Meadowood Marketing Review

July 15th 2023

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Introduction

The KPI team has taken steps to perform an in-depth evaluation of Meadowood's overall marketing execution. Of course, the term "marketing" is a very broad notion - encompassing an enormous range of elements, messaging, mediums, people, technologies, and consumer interactions that contribute to the club's overall reputation and ability to sell premium goods and services.

Following a brief introduction, we're going to tackle the following:

- Current state of Meadowood's marketing execution - how we see things now, what's been working/not working well.
- Meadowood's current market position - a detailed, data-driven look at your local marketplace, competitive set, demographics and overall demand for golf.
- Marketing knowledge base - some core marketing concepts that should provide context around our recommendations and also serve as reference info when it comes to any future in-house marketing execution (vs. hiring out the work).
- Marketing recommendations - KPI's suggested solutions for Meadowood to grow demand and revenue, sell memberships and thrive long term.

If you look around at how other clubs are marketing themselves, you begin to see a lot of commonalities.

Country clubs seem to be unique animals when it comes to marketing budgeting and execution. Unlike many other mid-sized businesses, golf courses are effectively many different "companies" in one. You're running a restaurant, a farm, fitness studio, golf course, golf practice facility, tennis, pool and others. Selling daily fee participation is also very different than winning high value membership sales. It's a difficult thing.

Because of all the "moving parts", limited budgets, and perhaps a disproportionate weight placed on word of mouth and localized reputation, many clubs handle a large share of marketing work in-house. This is fine – in fact there are many advantages to leaning on those right on the front lines to produce marketing material. Those having direct interactions with customers are generally more in tune with what customers are interested in.

It's a double-edged sword however. Staff members moonlighting in marketing generally aren't hired on for marketing work specifically, but are given marketing tasks alongside their actual job descriptions.

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This scenario leads to disjointed and fragmented execution. Things tend to fall by the wayside over time. Our aim with Meadowood is to continue to lean in on the talent and insights of in-house staff for a good share of the work, and to establish clear guardrails for the team to operate more efficiently.

If you'd like to cut to the chase, we're going to look to do the following:

1. Clarify Meadowood's position in the world
2. Build an infrastructure that helps us communicate effectively at scale
3. Set up processes to ensure the system continues to execute efficiently

Sounds easy enough ;)

Current State of Meadowood Marketing & Communications

Based on conversations with Meadowood Board Members, staff and through detailed audits of company marketing materials and assets, we begin with an overview of the current state of your marketing processes.

Generally, it's very clear that those involved with club marketing efforts are passionate about growing the club's brand reputation through a fairly wide variety of tactics - your website, social media, email communications, paid social campaigns, print advertising, events, and word of mouth.

First of all, it's a great first step for the club to acknowledge the need for help in marketing. Many clubs perpetually continue to chase the next "shiny object" without a clear plan (of which there are many in tech/marketing). With so many people involved, the system can quickly become fragmented and disjointed (which it has) - leading to increased time investment with reduced effect & ROI..

First, I've outlined some data, observations and simple commentary on the your current key marketing tactics. This helps us take inventory on what's been working well, or not working well to date.

To follow,, I've provided some recommended steps for the club to take in the coming weeks/months/years in order to help get on track and continue to optimize. I think you'll

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find somewhat of a “phased approach” to your marketing processes will serve the club’s reputation (and budget) best.

Market Position

We’ve provided a comprehensive set of data based on research of your local competitive marketplace. Our report outlines golf facility specific information that stands to directly impact the club’s future success. We encourage a careful review of this data as we construct a game plan around your intended market position (if different than current).

For starters, we’ve identified your competition - facilities located within a 30 minute drive time of Meadowood - along with a map.

Private clubs are marked with a Red Star (13 club within 30 minutes). Recently closed facilities are marked with a Black Hexagon (3 clubs). There are 3 tiers of publicly available clubs - Price (4 clubs), Value (3 clubs) and Premium (1 club) in ascending order. There is 1 Learning/Practice facility.

The “Home” icon represents Meadowood. Meadowood currently falls in the “Public - Value” category. The 2 other local Public Value facilities are Fairwinds and Gator Trace.

The Public Premium club is PGA Golf Club, while the lower level Public Price courses are Island Pines, Indian Hills, The Champion Turf Club at St. James, and St. Lucie Trail Golf Club.

Currently, the club is sitting in a relative sweet spot, with more clubs “below” Meadowood - of a seemingly lesser quality competing on price. Of course, this is a place we do not ever want to be - emphasizing the importance of upgrading course conditions and overall experience as soon as possible.

The pure private game is VERY crowded, especially since (as you’ll see in the data, and probably know intuitively), that the money and demand for higher end golf is all to the east. Building the perception/reputation for a pure private experience so far out to the

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west, although possible over time, would be an enormous shift and undertaking in the immediate future.

From a demographics perspective, we know that certain factors influence golf play rates - certain ages, incomes and ethnicities have higher/lower propensities to play golf (based purely on data). Not all populations are equal when it comes to playing golf.

What you'll notice in the Participation & Frequency report, is that demand for golf based on population counts and population makeup is quite low. That said, as you push east into 20 and 30 min drive times, play rate indexes rise well above state averages. This is not only because of greater overall population, but the makeup of these populations.

Based on blended/averaged numbers, we've got just 505 estimated golfers available within a 10 min drive, but 10,405 within a 20 min drive. Demographic data actually reduces that 505 number further, given huge local negative influences based on avg. household income (index of 79, 100 is average) and ethnicity (index of 76). There's also a slight negative based on age breakdown (index of 97).

I wish it were different, but less affluent and non-white populations play a lot less golf. In Meadowood's immediate area, there's a relatively low demand for golf based on total population and the makeup of that population.

We're not sure why, but overall population growth (Demographic Summary) is projecting minimal overall population gain over the next few years - even within a 30 min drive time. This means that Meadowood is unlikely to benefit from a large influx of new families (aggregate fresh blood) to the area anytime soon.

So, given these circumstances and other data, we're in position as a good quality, value driven offering in the market. Improvements to the club are well-timed to help retain this status. We definitely don't want to slip down in perceived quality & experience to compete on price alone (these are most often clubs that end up closing down, which is sad by the way because it means less affordable golf for people).

We need to work hard to improve conditions and overall club operations to deliver a product that our marketing efforts will be promising. Otherwise, our reputation can slip downward into a place from which it'll be very difficult to recover.

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As we improve the club…it's going to be important to DOCUMENT this improvement and share how things are getting good out here. The more diligent, genuine and honest we are in our reporting to the public, the more we can ensure our promises remain aligned with our product.

As the flywheel continues to spin, we envision enormous value for the club if we're simply able to:

- Boost average green fees by even $10-15 while keeping rounds steady
- Increase avg. customer lifetime value through retention & repeat play (delivering good value product, nurturing strategies to stay top of mind)
- Streamline operating costs through improved operating structure, procurement processes, and other best practices
- Create a marketing/sales infrastructure that helps escalate prospects toward our highest value exchange - membership and/or frequent play
- Continue to invest financial gains back into the club and further Meadowood's reputation toward the best Public Premium option in the Fort Pierce area…with options for a highly attractive membership experience.

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Club Website

The club website, unlike GolfNow, Facebook, or other 3rd party channels, is 100% owned and controlled by the club. Your website should be treated as your most valuable marketing and communications asset - the core hub of all information about the club for newcomers, prospects and members alike. Everything else (social media, email, paid reach, advertising, etc.) serves to amplify this information.

Done right, your website can attract new people who want to learn about the club, with clear pathways for them to initiate a relationship with Meadowood.. It's where we begin to establish the club's unique identity and value proposition - what we offer, to whom, how we do our thing, and why that matters to our customers. Everything is 100% on brand because we're not subjected to 3rd party design limitations.

Structural Overview
Platform: Wordpress
Theme: GolfNow Pro
Hosting: Automattic
Indexed Pages (Google0: 20
Created: 2009
Backlinks: 1,429
Linking Domains: 145

Overall the site structure itself is pretty good - in terms of back-end errors/setup stuff. Few broken links, some missing meta info and image alt tags, but not a big deal at all. With just 20 total pages, there's not a ton that can go wrong however. We'll want to begin using the site as a marketing & communications tool rather than simply an online "brochure" and pathway to booking tee times.

Here's a link to our Website Structural & SEO Audit Report

Observations
Overall, the website needs some help. I suspect that things could be fairly easily turned around with some processes so the team can move beyond simply providing very basic information and "fixing mistakes" on the site…and move toward a more proactive approach where you're actually using the site as a powerful marketing tool.

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Below, I've made some very general observations about the site, but a redesign is going to be highly recommended (don't worry, it's not as scary as it sounds).

General

- Written content needs an overhaul - some significantly outdated information, also not very customer-centric messaging (2nd person better than 1st person….lots of "Our/We" instead of "You/Your".
- Need more specific details - we need to avoid general or cliché statements like "fair test for golfers of all levels", which doesn't really tell the reader anything of value.
- Brand identity needs to remain consistent - colors, fonts, styles, voice, etc. Mixed use of "all caps" in headlines for example.
- Design uses many different fonts/text colors - off brand

Top Bar

- Navigation reasonably clear - shortening top level is advisable as main navigation pushes to 2nd row on certain screen sizes (i.e., "Membership" instead of "Membership Offerings 2022-2023")
- Clicking "Golf" keeps you on homepage

Footer

- Footer appears overlooked - great opportunity to provide certain core content which will appear on every page on the site. (i.e., call to action, map, key links, resources, etc.)
- Contact info and Address is redundant

Homepage Above the fold (top part of homepage)

This is most valuable piece of internet real estate for the club

- Immediate pop-up - understand the intent, but it certainly interrupts user experience. Also, immediate return visits receive the same pop-up even after closing - frustrating for users.
- Popup design itself is outdated…dating back nearly 1 month…not sure if still only 9 holes available.
- Immediate leap to sign up for membership seems a bit forward, feels desperate when a club is constantly asking for members.

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- Title text not super compelling - Good to mention open to public, but "Subject to Available Tee Times" seems obvious. Key opportunity here to set a clear tone.
- Call to action buttons are okay…key pathways users typically look for.
- Prefer slightly shallower opening imagery to visualize elements below.
- Imagery should be better - aspirational, representative, emote positive feelings
- Opening 4-column text introduces key areas of the club…this is a good concept in principle, but needs editing. F&B is more than catering, also probably not ideal position of location information (map would be better than text)

Other Homepage Thoughts

- "Affordable Luxury" is potentially a nice concept in developing a good opening positioning statement on the site. Like the use of "You" in the text instead of "We/Our"…denotes customer-centric perspective.
- No need to reiterate "Open to public….available tee times"
- Announcement of closing dates have long past. Website MUST be accurate… people will never bother to return if it becomes a waste of time.
- Green section is very poor layout…centered text, spacing, etc. Redesign.
- Ratings and reviews integration is a good idea - design needs work (colors, fonts, style).
- Generally use of negative coloration is not best for reading longer texts

Live Chat

- Live chat is a good tactic in concept - more pathways to achieve engagement is better than less, but the execution is in need of a little fine tuning. Chat can be a double edged sword - It's frustrating for users if things take too long or answers aren't helpful.
- Consider setting up off-hours to save user's time…it took us 8 mins to learn that the range is simply "open to public" after asking if there were any upcoming beginner golf clinics.
- Anecdotally, it showed that Nonkululeko joined the chat, but apparently her name seems to be Kate

Sub Pages

- Membership Offerings - Highly recommend that all key content is converted to website content. PDF link is okay, but this should be in addition to on-page content - much better user experience (especially in mobile environments) and for SEO.

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- Book Now - Great to market toward direct bookings on your website. Colors are off brand if integration allows for style changes.
- Golf - Needs a lot of work…more details, compelling text supported by quality imagery, etc. Golf is the focal point of the club…this page and extensions thereof are primary concerns. “Golf” is a pillar page where users should be able to access all relevant information about the golf experience itself. Integrate elements like scorecard and image galleries into the golf page. Save the user time and clicks to see this stuff - if needed, these specific elements can be “click to scroll”.
- Tennis - Same as golf - make this a pillar page with a ll key elements about tennis. Don’t force users to make too many clicks…it’s much slower in a mobile environment.
- Weddings & Events - These each probably eventually justify their own pages…an updated centralized event calendar as well as a specific “large event” page including weddings, birthdays, retirement parties, etc. Gather written, visual content to help users see and understand what they can expect at the club for their event.
- Contact Us - Nobody fills out generic contact forms except spammers. Need to provide a clear reason to utilize any form…why fill out the form, what to expect next, response times, etc. Conditional logic can channel form notifications based on the user’s intent. For example if someone checks the box about golf instruction and membership, the Head Golf Professional AND Membership Director can be notified.
- Staff information - recommend a more robust showcase of key staff members. It’s a reflection on the club to bring in high quality talent with great credentials. Also, staff members feel good about being showcased on the site…give them a place to share who they are, their interests, background, social profiles, experience, credentials, etc. Don’t publish email addresses directly on site - it’s a major invitation for spam bots. Better to hyperlink with clear anchor text (i.e., Email Travis)
- Location - Need a good map visual here as well as address, links to driving directions. Should be prioritized for mobile as many will be navigating on their phones.
- E-Club Signup - create a more compelling reason to submit contact information. I suspect there haven’t been many completions of this form given location in navigation and context around the form. There are lots of ways to do this…users nowadays are reluctant to surrender their info without a clear benefit for doing so

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along with a level of trust that they aren't going to be perpetually spammed/sold. Building in the "email authorization" into other pathways can be a great move (i.e., when someone signs up for the Wine and Dine, they're added to the email list)

Social Media

Currently, Meadowood is on Facebook and Instagram

Facebook - Meadowood Golf & Tennis Club
1,200 likes
1,300 followers
406 Reviews (4.0 rating)

Overall, the account page looks okay. The banner image is nice, but it's a bit dark. Given that Facebook is a social environment, I like to see happy people here using the club in some way - representative demographics of our top target audiences so that they can easily identify that the club may be a good fit for them.

It looks like Messenger is set up with several common questions, and the Book Now button does well to take users to the website booking engine.

I recommend a centralized email address for club/membership/questions related contact rather than a personal email address - ie., info@meadowood, support@, etc. This helps consistency when staff members come and go.

Double check club information for accuracy.

"About" context needs to be rewritten and formatted to paint a clear introductory picture of what the club is about, who it's for, amenities, etc.

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As for posts and activity, there have been 62 organic posts in 2023 (as of July 7th)...an approximate rate of 1 post per every 3 days. At a glance, the posts all seem to fall into a couple “buckets”:

a) Asking for something (book tee time, leave a review, join eclub)
b) General post with something funny, holiday wishes, quick facts/trivia

I like the balance of non-golf/sales specific content posted…there is great intent here to more away from 100% self serving sales pitches. There has been a clear effort to mix in somewhat of a variety of messaging in an effort to foster a relationship and achieve some engagement. That said, engagement is very low relative to your follower count. There are very few comments, and hardly any shares. We would like to see more interaction with our content - not sure of the “quality” of the follower count given that the page has been up since 2014…many have likely moved, died, etc.

All comments have to be responded to. If someone takes the time to write something about the club, we need to make sure to show them that we’re listening as well as talking.

Some 2023 Facebook Post Stats

Topic or nature of posts:

Help/Instruction - 2
Book Tee Time - 8
Membership - 2
Club Events - 1
EClub - 3
Request to Leave a Review - 2
General/Funny/Holiday - 44

Links:

No Link Provided - 45
Website Link - 13
3rd Party Link - 4

Again, it’s a very good thing to add lots of different kinds of content and topics to the feed. It looks like you’re a little too heavy on those simple, announcement-style posts

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that mention a holiday, or some sort of random factoids, etc. Would be nice if we had some of our own content to lean on a little bit for this kind of stuff.

The fact that many posts do not have links provided is actually recommended. Many users will prefer to consume content without leaving the platform they are on. Most of your website links are direct links to tee time booking, and the few 3rd party links are usually related to curated content/articles, etc.

There seems to be a pretty good foundation within your Facebook activity. We'll discuss a recommended content mix later, as well as suggestions for curating great content, and arming social media staff with better content about the club, events, activities, etc.

Instagram
10 post
140 followers
7 following

Very little activity here. Last post was a Mother's Day flier. Prior to that was Summer Membership announcement in spring 2022.

The profile could use a stronger image - designed for very small sizes where profile avatar appears. Description of the club should also lean in on more specific details - very succinct market positioning statement.

Instagram has limitations given that external linking isn't permitted. It's a younger demographic and of course primarily visual - photos/videos. This makes it better for brand building than selling - usually vids/imagery catering to a somewhat younger crowd (probably more related to daily fee play than membership sales).

To learn more about current social media strategies and aggregated data on social media as a marketing tool, here's a link to to 2023 Global Social Media Trends Report published by Hubspot (Web Design Phoenix is a Hubspot partner agency)

Email Marketing & CRM

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Email is still a highly effective avenue for direct communications with your audience - both prospects and members alike.

Of course the first thing you need is an email list. This involves your CRM along with best practices on adding new interested contacts to your email lists. While it's a great move to segment your mailing lists, Meadowood seems to have a less desirable form of "segmentation".

Member communications are sent through one email system, while prospects/non-converted contacts can only be reached through GolfNow messaging systems.

There are a number of distinct issues/challenges in this kind of "split" scenario:

- By leaning on GolfNow to capture customer/player data, processes to bring this data into Meadowood CRM is largely left by the wayside (staff doesn't bother collecting any data if GN is already doing it.)
- GolfNow controls the data for what seems to be ~1,000 people who have experienced Meadowood in the recent past.
- Customers don't have any real loyalty to the Meadow brand/experience (you're one of many)
- Difficult or impossible to custom segment GN contacts
- Messaging through GN is largely limited to "book now", "play now" kinds of sales pitches, rather than club happenings, updates, informative content, brand building, relationship growing.
- Little to no opportunity to direct customers to club website or private channels away from GN
- GolfNow can use contact data to market any way they please - including greatly reduced pricing, hot deals (where you get $0), or promoting competitor clubs.
- GolfNow can sell this information to anyone

In terms of member communications, Maggie does a good job curating content for the monthly newsletter:

- Intro and general updates
- Department head summaries/updates

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- Men's/Women's Golf updates and results
- Course Maintenance projects
- Photos, fun stuff

The design of the newsletter is very dated and not on brand (colors, fonts, styles). This feels like a big missed opportunity at the moment…newsletter content is pretty good, it just needs a more modernized presentation (especially mobile!)

You can offer a pdf version of the newsletter, but it's not necessary. The June 23 newsletter is 2.5MB, which is very large and may trigger many email spam filters (hurting deliverability).

Accessibility is also a huge factor in email especially. PDF documents with lots of text are extremely difficult to consume in mobile environments (approximately 45-55% of your email respondents based on current trends).

Not to mention, designing and editing a pdf document each month is going to be very time consuming - time which could be spent on more effective marketing tactics.

At the time of our conversation, it was unknown as to which email system was being used for member communications. We will recommend an institutional grade system of some kind (there are many) which will greatly improve design options, speed of execution, deliverability, and most importantly analytics/performance tracking.

For example, Mailchimp or Constant Contact will tell you exactly how many emails were sent, delivered, opened, clicked, which links were clicked, which users clicked which links, how many links, etc. Analytics are vital for understanding what kinds of messaging your audience is liking/not liking so that data-driven refinements can continue.

A proper email sending platform will also allow for increased personalization depending on the quality of your database (fields in your email list)

CRM seems to be disjointed with prospects and members living in separate systems. For maximum effectiveness, all contacts should be warehoused in the same system, segmented/categorized across several criteria.

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CRM is ideally integrated into all customer-facing systems such as your website, point of sale, email, and social media in some cases. What this means is that when customers do certain things, your email list/CRM are updated automatically. Contacts are managed in a centralized system rather than multiple, one of which you have no ownership/control.

Here is link to the 2023 State of Marketing Report published by Hubspot

Advertising and Paid Reach

Per our conversations, Meadowood has engaged in several recent advertising campaigns aimed at promoting Summer Membership. I love the idea of a multi-pronged "push" during critical times of the year for special offers. It's a great way to push some people over the fence toward a decision.

Although there are some details I would change in the execution of these elements, it was clearly a great effort…which may have in part led to a bump in recent membership inquiries (as per June's newsletter).

Please don't be disheartened by this sort of activity/expense. I believe that a similar push conducted this time next year will yield far better results - with a foundation of improved course conditioning, overall operations, word of mouth, website content, social reputation, communications processes.

Paid Social Campaign
You recently ran a paid reach social media campaign on Facebook and Instagram. Video ads are a great move ordinarily (although we have not seen the videos themselves). Of course, advertising on facebook/insta hinges upon the quality of the ad creative, messaging, pathways for customers to proceed.

On both platforms, ads were created to promote summer membership programs (it's a big ask to take someone from their facebook feed to exploring membership at a country club). The team didn't have data on whether the program could be considered successful, although according to the Newsletter, there were 17 new equity membership

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applications received (attribution is unclear, so it's difficult to say if campaign played any role in this).

The social campaign ran for 1 month from May 11-Jun 11, delivering ads to 40,000+ users, generating 591 clicks. Big reach and impression numbers look great, but they are often meaningless metrics if sales aren't ultimately made. Without understanding the specific goals of the program as related to actual memberships sales, and metrics like cost per click, cost per lead, customer acquisition cost, it's difficult to call the expenditure a success or failure.

Advertising on FB/IG is a highly technical game…one which we ought to consider down the line, but likely should be tabled until you've constructed a better infrastructure for escalating basic leads up the ladder toward completed membership sales (destination/landing pages, branding, lead nurturing, sales practices, collateral, etc.)

Postcard Mailer
The club sent out a postcard mailer to promote summer memberships. The cards were sent to approx. 1000 homes in the area.

While I'm not opposed to any marketing tactic that brings results, there are some concerns with mailers.

- Performance data is unavailable - we have no real idea as to how effective the campaign was. Without response rates, conversion or other metrics, you're shooting in the dark, and this campaign doesn't really inform the next one.
- No Integration with Any Digital Channels - there is no mention of the website, social channels, or even an email address. Not everyone wants to make a phone call, so more pathways are better. QR codes and landing pages are great ways to bring new people into the ecosystem in ways that they prefer.
- Mailers are generally better for shorter sales cycles - like events. Membership sales are much bigger decisions for people to make, and therefore require more time, touches, investigation before pulling the trigger. I suspect very few people received the mailer and immediately decided to pursue membership…that's a long way to take them in a single piece of info.
- No Targeting/Personalization - same message for everyone is a huge disadvantage of print media…no personalization means that it's very likely most of these flyers were quickly discarded.

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- Quality of the Content - Super important…and in print media, you basically get one shot. On the digital side, you can constantly A/B test and refine based on the results you're getting. Is the messaging on point, properly representative imagery, Compelling call to action? This is somewhat subjective, but we won't know if we can't measure.
- Time and Cost - Print is time consuming and expensive after you cover design, materials, labor and postage.



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Monthly Advertisement - Fort Pierce Magazine
Again, designed to promote summer membership at the club. Usually a good tactic as a complement to other messaging/activities.

Similar points to the mailer, this ad makes no mention of any digital assets (website, social, etc.). Other than a phone call, there is no other way for someone to take action, to learn more about the club, or to make smaller steps in lieu of the big membership decision. It's a shot at a homerun for sure.

There's no way to measure the success of this advertisement. Even if we see a spike in membership inquiries, we won't know which paid reach campaign was responsible. Less text, with links/QR codes for a landing page, event invitation, deal/offer, etc. would be a better way to get people in the door (or to surrender their contact info)…so long as we have a process for nurturing them along the way.

Landing pages also offer us the chance to modify information as things evolve. If we want to extend the offer, change pricing, add imagery or a video, it's easy to modify the landing page…not possible to change the ad after print.

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Marketing Knowledge Base

Like many clubs, we understand that Meadowood is not in a position to hire out 100% of your marketing execution. There's going to be at least a fair portion of the work conducted by in-house staff. For this reason, and to make sure everyone on the marketing team is on a similar page, I'd like to arm everyone with some basic marketing principles that I believe we'll all find helpful as we craft game plans.

The following are introductions to some basic marketing concepts which I hope will help conceptually. I've summarized and also provided deeper resources where applicable.

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The Buyer's Journey: From Stranger to Evangelist

Our "buyer's journey" represents the entire transition as someone moves from a complete stranger into a lifelong loyal member. For some, this is a fairly quick process, others might take decades.

This concept is important, because where a prospect stands along this journey will certainly help inform the questions, challenges, concerns, hurdles they have on their pathway toward membership. We need different sets of information for each.

For example, addressing dress code and tipping policy questions can help a first time visitor feel more comfortable, while the same information is redundant for a member or repeat player. Conversely, touting membership options can be off-putting to a rookie member-guest partner who lives in California, but these details are expected to be in perfect order at a moment's notice when someone inquires directly about club offerings in the pro shop.

The goal is ensuring that potential members feel valued, engaged, and ultimately become an integral part of our golfing community. The stages of the buyer's journey at Meadowood:

Awareness
The journey begins when potential members become aware of our club's existence…or even golf as a legitimate option for recreation. They may not know about Meadowood at all, nevermind membership. These folks might be considering any number of other options for their health, social, or general lifestyle beyond golf as well. It's a big universe of people, but also the farthest away from the promised land!

Consideration
This phase can last a very long time for some. They continue to experience the club, meet people, attend events, receive communications, engage with social media channels, and gather insights from current members. These people are customers of ours - those who have identified themselves to us and spent time and money at the club to varying degrees. Maybe they've never considered membership, but it's our job to stay top of mind and nurture this group - keep them interested in the club, continue to deliver positive experiences, build relationships, and ultimately help them escalate on their own timeline toward the day where they will consider joining. This group is our "farm system" in our membership pipeline.

Decision
These are people who are looking to join a club somewhere. It's now our job to convince them that Meadowood is their best option. These are "hot leads" and warrant the utmost personalized attention to help them feel comfortable about their decision. It's a competitive sport by the way.

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We need to provide clear and transparent membership details, including pricing, benefits, differentiators, expectations, and outline access to facilities through any means necessary. Personalized consultations, tours, member introductions, invitations to events, and otherwise to overcome any remaining hurdles and become the best option.

Loyalty
Current members, especially newly minted members, represent our best opportunity for finding additional members (see 85/50 program). Also, the longer a member stays at the club, the more socially integrated, the greater their Lifetime Value (LTV) from a revenue standpoint. Current members are MUCH easier (and cheaper) to retain than it is to find and sell to new members. Member satisfaction is perhaps the #1 KPI of all, yet tends to get overlooked.

Once a new member joins, proper onboarding is critical. We need to provide a comprehensive welcome package, introduce them to all key staff members, organize orientation sessions to familiarize them with club rules, facilities, and programs. Invite them to participate in social events and directly connect them with existing members, facilitating a sense of belonging right from the start.

To foster long-term loyalty, continuously engage with members through regular communication channels - providing updates on club activities, upcoming tournaments, and special events. Gather feedback and use it to help inform future refinements and improvements continuously.

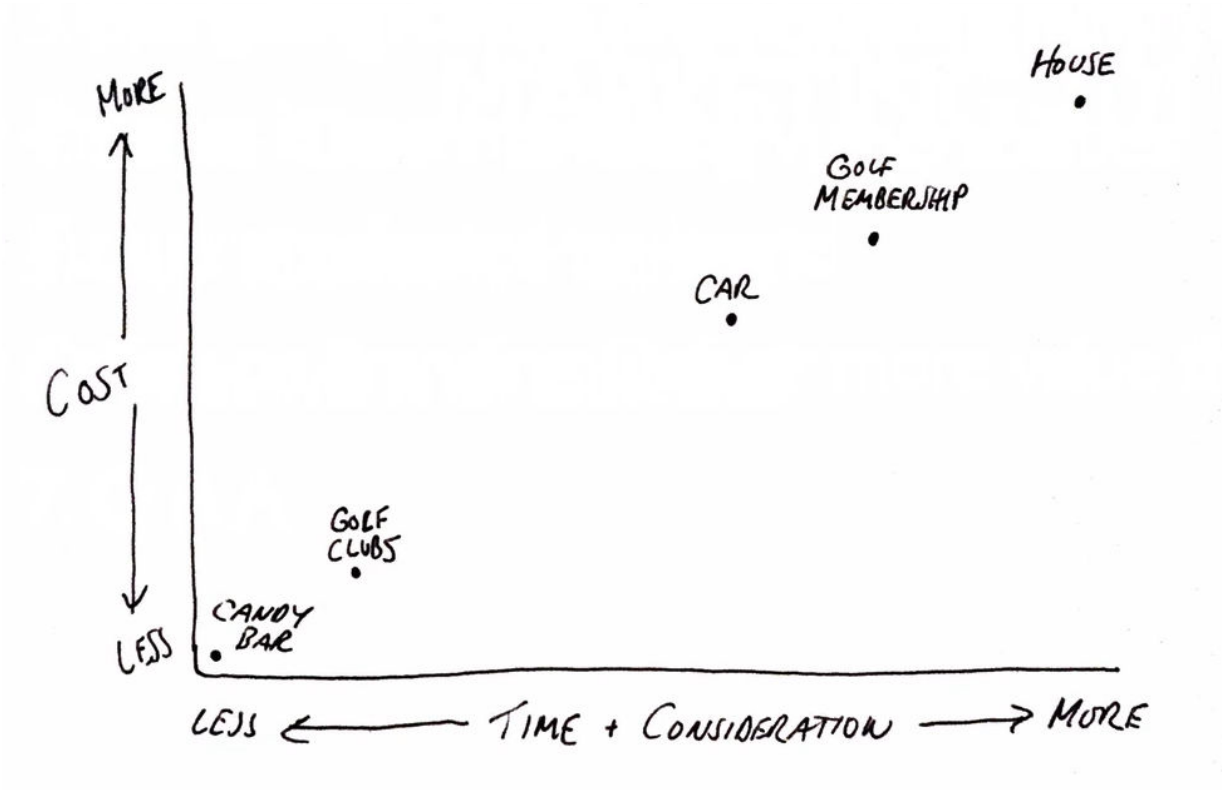
Membership Sales is a Considered Buying Process

Basically, the more important a decision is, the more time and information they're going to need in order to pull the trigger. Memberships are definitely not impulse purchases, and need to be marketed differently than candy bars.

Selling a considered buying process requires patience, and a longer term mindset. Hard sales are rarely effective.

- High financial and/or emotional risk
- Requires extended timetable for evaluation

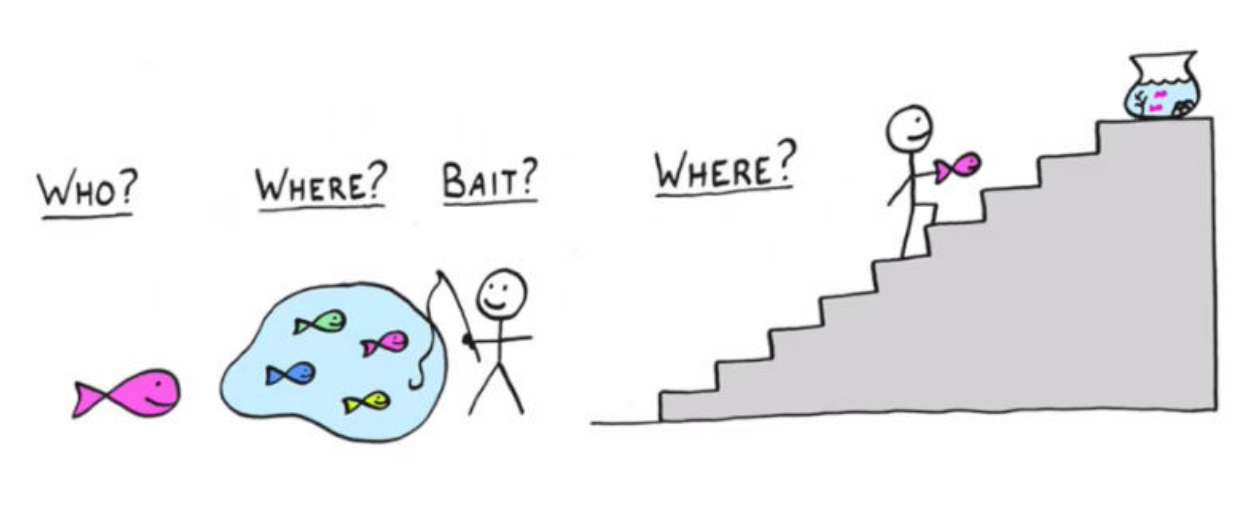
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The World's Simplest Marketing Formula

This graphic is pretty self explanatory. One important note is that the staircase represents the entire "Meadowood ecosystem". The top step (fish bowl) is perhaps club membership - the very top tier of value exchange. This is ultimately where we want to take as many people as possible.

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That said, it's definitely not easy to take a complete stranger directly to membership (see Considered Buying Process). The lowest steps in our ecosystem are relatively easy to sell, to get more people to experience the club with minimal barriers to entry (low cost, risk, deliberation). Over time, we develop a healthy pipeline of membership prospects who already have experienced certain aspects of the club. We can escalate these prospects to the top over time.

1. Identify exactly who we are chasing
2. Understand where our target audience is paying attention, how they get information
3. Offer "Bait" by answering their questions, resolving challenges, inviting them into our ecosystem (usually low barrier to entry)
4. Develop processes to help escalate them up the "Value Ladder" toward loyalty and/or membership

Developing a Value "Ladder"

Our goal is to sell as many club memberships as possible. This is the highest possible value exchange at Meadowood.

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While it's EXTREMELY difficult to take someone from knowing little about the club all the way to instantly buying a membership, it's very easy to find simple, low risk, low cost ways for MANY people to experience the club in some way.

Think of these simple entry points as the "bunny slopes", "practice range", or "gateway drugs". It's a way for people to test things out with little to no risk - such as free golf clinics, club events, online content, etc.

People who have experienced the club in some way are a MUCH better use of our time and marketing efforts than continuously marketing to people who may not have ever heard about us.

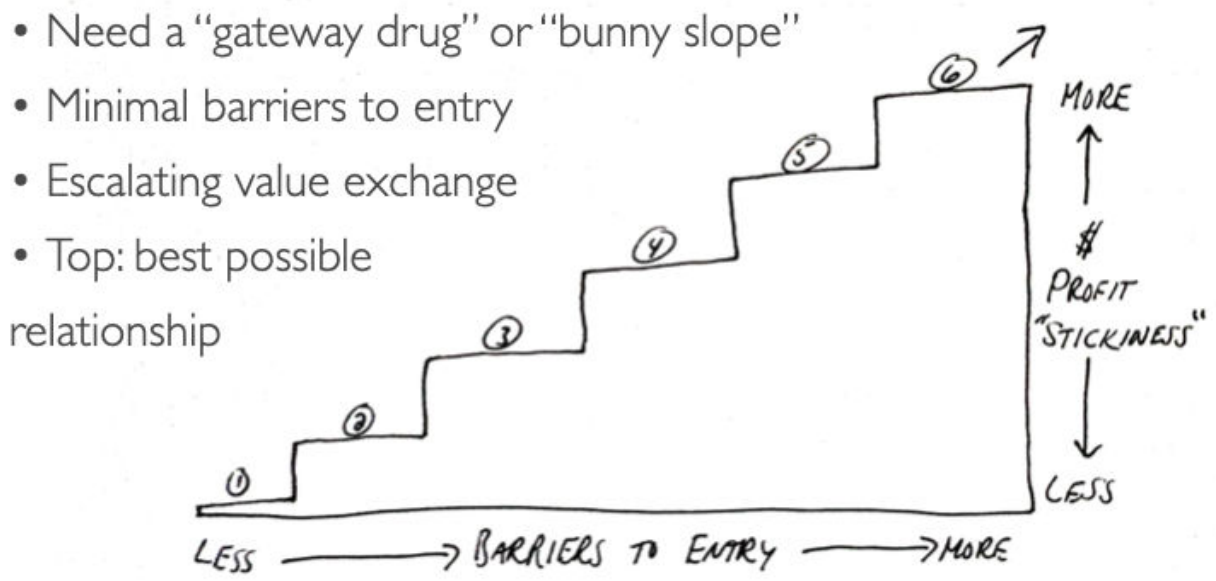
Once they get a small piece of experience, it's easier to sell or invite them to the next logical "tier"...perhaps it starts with a free group clinic, then moves to a series of private lessons. From there, the pro introduces the player to a couple members for an evening 9 holes, or a morning Saturday game. It's easy to sell membership to a regular player than a complete stranger.

The concept is easy entry into the club experience, followed by a steady diet of options to increase involvement, meet new people, and to make golf and the club an increasingly significant part of their lives…all the way to the point where they begin considering membership.

We want as many people pouring into the system here as we can find. The higher up the "Ladder" they climb, the more profit and "stickiness" (Lifetime Value). Sure, we'd love to sell memberships instantly, but many will require multiple touches and careful consideration before they get there.

Develop a "Value Ladder" of Service Offerings

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Attention is your #1 Marketing Asset

Here's a simple 2-Minute Video on the importance of winning and retaining attention. Before you can tell your story, you first need someone's attention. Gary Vaynerchuk is a global icon in the digital marketing space.

Attention is a crucial aspect of marketing as it directly impacts the effectiveness of your messaging and communication efforts. If nobody's paying attention, the best ads and offers in the world don't matter.

Like a TV station with too many advertisements, people will tune us out if we're constantly asking them to buy our stuff. To retain attention over longer periods of time (which is necessary in membership sales), we need to balance DELIVERING value vs. attempts to EXTRACT value.

We also need to make sure we're objectively considering the means with which we seek out attention. The yellow pages are no longer relevant…but they used to be.

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Branding vs. Selling:

Think of the Meadowood “Brand” as its overall reputation. “Selling” Meadowood is when we want someone to do something or buy something.

Based on our intended market position, we want people to think of certain things when they hear about Meadowood - positive things of course. We need to work on our reputation by doing some good things for others. Occasionally, we can ask them to do things for us in return. That’s how relationships work.

Your brand definitely encompasses many things. For the purpose of this discussion, we’re referring to club messaging and communications - to the general public, to members, and all other stakeholders in the organization.

Basically, every message we send out is either “Branding” or “Selling”. Never both.

Our mission is to become the TV or Radio Station rather than the Commercials on that station

Consider your messaging in terms of “Gives” vs. “Asks”. A message is either delivering value (a give) or attempting to get something from people (an ask). When we’re giving, it’s about them, not us…we’re delivering something of value to people - whether informative, entertaining, or otherwise. Examples of gives:

- A bunker play tutorial video
- A free beginner clinic
- Highlighting a cool member accomplishment
- A video tour of recent pesticide application

Asks are where we attempt to get people to act or to buy stuff. Asks are about us. These are our calls to action:

- Book tee times
- Sign up for a lesson series
- Join the club
- Ask members to bring a guest to the club

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Just like in real life, people who are constantly asking for stuff, or always making it about them are not fun to be around. The people we like the most are empathetic, they listen, they offer things without expectation of returns. This is how we want to be, at scale, as a club to build a great reputation.

Organizations need to consider the ratio of their gives vs. asks. In marketing, we try to shoot for a 4 or 5-1 ratio. This means, every time we want to pitch people to sign up for something, we need to earn that ask by sprinkling in 4 or 5 interactions that aren't self-serving whatsoever.

Here's the trick, when you give, give. When you ask, ask. There's no in-between. When you offer a free golf clinic, then pitch your new membership offering, it sabotages the good thing you did. People intuitively see that the clinic was just a tactic to get them to buy something.

Better is to offer a free golf clinic, with zero expectation of participants buying or doing anything in return. They'll appreciate the program 1000% more, and you'll earn their trust after some time. At some point, a simple offer for a paid adult golf camp will be much better received (sales rule of reciprocity).

If we're truly empathetic, and delivering value to our community, we'll simply earn the right to ask directly. No trickery or backdoor offers. Playing in the middle is neither good for branding nor selling.

Content is Required - It's How We Share Our Story

If we reverse engineer the number of "asks" we might want to make. It's logical to deduce that we're going to need some content for all the "gives" in between. If we want to send a weekly offers email with upcoming events, programming, deals…then we've got to come up with 4-5 truly selfless pieces of content each week that our audience will find interesting or valuable.

This isn't easy, but these gives are vital for sharing the Meadowood story anyway…and it doubles as a way to build a healthy brand. It'll be how we SHOW people what we're up to, how we do our thing, why the club is great, etc. Content is mandatory for marketing success.

The good news is that content doesn't all need to be long-winded, high production value, time-consuming stuff. There are 3 ways we can acquire and deliver quality content for our audience:

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Curating - A museum doesn't create art, it just collects it. Museums are still valuable places to visit. Curating relevant 3rd party content is a great (and easy) way to deliver value. Basically we find cool stuff, then share or talk about it.

Engaging - We don't always need to be the one who's talking. Commenting and sharing other peoples' content (our members, guests, connections, etc.) is an amazing way to show that we're listening as well. People LOVE it when their story or accomplishment is amplified by organizations…we're just being good citizens.

Creating - Here's where we distribute our own ideas or stories. This is the most time consuming of the 3, but certainly required if we plan on telling our story.

Documentation is Better than Creation
Creating fresh new ideas and content from scratch is really hard. It's not sustainable to come up with new stuff every day…especially with limited resources and budget.

Everyone like documentaries…you see how things really are and learn something. Engage the team in documenting what they're already doing anyway. Make it part of their job description. If the super is trimming bunker edges, share a 40 sec video or a set of images on how the team does it. If there's a wedding, have a server take some photos with their iphone of the beautiful setup and place settings. Show a "behind the scenes" in the bag room. Have a tennis or golf instructor do a quick 1-min video with a drill or tip.

Documenting our journey is a highly effective way to show the world how we do our thing. Doesn't need to be high production value, especially in social media as posts are covered up in the feed very quickly. People appreciate real stuff…it doesn't always have to be sunshine and rainbows.

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Where Will Our Content Live?

This can vary over time depending on what's working well and what isn't. Generally, the website is the centerpiece of club marketing. Social media, email, paid reach campaigns, 3rd party websites, print media, etc. all serve to AMPLIFY this content and awareness.

All of your core content (about, location, staff, amenities, value proposition) and end destinations (tee time bookings, membership inquiries, registrations) will live on the website. This includes all relatively static information about the club…stuff that isn't so time sensitive, with a longer shelf life. The more valuable and accurate the information on our website, the more people will trust and pay attention to the site. The website is something we control 100%...unlike social media or other channels.

Of course, as the hub of all our marketing, the website should also showcase/curate time sensitive material like upcoming events, tee time booking, integrated social feeds, blog/announcements, etc.

Think of the website as the body of an octopus, with the arms extending outward being social media, email, etc.

For example, we might write an article about upgraded irrigation on the golf course, and the effects we're seeing in course conditions. This article might "live" on the website blog/news feed. A piece like this probably has a shelf life of a couple months at least, so we can schedule 5-8 social posts on each platform over the coming 3 months, each with slightly different intro context linking back to the full article. There might also be small snippets/quotes/takeaways in the article that we could copy/paste directly into social media and schedule those out over weeks/months as well. The same article can be introduced in the monthly newsletter with links back to the full article on the website. We also could submit the article for publication on any local 3rd party websites, forums or even print publications. Certain types of content can lead to dozens of other pieces of content/messages over time.

Here's our article Winning Attention: A Plan for Content Creation
We don't need to do all of this, but it outlines how one quality piece of content can transform into massive amplification and reach over time. It's how smaller companies are able to produce quality content at scale.

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Social Media Basics

Here's a quick article with some data around Which Social Media Platforms Should I Use? Meadowood is currently on Facebook and Instagram. I believe this is sufficient currently given the nature of the club's standing, along with allocated staff/resources. There are other platforms we could look into, but I believe time/energy spent would be better served focusing on these two primary accounts for the near term.

If we're doing social media right, we're using it primarily in the following ways:

1. Delivery - we're bringing valuable content directly to the places where our audience prefers to consume. Like pizza delivery. No strings attached.
2. Amplification - key content living on our website can be introduced on social channels - either through contextualized snippets or links back.
3. Listening - showing that it's not all about us. Share, comment, respond to comments…become a good citizen in the digital space.
4. Growing Reach - helping to bring more people into the Meadowood ecosystem, more followers, likes, shares, etc. stands to grow our overall audience.
5. Selling - occasionally, based on our give/ask ratio, announce offers, deals, calls to action.

Note that even asking Facebook/Instagram users to leave the platform and come over to our website is in fact a small "ask". We'll want to be aware of the quantity of backlink posts vs. bringing content (text, images, vids) for on-platform consumption.

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Email Basics

Email is a long-standing, yet still extremely effective means of scaled communication - if done correctly.

Email design needs to contemplate many things:

- Deliverability and navigating spam filters
- Open rates - usually related to subject lines
- Messaging - what are we giving vs. what are we asking for?
- Style - on brand, easy to read/consume on both desktop and mobile
- Length - shorter emails are better than long ones…intros with website links can be effective
- Weight - large file sizes load slowly or fall into spam filters
- Content - nature of relatively static vs. time sensitive content - needs to contemplate time required for creating, curating, layout, and editing every week/month/cadence.
- Static Content - usually involve key website links
- Time Sensitive - intro text, titles, updates, announcements, results, etc.
- Calls to action - registrations, links, feedback, buttons
- Can-spam laws - when it comes to managing mailing lists
- Segmentation - personalization, altered content for certain audiences
- Analytics - data around email performance to guide future refinements

There are a lot of factors that go into effective email processes. Good news is that once a design and process is laid out, execution can become relatively easy.

Imagery & Video

This is a fairly subjective area, so I'll keep things pretty generalized.

Important Visuals
For more permanent, key areas of marketing "real estate", such as the website homepage, amenities, club culture imagery, etc., images need to be top professional grade only. Iphone photos won't cut it.

We believe in what is called "aspirational imagery". When marketing dental practices, we don't want to show the scary dental chair, or high tech drilling equipment (although this is usually what dentists want to show). Everyone hates going to the dentist…we'd rather show them a beautiful confident smile, healthy teeth, which is the ultimate benefit of working with the dentist.

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There is a natural tendency for clubs to insist on having actual club members, locations, etc. in every image. This is not the case all the time. Crappy photos of the actual clubhouse are not nearly as effective as a professional grade stock image with representative demographics enjoying a glass of wine in a beautiful setting (that 'could' be at Meadowood). People respond more positively when they can "see/feel/imagine themselves" enjoying the club. The image below could theoretically be happening at Meadowood - I know, you longtime members will poke holes in this, but newcomers won't ever know. Marketing isn't always about 100% accuracy, it's about conveying impressions and feelings :)



Of course, some images need to showcase the club directly. These visuals need to be professionally photographed in the best possible way. In the meantime, it may be helpful to have someone try to take some shots themselves. Here's our Do It Yourself Web Photography Handbook with some quick professional tips on taking better organizational photos. Also, here's a similar Guide to Web Videography.

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Less Important Visuals

This includes blog posts, social posts, quick updates, documenting club activities, short form videos, quick tips, behind the scenes content, etc.

As mentioned above, we're going to need to be producing a fair quantity of content by documenting things. This isn't always pretty or professional grade…and that's okay! In fact, it's probably preferable in many cases. People want to see genuine, truthful, real…rather than something that looks fake or doctored up.

Maybe the chef is doing a quick 45-sec tour of the kitchen. He can hold his phone himself, walk through, talk over the tour…no stress if someone's chatting in the background, dirty dishes, or there are some sizzling burgers distracting. People like to know how things happen.

The superintendent wants to highlight some work the team did in clearing out some underbrush on the 12th hole. He can take 5 or 6 before/during/after photos and share with a quick line of context. The value of people seeing and understanding what really goes into maintaining a golf course is far more valuable than a shiny, perfect, sexy photo.

This guy posts images of greenkeeping activities virtually every day for his membership/followers. Extremely effective. Nobody doubts his work ethic or the efforts of the team, and members have a keen perspective on just how much work it takes to create quality playing conditions (lending much more respect for the grounds)

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Meadowood Marketing Recommendations

KPI will work with Meadowood staff to guide conversations and to help value engineer an effective game plan aimed at addressing much or all of the following recommendations. Budget and resources are never unlimited, so further conversation around these recommendations will be needed.

A revitalized club is a great marketing opportunity, but we don't want to hard sell a fresh new product that isn't there yet.

This marketing game plan contemplates significant allocations going towards irrigation and agronomy expenses, revised operating infrastructure, and a renewed focus on customer-facing club improvements. It's smart for us to put major marketing outlays on the back burner until these previously mentioned efforts start to gain traction.

To that end, we want to put the club into a solid position heading into the fall season without overspending. There's lots that can be done in-house or on the cheap to prepare.

We ultimately need the following:

- A framework for consistent and compelling stories we can share about the club
- An infrastructure that allows us to tell our stories and communicate effectively with all prospects, members, stakeholders
- Ongoing processes for executing and optimizing this system to maximum effect within budgetary/staffing parameters

I'm recommending a phased approach to building Meadowood's marketing processes – in the following areas – roughly in this order.

PHASE 1: Marketing Foundation & Guardrails

- Branding Guide
- Market Positioning
- Offerings Design

PHASE 2: Clean Up the Marketing Infrastructure

- Website Redesign
- Social Accounts
- Email Communications

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PHASE 3: Ongoing Awareness & Reputation Management

- Content Creation
- Amplification Processes
- Performance Based Refinement

The plan is to focus on “need now” elements – then to implement a simple system that allows the team to monitor performance, stay proactive (looking ahead rather than just fixing stuff), and prioritize highest impact activities for the club ongoing.

PHASE 1: Marketing Foundation & Guardrails

This phase is about strategically crafting the story we want to tell about the club. Everyone needs to be on board with the what, who, how, why of Meadowood so that we can remain clear and consistent. It’s the only way to build a legitimate brand reputation.

Our guardrails will consist of 3 primary elements:

- Branding Guide - brand elements and how to use them
- Market Positioning - what, who, how, why of the club
- Offerings Design - clear details on offerings & programming

Develop a Branding Guide

Basically, you need a branding guide so that anyone (inside or outside Meadowood) knows exactly how to present the club consistently and in style.

A branding guide, also known as a brand style guide or brand guidelines, is a comprehensive document that outlines the key elements and guidelines for maintaining a consistent and cohesive brand identity. It serves as a reference tool for internal teams, external partners, and stakeholders to ensure that the brand is represented accurately and consistently across all marketing and communication channels.

A branding guide typically includes various components such as the brand's mission, vision, and values, logo usage and specifications, color palette, typography guidelines, imagery and photography styles, voice and tone guidelines, and examples of correct and incorrect brand applications. It provides clear instructions on how to use these elements in different contexts, such as print materials, digital platforms, social media, advertising, and packaging.

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Consistency is crucial in marketing because it builds brand recognition, trust, and loyalty among consumers. When a brand presents itself consistently across different touchpoints, it becomes easier for customers to recognize and remember it. A well-defined branding guide ensures that all marketing efforts align with the brand's essence and convey a unified message. It helps maintain a coherent brand image, regardless of who is creating the marketing materials or where they are being produced.

Your brand guide doesn't need to be so comprehensive, but it is very necessary to settle on core design elements.

We'll need to discuss options for logo versions - for light and dark backgrounds, small/large sizes, perhaps 1 or 2-color logo options, and an array of logo formats depending on use (digital, print, embroidery, etc.)

Locking in primary and secondary color codes, font styles and spacing, and other core design elements will ensure consistency.

Example Branding Guides:
A large sporting complex in Phoenix called MG Sportsplex
A dental practice consulting firm called Elevate

Identify Meadowood's Market Positioning Content

This is about identifying exactly what Meadowood is all about and where you want to stand in the world. If you're going to tell a compelling story about your club, you need to understand and agree on what that story is all about.

- Understand your competitive set, selling points, differentiators
- Why does Meadowood exist? What value are you delivering specifically?
- Who do we want/not want to do business with? What traits do they share?
- What are our core competencies…what do we offer, what ways do we provide value?
- How do we operate? Company culture, special methodologies, etc.

Here's our Guide to Market Positioning for Country Clubs. This is a great brainstorming exercise that the team needs to conduct asap. There are about 20 core questions…that sound simple on the surface, but actually are quite challenging to answer in detail.

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Before you begin brainstorming:
If you're new to marketing, please watch this 15-min video as a starting point. It's a little older, but an incredibly valuable marketing concept…one of the top-3 TED Talks of all time: How Great Leaders Inspire Action - Simon Sinek.

Also, here is a short video (also old, but identifiable) from back in the 90's. It's when Steve Jobs introduced Apple's famous "Think Different" marketing campaign. Back then, we was trying to turn around a struggling company - going back to basics, bringing clarity in messaging and offerings. You can substitute his mentions of bits, htz, memory, speeds, etc. with Meadowood's green speeds, yardages, square footage, etc.

Lastly, here's a short article about The Difference Between Table Stakes and Differentiators. "18 holes of championship golf" are table stakes…you can't call yourself a golf course without some holes. This isn't a differentiator whatsoever.

In the end, we need to develop your market positioning statement. This is an ultra-concise statement that answers the question: What is Meadowood really about?

We offer [WHAT] to [WHO] by [HOW] because [WHY]

I've brainstormed a quick example for us:
Meadowood is an uplifting, inclusive golf environment for members and non-members alike - because we believe that a healthy club means a healthy community, with benefits far reaching and better lives for those it touches.

Whatever it is, we need to be really clear on why we're in business…as if golf is a means to a higher purpose. Although many things will change over time, this foundational "Why" will not. If we believe in and exist for building strong community, there are many ways to do this…but our focus on community won't waver.

That's what gets people to act, to join clubs, to make the club a significant part of their lives.

Offerings Design:

Based on the club's market position, and our renewed what/for whom/how/why, you'll need to evaluate every key club offering - starting with the most important: membership programs.

Make sure that you have crystal clear offerings for membership - taking into account our target market, fee structure, access levels, ideal member mix and culture, etc. Memberships are the "top tier" of our offerings ladder.

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Working backwards, we'll want to identify all of our goods and service offerings - ranging from free/small cost/low barrier entry points, escalating up in terms of value exchange/risk/involvement.

We want offerings that make it really easy for people to experience the club for the first time. There also needs to be a menu of increasingly interesting options for them to continue to experience the club, meet people, become more engaged over time…on a pathway toward eventual membership.

Free golf clinics are a great way to get people out to the club. It's easy to sell FREE, and it's a very high value give without much of a cost basis. Entry level teaching pros can do beginner clinics without any trouble.

Here's A Business Case for Free Golf Lessons - which predates Covid, but nevertheless highly relevant.

As a group you need to brainstorm and map out all offerings clearly - from entry level to top-tier membership. We'll use our marketing ecosystem to help move people along and up the ladder over time, generating a pipeline of membership opportunities.

PHASE 2: Clean Up the Marketing Infrastructure

The key pieces of your marketing infrastructure are your website, social media profiles, and email systems. These are the technologies you're using to tell Meadowood's story and to communicate with everyone involved with the club.

For max efficiency and effectiveness, these technologies need to be integrated - effectively a single "ecosystem" with consistent branding, messaging, and proper pathways for people to take action.

There is lots to be done in this phase. I recommend hiring out certain aspects of the work to professionals, while other elements can be done in-house to save on costs. Further conversation and planning is needed to nail down a specific and agreeable plan.

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Redesign the Website

Your website cannot be an afterthought. It needs to be the centerpiece of your marketing and messaging - for members and non-members alike. You need a professional redesign, along with a simple process of ongoing review/planning discussions to help everything stay accurate and on point.

Once the new site is launched, I recommend monthly review/planning calls to keep the team proactive.

Rather than a large, exhaustive website redesign, I recommend a “value driven” approach. This means that your redesign focus only on NEED NOW elements so that the new site can launch quickly, saving time and resources for iterations of refinement.

Messaging: The brainstorming and content created in Phase 1 will serve you well in applying to the site. You need to tell the world a more compelling story about Meadowood. At first, a focus on core, relatively evergreen content - What, for Whom, How, Why etc. Answer common questions with FAQs. Paint a picture of what it’s like at the club, try to get people to understand the culture and what the club stands for. Eventually you can work to integrate social feeds, blog articles, and other mechanisms to centralize content on your site.

Aesthetics: The style is very inconsistent and needs a redesign. The branding guide (Phase 1) will inform the use of colors, logos, fonts, imagery to ensure you’re staying on target. Pages with a lot of text can’t have negative color schemes for readability. Clean and simple is best - but it takes a professional to do this right. Imagery and visuals, as discussed above play a huge role in conveying look, feel, experience of a club. You need to be strategic about every image on the site and the impressions they have.

Content: Your website is the center of all of your marketing messaging. Mapping the interests, questions, challenges of your target audience leads to creating content around those topics. Most content “lives” on your website, and can then be amplified through social channels and email. Content helps in every phase of the customer journey - awareness, consideration and decision. An article about a great recipe from the chef might be the entry point for someone. The piece could be found organically by someone who has never heard of Meadowood before. As they consume related articles, or poke around on the website, they might see a free cooking class they can attend. More reach, staying top of mind, retention…content strategy is vital.

Endpoints/Calls to Action/Conversions: These are special pages and pathways - destinations for our users. They have to be perfect - tee time booking, membership inquiries, etc. Often, clarity and context is required to “grease the skids” and get people to act. Set up clear expectations on

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benefits, what comes next, etc. The site needs to be integrated with your CRM/Email system to help continue to build and segment your lists and nurturing programs.

Of course, a website has lots of options. It's important to establish a plan that focuses strictly on NEED NOW elements first. From there, the team can brainstorm and prioritize highest impact activities to tackle next. Chasing the next shiny object is not effective or economical.

Here's an ebook published by my agency Web Design Phoenix called Value Driven Website Design which outlines how value driven design works, how it's very different form how websites used to be built, and why it makes business sense for organizations.

If interested, here is the Services Guide for Web Design Phoenix, which shows how we do our thing with groups like Meadowood.

Social Media

Organizations lean into social media because that's where their target audience is paying attention. Social is a great way to bring content to the places where people choose to consume content, in the format that they prefer (text, images, video). Each social platform attracts certain demographics of users, utilizing each space in different ways with different intentions. Very different people visit LinkedIn for very different reasons than Snapchat. We'll talk about basic social media strategy in our recommendations.

I recommend a focus on Facebook and Instagram for Meadowood. Both accounts need to be audited for contact info, calls to action, links, descriptive text, imagery, etc. It's important social accounts are a natural and consistent extension of the brand.

As mentioned above, social media can be used in many ways - amplification, organic reach, 2-way communication, customer service, etc. Social platforms are very common entry points for newcomers, and also the most convenient way for people to stay in contact with a brand (content is delivered to them, rather than having to go find it).

Once profiles are cleaned up, a relatively simple strategy of curating, engaging, and creating social content is advisable.

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Email Communications

A centralized CRM and high grade Email platform is necessary. The club cannot continue with such heavy reliance on Golfnow messaging platform and a monthly pdf newsletter.

A true email strategy is required to nurture quality relationships with stakeholders over time.

Where possible, we need to take steps to get newcomers to the club to surrender basic contact information for our own email database. Even Golfnow bookings need to provide email addresses so that we have the ability to communicate directly, on our own terms. Proper list building involves face-to-face processes, point of sale, website conversions, etc. Where possible, we want to segment our lists across certain criteria so that messages can be more personalized and relevant.

Professional grade email systems like Constant Contact or Mailchimp are relatively inexpensive, but a huge step up from pdf newsletters. You'll be able to integrate for list building, track all performance metrics, and design emails best suited for their purpose. These systems also help to navigate spam filters and improve deliverability. Emails are delivered in a more relevant, personalized way so that our audiences are more easily able to pay attention to what's happening at the club.

Proper email strategy should include relatively consistent links/calls to action like event calendar, tee time booking, membership inquiries, etc. They should also include some level of interesting content for the user (otherwise, why bother opening) such as stories, tips, helpful articles, videos, etc.

Planning your email strategy around the interests of your audience, while value engineering the frequency and work requirements is key. As with your website and social strategies, focus on "need now" elements first…then add the "wants" later on.

PHASE 3: Amplify Awareness and Reputation Management

Now that we've built an efficient communication and marketing system, it's all about using it effectively. After a website redesign, social and email setup, it's common for everyone to high-five one another and forget about it.

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Let's not do that…we've armed ourselves with everything we need to compete favorably vs. all the other similar clubs in your area. This is the "ongoing execution" phase.

We need a basic content strategy, to use our marketing infrastructure for amplifying our messaging, and to set up lightweight iterations of review and refinement to keep things operating optimally.

Content Creation

Some sort of commitment to content creation is critical to building your brand and telling Meadowood's story. I'll put "content" into 2 buckets for now.

Core/Static Content - Much of this information will have come into existence already in Phase 1. You'll have much more descriptive text about what the club is all about. This content will serve as relatively static (longer shelf life) content on your website - What, for Whom, Where, How, and Why we do our thing…told through text, imagery, visuals., etc. This stuff doesn't change every day…but it needs to be clear and top quality to reflect the vision and culture of the club. Along with this added clarity around the club's value proposition, you're gaining a ton of great ammunition for social posting and email announcements as well.

Time Sensitive Content - This stuff usually has a shorter shelf life, but not always. As mentioned above, here's where we are curating, engaging, and creating content that we believe our audience will find helpful, useful, interesting, etc. We need to announce events, offers, tips, behind the scenes views, construction updates, tournament results, and everything else about the club on a recurring basis.

To stand out from other clubs, we'll want to document rather than create some of this content. We need to go beyond simple photos of people teeing off and MGA weekly results if we want to capture attention and interest. Instead, we need to SHOW people what's really happening at the club through images and video particularly, in a real way. We'll want to establish some ways to engage key staff members in this responsibility - making it easy for the club to distribute content that is actually helpful and interesting for users and for building club culture.

Time sensitive content might live on the website in the form of articles, or blog/vlog posts. Most of the time, they will be distributed through social media channels, and if fitting perhaps included in email sends.

Start with a basic plan for curating, engaging and documenting/creating content to fill our communications channels with interesting "gives". With this, we'll simply earn the right to "ask" for people to sign up for stuff on a regular basis without burning out relationships.

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Here's an article that outlines how smaller organizations are able to deploy vast amounts of content at scale.

Performance Based Refinement

The current Meadowood website doesn't appear to have analytics connected - meaning you're not able to view how busy the site is, what kinds of people visit the site, how they found the site, which pages are most popular (overall, entry points, exit points, bounces), etc. The digital world allows for data tracking - which serves to inform future decisions…at least it should.

When discussing recent advertising/promotional campaigns, it wasn't readily apparent whether these campaigns were successful or not. There was minimal if any data associated and goals were quite ambiguous.

If you're going to be successful in marketing, we need to take more of a "long game" approach. Initially, we're building infrastructure, but the part most clubs forget (or really suck at) is the ongoing execution.

Small edits and refinements are made to the website, social, email systems immediately as needed to maintain accuracy.

In addition, depending on the specific plans we develop, I usually recommend **monthly review/planning calls**. On these calls, we aim to accomplish a number of things:

- Update on prior marketing activities, projects, progress.
- Keep everyone informed on performance outcomes - analytics, metrics, conversions, sales, whatever else we choose to track.
- Minimal business interruption for the team (30 min calls, hour max) so that we're not taking away from other tasks/responsibilities
- Proactive discussion on what's happening in the coming days, weeks, months so that we can plan accordingly (events, offers, announcements, seasonal stuff, etc.)
- Brainstorm all possible marketing activities based on current state of the organization.
- Prioritize which activity(ies) should be executed based on what is needed most, potential overall impact, and assigned bandwidth (budget, workloads, etc.)
- Identify agreed next steps and assign responsibilities/deadlines.
- Recap the meeting via email so that all attendees have record of discussion, responsibilities, data/reports, etc.

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A simple, to-the-point monthly meeting allows the club marketing team to stay on task, keep the system optimized, and most importantly - to remain proactive. Without regular meetings, the marketing ecosystem becomes stale, unused, fragmented, ineffective…or all of the above.

There's some heavier lifting in the next 3-6 months to organize all of your marketing infrastructure, messaging and processes. After that, it's about diligently monitoring, refining and executing.

Game Plan Summary

Phase 1 is about nailing down some strategic guardrails. It's clear that Meadowood's marketing is very disjointed at the moment. Messaging isn't consistent in voice or in style across all of your communication channels. Nail down your current and intended position in the market so that everyone knows what the club stands for, what makes you special, and how to present your value proposition in compelling ways. Lock in exactly what you're selling, pricing, benefits, so that you have clear end destinations for prospective customers/members. Everyone is involved pulling on the same rope, using consistent messaging, logo versions, fonts, sizing, colors, styles of imagery, etc. A basic branding guide helps tremendously. Phase 1 is about arming everyone on the team with talking points, digital assets and guidelines they need to tell our story. This is foundational stuff that most clubs tend to shortcut, but upon which everything else rests.

Phase 2 is about designing Meadowood's marketing ecosystem – the set of processes and technologies that will help convey your story at scale, hold the attention of as many people as possible, and win a loyal customer base. Your website needs a redesign – everything from aesthetics, imagery, core functionality, and especially messaging. It doesn't need to be fancy, but it does need to be relevant, accurate and on point for users. The website becomes the hub of all of your marketing activity – because it's an asset that you 100% control and own. Also develop necessary channels for amplifying messaging into the places your audience prefers to consume content – social media and email communications. All of these assets are interconnected to help scale your reach in a consistent, efficient way.

Now that your ecosystem is in place, Phase 3 is about bringing (and keeping) as many people into your world as possible. Most clubs don't get too deep into this phase, or their efforts fizzle out fairly quickly, because it requires some level of ongoing coordination, allocation, and execution. Static brochures don't cut it anymore…you need to create content (documenting) that helps to address questions, challenges, goals, aspirations of our audience. Here's where we lean on our processes to document the journey, club improvements, what our members are up

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to, and tell our story. This includes low points, high points alike…being real is far more interesting than being perfect - people know the difference, all sunshine and rainbows loses credibility. Content is what helps strangers find us, past customers to remember us, people to witness how the club delivers an experience, and to learn why they should make the club a part of their lives. Content is the fuel for the rocket ship.

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