



Kevin Gilbride
Publisher

It's all about you

Other than my family, I have three passions in life: publishing a well-read and respected magazine, downhill skiing and, of course, the challenging game of golf.

Since GIE Media relaunched *Golf Course News* in 2004, GCN has been a labor of love. GIE has been a leader in the green industry for decades thanks to our award-winning sister publication, *Lawn & Landscape*, so we knew we had to publish a first-rate magazine. To do that right, we had to make the magazine all about you. We needed to understand what you really needed, wanted and absolutely had to know.

To accomplish our goal, we spent a lot of time talking to superintendents, owners and managers at golf courses throughout the country. We quickly learned the old GCN and other industry publications weren't delivering what you really wanted. We found that in today's fast-changing marketplace, you yearned to keep up to date on news as often as possible. So, our solution was not only to deliver a solid, traditional print product, but also to use the Web and e-mail to our advantage and deliver you the information you need weekly and daily.

This decision wasn't made on a whim. Actually, there were some internal disagreements about the frequency of a regular e-newsletter. But you said you wanted quick updates online and a print publication that provides you with in-depth knowledge, ideas and opinions to give you various perspectives about the business.

So, we stuck to our guns and delivered an e-newsletter, which includes original features as well as all the breaking news stories you need to know about, and our Web site, which is updated daily. It's been a tremendous success. In fact, 37,000 folks visit www.golfcoursenews.com monthly to check out our news, digital edition and other content on the site.

During our research, we also found readers wanted more information about business issues other than agronomy. That's why GCN also delivers more industry news, development updates, construction and remodeling case studies, marketing ideas and business strategy stories faster and better than any other magazine in the market. In short, we listened and responded to you. You told us the golf market was changing, and

you wanted the publications you read to change. So we did.

That concept isn't too different from the changes that evolved in the ski industry about 15 years ago. Traditional ski resorts suddenly were besieged with teenagers who slid down the mountain on snowboards instead of skis. At first, the resorts hated these rebellious upstarts who saw mountains as a different kind of challenge. But quickly, their disdain turned into dollars as they realized that "those darned kids" were the future of the business and a great new source of revenue. The ski resorts evolved and prospered.

At GCN, we concentrate on the fact that golf is a business and success requires that same kind of evolution. That means innovation, creativity and an unwavering focus on a few simple goals: presenting a resourceful product, attracting and retaining customers, and carving out a profit in a competitive market. Every article we print and everything we do is predicated on that idea.

I'm extremely fortunate to have a team of editors, writers and columnists who are connected to the industry like no one else, including John Walsh, Heather Wood, Pat Jones, Kevin Ross, Terry Buchen, Jim McLoughlin and Jeff Brauer. We're proud that each issue of the magazine features thinkers who offer more than 100 years of real-world experience, global perspective and industry insight. And, I hope you agree the ideas they put into print help you succeed in your business.

That said, I want to emphasize something that ties to my original premise: being passionate about listening to readers. As publisher – and in the magazine world that means "the buck stops here" – I also want to hear from you. What do you like about GCN? What do you hate? What topics and ideas are you really interested in?

I want you to e-mail me, call me or write me a good old-fashioned letter – my contact information is in the masthead on page 8. My promise is that you'll get a response – no matter what you have to say, good or bad. That's because I have one more passion: making sure *Golf Course News* is the best source of useful information in today's market and that we never stop listening to readers. That's because it's all about you. GCN

We would like to hear from you. Please post any comments you have about this column on our message board, which is at www.golfcoursenews.com/messageboard.



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