

DIRECTOR'S COLUMN

Scott Witte, CGCS, Cantigny Golf Club



MAGCS Partnerships

As chairman of the newly formed Partnership Task Group, I spent some time evaluating the value of MAGCS Partnerships. As I started to delve into the whole concept of partnerships, I thought it would be a good idea to look the word up on Merriam-Webster.com. When I looked up the word "partnership," it said, "see association," which led me to "see also, connection."

Entry Word: partnership

Function: noun

Text: *the state of having shared interests or efforts (as in social or business matters).* **See ASSOCIATION.**

Entry Word: association

Function: noun

Text: *1 the state of having shared interests or efforts (as in social or business matters).* (It is interesting to me that this definition is interchangeable) then M. Webster says: **See CONNECTION.**

Entry Word: connection

Function: noun

Text: *3 an acquaintance who has influence especially in the business or political world.*
Then they said: **See ASSOCIATION**

So I started thinking about the link between the three words.

I think what makes the MAGCS such a great association is that we have great partnerships and great opportunities for connection. The level at which we associate, connect, and partner has a direct correlation to the success of the MAGCS and its members.

One of the keys to our success is the fact that our association incorporates the support of our commercial vendors in our business model to help provide services to members. This partnership places value on relationships and networking. No matter what class of member you are within the association, there is tremendous value in the opportunities that MAGCS provides for its members. MAGCS promotes: developing professional relationships, gaining education, sharing information, and increasing networks of industry professionals that provide products and services for golf courses.

When the officers of the association develop the annual budget for the MAGCS, there is no denying that there is a "For Profit" mindset; however, this so-called profit goes directly back to its members in the form of services. Partner investments are put right back into the MAGCS to offset the costs associated with continuing the circle of CONNECTIONS AND PARTNERSHIPS WITHIN THE ASSOCIATION.

So how do you put a price tag on partnership worth and networking potential? Well let's just take a conservative look at the value of the MAGCS membership as a whole. If we consider the approximately 300 golf courses that are members of the MAGCS and assume that their average annual maintenance budgets are 400-500K, we could also assume that after labor expenses, each club would have 160-200K for soft goods or operating expenses. Therefore, 160-200K times 300 members gives us a conservative estimate of 48 to 60 million dollars in purchasing power for soft goods alone. Add to that an average of 25-50K for Capital equipment purchases per member, and we add on another 7.5-15 million. Next we have to consider adding contractor fees for renovations and other improvements. If we average the 300 clubs' costs for contractor fees, new construction, and renovations, we might assume another 10 to 15 million. I am not a genius, or a market analyst, but I wouldn't be surprised if the Chicago area golf courses have an annual spending power of up to 90 million! How's that for a stimulus package?

From a superintendent's perspective, MAGCS partnerships provide easy access to a wide array of products and services. From a commercial vendor's perspective, MAGCS partnerships create opportunities for selling products and services. These partnerships are a two-way street. When companies invest in sponsorships, they are looking for opportunities to interact with potential clients and extract value from their investment. The Golf Course Management readership survey from 2005 found that 82% of superintendents are more likely to purchase from a

(continued on page 30)

varied as were the rates. Labeled fungicides were compared with off label fungicides. Systemic products were compared with contact products. Preventative programs were compared with curative programs.

The four programs reviewed were:

- Coyote Run
- North Shore Country Club
- CDGA "Bookend"
- Dernoeden 3 Way 21 Day

Dr. Megan Kennelly came back after lunch to make her presentation on Nozzles and Dollar Spot Control.

Some of the nozzle variables are: spray patterns and droplet sizes. Her ideal pressure flow rate is between 30 to 60 PSI. Her 2007 Test Study indicates there is less disease control when using certain nozzles. She found that using certain carrier volumes had similar results of being more or less effective.

Ty McClellan from the USGA made his presentation on "Practical Applications of the USGA Trufirm Testing Device". The USGA was looking for a way to test greens and bunker sand and quantify overall firmness with the objective to predict ball response, measure for consistent roll, eliminate or identify extremes, and determine/track progress of corrective maintenance practices.

The tool works by raising and dropping a hammer device into the desired surface. The design of the tool is simple. Penetration is a direct measure of firmness. It is equipped with an accelerometer. The data is measured by impact and stored directly via computer link using GPS for specific locations. The data is downloaded and stored to a laptop for printing.

The tool will be used at all USGA events, PGA Tour events and TAS visits. There is some fear it may become like the stimpmeter. Club A is thumping .35 and Club B is only thumping at .47! Oh oh.

Ty indicated more research is needed to quantify affects and to provide the most useful information a Club can use. Don't worry; the cost (\$8700) may discourage your Green Chairman from running out and purchasing a unit.

Another great education event was put on at the Golf House. Much of the information was very technical and you really needed to be there to the full impact of the Power Point Presentations complete with graphs, charts and question and answer sessions. This is good stuff! **-OC**

(continued from page 5)

company that supports the GCSAA. I'd like to think that the MAGCS's numbers are comparable to this.

Our industry partners play an important role in ensuring the growth and success of the profession of superintendent. The efforts of the Partnership Task Group are now focusing on new and creative ways for the MAGCS to recognize those industry partners who have provided significant support to the association. Their investments make it possible to provide MAGCS members with the programs, services, and research that advance the profession and the industry. In turn, sponsoring partners have the advantage of year-round exposure through a variety of communication vehicles and events.


Associations perform best when members are connecting on a regular basis. Don't fall into the trap of becoming "dissociated" or "unconnected." Come to monthly meetings on a regular basis; take advantage of educational events; and golf with someone new! Active participation is an essential component of making CONNECTIONS that begin to form PARTNERSHIPS, and strong PARTNERSHIPS make strong ASSOCIATIONS. Please join me in thanking our industry partners and make an effort to support the companies that support our association. **-OC**



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