

GOLF COURSE INDUSTRY

2011 TURF MARKETING To Do List:

- ✓ TARGET OUR BUDGET
- ✓ BE CREATIVE & FUN
- ✓ MIX PRINT & DIGITAL
- ✓ RAMP UP SOCIAL MEDIA

✓ CALL GCI FOR HELP!!

Look inside
to find out
what's new!

What's New at GCI? Plenty!

The golf market is coming back and GCI is surging ahead with new editorial features, great partnership opportunities and proven marketing solutions in print, digital and multimedia. Take a look at what's new with us and how we can help you achieve your sales and branding goals in 2010-2011.

“QUOTABLE

“Can't wait to view and read the (publication)... everything you and your magazines do is first class!”

Bruce Williams,
CGCS, Valley Crest Golf
Maintenance



PROVE IT!

The first thing you need to decide when you advertise your products in an industry magazine is whether it actually reaches your customers. Does the publication actually get mailed to the superintendents and other buyers who buy your stuff? Is the list they use up to date or is the magazine being sent randomly to someone who left that job years ago? Do the customers actually agree that they want to receive the magazine or is the publisher just randomly sending them out to people who just toss it?

Those are questions that should be answered simply and easily by a circulation audit. Historically, nearly every reputable trade magazine has used BPA audits as the standard to prove their circulation claims. It's an expensive and challenging process for those of us in this business, but good media companies owe it to their customers to put their money where their mouth is and validate what they promise to advertisers. But, predictably, some struggling publications are now getting cheap and dropping BPA entirely or replacing it with something “almost as good.”

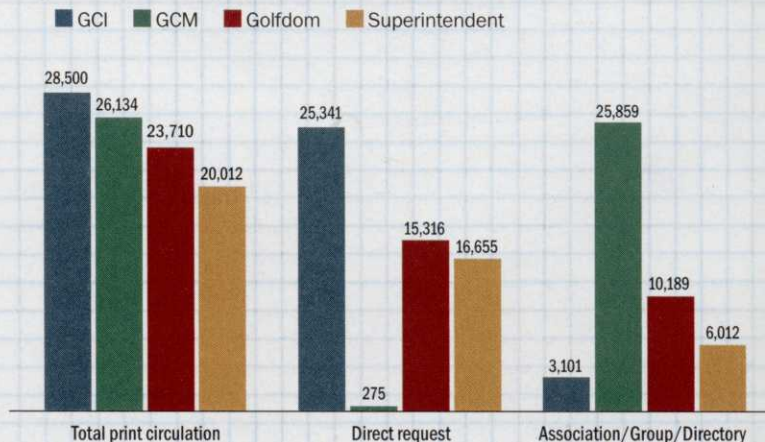
Ummm...okay.

Think about it this way: If you changed a key ingredient or an important part in one of your products, wouldn't customers demand to know why? Shouldn't you do the same?

By the way, GCI is sticking with the tried-and-true BPA system to prove that we do reach the most qualified buyers in the market (28,000) and we have the freshest list (nearly 80% one-year/direct request). We're also going to be the first to introduce the new BPA “Brand Audit” that verifies our reach in print and all of our digital products.

In short, we're investing and adding value to the communications platform we provide to our clients. Why aren't our competitors doing the same? You should ask them.

Nov/Dec 2009 Total Circulation



GET THE INSIDE SKINNY

Our intrepid publisher and editorial director has launched a blog just for you! Check it out at <http://gcimarketing.blogspot.com>. Pat blogs regularly about trends in the industry, new research about the market, observations from his travels around the country and, of course, what's new with the magazine. Check it out and make sure to subscribe to the blog through Google Reader or RSS to get your updates directly to iGoogle or e-mail.



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Kirk Richmond at Crooked Stick Golf Club in Carmel, Indiana visited with superintendent Russ Apple during his grow-in at The Pete Dye Course at French Lick to share management ideas. And while there is strength in numbers, it's more important to know that a familiar face just up the road uses the Penn bentgrasses too.

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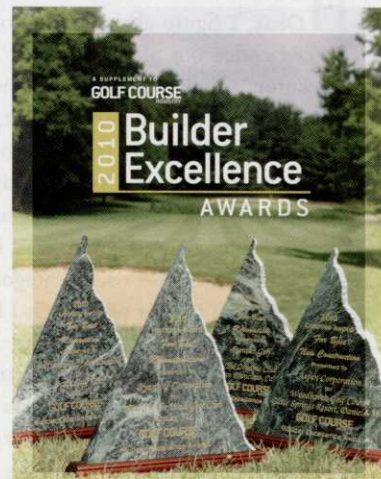
Wilmington CC uses several turf varieties on the various parts of its South Course.

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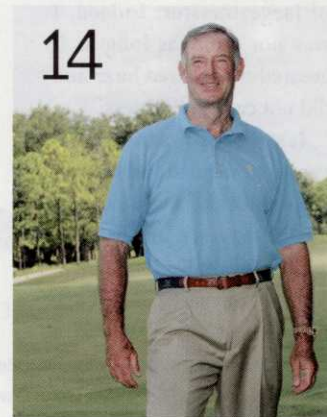
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CATHARSIS

Hi. My name is Pat and I am an alcoholic. Okay, I figure about a third of you just horked coffee out of your nose at that little revelation. Another third of you who've spent time with me immediately thought, "Duh...I knew that." The final third of you are sitting there wondering, "Who is this guy and shouldn't he be writing something witty about Johnny Miller being a grain-head instead of this junk?" No matter which category you fall into, I ask you to bear with me as I indulge in a little catharsis.

First, allow me to state for the record that I was a damn fine professional drinker for nearly three decades. I was mostly a beer guy but I never turned away a Grey Goose on the rocks, a tumbler full of single-malt scotch or a pricey bottle of merlot if someone else was treating. Hell, I may be the only human on earth who actually grew to like the taste of Jaegermeister. Indeed, I was not picky as long as it created the desired buzz and did not cause blindness.

It's worth noting that I came to adulthood in the tail end of the three-martini lunch era. Work and drinking were inexorably intertwined. My first day at GCSAA back in the mid-'80s featured a welcome lunch with cocktails, beer and wine. And it was always 5 o'clock somewhere in that workplace and pretty much all the others I habituated over the years.

I'm not sure anyone's ever done a scientific study but I think I can say with some certainty that alcohol flows a bit more freely in our happy little industry than in others. Any time you mix turf, testosterone, stress, schmoozing and selling, booze is sure to be found. And I found it in glorious quantities at every trade show, conference and sales meeting I attended. Heck, it was part of my job, right? Just whip out the company credit card and keep that tab open until everyone's feeling no pain.

Surprisingly, I rarely got falling-down, Otis-from-Mayberry drunk. Like many alcoholics, I had both a unquenchable thirst and an equally tremendous capacity to consume. The same two cocktails that would put the average guy on the edge of goofy were just a pregame warm up for

me. I could usually go all night, appear to be relatively sober and most people would never have guessed I'd had 13 Heinekens or nine Ketel Ones or whatever. I maintained, as they say.

I knew for years – deep down in my soul – that I drank too much and I was dependent on it. But, thanks to an amazing, almost superhuman ability to rationalize, I decided I was a "high-functioning drinker." In short, I convinced myself I could do anything while drunk and generally do it well. For example, if I had to guess, I'd say 30 percent of what you've read from me over the years was probably written when I was half in the bag. Seriously, I sometimes go back and reread columns and have absolutely no recollection of writing them. God only knows how many important conversations and events are missing from my brain because the Bud Light molecules were having a party in my memory synapses.

Booze hastened my planned departure from my previous publisher/editor gig. It also helped to destroy my marriage to a good and patient woman who I'd known and loved since junior high. Mostly, I think it kept me from achieving the personal and professional potential I had that day in 1978 when I

was handed my first beer (a warm Coors tall-boy, as I recall). If I'd croaked along the way, "Didn't live up to expectations" would have been a fitting epitaph for Poor Drunken Pat.

Things really started to deteriorate for me about six years ago. I left/got kicked out of my old job and started a consulting firm. It actually went fairly well at first and I found I could get a lot accomplished in a relatively short time working solo in my home office. The downside was that 5 o'clock came early nearly every day. Some days, it started shortly after breakfast.

I isolated myself – another common tendency for alcoholics – and increasingly drank alone. A cheap-ass bottle of vodka became my best friend and confidant. I went to amazingly creative lengths to hide my drinking and I lied constantly about it to my ex-wife, my kids, my friends, my colleagues and myself. I was

(continued on page 62)



Pat Jones

Editorial director and publisher

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We'd like to hear from you.

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

FEEDBACK

Recreational use

I must say, having just read Jeff Brauer's column ("Shouldn't future courses be shorter?" page 26) in the June issue of Golf Course Industry that I agree with every word. Just why golf course architects think that they have to apply their trade to the best golfers around rather than the average golfer is beyond me.

Perhaps the placement of an extra one or two tee boxes would help out the situation. My wife and I both enjoy our golf but we are reluctant to play some of the better courses in our area simply because they are too long. We are both in our early 70's and still play a pretty good game, but we need some "senior tees" out there.

David Hughlock
Pomona, Calif.

EDITOR'S NOTE

Check out the GCI online for the BLOGROLL, a comprehensive list of superintendent and industry-related blogs, as well as the Golf Course Industry Super Blog of the Month.

Brauer feedback

I just wanted to let you know that I read Jeff Brauer's column almost every month and, as an architect, appreciate his common-sense (slightly sarcastic) approach to design, working with nature, reducing maintenance, etc. etc. The June column ("Should future courses be shorter?" page 26) regarding course length really struck a chord with me, so I had to write to say keep up the good work. I enjoyed it and agree 100 percent with his comments.

Mark Miller, Golf Course Architecture
Miller Design
Arvada, Colo.



Moderation

The planet will be OK. The carbon agenda ("Can golf save the planet?" March 2010) has a big element of self-interested envirofanatics in charge. Moderation is key.

John Hagg
Indian Wells, Calif.

Kudos

One helluva job on the article with Armen Suny ("The Road Less Traveled," June 2010, page 20). Thanks.

Larry "Red" Elliott
Standard Golf Co.

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white grubs | ants | billbugs
chinch bug (including pyrethroid-resistant) | more

Golf in the gulf

The Gulf of Mexico oil spill is affecting more than just water, animals and beaches.

GCI's engineers working on the oil crisis in the gulf report in that components that make up wetting agents – ethylene oxide and propylene oxide – are being used to aid in the ongoing cleanup effort. Because of this, there has been some speculation about rising prices and supply shortages of popular wetting agents. However, Paul Garvin, Aquatrols director of manufacturing, believes wetting agent prices will remain steady.

“Many of the chemical plants that make the components in turf wetting agents also make dispersants and detergents,” Garvin says. “I believe that the demand for dispersants and detergents to aid the cleanup of the Gulf oil spill has helped to keep previously elevated costs in place, more so than directly increasing them.”

Garvin adds that while many chemical manufacturers saw a significant upturn in demand this past spring, as the economy started to rebound, which resulted in an increase in price. “The upward pressure on surfactant prices earlier this year was more a result of increased demand overall, as well as significant upward pressure on the components of ethylene oxide and propylene oxide, which are the building blocks of the surfactants we use in turf,” Garvin says. He points out that most of the major price increases came before the Gulf oil spill.

Garvin couldn't speculate on long-term cost or supply issues at this point in time.

This latest story, though, makes you realize how many people and industries the oil spill indirectly impacts.

Old embraces new

Here's an interesting anecdote of old-meets-new from our good friends at John Deere Golf.

Musselburgh Links, Musselburgh, Scotland, is officially recognized by Guinness World Records as the oldest playing golf course in the world. In fact, GCI's crack research department has uncovered dusty documentary evidence that shows the course was played as early as 1672, although Mary Queen of Scots is reputed to have played at Musselburgh more than a century prior.

So in an effort to improve playing conditions and make the centuries-old facility more eco-friendly, Musselburgh recently purchased John Deere Golf's newest technology – a 8000 E-Cut hybrid fairway mower and two 200 E-Cut walk greens mowers.

The turf pros at Musselburgh tell us their recent investment reflects not only their attention to quality of play, but also to their impact on the environment.

“We are trying to embrace hybrid technology across all of the council's machinery operations,” says Dougie Fox, East Lothian Council's amenity technician. “The decision to choose the hybrid mowers was made primarily to help reduce our carbon footprint, as well as cut fuel consumption and noise levels.”



“QUOTABLE

“We suited up in heavy leather jackets, gloves and masks. He had inch-and-a-half claws.”

Brian Chapin, superintendent at Dellwood Country Club, New City, N.Y., describing his team's efforts to rescue a great horned owl that had become entangled in the facility's driving range net in mid-July.

ROLL CALL

Superintendent **Gary Dalton** announced his retirement from San Diego Country Club.

Crystal Mountain Golf Course (Thompsonville, Mich.) Superintendent **Adam Ikamas** earned the Certified Golf Course Superintendent (CGCS) credential from the Golf Course Superintendent's Association of America (GCSAA).

Marriott Golf named **Andy Ragsdale**, superintendent at The Ritz Carlton Golf Club, Orlando, Grande Lakes, Golf Grounds Manager of the Year.

Standard Golf has promoted **Steve Tyler** to its newly-created national sales manager position.

Dow AgroSciences announced **Mark Urbanowski** will lead the Turf & Ornamental team as the portfolio marketing leader; Patrick Bell will serve as the Turf & Ornamental product manager; **Kevin Sheaffer** joined the Southern Urban Pest Management district as a sales trainee responsible for the Turf & Ornamental territory previously managed by Bell; in the Western district, **Bruce Kidd**, sales representative, is retiring and **Evan Walden** will take over his role.

Trevor Thorley was named the president of Engage Agro USA.

PBI/Gordon added **Allen Baumstark** to the professional sales staff. His territory includes Missouri, Arkansas and Louisiana.

Paul O'Connor, former assistant superintendent at Carnoustie Golf Links, has been appointed links superintendent for Trump International Golf Links, Scotland.

Jane Geddes, LPGA senior vice president of tournament operations, and **Morgan Gregory**, president of GlenArbor Golf Club in Bedford, N.Y., will serve on The Environmental Institute for Golf board of trustees through Feb. 2014. GCSAA Secretary/Treasurer **Sanford G. Queen**, CGCS, manager of golf operations for the city of Overland Park, Kan., will serve through Feb. 2013.

Mr. Blue Sky

Besides prime playing weather, there's one more powerful reason why Foxchase Golf Club is lobbying Mother Nature for blue skies and sunshine.

GCI's advanced technical correspondent reports that, in late July, the Stevens, Pa., golf course became powered 100 percent by solar panels.

This move off the grid makes Foxchase the only golf course in the Keystone State – and perhaps the only, if not one of the few in the nation – powered solely by solar energy.

"Foxchase aims to stay in the forefront of the golf industry," says co-owner Steve Graybill. "Utilizing solar technology is a welcomed addition to both our course and the community."

The facility's system covers an acre of land and is composed of 1,320 solar panels. The system, which is wired underground, can be monitored anywhere in the world via the Internet. A display mounted in the pro shop provides the public with the amount of power being produced.

So how much sunshine will the Foxchase solar farm harvest? The system is expected to produce 360 mega watts of power per year, which according to our estimations, is about the same amount of juice necessary to power 30 homes.

As an added bonus, about half of the system's costs were offset by federal and state incentives. For example, Foxchase qualifies for accelerated depreciation available through incentive programs like the Renewable Energy Tax Credit and the Pennsylvania Sunshine Solar program, and there's an expected 5-year payback on the system. And, the system is expected to yield a positive cash flow of \$144,000 annually.

Lastly, the Foxchase solar system – which was installed by Advanced Solar Industries, New Holland, Pa. – will offset about 3,600 tons of carbon per year.



CONSUMER RESEARCH

A glimpse of how golfers' behavior affects the business of golf facility maintenance and management.



Outsourcing hospitality

It's widely held that quality employees make for a successful club or golf course facility. However, the impact of the recent global recession on service staffing levels has been felt at facilities throughout Europe as well as in the United States. In both markets, the golf industry is an employers' market as managers look for ways to streamline operations and staffing levels and cut costs, yet still maintain a competitive level of customer service. Outsourcing has become a popular remedy to cure overextended budgets.

Recently The Club Managers Association of Europe, in conjunction with KPMG, conducted a salary and benefits study surveying several hundred club managers throughout Europe with the intent that it would help future managerial training and development.

Here are some of those findings.

Clubs & courses outsourcing services overall

Overall, nearly 60% of golf clubs in Europe outsourced food services and over half outsourced coaching services.



Equity vs Non-Equity Club

Equity clubs (owned by members) were more likely to outsource services than non-equity clubs (not owned by members).

