



Clarks Beach Golf Club

CASE STUDY:

Outside of Golf

Innovative Ways of Creating Revenue

Outside of the Traditional Golf Club

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF CREATING REVENUE OUTSIDE OF THE TRADITIONAL GOLF CLUB OPERATION

A picturesque coastal settlement, Clarks Beach Golf Club is a relatively small community in south-west Auckland.

The community itself is undergoing change as, with the significant cost of house prices in Auckland, younger families and first time home-buyers are moving into the area. At the centre of this community is the Clarks Beach GC.

General Manager Rodney Sentsch said to ensure the Clarks Beach Golf Club is around for future generations to enjoy, the club recognised the need to change.

"After identifying the changes in the local community, the aging club membership

and the reducing volunteer level, we decided that we needed to engage the community at a greater level," said Sentsch.

In order to do this they focused on three main areas:

1. Provide a great atmosphere for members and visitors.
2. Reduce the barriers to join the club.
3. Create something more than a golf club.

"The club set out to be a community focal point where locals would enjoy engaging for a number of reasons and not just the game of golf itself," said Sentsch.

CHALLENGES



AGING MEMBERSHIP BASE

As a relatively isolated community in Auckland, the demographic is older and more settled.



SMALL COMMUNITY

There is a small population base to support the club membership.



BARRIERS TO GOLF

A lot of younger families moving in to the area are too busy to be involved with golf or have one family member away for a long period of time.

SOLUTION

To engage new people, the Clarks Beach GC created a “social membership” that allowed the members to enjoy the facilities at the club while not actually allowing them on the course.

Younger families were starting to join and had children, so the club built a playground to keep the children entertained and create a family environment.

The club engaged quality caterers who were able to provide meals throughout the day. They also introduced social nights – for example a Cabaret night – not related to golf to make the club a community hub.

Social twilight evenings were staged. The social members of the club could give golf a go and hack their way around the course.

Prizes were provided for this but were divvied up randomly to participants and not to the person with the best score. “It was a great way to introduce these social members to the club and they had a lot of fun. It was all about participation and having fun. It took the pressure off their introduction to golf.

“All of this created a great environment for the social members and drove revenue into the club for the other members,” said Sentsch.

RESULTS

100+
NEW SOCIAL
MEMBERS

The Clarks Beach GC went from 30-40 social members to 146 Social Members at the club.

50
MORE MEALS
SOLD

The club went from selling 30 meals on a Friday night to 80 meals. An increase of 50 meals on average per night.

↑
INCREASE SOCIAL
ACTIVITY

There has been an increase in social activity around the club and engagement with social membership and full playing members.

KEY LEARNING / LESSONS

The Clarks Beach Golf Club recognised the change in the demographic in the area and acknowledged the need to change. “You need to see what is going on in your community around you and change your offering to suit,” said Sentsch.

The Clarks Beach GC removed all the barriers to young families becoming social members of the club.

It became a hub of the community by taking the focus of its core business – golf.

The Clarks Beach GC was open to feedback and provided for the needs of the new and significant social membership.

“Listen to your membership base,” said Sentsch. “It was them who came up with the social members who created the idea of a playground for children. It has proved a good investment for the club.”



CONCLUSION / SUMMARY

The Clarks Beach GC believed that the outcomes were extremely successful.

“We have a vibrant club culture,” said Sentsch. “We have great community engagement. We have kids in the clubhouse who are likely to be the future of the club.

“On top of this we were able to invite new people in to the club without devaluing our current membership. They are now adding value to the club and ensuring its sustainability which supports our current members.”

The Clarks Beach GC is excited about the potential of its social members becoming full playing members but it is also fine with them remaining as social members.

“The social membership has created a window of opportunity to engage with people who don’t normally play golf.”

The Clarks Beach GC plans to continue its Social Members programme and will continue to listen to these members to create an environment that is the hub of the community.

For more information visit:
clarksbeachgolfclub.co.nz



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