etetime.com names Raney new president

Internet tee time provider tops 160 courses with Walters Golf Management additions

By Peter Blais

LA QUINTA, Calif. — William Raney has been named president of etetime.com, a growing Internet-based tee-time service provider that recently landed the 160-course client mark with the addition of five Walters Golf Management facilities located in Las Vegas.

Raney will direct etetime.com’s worldwide sales, marketing, administration, technology, financial management and customer service initiatives.

Raney has considerable experience in the Internet industry and had been a consultant to etetime.com since February 1999. Previously, Raney held an associate position with Rader Reinfrank & Co., a Los Angeles-based Internet and telecommunications private equity fund. While at Rader Reinfrank & Co., Raney focused primarily on the firm’s Internet-related transactions. He also worked at Whittier Trust Co., an asset management and private equity company based in Los Angeles.

Through www.etetime.com, golfers secure real-time, tee-time reservations over the Internet 24 hours a day. Courses also use etetime.com’s proprietary tee-sheet software as a tee sheet management tool, as well as to sell a number of otherwise unfilled golf rounds with www.etetime.com as their booking agent.

It is one of only a handful of golf tee-time reservation software programs written in JavaScript, one of the codes easiest to read by computers.

Among the 160 courses in the etetime network are facilities in the United States, Mexico, Canada, Argentina and Puerto Rico. They include:

- Walters’ Stallion Mountain Country Club, Desert Pines Golf Club and Royal Links Golf Club in Las Vegas.
- More than 50 courses in California, Nevada and Arizona ranging from Johnny Miller-designed Badlands Golf Club (Las Vegas) and the Arnold Palmer-designed Tahquitz Creek Resort (Palm Springs, Calif.) to the value-oriented Kookopelli Golf Course (Gilbert, Ariz.) and Eastlake Country Club (Chula Vista, Calif.).
- Garland Resort’s four, 18-hole courses.

According to Executive Vice President Michael Stone, etetime.com started three years ago with the idea that selling tee times on the Internet was fine, but if courses and golfers didn’t end up on an electronic tee sheet that was at least as good as paper and pencil, then the system wouldn’t work. After considerable research, the company launched its site in January 1999.

Stone says his firm’s site is the easiest electronic tee sheet for golfers to use. “We want to make this as easy as possible for the course and the golfer,” he said.

A course must list at least two tee times a day with www.etetime.com. It may make available its entire tee sheet or any number in between. In addition to public facilities, some private clubs make a limited number of rounds available. Northern California’s private Granite Bay, for instance, sells some Monday rounds to the public.

Stone said etetime.com will take reservations as far as 90 days in advance. Typical golfers reserve tee times three weeks ahead of time. The company prepays the course a week before the golfer shows up to play.

The firm makes its money by charging the golfer an additional fee per round (usually roughly 10 percent over the going rate) or the course may pay etetime.com a commission ranging from 15 to 20 percent of the pre-sold green fee rate.

Stone said the company may go public at some point, although raising capital has not been a problem because of the firm’s state-of-the-art technology and quality management. In addition to Raney, Chief Executive Officer John Hoffmaster is a former top executive with Info USA of Omaha and several other successful Internet ventures.

The company plans to have 8,000 courses signed on within five years, Stone said.

Continued on page 73

ClubLink enters London, Ontario market with Greenhills purchase

KING CITY, Ontario, Canada — ClubLink Corporation has agreed to purchase all the assets of Greenshills Golf & Country Club in London, Ontario, from the Simpson family and related corporations. The transaction is dependent on certain third-party conditions.

Greenhills features an 18-hole course that winds through mature forest and valley lands on London’s southwestern perimeter. The club also includes a clubhouse with banquet seating for 200, a nine-hole academy course, the Greenshills Golf Dome for indoor practice, a pool, eight indoor tennis courts and five outdoor clay courts. The tennis facilities will be leased back to the Simpson family.

“We are pleased to make our initial acquisition in London, a strong financial...
Fairway Systems launches Internet site

ENGLEWOOD, Calif.—Fairway Systems, Inc. recently launched an Internet-based reservation system with the support of a $15-million capital infusion.

The product, to be branded under the E-Golf moniker, comprises three modules: "I," the Internet Edition, offering golf courses the opportunity to publish tee times on the Web free of charge; "S," the Standard Edition, an electronic tee sheet and POS solution for a single course, including Internet access; and "P," the Premium Edition, a comprehensive golf software solution designed for multiple courses operated by a single owner, regional destination or management company.

The Internet strategy was developed by Organic, a San Francisco-based Web integration firm. The theme of the site will be about "getting things done on the Web relating to golf."

The site will offer direct, real-time access to a vast aggregation of tee time inventory initially targeting 20 metropolitan areas within seven countries.

GolfSwitch signs on with GolfServ

SCOTTSDALE, Ariz. — GolfSwitch, a maker of tee time connectivity software, has signed an agreement with GolfServe Online Inc., a provider of personalized golf content and services to 180 Internet sites, giving course owners access to potential customers.

The agreement means golfers can use GolfSwitch when they book tee times online through all GolfServe syndication partners, which include Internet sites like CNN.com, chipshot.com and USA TODAY.com.

GolfServ will use GolfSwitch's software to add tee time reservations to its existing services that allow golfers to track their handicap and playing performance, find detailed information on 20,000 golf courses worldwide, and obtain private lessons from golf professionals.

More than 250 courses now have the ability to broadcast their tee times with GolfSwitch marketing partners such as America West Airlines Vacations, Delta Airlines Dream Vacations, Pam's Golf, Resort Suites of Scottsdale, and PGA.com. GolfSwitch software enables marketing partners to access and book tee times at multiple golf courses in multiple cities in real time.

GolfCourse News

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