

Beyond the Green

■ CLUB MARKETING

Remember back in high school when you donned your favorite hooded sweatshirt that featured your school colors and mascots? My sweatshirt, ridiculously enough, also had my last name stitched across the back in big block letters, which my mother sewed on.

We had so much pride wearing our team colors and attending those pep rallies on Friday afternoons, didn't we? Come to think of it, don't you wish your members had the same fierce loyalty to your club's logo wear?

During my travels throughout the world, I wear clothing with logos from the clubs with which I've consulted. I admit that most of my clients are gracious enough to give me free stuff so I feel guilty if I don't wear it. But it's good marketing for them. I've been stopped in many airports by people who recognize my Pradera (no, not Prada) briefcase and Federal Club jacket.

Recently, I was with my father in London, and he was wearing a hat I'd given him that had two eagles emblazoned on it. The hat had no club name, just the icon of the eagles. The club that it represents has only 50 or so local members and maybe three times that in national and international members. But when my father and I were in the elevator at The Goring Hotel, we saw a man who said to my father, "Well, there is a golfer." Well, my dad sports a good golf look, but he is the furthest thing from a golfer. So there was no doubt it was the hat that tipped off the man to the golf club. I asked the gentleman if he knew of the course, and he commented that it was one of the best places he had ever played.

I'm amazed at the conversations that come up when total strangers recognize the club logo I'm wearing on a jacket or other piece of clothing or luggage. Recently, I had a suitcase with the two eagles logo and a man stopped me in Hartsfield International Airport in Atlanta and demanded to know where I had purchased the bag. I told him in the golf shop, of course. (I probably didn't look like

Drumming Up Some Club Spirit

BY HEIDI VOSS



TRY A CONTEST OR
TWO TO GET MORE
PEOPLE WEARING
THE CLUB'S
LOGO WEAR

an ideal club member at that moment. It might have been the torn jean jacket.)

It definitely benefits the club when its members travel with their club logo wear. To encourage them to do so, you should develop a "Show Us Your (Insert Club Name Here)" program. Let me explain. To introduce this program at your club, you need to first feature an article in your newsletter that issues a challenge to your members to send in photos of themselves wearing their logo gear in far-away places. You can offer prizes, such as "longest distance traveled," "most creative photo" or "cutest family photo" to get people to send in photos.

A club can benefit by selling more logo merchandise and will also be getting more exposure. People have snapped photos of themselves wearing their club gear all over the world — from the White House to the Great Wall of China. And they're thrilled to see themselves on clubs' Web sites and in their newsletters.

So encourage your golf shop merchandiser to purchase items that all family members will enjoy wearing. This can include winter ski hats, scarves, baby bibs and doggie bandanas or collars. Remember that pets are next to kids on the dollars spent each year.

So have fun with this promotion and be sure to reward those who do send in their photos. It's good to reward them at member-attended events so other members can be reminded of the program.

The next time we meet, I expect to see your club spirit — on your sleeve.

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