



When Social Media is Not Social



If you are over 45 years old and love to play golf, follow the golf tournaments on Saturday and Sunday, and play over 52 rounds a year; chances are you aren't a fan on some golf course or golf resort Facebook page. Why? Because your peers would make fun of you and rightfully so.

Here is an idea of famous golf resorts and or golf courses with their number of fans on Facebook. Serious golfers will know each of these places well: Doral – 1339, Whistling Straits – 1889, Augusta National – 293, The Memorial – 11, PGA West 2, Bay Hill Club & Lodge – 22 (and it's not even their page). Well what does that say about marketing on a social media outlet with 500,000,000 members? It says it's not the place for marketing great golf to serious golfers. Duh.

Have you ever seen a signature golf hole on Twitter? Any of your golfing buddies use Four Square, Where, Gowalla to tell you where they are at any given moment. Not even drunk! So it begs the question: if I owned a golf resort or golf course how do I best reach new markets to visit my resort and or play my golf course?

The answer is to use multiple forms of media to capture your market that can best activate the emotions of a potential market. Print is still very viable in the golf industry. Glossy printed pages of professional golf photography can create an aura still difficult to duplicate on the Internet. Forty five year old plus golfers still read in their favorite chairs and imagine what it would be like to play that finishing hole.

The printed piece still drives people to the Internet and that particular website for any and everything you ever wanted to know about that golf resort or golf course. Television, pay-per-click, search engine marketing, direct mail, public relations, email blasts, and outdoor should also be part of the

marketing mix. The more times you can reach your market with multiple media messages, the better the results will be.

Finally, if you really wanted to look smart to your boss, you would find a marketing partner who understands golf resort or golf course marketing better than you do. Look for an agency that may employ people who have been in that business and that have successful track records in golf resort marketing. It is a specialty like being a Brain Surgeon and or a Gynecologist as opposed to being a general family practitioner. Would you have a Brain Surgeon deliver your baby or a Gynecologist perform surgery in your medulla oblongata? Wrong ends for both.

So go out and find professional help that has case studies to share with you and a track record for success. Ask if they know how many rounds of golf for 18 holes is considered capacity. Do they understand teeing off on both front and back tees? Do they understand overseeding and aerification? Do they even play golf themselves? Do they understand that every marketing initiative has an impact on operations? You don't want to train them in your industry on your nickel do you? Why should you.

Social media is a new marketing tool that is not right for every product every time. It can be a great branding tool if it fits your demographic market's profile. Don't get caught up in all the hype. Truthfully the next hot media outlet will be mobile when in the next 18 months, 80% of all phone users will have smart phones. Today that number is 45%. Think about that.

If you need recommendations, ask me. ed@absolutethinking.us. I have been active in the golf industry for 27 years. Surely I have learned something. And don't call me Shirley. 🏌️

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