Career Web sites

My column in the September issue of *Golf Course News* introduced the concept of the golf course superintendent (and the other professionals in golf as well) committing to the development of a personal career Web site. Since then, I have received calls and e-mails asking how this might be done and at what cost. So, I will address these questions.

Web-site counseling is available via the Internet and professional consulting services. Enterprising superintendents can develop their own Web site at almost no cost. This possibility should be explored for its educational value before seeking professional assistance.

Because of the technical nature of superintendents' work, they should be prepared to write a sizable portion of the Web-site text after a consultant organizes and formats the Web site. A solid, representative Web site can be developed for about $500. More sophisticated Web sites can cost as much as several thousand dollars.

A student Web site

This is for students seeking assistant jobs. The later college years present the first opportunity for career-minded students to commit to the preparation of a Web site because the development of one's life track record is well under way at this time. Accordingly, a student Web site might focus on:

• A consolidated, high-school profile listing noteworthy grades, honors, elected positions, projects undertaken, writings, jobs, hobbies, golf participation, level of computer literacy and community service.

• An expanded profile of the student's college years focusing on and further developing the same items listed within the high-school profile, but putting added emphasis on: (a) the quality of school attended; (b) the specific degree earned; and (c) situations that present the student as a person taking initiative and assuming leadership roles.

An effective, personal Web site will present students as unique job applicants instead of being viewed as one of many uncredentialed candidates applying for an assistant position. Web-site-bearing candidates will draw attention and practically assure themselves an interview, which is the name of the game at every employment level.

An assistant Web site

This is for assistants seeking superintendent jobs or better assistant jobs. The assistant Web site isn't intended to be a new, start-over Web site; rather, it should be a continuing extension of the student Web site that strategically expands on the activities initially presented. However, it would be appropriate to convert the student Web site to a link within the assistant Web site so viewers will be able to focus on an assistant's current work product better.

With this housework completed, specific notice should be given to the following:

• A concise expression of the assistant's career-mission statement.

• A profile of the club(s) and/or course(s) where the assistant has worked, which should include: private versus public status, grass types, number of rounds per year, totals of operating and capital budges (if public knowledge), noteworthy tournaments hosted, and a mini-profile of the superintendent's credentials.

• A profile of the assistant's job description for each job held, any titles earned, and positions within chains of command.

• Special assignments and projects undertaken by the assistant and what role was filled within these assignments. Digital photographs should illustrate special projects completed.

• A listing of industry-related seminars and workshops attended, as well as a list of the textbooks, videocassettes and CDs collected within the assistant's personal library.

• What commitment has been made to continuing education.

Clearly, the more initiative assistants take with their careers, the better the Web site will reflect a creative maturing professional.

A superintendent Web site

This is for superintendents seeking to advance their careers via better job opportunities. Again, the earlier practice of continuing and extending the information presented within earlier Web sites should continue, with the assistant Web site being converted to a link within this process.

The primary purpose of developing a personal Web site at this point in a career is to definitively present what impact superintendents have had on golf courses and properties they've accepted responsibility for when starting each job.

Accordingly, this Web site should focus on a combination of following: the superintendent's approach to and results with general management, crew training and safety, efficient budget management, computer systems and record keeping, expanding commitments to playing golf and the Rules of golf, where assistants have found worthy jobs, family status, and off-season priorities.

This is the most critical Web site within an advancing superintendent's career. A Web site that concisely reflects decisive decision-making and planning in the pursuit of excellence will open the door for job advancement.

A veteran Web site

This is for more experienced superintendents looking to secure present jobs and for those seeking job advancement. Because the most constant challenge to experienced superintendents' job security is their higher salaries when good, lower-salaried superintendents are available, it's imperative veteran superintendents clearly demonstrate that their general-management style and highly efficient, budget-management practices (using computer graphics appropriately) will save much more money than their salary increment will cost each year.

Accordingly, this continuing Web site should artfully show, among other things, that superintendents remain completely active in their jobs and that no one else is a more efficient manager of the sizable amounts of money committed to the maintenance program each year.

Enlightening Web sites can save veterans' jobs and present superintendents in such a renewed light that they will be looked at as invaluable assets to current and prospective employers.

Superintendents developing personal Web sites for the first time relatively late in a career should prepare student and assistant links as profiled above.

Never in the employment history of the golf industry has a professional had a better opportunity to present credentials more effectively on a better stage than now via a personal Web site.

As the invention of the wheel changed the way the world operated, so too will the use of personal Web sites change the way the employment world functions in golf. The era of overloading resumes is over. GCN

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