

## ***Golf Marketing 101***

***– Submitted by Kim Shafer, Director of Events-Marketing at Golf House Kentucky***

Marketing is hard work but you and your facility will reap the benefits from that extra effort. You have to physically leave your golf facility and get out into the community to market yourself, your skills and your facility. You might be too busy to do this during the middle of the golf season, so create a marketing calendar and determine the best times of the year for you to market your facility.

The PGA of America has determined that there are six key areas of focus to improve your customer acquisition. You will find and recruit more golfers if you use these guidelines.

- 1) Local Business Relationships – Become loyal customers at a certain grocery store, dry cleaners, movie theatre, restaurant, etc. Meet the business owners and establish relationships with them. Get to know them, make sure they know what you do and offer your services to them. Support their business and they will support your business. Discuss ways that you can send customers to each other's establishments. Reach out to the Chamber of Commerce and send brochures and promotional materials to the businesses that are located close to your facility.
- 2) Community Organizations – Reach out to the local churches and charities, United Way, Special Olympics, etc. and offer to make one of their events special by offering a Family Fun Zone. Reserve some of the inflatables from Golf House Kentucky and create a fun golf atmosphere at one of their events. Offer your course for outings and events. Offer league play for churches.
- 3) Health Clubs – Advertise at local health clubs. Offer discounts for lessons if they bring in a coupon they received at the health club. Create a partnership with the health club and offer golf classes. Partner with a local TPI fitness instructor and provide golf fitness classes together.
- 4) Schools – Work with a local P.E. Teacher and institute a golf curriculum into the school system. Introduce the kids to the game with a Golf in Schools program and then offer an After School Golf Club at your facility. Recruit PGA Jr. League teams from the school.
- 5) Referrals and Word of Mouth – Don't be afraid to ask happy and satisfied students to share your name with others. When I was a golf instructor if I had a student who was overjoyed with the outcome of their lessons, I would often say, "I am so glad that you are doing well and enjoying the game. If you have the opportunity, please share my name with any of your friends and I would be happy to help them too." It works!
- 6) Local Media Relationships – Reach out to the local media. Try to foster relationships with the newspaper and television reporters. Offer to play golf with them at your facility. Let them know of any outstanding accomplishments at your facility. Have you grown your PGA Jr. League from 8 kids to 40 kids? They might want to feature you and your facility.

Create your marketing calendar! Dedicate some of your time to these six key areas and watch more customers walk through your doors!