

Internet

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golf course in the Washington area, you're probably looking at a minimum of \$100,000 to do it right," he says. "A small ad in *The Washington Post* sports section costs \$800 to \$900, and one ad doesn't do anything for you. The key is to keep your name in front of people. So with the *Post*, you can spend \$4,000 a week in a heartbeat."



Cliff Boyd

he's dropped the price of MarkeTee to \$3,500. "In less than a week, we can have a course up and running," he says. "It builds them a gigantic e-mail list for their course. It is very focused marketing."

"Where I've seen it most effective," Smith adds, "is for week-day play. Send out special offers at around 10:30 in the morning. That's when most people are sitting in their office thinking, 'You

know, I'd rather be playing golf.' If you e-mail a special offer, it gives them a reason to go."

In spreading the word about cyber-marketing, Boyd is a man with a mission. "I believe the e-mail method we use on our site is the future of golf course marketing," he says. "For the overall health of the industry, I hope more clubs embrace Internet marketing. Just don't do it near our golf course." ■

MAILBAG

Dear editor:

It came as a surprise that my company was no longer managing the Overland Park Golf Club in Overland Park, Kan. The announcement by Kemper that AllGolf has added my club to its portfolio is incorrect. AllGolf has picked up the Family Golf

Center in Overland Park, which is a driving range and putt-putt facility.

The management of the Overland Park GC is contracted to Golf Operations Management LLC, of which I am principal.

Steven A. Jablonowski, PGA, GCSAA Affiliate
Director of operations, Overland Park GC

Boyd's \$20,000 advertising savings go to the bottom line, and he keeps his name in front of customers free of charge. "We have thousands of online members, plenty of repeat business and Internet profitability," he notes. "How many dot-coms can say that?"

MARKETEE PRICE COMING DOWN

Topper Smith, at Solator Systems, has signed up a second course in Virginia, and with development costs behind him,

New players

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"We want to provide a place for beginners and juniors to play, because on an 18-hole course, it can be intimidating to learn the game," said general manager Sally Cadmus.

Through a USGA grant, the course ran a week-long camp last year for 250 disadvantaged youth and allowed participants to have free access to the course for the rest of the year. Not many turned up to play again, though, according to Cadmus, because of transportation problems. To solve this problem, the course is working with local Boys and Girls Clubs to get more kids involved this year.

"Building a junior program is a lot harder than I thought it would be," she said. "We took baby steps last year and we are looking to take it to the next level this summer."

Grant money and fundraisers are key to the success of the program. "Otherwise, the 18-hole course basically has to support the learning center. If it was the nine-hole course on its own, it would be difficult to manage," Cadmus said.

Grant money and municipal subsidies aside, the industry should be doing more to back these new player initiatives. While player development programs continue to blossom all over the country, more involvement and support will be necessary to keep them going after the summer camps and "free access" days end. Contact programs like The First Tee and Kids on Course and get involved. Or better yet, start a program at your "home" course. ■

GOLF COURSE NEWS

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