

Golf Business

2010 Profile Study

GolfBUSINESS[®]



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The findings cited in this report are based on a survey sponsored by the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) on behalf of their publication, *Golf Business*.

PURPOSE

Through the use of a mail survey representing key segments of *Golf Business* domestic, qualified circulation, the purpose of this research project was to provide the editors and advertisers with a profile of this audience.

Specific areas of inquiry included:

- recipients' readership, use, and opinions of *Golf Business*
- their preferences for future topic coverage
- their use of other information sources publications
- the nature of their jobs and golf facilities
- their purchasing involvement

The survey sample of 1,100 was selected in systematic, stratified fashion by the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and Readex Research from *Golf Business*' domestic, qualified circulation (excluding those classified as golf professionals, golf superintendents and those in the following business/industry categories: development company, golf course builder; other golf facilities and others allied to the field), representing 17,428 recipients (or about 92% of *Golf Business*' entire estimated 19,000 circulation) at the time of sample selection.

Data was collected via mail survey from May 24 to July 7, 2010. The survey was closed for tabulation with 275 usable responses—a 25% response rate. As with any research, the results should be interpreted with the potential of non-response bias in mind. It is unknown how those who responded to the survey may be different from those who did not respond. In general, the higher the response rate, the lower the probability of estimation errors due to non-response and thus, the more stable the results.

The margin of error for percentages based on 275 usable responses is ± 5.9 percentage points at the 95% confidence level. The margin of error for percentages based on smaller sample sizes will be larger.

(Please refer to the Appendix for details of the survey method.)

METHOD

Readex Research is a nationally recognized independent research company located in Stillwater, Minnesota. Its roots are in survey research for the magazine publishing industry, but specialization in conducting high-quality survey research (by mail and/or the Internet) has brought clients from many other markets, including associations, corporate marketers and communicators, and government agencies. Since its founding in 1947, Readex has completed thousands of surveys for a lengthy and diverse list of clients.

As a full-service survey research supplier, Readex provides in-house processing of all phases of each project (traditional mailing, broadcast emailing, and data processing) to ensure complete control over project quality and schedule. Analytical capabilities include a range of multivariate statistics and modeling techniques, in addition to the more traditional stub-and-banner tabulations.

This survey was conducted and this report was prepared by Readex in accordance with accepted research standards and practices.

ABOUT READEX RESEARCH

FINDINGS

Work Profile

Specific job titles/functions among *Golf Business* recipients¹ vary, although managerial titles are common: *general manager* (33%), *owner/operator* (24%), *president/CEO* (8%), and *CFO/financial manager* (1%). Other top mentions include *director of golf* (14%) and *club manager* (6%).

In terms of golf facilities, responses show similar diversity. The highest proportions of recipients work in golf facilities that are either *private* (21%), *semi-private* (17%), *public* (15%), or *privately-owned daily fee* (15%). 7% do not work in a golf facility.

Most recipients (75%) indicated they are responsible for only one facility. Fewer (14%) are responsible for two or more and 2% are not responsible for any facilities. On average, recipients are responsible for 1.3 facilities.

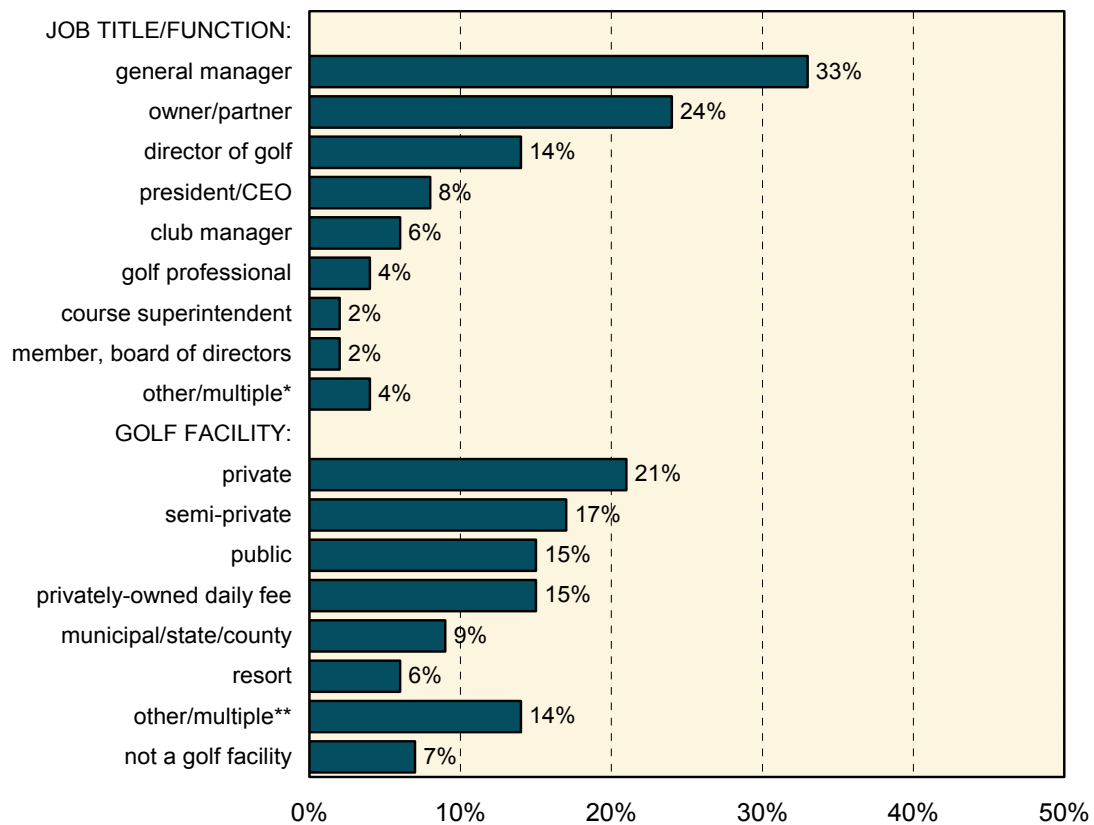
| Number of Facilities Responsible For | |
|--------------------------------------|-----|
| 3 or more | 7% |
| 2 | 7% |
| 1 | 75% |
| none | 2% |
| <i>mean:</i> | 1.3 |
| <i>median:</i> | 1 |

base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients

¹ “Recipient” refers to the 275 individuals from key segments in *Golf Business*’ domestic, qualified circulation who responded to the survey, representing 17,428 individuals (or approximately 92% of *Golf Business*’ entire estimated 19,000 circulation) at the time of sample selection.

Work Profile

FINDINGS Work Profile



base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients

*includes CFO/financial manager, purchasing manager/buyer, marketing/sales manager/director, executive/national/regional director/manager, other

**includes driving range/practice facility, university/college, military

Purchasing Involvement

Purchasing involvement is nearly universal. The vast majority of recipients (96%) are involved in their organizations' purchases of products/services, including over four in five (85%) at the highest level of involvement—*approve items within budget*.

| Usual Purchasing Involvement | |
|---------------------------------------------|-----|
| NET: INVOLVED IN SOME WAY | 96% |
| approve items within budget | 85% |
| develop selection criteria for staff | 35% |
| select from pre-screened products/suppliers | 28% |
| recommend products/ideas | 53% |
| specify particular suppliers/brands | 34% |
| involved in some other way | 12% |

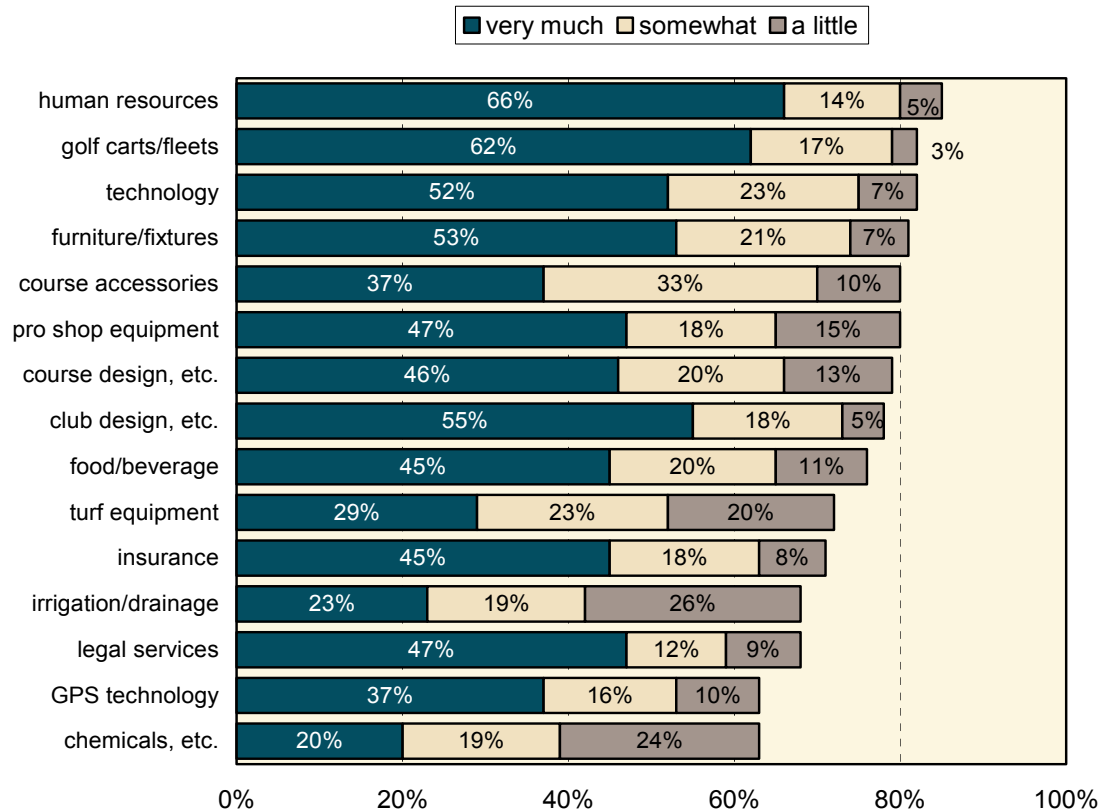
base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients (multiple answers)

In regard to specific products/services, recipients were asked their purchasing involvement of 15 products/services for their organizations using the categories *involved very much*, *involved somewhat*, *involved a little*, and *not involved*. At least four in five recipients indicated purchasing involvement in *human resources/staffing* (85%), *golf carts/fleets* (83%), *technology* (81%), *furniture/fixtures* (81%), *course accessories* (80%), and/or *pro shop equipment/apparel* (80%).

At the highest level of involvement, very much, top mentions included *human resources/staffing* (66%), *golf carts/fleets* (62%), *club design/renovation/construction* (55%), *furniture/fixtures* (53%) and/or *technology* (52%).

Level of Purchasing Involvement for products/services

FINDINGS Purchasing Involvement



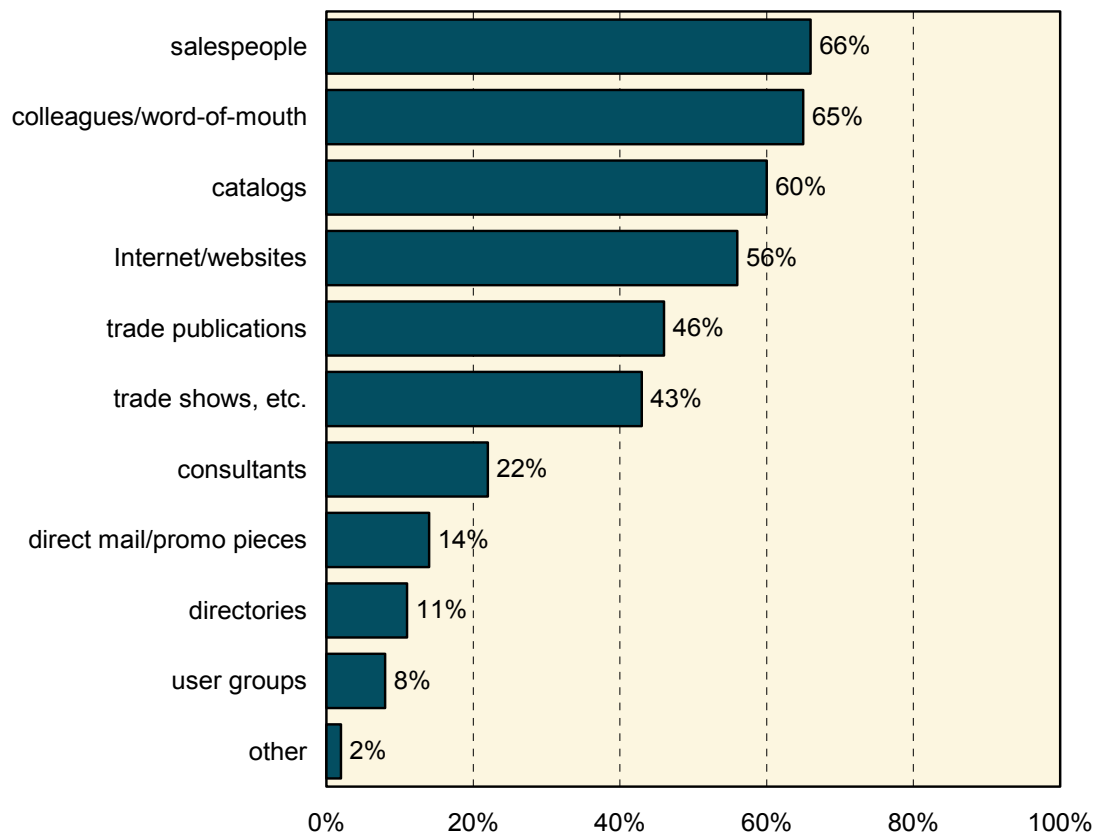
base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients

Purchasing Involvement

It stands to reason that recipients would use many resources when considering purchases for such a wide variety of items. *Trade publications* are common, as over two in five recipients (46%) indicated they use this resource. Other top mentions included *salespeople* (66%), *colleagues/word-of-mouth* (65%), *catalogs* (60%), and/or *Internet/websites* (56%).

Resources Used for Purchasing Information

FINDINGS
Purchasing Involvement



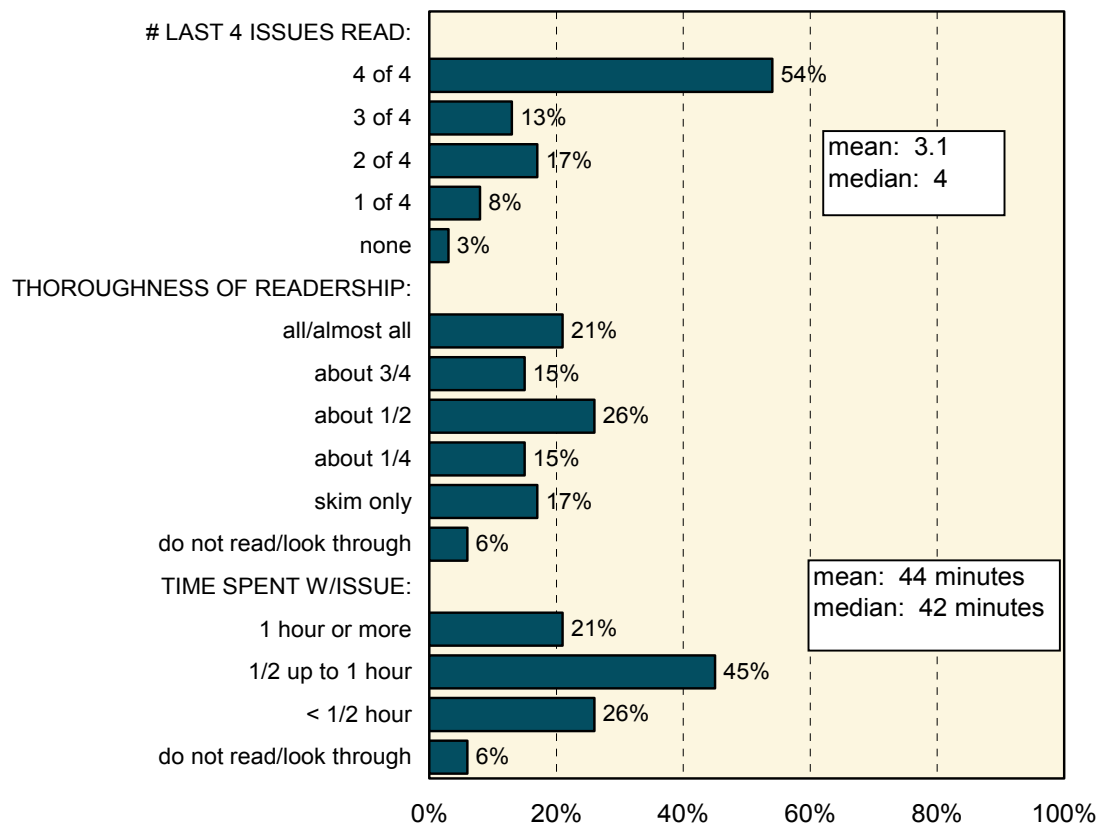
base: 275 Golf Business recipients (multiple answers)

Readership, Use, and Opinions of Golf Business

Golf Business recipients prove to be well engaged with their copies of the publication. The typical recipient has read or looked through all four of the last four issues and spends 42 minutes reading/looking through a typical issue. Over three in five (61%) recipients read about ½ or more of a typical issue. Details on each of these behaviors follows.

- **Regularity of Readership** - Over half (54%) have read all of the last four *Golf Business* issues and an additional 13% have read three of the last four. Only 3% indicated they have read none. 2% are new recipients and had not yet received four issues at the time the survey was received.
- **Thoroughness of Readership** - 21% of recipients read all or almost all of a typical issue, and an additional 15% read about ¾. 17% indicated they skim it only and 6% do not read/look through a typical issue.
- **Time Spent with a Typical Issue** - 65% of recipients spend at least 30 minutes or more reading or looking through a typical issue of *Golf Business*, including 20% who spend one hour or more with one.

Readership Behaviors of Golf Business



base: 275 Golf Business recipients

FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and Opinions of *Golf Business*

Readership, Use, and Opinions of Golf Business

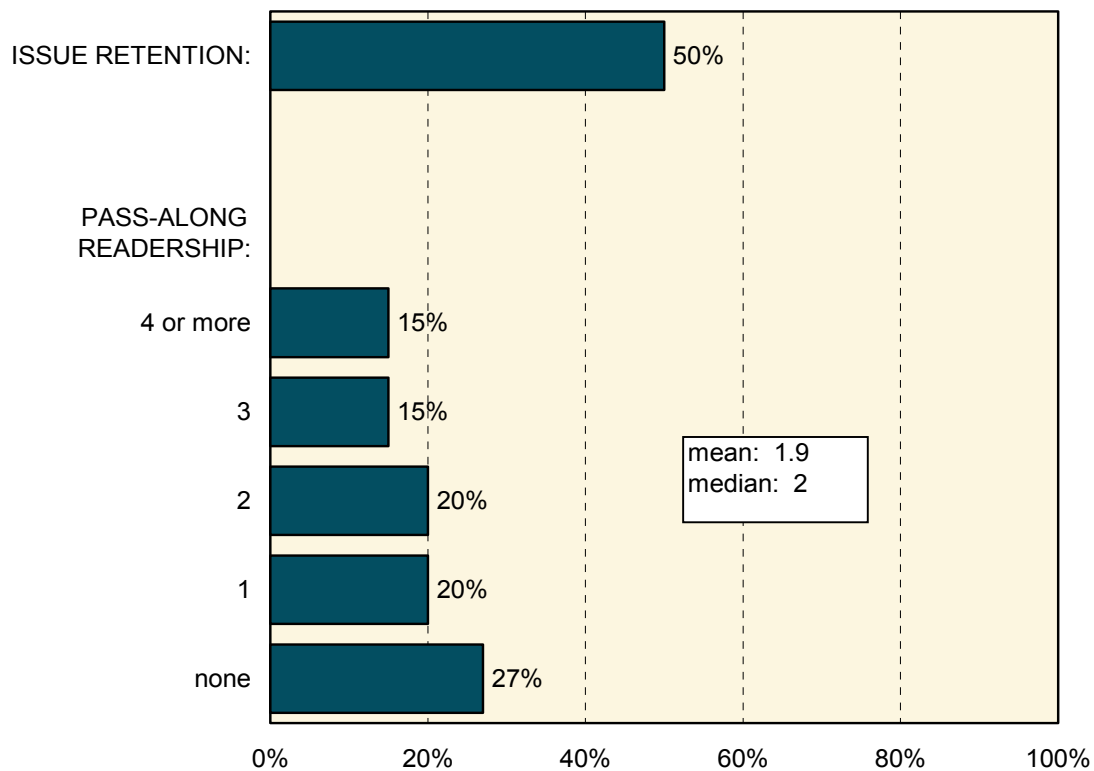
Golf Business has life beyond its initial receipt. Half of recipients (50%) save their issues for reference and 70% pass their issues to at least one other person, including 50% who pass them to multiple people. The typical recipient passes an issue of *Golf Business* to 2 others, extending *Golf Business*' reach to over 34,000 additional readers beyond the circulation².

² Number of pass-along readers is calculated as the number of recipients represented by the survey sample (17,428) multiplied by the median pass-along (2.0), rounded to the nearest thousand.

Issue Retention/Pass-Along Readership

FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and Opinions of *Golf Business*



base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients

Readership, Use, and Opinions of Golf Business

Golf Business prompts recipients to take action. Four in five recipients (79%) have taken at least one action in the last 12 months as a result of reading articles or columns in *Golf Business*. At least one-third *discussed item with others* (56%), *passed item along to others* (47%), and/or *visited a website* (33%).

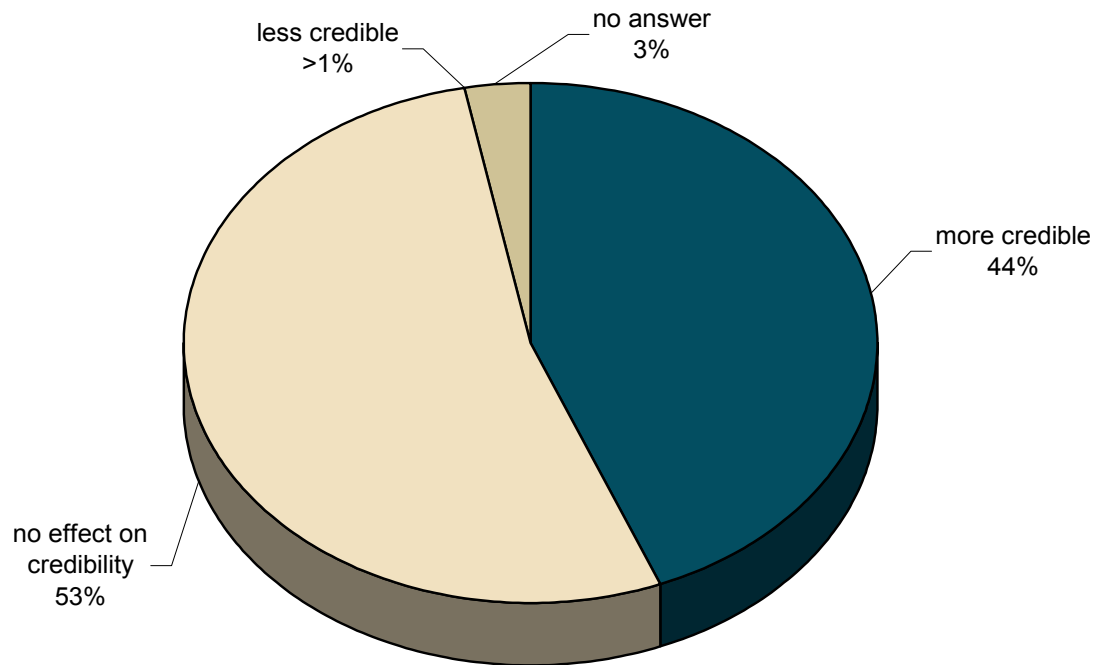
A substantial proportion (58%) have also taken at least one action in the last 12 months as a result of reading advertisements in *Golf Business*. Over one in five *visited an advertiser's website* (30%) and/or *discussed ad with others* (22%).

| Actions Taken Due to Reading Ads (in the last 12 months) | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| visited an advertiser's website | 30% |
| discussed ad with others | 22% |
| passed ad along to others | 19% |
| contacted dealer, supplier, or representative | 13% |
| filed ad for future reference | 12% |
| purchased/ordered a product/service | 9% |
| recommended a product/service | 6% |
| contacted advertiser in some other way | 6% |
| other | 1% |
| AT LEAST ONE | 58% |

base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients (multiple answers)

Golf Business is a valuable venue for advertisers to reach potential purchasers of their products/ services. In fact, 44% indicated advertising in *Golf Business* makes a company/product more credible whereas less than 1% thinks it makes a company/product less credible. About half (53%) think it has no effect on credibility.

Effect of Golf Business on Advertising Credibility



FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and Opinions of *Golf Business*

base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients

Readership, Use, and Opinions of Golf Business

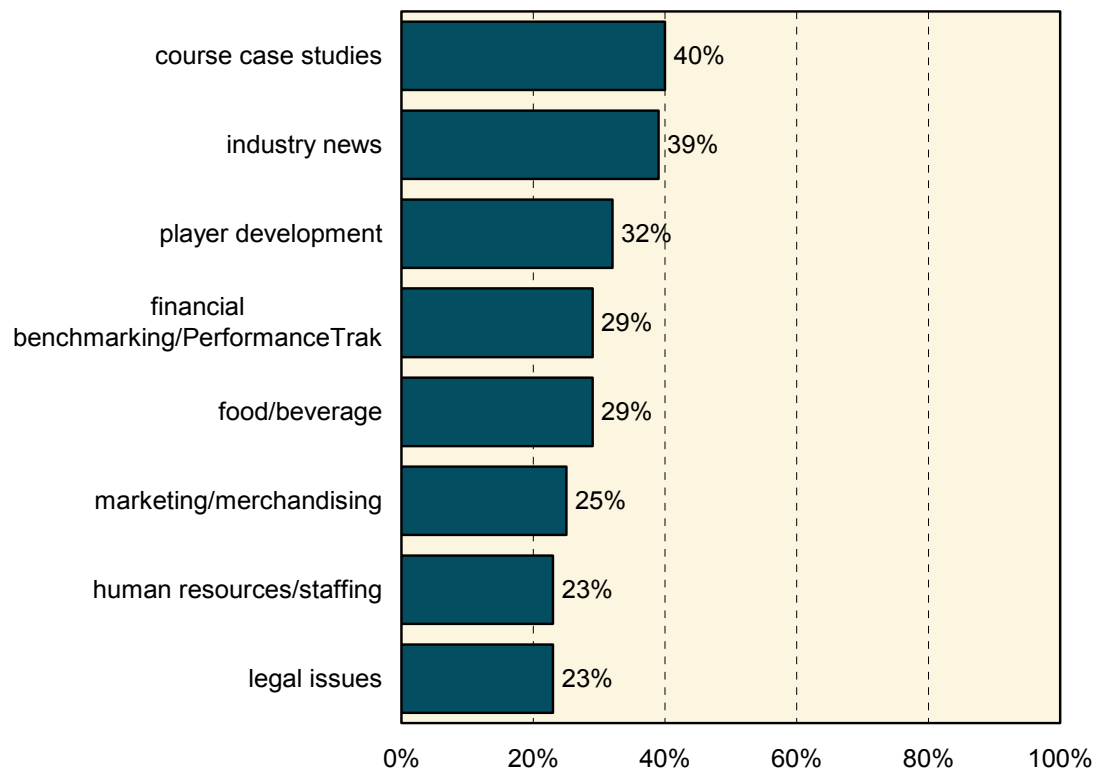
Using the categories *more*, *about the same*, or *less*, recipients were asked their coverage preferences for 28 topics in *Golf Business*. In general, recipients are satisfied with the amount of coverage given to each topic. However, two in five would like to see more coverage of *course case studies* (40%) and/or *industry news* (39%).

Proportions of recipients wanting to see less of any topic are modest. The two items receiving the most substantial mentions were *real estate development* (25%) and *global positioning technology* (24%).

Top mentions cited by those wishing for increased coverage are graphed at right. See Tables 011 - 039 in the Data Tables for a complete listing of all items asked about on the survey.

Topic Coverage Preferences

% wanting more coverage (top mentions)



base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients (multiple answers)

FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and Opinions of *Golf Business*

Readership, Use, and Opinions of Golf Business

Using a 5-point scale where 5 = very interested and 1 = not at all interested, recipients were asked to rate their interest in reading about eight topics in *Golf Business*. Based on those rating each a 4 or 5, recipients expressed the most interest in reading about *consumer golf news* (56%) and *general economic news* (48%) in *Golf Business*.

In open-ended fashion, recipients were asked what other topics they would like to see covered in *Golf Business*. Comments varied, with several centering around the theme of business development:

“Developing younger clientele base.”

“Ideas to make golf courses more profitable. Marketing.”

“Leadership, strategic thinking.”

“More on marketing, sales ideas, P.R. and customer service.”

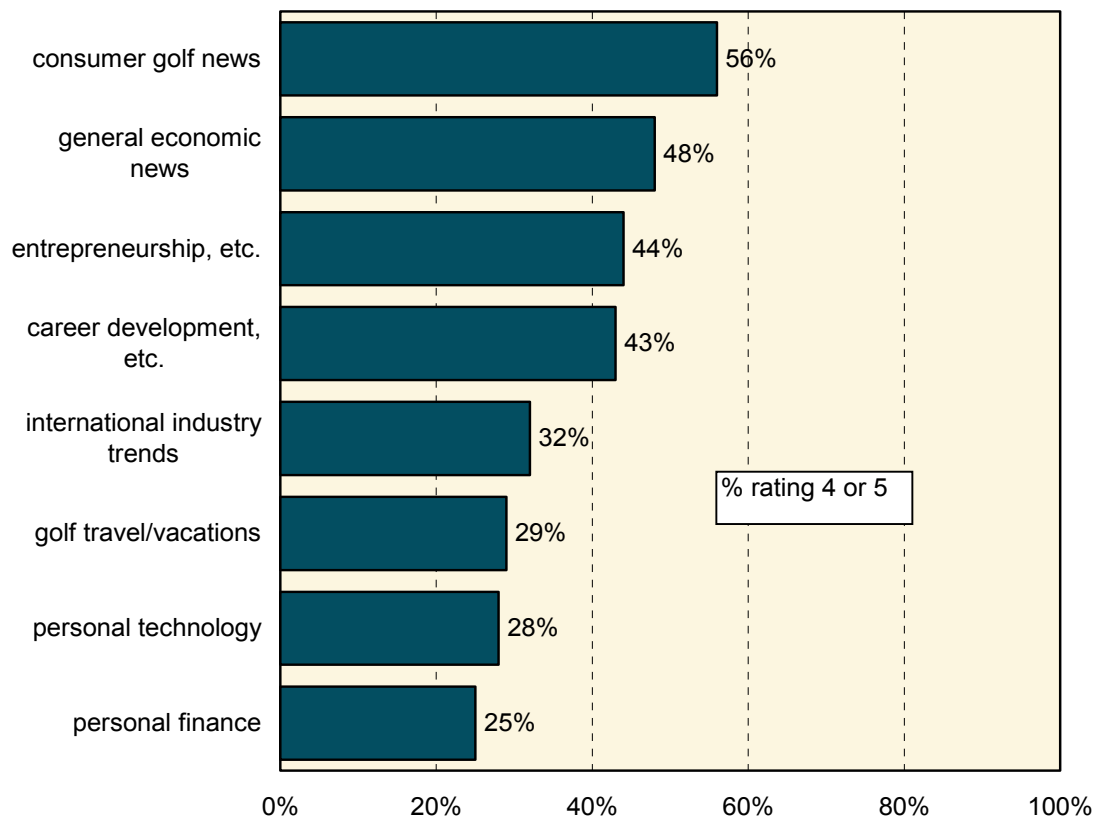
“New business trends, sales initiatives.”

“Sales/marketing and retention.”

A complete listing of all verbatim comments can be found in the Appendix section of this report.

Level of Topic Interest

5-point scale: 5 = very interested; 1 = not at all interested



base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients (multiple answers)

FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and Opinions of *Golf Business*

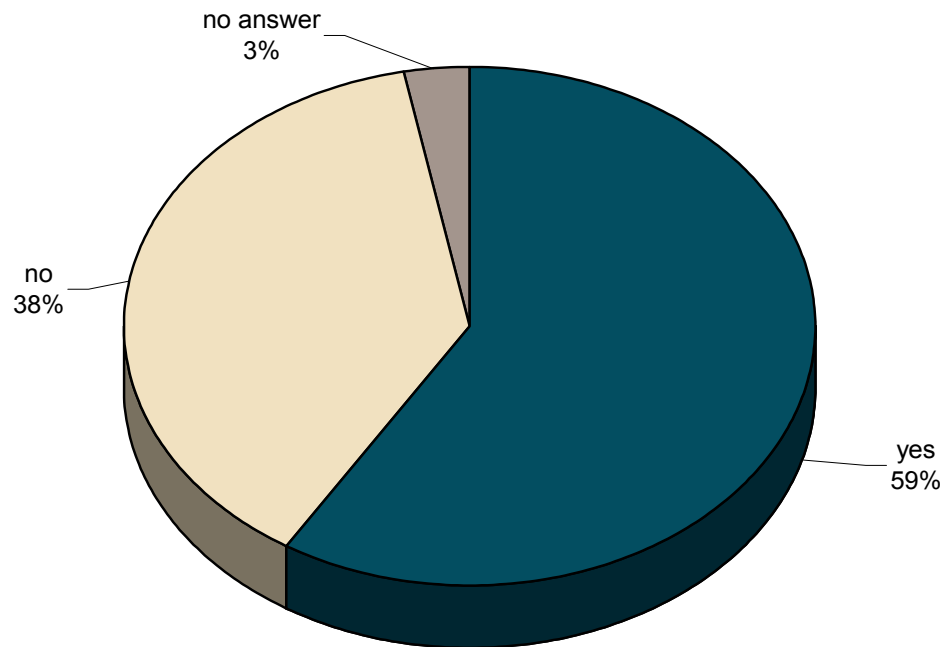
NGCOA Affiliation

The majority of recipients (59%) were aware, prior to receiving the survey, that *Golf Business* is the official publication of the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA); 38% were not.

It is clear that recipients view this affiliation positively. Three in five recipients (61%) indicated the affiliation with NGCOA makes the publication more credible and less than 1% indicated it makes it less credible. One-third (36%) indicated it has no effect on credibility.

Proportion Aware that Golf Business is Official NGCOA Publication

FINDINGS
NGCOA Affiliation



base: 275 Golf Business recipients

Golf Business Website

Use of *Golf Business* online is marginal among recipients with 35% having visited its website, including 13% who do at least monthly.

Just over half (53%) of website visitors indicated they visit the *Golf Business* website to review current content, either in the regular format and/or in the Digital FlipBook. Two in five (42%) do so to search the archives.

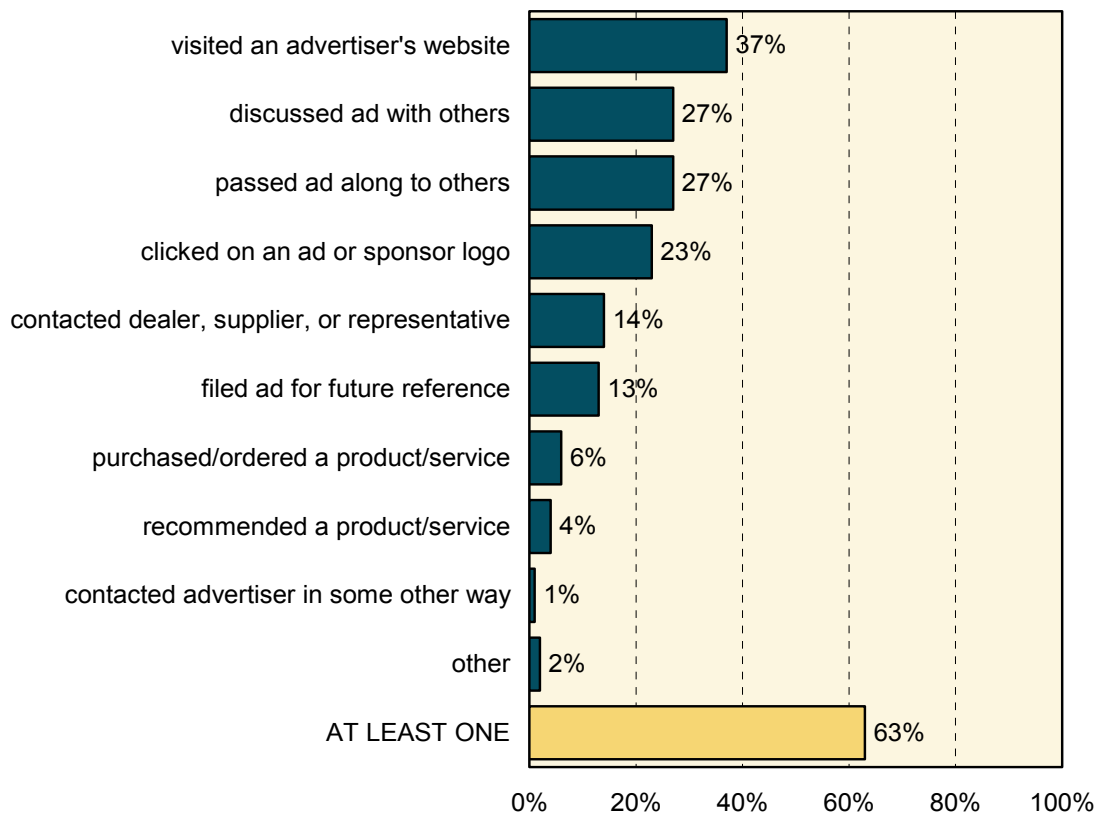
| Reasons for Visiting Website | |
|--------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| to search the archives | 42% |
| to review current content in regular format | 31% |
| to review current content in the Digital FlipBook | 24% |
| for the exclusive online content | 11% |
| for subscription or renewal management | 5% |
| to contact a members of the <i>Golf Business</i> staff | 5% |
| other | 1% |
| net: to review the current content | 53% |

base: 112 website visitors (multiple answers)

The strong majority of those who have visited the *Golf Business* website are prompted to take action once they are there. In the last 12 months, 63% of website visitors have taken at least one action as a result of reading advertisements on the website. Over one in four indicated they visited an advertiser's website (37%), discussed ad with others (27%), and/or passed ad along to others (27%).

Actions Taken Due to Reading Ads on Website
in the last 12 months

FINDINGS
Golf Business Website



base: 112 website visitors (multiple answers)

Golf Business Website

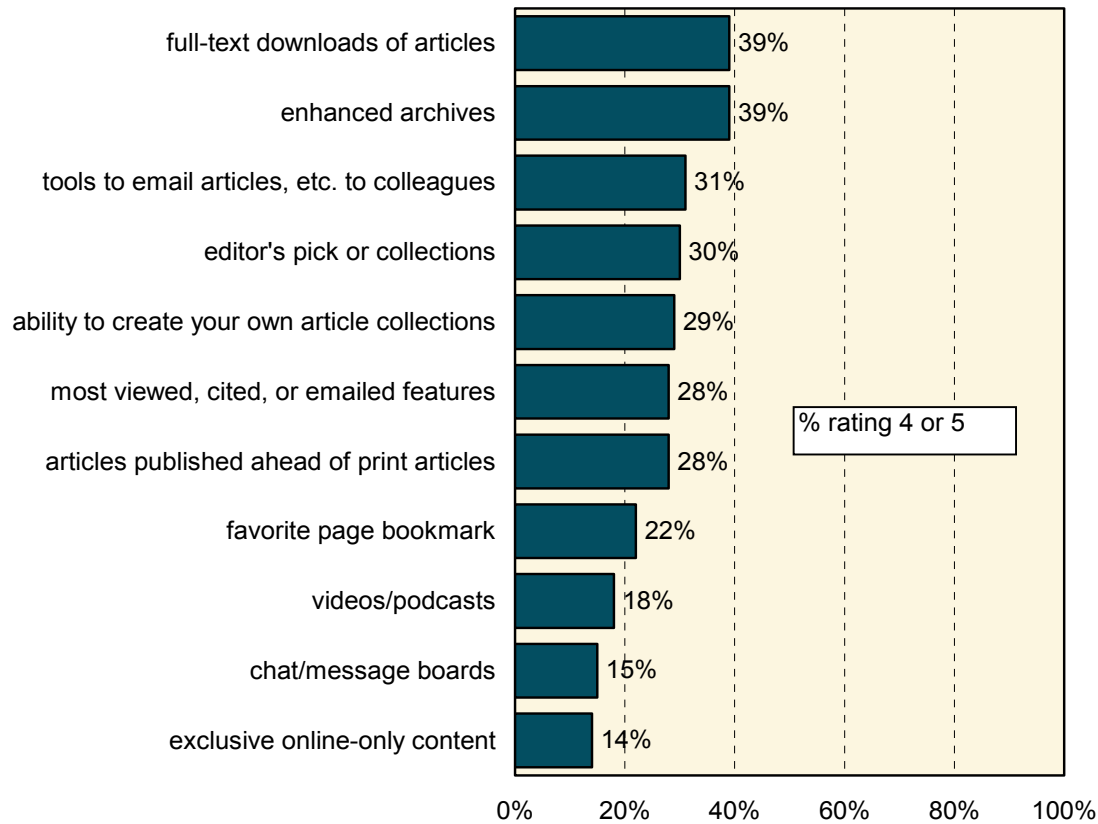
In order to further explore interest in its website, website visitors were asked to rate their interest in seeing 11 features available on the *Golf Business* website using a 5-point scale where 5 = very interested and 1 = not at all interested. *Full-text downloads of articles* and *enhanced archives* show the greatest potential, as 39% rated each a 4 or 5 on the scale.

Interest in Potential Website Features

5-point scale: 5 = very interested; 1 = not at all interested

FINDINGS

Golf Business Website



base: 112 website visitors (multiple answers)

Other Publications

Finally, recipients were asked to indicate which other industry publications they read regularly (at least 3 out of 4 issues) and which one publication, including *Golf Business*, they would choose if they could read only one.

In regard to regular readership, only one other industry publication asked about is read at this level by a majority of recipients—*PGA Magazine* (52%).

Golf Business is regularly read by a comparatively higher proportion of recipients. Two-thirds (67%) have read or looked through at least 3 of the last 4 issues.

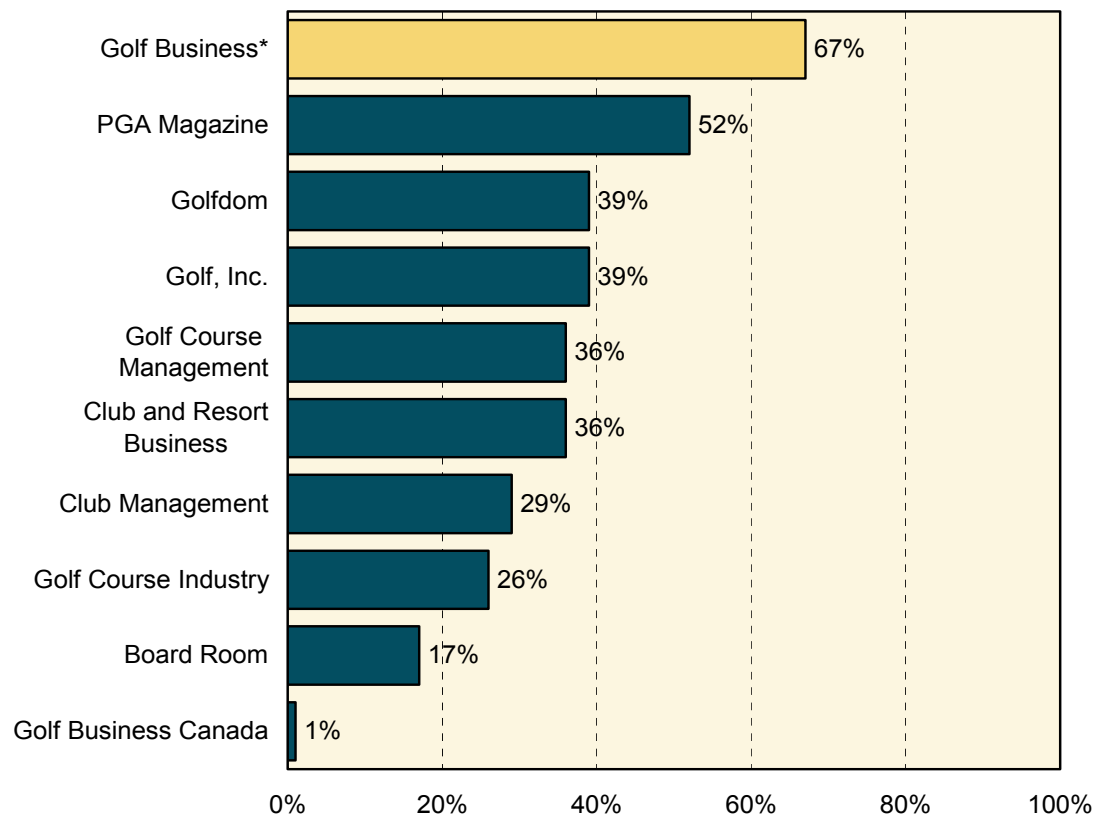
Golf Business is the publication of choice by the highest proportion of recipients when asked if they could read only one. Over one in five (27%) would choose this publication over any other one asked about. The next closest competitor, *PGA Magazine*, was cited by 20% of recipients.

Other Industry Publications Read Regularly

at least 3 out of 4 issues

FINDINGS

Other Publications



base: 275 *Golf Business* recipients (multiple answers)

*those who have read or looked through 3 or 4 of the last 4 issues