



Mangawhai Golf Club

CASE STUDY:

**Female Environment:
Innovative ways of creating a female
friendly environment**

OVERVIEW

Mangawhai Golf Club are always looking for innovative ways to allow more people to experience the game of golf and the facilities they have to offer.

Shop Manager, Nick Launder brainstormed ways of attracting more of the community and visitors to make use of the clubhouse facilities without necessarily having to play golf. One of the identified groups in the community was women. Specifically a group of women were identified who were either newcomers to the area or had partners or juniors learning and playing golf. Due to time constraints or lack of confidence those women had not engaged with the Club themselves.

An event was held at the Club called "Afternoon Tee" and was advertised locally and amongst members to judge interest levels. The success of that event led to a further "Morning Tee" being held for those who had not been

able to attend the first event. Over 50 women attended the noisy and jovial Tees and 41 expressed interest in golf, books, pilates, walking and art.

The women, of their own accord, noted that they would like to have some informal group golf learning and practice. Geraldine Speed of the Mangawhai Golf Board with the help of Maggie Cameron implemented and drove this initiative. 32 women took up the offer of 4 group lessons over 6 weeks at a nominal cost.

Geraldine notes that the Women's Initiative was not just about the golf "It's all about women getting together in our Mangawhai Golf environment, opening up our clubhouse to embrace wives, mums, partners and families into the fold. To spread the word that families and visitors are welcome."

CHALLENGES



MAKING GOLF MORE ACCESSIBLE

Getting members involved and informed so Mangawhai Golf can carry through the enthusiasm from the first wave of newcomers.



FINDING VOLUNTEERS

Each person was paired with a 'buddy' to take the Newcomers out on the course for a couple of holes after each group lesson.



ADMINISTRATION

There was a lot of organising, working around the unreliable weather and Club events; working in with the caterer and bar staff.

SOLUTION

Communicating clearly the audience Mangawhai Golf were targeting and what they were hoping to achieve was absolutely key. An email was sent to the membership database followed up by direct conversations and phone calls with key members of the Club plus Junior mums. A programme and roster was generated for buddies to arrive after each lesson, take the Newcomers into the clubhouse for a quick refreshment, then on course in the ratio of 1 buddy to 2-3 newcomer women. Some 13 women members volunteered their time to buddy.

They needed to also cater for our Newcomers being either totally new to the game, 'rusty' or just holiday golfers.

Clubs, bags, balls, tees were donated for those women with no knowledge or stock of such things.

Occasionally the course was occupied after their lesson, so our buddies took our Newcomers onto the practice area for an hour of chipping or putting fun.

Some of the Newcomers were so new to the game they did not know what a tee was, let alone placing it with a ball, or what 'loft' meant. Some were also unaware of how to score or hold a pin. We provided the buddies with a sand bucket and everyone had a short visit to the pro shop to see what a pitch mender, various tees, balls and golf gear was for.

A key success of this programme is that golf only forms one part of the many other things that the group does. Mike Howard, President and Chairman of Mangawhai Golf notes that "The group is a social group who happen to enjoy their golf lessons, but we've also looked at things like Pilates and book groups."

Howard continued to say "We are a Club that is open for its community to use. Whether they are golfers or not, everyone is welcome and Geraldine and her team have done an amazing job of creating this environment."

RESULTS

32
ATTENDEES

32 women attended 4 group golf lessons over 6 weeks at a nominal cost.

7
NEW
MEMBERSHIPS

7 new memberships signed up to date from the Newcomer women.

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ENGAGEMENT

With new women, their partners & families enjoy the golf, camaraderie and facilities.

13
NEW
VOLUNTEERS

The Club found 13 engaged volunteers to act as buddies.

KEY LEARNING / LESSONS

A rewardingly large number of women took up the initiative. Geraldine puts a big part of the success of the programme down to the buddying system. "Buddying for a couple of holes on course after each lesson was so popular that some of our newest Novice Members joined the lessons. Buddies offered encouragement and course management, as opposed to coaching."

Word of the programme spread and managed to attract people from as far as Sandspit, 52 kms away.

The women Newcomers associate golf with "fun". Geraldine believes that the reason for this was not to emphasise rules, etiquette or protocol. "We concentrated on swinging, playing and having fun". "They say we gave them confidence to go out on the course and to enter the Clubhouse and enjoy camaraderie –a coffee, a drink at the bar or to attend our Friday night buffet."



CONCLUSION / SUMMARY

Mangawhai Golf has been able to successfully engage new women into the game through an innovative idea that was driven by committed volunteers who wanted to share their love for the game.

The programme has seen some great success by being moulded to the needs of audience they were trying to attract.

With the success of the current programme Mangawhai Golf are looking to provide a third set of Women's Newcomer lessons and already have pre-registrations for this.

Mangawhai Golf are committed to engaging their community in this and other initiatives. Already up and running is a new Junior Initiative to encompass not only boys and girls at primary school enjoying the game, but also to encourage them to keep involved in golf throughout their secondary and tertiary years. Also the Newcomer women have suggested a Thursday Muster of 9 holes together with Members. Really an extension of the popular 'buddying'.

We look forward to seeing the results of these.



THE VALUE OF GOLF

The Game of Golf Provides Unique and Lifelong Enrichment

VISION

Golf is New Zealand's Favourite Pastime

MISSION

To Grow the Love of Golf

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