

Case Study

**Understanding the Value of Attracting
More Women to Golf**

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Introduction

Conversations about growing the game are more common in golf circles than ever these days. Women account for just 24% of golfers worldwide, yet the number of prospective female players could potentially add \$35 billion to the global golf economy. These are the findings of a ground-breaking global study into

female golf participation commissioned by Syngenta and conducted by an independent international market research company. Syngenta, a global agriculture company, is a leader in turf management solutions and is working closely with the golf industry to grow the game through participation initiatives and research.



The Economic Value of Female Golf

The following information is a summary of the main findings from the 'The Global Economic Value of Increased Female Participation in Golf' report. This study represents the most comprehensive research into golf ever undertaken and provides valuable insights about how to retain and optimise the value of existing female golfers, as well as how to recruit new women to the game.

After surveying 14,000 people across North America, Europe, Asia and Australia, the report found that 29 percent of non-golfing female participants indicated an interest in wanting to pick up golf over the next two years or roughly 36.9 million women worldwide. The appeal of relaxing by being outside and spending time with family and friends were primary reasons, the report says. For each new woman golfer, the report estimates potential increased revenue to the golf industry annually of US\$949.

Retaining Existing Golfers

A finding that came out of the study was that the cost of the game was one of the main reasons that women left the game. The report states that this doesn't necessarily mean the game is too expensive and golf clubs should default to discounting but rather focus on ways to improve the value proposition. Providing solutions that address customer challenges – including family responsibilities, time, flexibility and the ability to improve – could enhance the game's value proposition and result in better retention as well as converting more women who are interested in golf.

The study also identified the key customer touchpoints that mattered most to female golfers in terms of the amenities, products and services on offer at golf clubs. The standout touchpoints for female golfers worldwide are:

- Locker room
- Club website/app
- Course conditions
- Food & beverage facilities
- Time/flexible play options
- Signage (parking, clubhouse & course)

Signage too often tends to be overlooked as we pass the same old signs at our golf clubs with little attention to the content and design. The study found that signage is the number one touchpoint that can create or lose the most value for delivering a positive or negative customer experience. The report identified that this may be related to giving women confidence and making them feel welcome in what is often a male dominated environment. There is a need to understand the golf experience from a female perspective and enhance navigation every step of the way which extends to the website, booking experience and customer service.

Retaining Existing Golfers

The study looked at what actually interests new players about the game and what would encourage women to give golf a try which provides an insight into how we can attract more women to the game.

The most appealing factors about golf for prospective customers are:

- 1 Being outdoors
- 2 Relaxation and stress relief
- 3= Unlike other sports, golf is ageless
- 3= It presents a mental challenge
- 5= Spending time with family and friends
- 5= It presents a physical challenge

The study asked non-golfers what would encourage them to try golf. They were given 25 different options and asked to select those that would encourage them to take their first step into golf. The top responses below provide a good checklist to determine how your club is performing in this area:

- Free give golf a try sessions
- Easy access to affordable lessons
- Relaxed atmosphere
- Clubs available for rent/hire
- Introduction to golf lessons with a group of peers with similar golfing capability
- Beginner only mornings
- Venue is more accommodating to non-members, beginners and juniors
- Female focused coaching on the course as opposed to the range
- Able to play from distances on the course aligned to abilities

A Female-Junior Multiplier Effect

Analyzing the data of 3,271 female golfers and 3,492 male golfers, the study found that female golfers are 38% more likely to bring their children along to play golf with them. Evidently, recruiting more female golfers results in even more juniors playing golf. In fact, if 1,000 new female golfers are recruited, they will bring up to 720 more potential new golfers than if 1,000 new male golfers had started the game (based on 1.9 children per female).

These findings open up the possibility of thinking about the recruitment of juniors through mother-and-child products, not solely junior golf. One of the primary reasons for women leaving the game is family responsibilities, yet spending time with family and friends is one of the greatest attractions of the game. This points to the opportunity for more of a family focus at golf clubs by providing family friendly golf options for learning and playing the game.

Conclusion

While the reality is that only a fraction of these prospective women will actually take up the game due to some of the perceived and real barriers to starting golf, what the numbers contained in this report underline is a very significant and strong interest among women in the game. If golf clubs can address the needs of prospective female customers and proactively develop their value proposition, there is a significant opportunity available to attract more women and juniors to our game.

The complete report 'The Global Economic Value of Increased Female Participation in Golf – [http://www.golf2020.com/
media/65418/global-economic-value-female-golf.pdf](http://www.golf2020.com/media/65418/global-economic-value-female-golf.pdf)

