



The Grange Golf Club

CASE STUDY:

**Membership Recruitment and Retention
The Importance of the PGA Professional**

THE IMPORTANCE OF THE PRO

The PGA professional needs to add as much value to the club, their members and guests as possible. Clubs are after a professional to run and operate all services associated with a golf club including running/organising the golf operations, coaching services and retail/club fitting services.

The Grange along with their Club Pro – Jacques Norte and his team are trying to create an environment for all associated with the club to play more and better golf. The ultimate outcome from this is to provide them with a valuable and enjoyable experience so they keep coming back. Jacques has noted that involvement in the local community is paramount as this is where the majority of future players will come from.

The Pro has decided on three main areas of focus;

1. ENGAGE with current members and guests
2. INSPIRE them to play better golf through coaching/club fitting/golf operations
3. RETAIN and gain more members

The Grange were dealing with some common challenges faced by other clubs throughout New Zealand; A reduction in their current membership, the perception of an unwelcoming environment and not being linked directly with their community.

Their collaborative approach with Jacques Norte has been successful in driving the club towards success.

CHALLENGES



A REDUCTION IN TRADITIONAL MEMBERSHIP

A lot of members are struggling with the pace of the modern day lifestyle, they need to feel valued at the club.



THE PERCEPTION OF AN UNWELCOMING ENVIRONMENT

Golf clubs in general have not been perceived as very welcoming or inviting for people other than existing members.



LACK OF ENGAGEMENT IN THE LOCAL COMMUNITY

There was a lack of suitable programmes to engage new people to the club, particularly juniors and the casual golfer.

SOLUTION

To help current members feel more valued, Jacques and his team ran club fitting days to assist members in getting the right clubs to help their game. They also developed a number of different types of tournaments for members to engage with and ran those events on behalf of The Grange. This allowed the members to engage to a greater level by involving themselves in new and enjoyable formats of the game.

To engage with the community and be perceived as more accessible, a number of programmes were established to suit different categories of players. Junior programmes and beginners clinics were employed along with a very successful, free ladies coaching programme. This programme, run over 6 weeks, targeted ladies who had never played golf and covered all aspects

of the game from etiquette to on course play. This was followed up with a 'learn to play' membership option which has been supported by both the club and the Pro. This entitles the ladies to six more coaching sessions while they get to grips with the game. The coaching sessions attracted 20-22 ladies, per session and converted about one third of those ladies to members.

The Grange, in collaboration with Jacques and his team have noted the importance of engaging with the casual player. Many of these players are approaching the club through corporate events and Jacques and his team are engaging directly with them to bring these players back to the club after the day is finished through either coaching sessions or upselling green fee vouchers.

RESULTS

↑
WOMEN
ENGAGEMENT

20 - 22 Women at
coaching lessons

8
NEW
MEMBERS

8 New Female
Members

↑
IN GREEN
FEE ROUNDS

Substantial
increase in the
number of Green
Fee rounds

CONCLUSION / SUMMARY

A collaborative approach between a club and a PGA Professional is key to adding value to the club's membership base.

It can help to retain existing members and attract new members and also assist in engaging the community-at-large.

Jacques believes that "The PGA Professional is a lifeblood and symbol of the club" and that "The role of the PGA Professional needs to reflect the commercial objectives of the club so that as much value as possible is provided to all those involved.





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