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NODE TO NODE TO TODAY

As I embark on my first social media column with Golf Course Industry, it is a bit ironic that it is the magazine's annual water issue. I am going to a place I reference often, so please bear with me. In my announcement assuming the role of CEO of the new startup Turf Republic, I referenced Steve Jobs' commencement address. In it, Steve talks about connecting the dots:

"... you can't connect the dots looking forward; you can only connect them looking backwards. So you have to trust that the dots will somehow connect in your future. You have to trust in something – your gut, destiny, life, karma, whatever." This really couldn't be more true and I would be willing to guarantee if you all took a moment to look back, your dots would connect too."

So what does connecting the dots have to do with me, water, GCI, Turf Republic and social media? Some of you may think I'm already stretching the column – long internodes between the nodes, to put it in turf terms – but I'm not.

I have always been a tech guy. I like to reside on technology's cutting edge and I like to stand at the front of the line when the "next big thing" comes out. When social media hit the scene, it was innovative and cool and I, of course, jumped on.

Back then it was about Brittney Spears shaving

Who could forget #whosgotmyhose and the #LSOT awards? Both of these hashtags served a very good purpose; one for learning and the other for release.

her head and what Starbucks Ashton Kutcher was going to order a latte. Social media in our industry took root in 2009. Many of us turned to social media, a much larger diverse network, to solve our problems. I tell this story often in my social media seminars. The first time social media had an impact on me professionally was on a Friday in July of 2009. A fellow superintendent was looking for help, his pump station had gone down. He tweeted some photos and symptoms of the issue. Colleagues began chiming in and sharing their thoughts and experiences with this particular type of pump station. By day's end, social media and the intuitive-

ness of interconnected superintendents combined to fix the pump station.

The summer we all wish to forget came next, the summer of 2010. Social media flexed its muscle power that summer. Who could forget #whosgotmyhose and the #LSOT awards? Both of these hashtags served an integral purpose; one for learning and the other for release. Water was a big topic of conversation in 2010. I wrote a few columns that summer focused on utilizing soil moisture meters, and remote access via iPhone and iPad to control irrigation cycles.

The summer of 2010 an idea was born – Turf Republic. Some think this was a whim, something thrown together to bring a more social approach to turf. However, those who know me and understand how I operate, know what Turf Republic is built on and the type of impact it will make. The vision, philosophies and assets of Turf Republic come from an understanding of where we are and where we need to be in the future.

While Turf Republic is young, I could not be more excited about the direction it's going.

So how do we connect these dots, nodes to internodes?

Well, I have trusted my instinct my entire career and life, for that matter. I have had ideas, some good some bad, but have always gone with them. Even the bad ideas have their dots connected. So you may wonder how we go from me in 2009 to today writing a column for Golf Course Industry's water issue? Well my love for technology and passion for the industry paved the way for my use of social media and the genesis of my iTurf Apps platform in 2009. The first time social media made an impact for me was in 2009 when several of us assisted breathing life back into an irrigation pump station for a fellow superintendent. In 2010, social media helped an entire industry endure one of the toughest summers on record. It also educated us in many areas on water and turf management. That same year an idea called Turf Republic was born, and early this year a phone call that had the words "So what's this Turf Republic?" brings me to where I am today.

I look forward to this new journey with you all and look forward to the future and connecting more dots. **GCI**