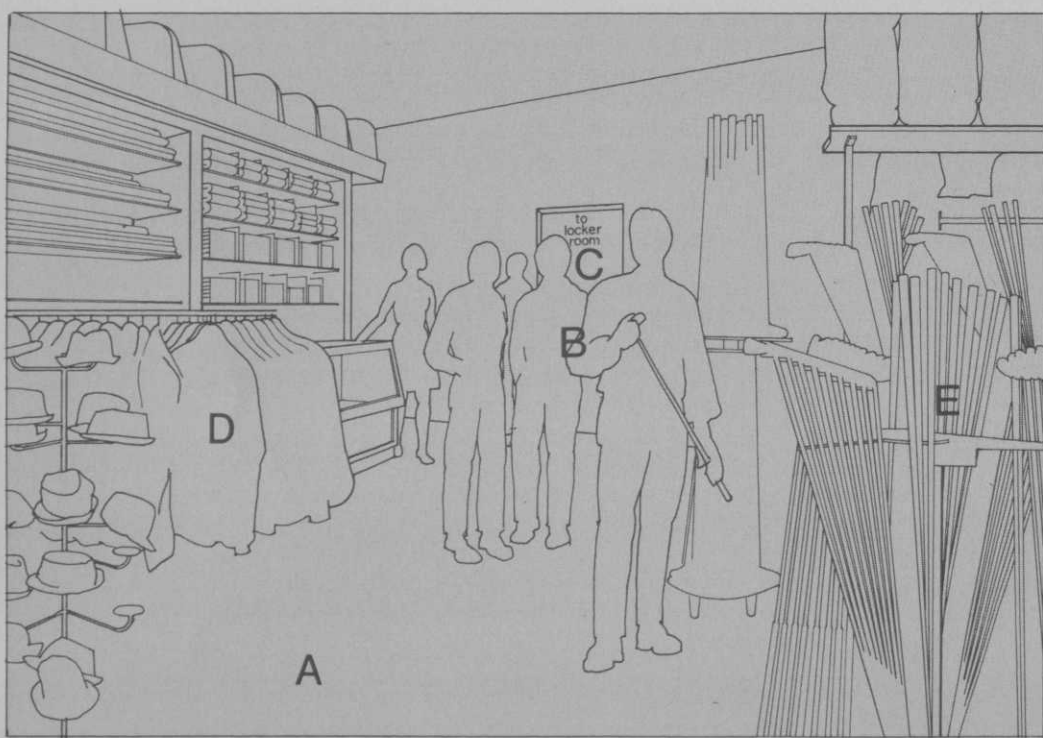


WHAT IS THE AVERAGE PRO SHOP?

If your shop doesn't have a dressing room, you have lots of company. And you are among the majority, if you've had business training

By Vincent J. Pastena



- A) The average pro shop has a floor space of 1,310 square feet or about 36 by 36 feet.
B) The average pro shop's staff, including the professional, numbers 4.5 people.
C) The average shop does not have dressing rooms or booths; usually customers use locker rooms for "try-ons."
D) The number of different manufacturers' lines that the average shop carries in apparel is: shirts, 3.4; men's shoes, 2.6; ladies' shoes, 2.0; gloves, 3.2; men's hats, 2.0; ladies' hats, 1.8; ladies' shirts and blouses, 2.2; men's pants, 2.0; ladies' pants, 2.0; socks, 1.9.
E) In equipment the number of lines the average shop carries is: putters, 6.9; wedges, 5.7; clubs, 6.1; balls, 6.1; bags, 3.9.

The average pro shop has an extremely limited amount of physical space to handle a large merchandise mix, and the records that guide its operation are, at best, minimal. These two points perhaps are not startling to someone who has been in the golf industry for any amount of time. However, they are not educated guesses, but the results of a for-

mal survey designed to determine the characteristics of the "average pro shop operation." The term frequently has been used. Yet, it could not be said with absolute certainty whether a norm exists, and if so, what that norm is. GOLFDOM made a survey of golf professionals to find out.

Respondents revealed that they are

carrying many items of equipment and apparel in a space that is little more than 1,300 square feet, which works out to a square space of about 36 by 36 feet, including storage area. This means the professional cannot afford to be indiscriminate about his use of space. Every square foot of floor, as well as wall, and even some of the ceiling, should serve a

How often do you tally sales slips?	
Frequency	Per cent of total response
Daily	80.7%
Every 2 days	.5%
Weekly	10.7%
Bi-weekly	.5%
Monthly	6.6%
Do not use	1.0%

How often are items sold deducted from inventory figures?	
Frequency	Per cent of total response
Daily	16.9%
Weekly	21.4%
Bi-weekly	.6%
Monthly	49.5%
Quarterly	2.9%
Semi-annually	.6%
Annually	4.6%
Other	3.5%

How often do you take inventory?	
Frequency	Per cent of total response
Daily	1.0%
Weekly	3.7%
Monthly	35.8%
Bi-monthly	1.0%
Quarterly	17.4%
Three times a year	2.6%
Bi-annually	17.4%
Annually	19.5%
Other	1.6%

merchandising function. At the same time, space utilization must be very organized to clearly define merchandise areas for the customers and to avoid a "bargain basement" look. Sounds like a tall order, but with today's modular displays and storage units, designed with the cramped conditions of a pro shop in mind, the job already has been done.

Even with a tight space problem, there is one facility that must be added to the pro shop—a dressing room or booth. Almost 63 per cent of the survey respondents indicated that they had no such facility in their shops. Of that group, almost 74 per cent said their customers must use the locker rooms for "try-ons"—a sure deterrent to impulse buying. And although it sounds elementary, another "must" is a three-view, full-length mirror.

On the personnel side of the operation, the average pro shop appears to be sufficiently staffed with three to four people, excluding the professional. Generally, three of these staff members are involved to some degree in selling. Buying for the shop is the professional's domain. Almost 67 per cent of the respondents said they do all the buying, and most of the remainder share the buying duties with other staff members. Only a few give these chores over to someone else entirely. What is surprising, however, is that with staffs of three to four people, only about 50 per cent of the respondents said they have a woman salesclerk—something industry experts have been encouraging for years. In the apparel area, women sell to other women more easily.

A woman staff member is not the only answer to improved sales. The professional's presence in the shop is essential for equipment sales. In the minds of the consumer, he is the equipment expert—and rightly so. The majority of respondents said they spend 50 per cent or more of their weekly working hours tending to duties in the pro shop. However, more than 26 per cent of the respondents give less than half of their time to that activity, which should be providing the bulk of their incomes.

In addition to sales duties, many professionals apparently are not

(Continued)

Do you record incoming soft goods stock by brand name, size, style, color and price for inventory?	
Response	Per cent of total response
Yes	65.1%
No	34.9%

Are items sold deducted from inventory control records by size, style, color and prices for future recording?	
Response	Per cent of total response
Yes	41.4%
No	58.6%

When do you order your initial stock for the spring/summer season?	
Frequency	Per cent of total response
Fall	57.9%
Fall & PGA show	2.3%
Fall & spring	5.6%
December	.6%
January-February	19.1%
Spring	9.0%
PGA show	1.6%
Other	3.9%

Do you buy merchandise at the PGA Merchandise Show?	
Response	Per cent of total response
Yes	49.5%
No	50.5%

Pro shop
continued

Generally, what per cent of your initial stock do your total re-orders constitute?

Percent of initial stock	Per cent of total response
10%	29.2%
20%	29.2%
30%	25.2%
40%	5.3%
50%	9.9%
70%	.6%
80%	.6%

Do you employ a woman sales clerk in your shop?

Response	Per cent of total response
Yes	49.0%
No	51.0%

What per cent of your weekly working hours is spent on duties inside the pro shop, as opposed to duties outside the shop, such as instruction?

Per cent of working hours	Per cent of total response
Under 10%	1.6%
10% to 15%	2.1%
20% to 25%	7.9%
30% to 35%	9.4%
40% to 45%	5.2%
50% to 55%	22.0%
60% to 65%	16.2%
70% to 75%	12.6%
80% to 85%	14.1%
90% to 95%	7.9%
100%	1.0%

devoting enough time to record keeping. Survey results showed an obvious neglect of some basic and essential procedures. Although the majority of respondents—more than 65 per cent—indicated that they record incoming soft goods by brand name, size, style, color and price, only a little more than 41 per cent note the same facts when deducting items sold from inventory records. Unless a professional follows this procedure, a thorough and rapid sales analysis is difficult—if not impossible. There are no other practical means of determining what brands, price categories, colors and sizes are moving fastest and what brands are lagging. Without this knowledge, a professional cannot buy and re-order accurately. However, as important as such information is, some respondents indicated that they keep no records at all or simply do “spot checks” of stock. This type of nonchalance about record keeping does, in fact, reflect itself in buying procedures. Many professionals, through their responses to questions on quantity and frequency of re-orders, revealed an overdependence on re-orders. This is a prime indicator of inadequate knowledge of their stock and their market. Placing large re-orders at midseason is dangerous business, because some soft goods manufacturers, in particular, have reduced considerably the quantities of their overcuts. One supplier warns, “Never has it been more important that the pro commit the supplier as early as possible.”

The formal training acquired by golf professionals could well be the differentiating factor between those who are running their shops according to proven procedures and those who are not. A little more than 58 per cent of the respondents indicated that they had attended courses in merchandising and business offered by the Professional Golfers Association and/or an accredited college. A great percentage of these professionals had covered a range of subject matter that should have prepared them well for the merchandising side of their profession. Of those who attended such courses, more than 95 per cent acclaimed them as helpful in their job performance. □

Do you use in-shop display materials provided by golf equipment and golf apparel manufacturers?

Response	Per cent of total response
Yes	70.2%
No	29.8%

Have you ever attended any courses in merchandising and business offered by the PGA or accredited colleges?

Response	Per cent of total response
Yes	58.4%
No	41.6%

Into which price categories or category does your merchandise fall?

Price categories	Per cent of total response
Low	7.6%
Medium	46.7%
High	19.3%
Medium to high	18.3%
Low, medium, high	8.1%

If you carry merchandise in more than one category, which category accounts for the greatest volume of sales?

Price categories	Per cent of total response
Low	12.3%
Medium	55.6%
High	32.1%

How many different manufacturer's lines do you carry in the following categories:

Category	Number of lines	Per cent of total response
Shirts	1	5.3%
	2	27.6%
	3	30.9%
	4	17.0%
	5	8.5%
	6	4.3%
	7	1.6%
	8	2.7%
	9	1.6%
	none	.5%
Men's shoes	1	14.7%
	2	37.1%
	3	27.4%
	4	14.2%
	5	5.1%
	6	.5%
	none	1.0%
Ladies' shoes	1	27.8%
	2	41.7%
	3	16.7%
	4	8.3%
	5	1.6%
	none	3.9%
Gloves	1	7.1%
	2	28.8%
	3	29.9%
	4	20.7%
	5	6.5%
	6	6.5%
	12	.5%
Ladies' shirts, blouses	1	15.6%
	2	32.3%
	3	23.3%

Category	Number of lines	Per cent of total response	
	4	11.4%	
	5	.6%	
	6	1.8%	
	7	1.8%	
	none	12.6%	
	Men's pants	1	23.7%
		2	31.9%
		3	21.9%
		4	8.1%
		Over 5	3.8%
none		10.6%	
Ladies' pants		1	15.4%
	2	26.6%	
	3	23.1%	
	4	10.7%	
	Over 5	4.1%	
	none	20.1%	
	Socks	1	39.2%
2		40.3%	
3		16.0%	
4		2.8%	
Over 5		1.7%	
Clubs		2	1.7%
		3	4.1%
	4	9.9%	
	5	16.9%	
	6	20.3%	
	7	12.2%	
	8	15.1%	
	9	1.7%	
	10	9.9%	
	Over 10	8.2%	
Putters	1	.5%	
	2	3.0%	
	3	9.6%	
	4	12.0%	
	5	10.2%	

Category	Number of lines	Per cent of total response	
	6	24.6%	
	7	8.4%	
	8	7.8%	
	10	11.4%	
	12	5.4%	
	15	6.6%	
	Over 15	.5%	
	Wedges	1	.6%
		2	9.7%
		3	10.9%
4		16.4%	
5		10.9%	
6		22.4%	
7		7.9%	
8		8.5%	
10		7.3%	
12		3.6%	
	14	1.2%	
	16	.6%	
	Balls	4	6.0%
		5	12.7%
		6	18.1%
		7	10.8%
		8	24.7%
		9	4.2%
		10	15.7%
		12	4.2%
15		1.2%	
Over 15		2.4%	
Bags	1	1.7%	
	2	21.8%	
	3	27.4%	
	4	23.5%	
	5	11.1%	
	6	6.1%	
	7	3.4%	
	8	2.8%	
	15	1.1%	
	Over 15	1.1%	