

We'd like to hear from you.

E-mail us at gci@gie.net with your thoughts and opinions.

Five flaws

"Truth & Consequences" (October 2010, page 50) certainly addresses the current situation we all face as businesses and organization leaders. However, the unsaid conclusion that people would join a local affiliate if they didn't have to join the national organization has many flaws.

The first flaw. I haven't heard many people say, "I am not getting my money's worth out of this association and affiliation; therefore I am not paying my dues."

And I have heard, "I can't afford to belong right now. There

isn't enough money to pay my dues."

The effects of the recession and oversupply are the real culprits here. Would this still be a problem if everyone's revenues were at pre-recession levels?

The second flaw. Because we have affiliation agreements, the supplier side of our industry has a clear understanding of who they need to work with to meet their own objectives. This supplier side provides tremendous amount of funds for infrastructure support of both the local and national groups. Can anyone really imagine trying to operate a statewide affiliation on \$50 or \$100 dues today and still be effective?

The third flaw. As affiliated groups we become the voice of

golf, representing thousands of courses, owners, superintendents, professionals, employees and golfers. Could we be as effective in unaffiliated groups?

The fourth flaw. The affiliation between local and national groups has led to more cooperative efforts with the organizations in golf. This cooperation has helped foster a "we are in this together" attitude and helped eliminate some of the "us versus them" attitude that had long been in place.

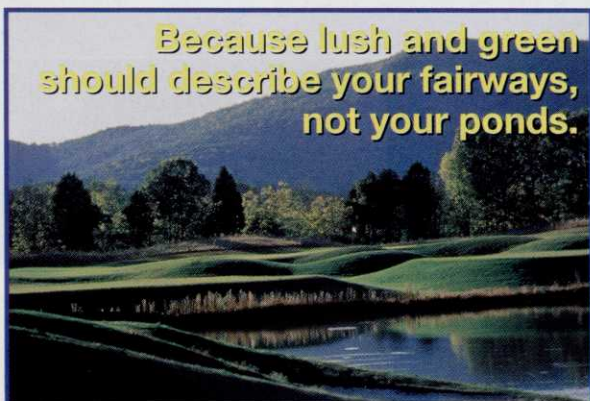
The fifth flaw. This could be the most important. The affiliation has helped to provide more and better informational, educational and networking opportunities for all of us. This is the active part of membership. The more active you are –

whether you are on the Internet searching through the organizations Websites or attending workshops and conferences – the more opportunity you have to become better at what you do.

While this is an extensive list, there are probably some items that could be added. However, I don't think breaking the affiliations and reducing the dues will increase membership at either the local or the national level. This would only fragment the industry and create obstacles to both local and national objectives.

Jeff Hoag
President
Golf Systems Inc./Scott Lake
Country Club
Comstock Park, Mich.

Want to access this article?
Enter <http://tinyurl.com/3ah6x8n> into your Web browser to read "Truth & Consequences."



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Social media

Congratulations on keeping us in the field updated and keeping Golf Course Industry alive and well.

I really enjoy any piece you do about the digital age like "The Social Networker" (October, page 24). This is the way things are going and we have to embrace it.

Eric J. von Hofen
Director of agronomy and building maintenance
Riviera Country Club
Coral Gables, Fla.

Want to access this article?

Enter <http://tinyurl.com/29ua2d3> into your Web browser to read "The Social Networker."

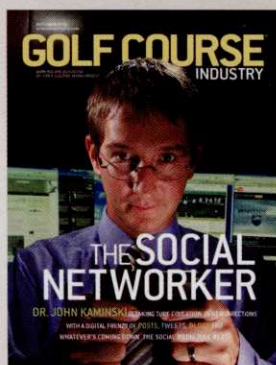


Figure it out

Good article ("Truth and Consequences") concerning required reciprocity. We have struggled with this issue at our chapter. I was not and still not supportive of it.

Also, I have brought up many times at meetings (some in the GCSAA HQ just down the road from me) the use of a sliding membership dues structure based on a maintenance budget ratio. Should the superintendent of Flinthills National (a friend of mine) with a budget from God in the seven-figure range pay the same amount as me with my five-figure budget? I have a landscape business, too, and used to be a member of the American Association of Nurseryman and there sliding scale was great for the mom-and-pop nursery. I have a feeling the GCSAA maybe more conducive to this approach in these times.

Kevin Fateley
President
Kansas Golf Course Superintendents
Association
Wildcat Creek Golf and Fitness

Hard times

"Truth and Consequences" was right on target. The genesis of GCSAA was from a local group of greenskeepers right here in Rocky River, Ohio. The health of the local chapters is and always has been the strength of the national organization. Take care of the locals and you will have a strong national.

The requirement of belonging to GCSAA if you belong to the local sounded good at the time except for the fact that the cost of

multiple memberships got pricey – the 1st and 2nd assistant superintendents plus the superintendent is a major expense even for a high-budget club. It's good to have the assistants as members of the local, but it's not necessary that they belong to the GCSAA as long as there is one GCSAA member from that organization.

These are tough times and clubs/courses are looking for every way to conserve dollars. This idea may cut a few assistants for the membership rolls of GCSAA now, but I think it would promote their joining once they became a superintendent.

Frank Dobie
Superintendent and general manager
Sharon Golf Club
Sharon Center, Ohio

"Catharsis"

Have been meaning to tell you what a great article you wrote ("Catharsis," August 2010, page 4)! Your experience mirrors my brother's adventure almost to a tee (pardon the golf term). Like you, he has taken the steps to right the ship and is back on the road to success. Congratulations and thanks for the courage to share your story.

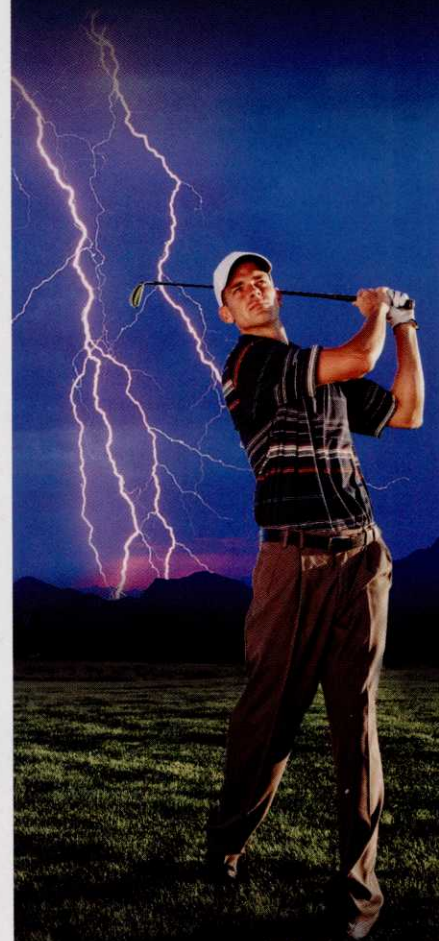
Editor's Note: Due to the sensitive nature of this feedback, the name has been withheld for privacy reasons. Readers seeking info about alcoholism and addiction can find out more at the Alcoholics Anonymous site: www.aa.org.

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