

# The Bottom Line

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If you want to start up a controversial group discussion I guess you could use the topic "Management Companies in the Golf Industry." There seem to be a tremendous number of these companies out there today.

Are some good? Yes.

Are some not so good? Yes.

Whether they are good or bad, they all have one thing in common. The bottom line! These companies are in business to survive and make a profit. Along with profitability, these companies work to enhance the level of quality and efficiency in clubs and facilities. That is primarily how they are judged.

You will find that the companies that can blend profitability with quality enhancement and sound

business practices will be the long-term respected survivors in the golf industry.

Although everyone has the right to an opinion as to whether a company is right or wrong, honest or dishonest, ethical or unethical, it is merely their opinion. The "make it or break it" opinions and perceptions for the companies lie with the owners and members at golf club facilities who pay these companies to provide a service for mutually beneficial results.

Having worked for one of these management/ownership companies for nearly 20 years, I have experienced a great number of positive professional and personal opportunities.

The financial and job security factors are probably the highest on the list. However, things such as continued education, support for industry involvement, insurance and retirement programs, intercompany networking, legal support, purchasing power, technical support and other benefits are also just as important.

Some people may think that the drawbacks of working with this type of company are a lot of paperwork and too many policies, procedures and restrictions. These activities are only the by-product of running a business or, in the situation of a golf course superintendent, managing a maintenance operation.

Also, accounting systems and reports are invaluable when tracking the financial trends of revenues and expenses. It is

much easier to make purchasing decisions when these reports are produced on a regular, frequent schedule. Planning and forecasting are great tools to help keep operations organized.

Policies on operations, wages and hour issues help staff operate within efficient and legal boundaries. These activities are only part of the "on the job" educational sources provided by the companies that help to develop staff personally and professionally.

Any company that is developing and maturing is going to have its share of growing pains. Their policies, guidelines and operating procedures may need to be reevaluated and adjusted over time in order to keep up with competition and changing trends.

Those that are able to listen and react to industry and member feedback will have a better chance of surviving in their competitive arena.

Individuals in the golf business who understand the concept of the management company and are willing to be part of their teams will also be the individuals who will help direct and guide those companies toward improving, strengthening and providing a better quality service to their industry and clients.

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