa.org/podcast!**



GOLF BUSINESS PODCAST

AFFILIATE NEWS



Midwest Golf Course Owners Association

14 Annual Owners Outing and Field Day

July 8
Windsong Farm Golf Club
Maple Plain, MN
Contact Curt Walker at mwgcoa@aol.com or 952-854-7272



California Golf Course Owners Association (CGCOA)

Southern California Fundraiser

July 8
MountainGate Country Club
Los Angeles, CA
Contact Marc Connerly at mconnerly@connerlyandassociates.com or 916-456-0500



Ohio Golf Course Owners Association

Buckeye Golf Association Field Day

July 15
Tannenhaut Golf Club
Alliance, OH
Contact Ken Guenther at keng@buckeyegolf.com or 614-563-5551



Ohio Golf Course Owners Association

Buckeye Golf Association Field Day

July 16
Locust Hills Golf Club
Springfield, OH
Contact Ken Guenther at keng@buckeyegolf.com or 614-563-5551



Michigan Golf Course Association

MGCA Annual Golf Outing

July 17
Bedford Valley Golf Course;
Battle Creek, MI
Contact Jada Paisley at jpaisley@michigangca.org or 800-860-8575



Michigan Golf Course Association

Ladies Day Away 9 Hole Event and Clinic

July 21
Fox Hills Golf and Banquet Center
Plymouth, MI
Contact info@michigangca.org



Michigan Golf Course Association

Ladies Day Away 9 Hole Event and Clinic

August 4
The Lynx Golf Course
Otsego, MI
Contact info@michigangca.org



NGCOA Mid-Atlantic

NGCOA MA VIP Reception

September 24
Woodmont Country Club,
Rockville, MD
Contact David Norman at dnorman008@gmail.com or 804-708-9760



NGCOA Mid-Atlantic

NGCOA MA Annual Meeting

September 25
Woodmont Country Club,
Rockville, MD
Contact David Norman at dnorman008@gmail.com or 804-708-9760



Michigan Golf Course Association

Michigan Golf League Championship

September 29
Eagle Eye Golf Course
Bath, MI
Contact info@michigangca.org



North Carolina Golf Course Owners Association (NCGCOA)

Annual Meeting

October 8-9, 2019
Pine Needles Lodge and Golf Club
Southern Pines, NC
Contact David Norman at Dnorman008@gmail.com or 804-708-9760



Ohio Golf Course Owners Association

Buckeye Golf Association Annual Conference

November 4-5
Embassy Suites/Muirfield Golf Club
Dublin, OH
Contact Ken Guenther at keng@buckeyegolf.com or 614-563-5551



Golf Course Owners of Wisconsin

GCOW Fall Meeting & Awards Luncheon

November 13
Grand Geneva Resort
Lake Geneva, WI
Contact jeffs@gcow.org



NGCOA In Action

START
\$AVING
NOW

NGCOA
Smart Buy Marketplace

NGCOA members get significant **discounts, rebates and value-added packages** from hundreds of the most recognized names and reputable, industry-leading companies. Many of these companies offer exclusive deals not available anywhere else.



Golf Cars & Utility Vehicles

Members converting from a competitor receive \$50 per-car for purchase or lease. Members renewing their fleet receive a free registration for Golf Business Conference or TechCon.



Golf Simulators

5% discount off MSRP.



Human Resources & Payroll

30% discount on new ADP services.



Insurance

Comprehensive employee benefits (health, dental, vision, life and disability), property casualty insurance, and flood risk assessment services at competitive rates.



Business Credit Card

No Annual Fee with Unlimited 2% Cash Back.



Performance Reporting & Benchmarking

30%-50% discount on all reporting packages.



Television Programming

Up to 60% savings on programming.



Beverage Supplier

Rebates on various Pepsi and Gatorade fountain, bottle and can products; includes equipment and service programs.



Food and Beverage

Typical savings is 7% to 15% on more than 800 vendors, including Sysco, Gordon Food Service, Performance Food Group, and many others.



Customer Experience Solution

Free survey tool and 55% off Players 1st's top-tier Combined Package.



Alternative Golf

15% discount on lowest pricing available at FlingGolf.com.



Irrigation Solutions

1.5% rebate on Rain Bird Golf Irrigation products.



Pre-Owned Turf Equipment

Discounts on tiered pricing plus 120-day extended warranty (normally 90-day).



New and Used Turf Maintenance Equipment

1% rebate on new and/or 0.5% rebate on used Toro branded turf maintenance equipment.



Automotive Vehicle Manufacturer

Significant factory direct fleet discounts on 2019 GM products.

FIND DETAILS AND TERMS ON SAVINGS
FROM THESE BRANDS AND MORE AT [NGCOA.ORG/SMARTBUY](https://ngcoa.org/smartbuy)



YOUR JOURNEY

Bringing business leadership and golf expertise to Belfair Golf Club, General Manager/COO Ken Kosak, PGA, allows board members to focus their attention on strategy and long-term growth.



OUR BUSINESS

Wherever your golf journey is
headed, let's get you there.



[PGA.COM/JOURNEYS](https://pga.com/journeys)

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