KPI GOLF
MANAGEMENT

Meadowood Golf & Tennis Club
Facility Review & Recommendations

Agronomy | Operations | Marketing

July 15, 2023

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Resources

All supplemental resources associated with this review/report can be found in the Meadowood Resource Portal on the KPI Website

Password: 4000 (last 4 of club phone number)

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Meadowood Agronomy Update

July 24th, 2023

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Here's where you can find the latest related materials associated with the following recommendations - greens renovation budget, irrigation quotes.

The Meadowood golf course has great potential. The layout and routing are all very well done. The conditioning of the course has lots of room for improvement, but in order to gain ground and to have lasting improvements, the infrastructure needs to be caught up. It will be impossible for the club to make any noticeable lasting improvements to the course until it has a strong foundation to work from.

Important infrastructure items have been pushed well beyond what many other courses have done. The club needs to find a way to bridge the gap to the next era since a full traditional course renovation is not an option. The goal should be to make the most impact on the course with the funds available.

In this report I will break down different areas of the course and maintenance operations. The course has 3 major expenses that need to be addressed first, as they are lynch pins for all the other aspects of the clubs success:

- Irrigation System
- Greens
- Bunkers

Once the club repairs the irrigation system, rebuilds the greens and bunkers, the staff can focus on the daily details and begin to progress toward making more lasting improvements. Currently the club is in an endless death spiral chasing hydraulic irrigation leaks and trying to maintain greens that have zoysia contamination. The zoysia contamination that is on the greens will prevent the greens from ever playing as well as other courses. The greens need to be maintained at higher height of cut and cannot be verti-cut as aggressively as the Champion grass needs to be, in order to not kill the patches of zoysia. The greens will always be slow and have patches of zoysia that may not make it through the winter months at greens height.

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Irrigation System

The irrigation system is a hydraulic control system. Unfortunately, the tubes used for these systems literally disintegrate in the ground after 25 years and begin to fail all at once. Currently your staff is spending most of its time chasing these leaks - which occur several times per week. These leaks are very time consuming and can take a day or more to locate and repair. These systems are very difficult to operate and maintain. You are fortunate you have someone on property who has the ability to operate it and repair it to a degree. If he were to leave, I'm not sure you could find a person to hire and operate it and this puts the club in a very poor position if he were to leave.



Once this is addressed the staff can be freed up to spend their time on detail work around the course as well as having a reliable system that can irrigate the course properly and keep the turf healthy and strong throughout the year.

New irrigation systems for a course your size would cost $2.5 - 3 million to replace. With limited funds, I feel it is more important to invest your funds on rebuilding the greens and bunkers instead of replacing the pipe at this time. I recommend the club pursue what they call a "spin-off" irrigation renovation. Fortunately, new technology now offers an option to replace the sprinkler heads and hydraulic control system with a 2-wire control system while using the existing pipe. Although the pipe on the course is beyond its life expectancy and should be replaced this option can buy the club time.

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There will continue to be some pipe leaks in the future, however they will be much less frequent and easier and quicker to repair then the hydraulic leaks you are experiencing now. This option has been done at other clubs when funds are not available to replace the pipe. In the future when the club has the money to replace the pipe, all the new sprinkler heads can be reinstalled to the new pipe. An estimate has been received for Meadowood for $835,580 to do a spinoff installation. Once an irrigation design expert GPS maps the course and lays out a control plan, a project RFP can be sent out for an exact number.

Included in this are several valves around the property to allow for the isolation of different areas of the course when repairs on pipes may be needed in the future. The greens would also have additional sprinklers added so the superintendent has the ability to water just the greens, or just the greens surrounds which will greatly improve the playability of the course. Typically, it would be important to install new pipe around the greens at this time however it is believed your loops were redone about 12 years ago and it may not be necessary. This needs to be further investigated and confirmed. The club has received 3 quotes for the irrigation design and GPS mapping and this phase can begin immediately. Best Quote $17,000

Greens

Your current greens which are a “no-till” renovation using the Champion turf method have become extremely contaminated and need to be rebuilt and regressed to a pure monostand of Tif-Eagle. There is nothing else short term that can be done to drastically improve the greens. Having a clean pure new stand of grass on your greens will give the membership the true putting surfaces your members deserve and desire. Again, rebuilding greens can be very expensive and there are several ways they can be rebuilt depending on the budget available. We have received 3 estimates to renovate your greens using different methods. Based on 3 acres which is the approximate original size of the greens here are some budgeting estimates. The club can also opt to reduce the size to 2.5 acres if needed to reduce cost.

3 Acres Estimates:

USGA Spec	$1,262,000
Modified 4 inch	$540,000
Downing Modified	$480,000

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Bunkers

The bunkers have become an eye sore and are not playable most of the time, especially following any rain event.







The bunkers are extremely contaminated and no longer have working drainage. Nothing short term can be done to improve the bunkers drastically as they are too far gone any gains will be erased by heavy rains. They will need to be prioritized and rebuilt as funds are available.

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Again there are several options in how this can be done. Ideally it should be done during a greens renovation while a crew is mobilized and on site with equipment. If it is done at this time the bunkers and greens will tie-in together better around the greens.

They should have the sand removed, new drainage and new sand installed for $140,000-$175,000 depending on how many and how big the bunkers will be. Or they can be completely rebuilt and reshaped with a liner or porous concrete liner for about $300,000+ depending on size and acreage.

Renovation Process Recommendations

The renovation process can be quite a burden on a club especially when downtime is needed for a greens renovation. The irrigation renovation can be accomplished in-play while closing a hole or 2 at a time for a few weeks. The greens construction will need to be done in a full closure for between 8-12 weeks in the summer and will need about a year of advance planning to secure a contractor and secure the grass required. It is very much advised to do the whole course at the same time instead of 9 holes at a time. The little revenue earned in the summer months for 9 holes is not worth the long term aggravation and additional costs to have a company come in twice.

The club should work with other clubs and courses in the area for reciprocity during a closure as your course will be a desired destination after the renovation. If everything can be secured and lined up, here is a possible timeline and budget.

Irrigation

July	Hire irrigation design firm
Late July/Early August	Map and design plan.
Early August	Bid out irrigation project.
ASAP	Lock in company and order materials
September	Complete project 3-4 weeks

Greens and Bunkers

August 2023	Thorough investigation of existing greens drainage and subsurface to ensure proper method is determined.
September	Select method of construction and bid contractors.
Close course May 1st 2024	
Mid-Late August	Reopen new course

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Possible Preliminary Budget

Irrigation Design	$17,000
Irrigation	$850,000
Greens	$540,000
Bunkers	$150,000
Total	$1,557,000 + 10% contingency

Additional Items

Tees and Fairways

The tees and fairways have an acceptable amount of Bermuda grass. With continued heavy verti-cutting and aerification along with aggressive herbicide and fertilizer applications, these areas will become very good playing surfaces with the installation of a reliable irrigation system. A total regressing of these areas would be a huge improvement, but not necessary at this time. If the club did want to explore this option, the best opportunity to do so would be during your closure and greens renovation. The estimated costs to re-grass all the tees and fairways would be approximately $250,000+ depending on the acreage.

Weeds

The weeds, especially the goosegrass, have become out of control. This is likely because of budget limitations and missed applications over years along with the overuse of cheaper chemistries causing resistance issues. The past few months the club has implemented aggressive applications of pre and post emergent herbicides with better chemistry and the weeds battle has significantly improved however the goosegrass will need a more aggressive approach. I have given the superintendent a recommendation from a professor at NC State, a potent spray combination that will kill 90% of the goosegrass however it could temporarily turn your bermudagrass off color for a period of time. In order to get the weeds under control the club should use this summer to use more aggressive sprays as recommended. The course will need temporary closures of 9 holes to accomplish this, so the spray is not tracked around by golfers.

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Tree Roots

The tree roots from the many large trees around the property have thinned the grass in many playable areas. These areas would instantly improve with a tree root pruner cut along the drip lines of these large trees. The course can be done in 1 day by an outside company for $2500. I would recommend this be done after an irrigation renovation so that no existing in service unknown irrigation hydraulic lines are accidently cut.



Club Entrance

The first impression of a club sets the tone for the experience. The landscaping and overall appearance from the bag drop to the pro shop needs to be freshened up. The club should receive quotes from local landscaping companies to come in and redo the beds with a few new plants, mulch and some fresh stones. All signage, bag racks and posts should be replaced or given a fresh coat of paint asap. Unfortunately, several of the trees around the clubhouse have outgrown their space and take away from the great views from inside the clubhouse. The club should keep the nice specimen trees and remove the ones that are blocking the views and causing shade and root issues for the areas between the proshop and 1st tee.

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Driving Range

The driving range needs to also be considered in the first impression category for the club experience. The driving range has not been given a high enough priority by maintenance staff especially considering the amount of use it receives from the membership. This area needs to have all the weeds eradicated with and aggressive herbicide application of very low rates of 4oz/A Sencor and .25oz/A Plyex to reset the area then regrow back the Bermuda grass with regular starter fertilizer apps every 3-4 weeks until the turf is lush and can recover quickly.

The key to a successful range tee is to have scheduled maintenance on a weekly basis to make sure all divots are filled and can begin to recover. It's all about time, and the sooner they are filled in the sooner the area will be ready again. Until the tee is in excellent shape the superintendent should include the range tee with his weekly greens spray package to improve the health and density of the grass. All divots on a range tee should be filled with a dirty heavy organic divot mix, not with clean topdressing or green sand.



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Staffing

The structure of the skilled staff needs to remain the focus. Under the current structure you are unable to execute or plan projects properly. Any recommendations will be difficult to execute properly and put unrealistic expectations on your current staff. You currently have 1 person assuming the roles of 3-4 skilled positions. He cannot be expected to run the crew, fix the irrigation system, fix the equipment and plan upcoming agronomic practices. It's not the total number of staff, it's the number of skilled staff. The success of all future investments depends on the ability to service and maintain the improvements after completion. You currently do not have this ability.

The club needs to immediately add at least 2 skilled staff members.

Recommended positions:
1. Superintendent
2. Assistant Superintendent / Spray Tech
3. Mechanic / Irrigation Tech

The club has not been able to maintain a steady reliable crew of hourly laborers. The club has had difficulty in hiring staff, and once they do, unable to keep them for any period of time. Many of the potential staff are turning down offers because the club offers no benefits to its employees. Other clubs are offering benefits and many also include a portion of what is offered. Some examples include a monthly allowance if the benefits are accepted of $50-$100 a week

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for full time employees. Once the club is in-line with competitive wages and benefits, there must be a culture change. Leadership of this department needs to become organized and structured as a desirable and efficient work environment. Currently this department is in disarray because of so many obstacles. Once the renovations are complete and benefit options are in place this department needs to thrive and grow and improve daily.

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KPI GOLF MANAGEMENT

Meadowood Operations Review

July 15th, 2023

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Club Governance Model

Majority Equity Investment Member Group
This is the new investment group who will have a Board majority until the loan this group provided is paid back. For example, if a Board size of 7 is selected to govern the Club moving forward, this investment group will control 4 of the 7 seats on the new Board. This group is free to appoint 4 members from their group of investors to serve the Board term selected, generally 3 or 4 years. Keep in mind that even in the event of early short term rotation out, this group will always (prior to loan repayment in full) be entitled to a majority of seated Board members.

Equity Members
Equity members represent the member group who has paid an equity fee when joining or upgrading their club membership. This group will have 3 board seats who will also serve a 3 or 4 year term. The entire Board will recruit and vet the proposed new minority slate of Board candidates. The slate is voted on by the entire Equity Member Group. A simple majority of votes wins the election. Keep in mind that members of the Majority Equity Group are free to vote in the election.

The Club Board of Directors
The Board can range from 5, 7, 9 members with 2, 3 or 4 seats opening yearly. The most popular term is 3 years. Shorter terms are normal with new Boards until they get in proper rotation. The Board is the Club's elected/appointed Governance Entity. The Board has numerous duties, with the main duties being: Establish a Board mission statement, vision statement, and values statement. The Board will also create the Club's Governance Model. This is generally a flow chart of governance and management responsibilities. The Board will also propose Bylaw revisions for equity membership vote. In the case of this Club, the bylaws already exist and it seems a strong possibility some revision may be needed.

Other functions of the Board will be to establish a Board Policy Manual, conduct new Board member orientations, and appoint a strong committee structure that answers to the Board. Each committee chair is usually a seated Board member who recruits a committee with a total size of 5, 7, or 9 members.

Meadowood should consider the following committees: Golf, Greens, Membership, Social and Finance. It is strongly recommended to allow related staff members to be seated voting committee members. It is also recommended to allow non-equity members, if selected, to be seated voting committee members. This is a nice recruiting tool to turn these non-equity members into future equity members.

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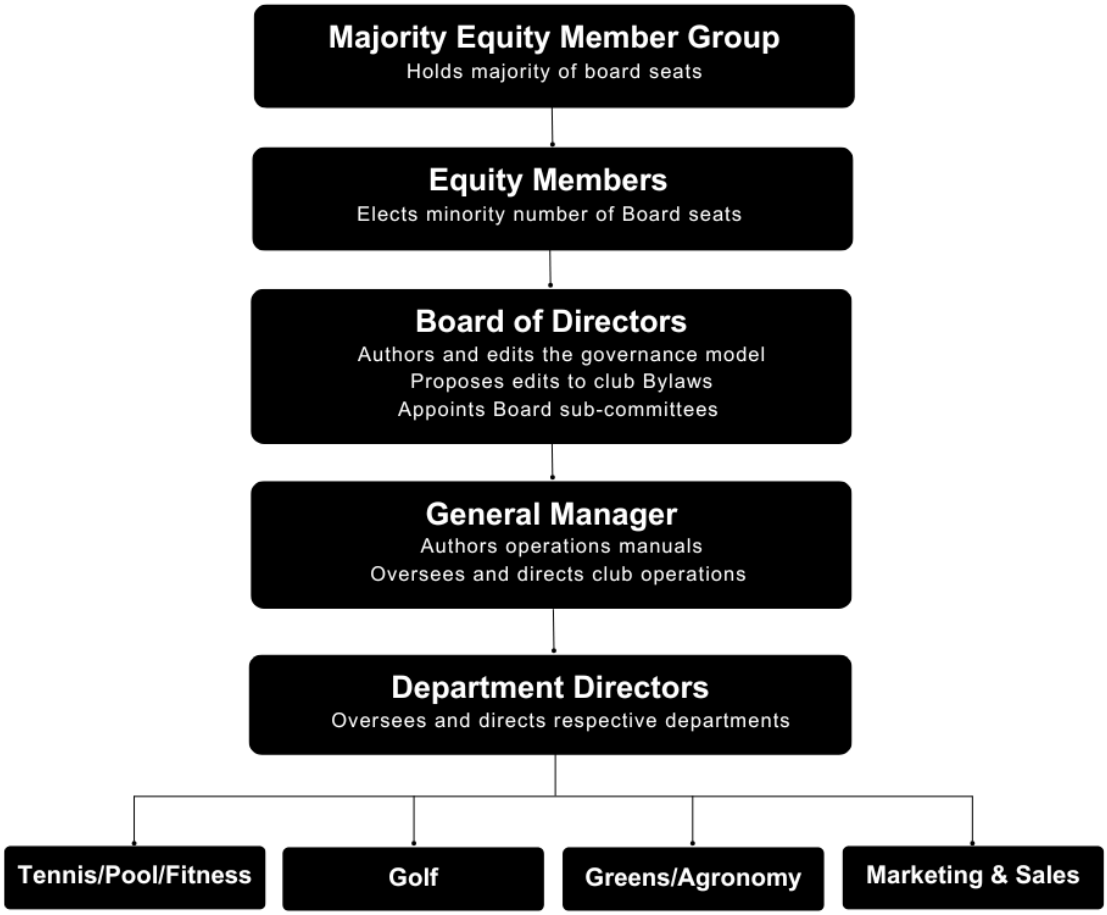
The Board also is charged with hiring a General Manager/COO. The collection of resumes and early vetting process can be assisted by a new subcommittee, appointed for this purpose.

General Manager

The Club's General Manager is the chief operating officer of the Club. This person should attend all committee and Board meetings in an advisory capacity only. The General Manager oversees virtually all aspects of the operations of the Club. All Department Directors will report up to the General Manager. The General Manager will ensure all operating departments are managed through a detailed operations manual. Generally, this manual is authored jointly by the General Manager and Department Director and approved through the associated committee to the Board.

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Meadowood Organizational Chart



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Budget

Your staff should be working on your annual operating budget all year long to ensure accuracy and a timely November 15 submission to the Board for review.

You will need a master budget template and the following additional information:

- Budget checklist
- Annual marketing plan
- Annual golf shop buying plan
- Annual chemical & fertilization agronomic plan
- Master facility equipment file
- Weekly trend report file
- Line item ration recommendations

Here is an Updated Meadowood Budget (printed 7/12/23)

Accounting

- Develop a detailed comprehensive budget that has Board approval
- General Manager believing in the budget is a must!
- Update and re-evaluate in real time as much as possible.
- Monthly inventory is a must. Follow up on leakage. Add accountable.
- All purchasing over $400.00 must have 4 bids and approval of the General Manager. (Department heads will hate this, but it will save you annually more than $100,000.)

General Accounting

This is the list that will be completed or processed by the Club staff.

- Deposits
- AR & Collection Procedures
- Sales Tax
- Inventory
- Invoice Process
- Month end close

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Resources and Templates

- Accounting Standards
- AR Process (Account receivable)
    - AR Collection Tracker
    - Member Collection Policy
    - Delinquent Letters
- AP Process
    - Purchases
    - Invoice Receipt—followed by submitting & coding
    - Invoice Payment
- General Ledger – Chart of Accounts
- Golf Course Maintenance Inventory Template
- Food & Beverage Inventory Template
- Golf Shop Inventory Template
- Inventory Accuracy Acknowledgement
- Inventory Count Cost Verification
- Invoice Tracker Report

ALL of these items can be completed by the Club's accounting personnel or be jobbed out to a 3rd party provider. ALL of this will result in the monthly financial reporting package. To sub this out, the annual cost is approximately $42,000.

Financial Report Package

- Balance Sheet
- Operating Statement – Summary and Detail
- Last 12 months – (LTM Summary and Detail)
- General Ledger
- Budget vs Actual
- FF & E (Furniture / Fixtures / Equipment)
- CASH Flow
- Budget
- Lease schedules
- Capital projects

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Human Resources

This is an area of great concern for me at Meadowood. You have to create a fair and consistent work place. To do this, you must implement standardized policies, procedures, and practices. The number one resource an employee should have is an Employee Handbook. This is the "Bible" to hold team members accountable, maintaining legal compliance, and minimizing risk to the Club.

Key Areas of Concern

- Recruiting and onboarding new associates
- Timely Payroll Processing and Time Cards
- Training Compliance
- Employee Development and Recognition
- Timely consistent Communication and Reporting
- Corrective Action
- Accurate Record Keeping
- Secure Records

Golf Operations

Golf operations is inclusive of all the functions that happen in the golf shop, cart storage and staging area, on the lesson tee, on the website, all social media, and booking engine.

Standard Procedures

It is extremely important to have standardized operating procedures to ensure a consistent and enjoyable experience for your members and guests, to include:

- Inside and outside opening and closing checklists.
    - Customized for your club.
- Golf cart parking, cleaning, staging, rotation and maintenance checklists.
    - Practice facility daily set-up and operational procedure checklist.
- Phone script that engages the customer.
    - Customize.
- Service standards guidebook. This can be part of the Golf Operations Manual.
- Best-in-class golf Instruction, merchandising and tournament operations.

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Tee-Time Management

Consistent Tee Sheet Management is essential to optimize both rate and rounds. These 4 things must be integrated and automated.

- Booking Engine that works for you, and that features dynamic pricing, with pre-payment option and promo codes.
- Course Website – where the best price will always be found. Your best lead generation will generally come from you website.
- Marketing (CRM – Customer Relationship Management)
    - Improving customer relations = growth.
    - You should budget 2-6% of your gross revenue for market/CRM.
- Point of Sale – Your data warehouse. Learn and use the features.
- Coordinate Tee Sheet open times.
    - When is Sunrise?
    - First available time that works for maintenance?
    - Intervals that work for your club.
    - How can we get more rounds of golf? (Shotguns, Double-tee, Shorter intervals, Reverse shotguns).
    - Fill high demand times with higher fees.
    - Group rates that make sense (No less than 75-80% of full rate.).
    - Sunrise 9 off the back works.
    - Tee-Sheet block. (Members and guests in block times have to be accountable.) A member holding a blocked time who is a no-show costs the club money. This is not acceptable. A strong deposit is recommended for all group blocks.
    - Automated Tee Times with a pre-payment option is very important. It is also still extremely important to have a consistent timely tee time phone option.
    - Data Collection and pre-payment of fees is the current preferred method of several generational groups. Use the notes field to customize for that golfer or group.
    - Your team members that interact with either the phone or automated tee sheet are the key to your success. Dealing with an inspired employee is many times the difference maker. People will always be a major part of creating a great experience for your customers.
    - 3rd Party Tee Time Provider: Why would any club give away 2 tee times every day just to be a place their, not your customers can play for a discounted rate. After all, 2 tee times a day is 8 x $30.00 per head x 365 days a year = $81,600 annually, AND they drive your rate down and you don't own or have access to the players' data. Find a better, less expensive option, but keep in mind artificial intelligence will never rival human ingenuity in the golf space.

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KPI Membership Sales & Retention

Retention of current members is ALWAYS easier than membership sales (finding new members!)

- Personalize the experience for the member constantly.
- Monitor the rounds played and handicap trend report. If rounds go down and handicap goes up, this member is on the verge of leaving (Golf Professional: Invite these members to some frees lessons.)
- Monitor Food & Beverage usage. Personally invite the members who aren't using them to a Club event.
- Retention starts on day one with new member orientation and manual.
- Engage new members quickly. Make personal phone calls from the staff. Get them involved and feeling good about their investment to join.
- Communicate transparently and often.
- Listen and follow-up.

85/50 Membership Sales Programming

- The membership committee is a sales tool for the club.
- 6-12 members consisting of a Board member Chair and 5-11 hand-selected (70% new member / 30% longer term members) The committee will serve for 1 to 2 months maximum.
- The 5-11 committee members all must propose 2 people whom they believe would be great members.
- The committee entertains this group of people, perhaps with wine and cheese during a golf putting clinic—anything really, that would get the recommended people to enjoy the club.
- You have an 85% chance to close on all those recommended by new members. You have a 50% close rate recommended by longer term members.
- Once every member has served on this committee, start again.
- Understand your competition (Competitive analysis included in this report.)
- Evaluate your club's offerings.
- ALL EMPLOYEES are also part of the sales force.
- Along with the 85/50 program, also important:
    - Search engine optimization (SEO)
    - Search engine marketing (SEM)

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  - New homeowner letter
  - Cultivate realtor friends
  - Your tee time provider can track much helpful data. Use it!
  - Database development!!!
  - Follow all leads to a conclusion.

Merchandise Management

- 80% of your pro shop sales come from 20% of your golfers. Buy a strong majority of the shop merchandise with these buyers in mind.
- Upsell or add on sales
- Inventory count & cost verification.
  - Customize and use to hold a staff member accountable.
- Merchandise standards
  - Cost of goods sold 60-69% (COGS)
- COGS – purchase price $30.00 / sales price $45.00 / COGS would be 66 2/3%.
- You need to attain a merchandise turnover ratio of 3:1. Ex. Trailing 12 COGS sold @ $120,000 (LTM Detail) with current inventory at $40,000. This would attain the 3:1 ratio.
- Recommend starting an online store for logoed items.
- Custom club fitting expertise is essential. A well-designed and inventoried teaching/club fitting area will attract attention—private enough nobody helps themselves, but public enough to draw attention on your driving range.
- The driving range must be a stand-along profit canter. Use top-quality, clean balls; provide demo days, launch monitor days, and a variety of golf professional lesson options. 80/20 teach/facility split is normal. The club must get a piece of everything.
- Free instruction time periods are also important. “PGA Professionals must help their facilities attract new members/golfers.”

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Ratios, Stats & Opportunities to Shoot For

This is based on a number of studies and a review of many of the facilities we have been involved with. These are combined averages from the various data.

2022 National Average Semi-Private Club (Similar size to Meadowood)

- Food Cost of Sales = 38.4% / Beverage Cost of Sales = 28.3%
- Golf Shop Merchandise Cost of Sales = 60.9%
- Total payroll cost as a percentage of total revenue = 48.1%; however, well-run clubs are at 44-45%.
- Food & Beverage payroll as a % of total Food & Beverage Sales is 38-50%
- 54.1% revenue comes from dues; 23.1% from Food & Beverage, 11.1% from golf and Pro Shop sales, and 5.1% from all other. (Semi-private Clubs can vary greatly within these areas.)
- Member attrition rate 5.2%
- Average number of full-time equivalent employees (FTE) in 12 month season is 34. This includes Food & Beverage. Meadowood's number to shoot for is 23.
- A healthy club runs at 55% to 65% tee time utilization rate adjusted for weather, and average revenue per round of 70-75% as a percentage peak revenue per round.
- RevPar – Unlike the average rate per round, RevPar factors in all your available tee times, not just the ones that are sold. This is one of your most important KPIs.
- Clubs in the 3.4 million and under gross revenue bracket MUST GET GOLFERS TO BOOK DIRECT. When they do, the average rate per round will rise and YOU WILL OWN THE PLAYER'S DATA. Consider offering 3rd party booking engine players a discount card they can use when they book direct the first time.

Statistics

- 2022: Number of golf courses in the U.S. = 13,052 (Down from 14,794 in 2019.)
- Total rounds of golf played in 2021 = 504 million (Up from 441 million in 2019.)
- Average rounds played per golf course on an annual basis: 38,615
- There are approximately 26 million golfers in the United States.
- Average household annual income of a golfer is $125,000.
- Average cost of a round of golf & cart at a public course in the U.S. in 2021 was $36.00. This number was $34.00 in 2018. This number continues to be beaten down by golf booking companies selling some of your tee times well-below market value. If you continue to let 3rd parties bastardize your tee times, real rate growth will be very slow to occur.

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More Statistics

- 25.6 million Americans played golf on a course in 2022—8% of the population.
- 34.2 million people played golf on or off the course (Top golf, Driveshack) in 2022.
- 13.6 million people played off-course in 2022; this also includes driving range and simulators.
- 3.2 million first time players in 2021—a strong Covid influx of new players.
- U.S. Golf Course Market financial impact is 26.1 billion in 2022.
- The estimated value of the U.S. golf industry is 84 billion in 2022 – a 22% increase in value since 2011.
- 25% of female golfers in 2020 tried golf for the first time.
- Women represent 41% of off-course golfers.
- 27% of new golfers are GenZ (18-34 years old)
- 502 million rounds played in 2020; up from 441 million in 2019 (14% increase)
- Keep in mind we have 25.6 million golfers in 2022, down from an industry high of 29.82 million in 2006. (We need to get back to that number.)
- 12 % of millennials (1980-1994) played golf in 2021.
- 7% of GenX (1965-1979) played golf in 2021
- An estimated 800 courses have closed in the last decade.

Opportunities

In 2022, GenZ (1999-2012 / 9-24) and Millennials (1981-1996 / 25-41) made up 27% of new golfers. Between these two groups, with the U.S. population total of 141,000,000, there are 31,000,000 who do not play golf, but have indicated they would like to. GenZ and Millennials will make up 75% of the workforce by 2030.

Generation X: (1965-1980 / 42-57) has a total U.S. population base of 66 million. Of this group, 6.8 million men play golf. This group has the money and can make the time to play, if they want to. Getting their spouses and teenage and college-age children into the sport at the same time is a key to success.

There are 72 million employed women (17-60) in the United States. The total number of golfers in the United States is approximately 26 million. Women represent 25% of that total, or 6.5 million. Specific programming to this group will continue the rapid growth from this group in recent years.

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Total population of the U.S. is 332,278,200, of which 14,000,000 are millionaires. Keep in mind that 80% of your total revenue comes from 20% of your golfers. Know your 20% and cater to them.

Top Clubs Do The Following:

- Re-invest in their facilities. 65% of the investment in impact items that members can see, enjoy and improve the club's abilities to sell memberships. The other 35% to be invested in necessary facility improvements, like a new roof.
- Constantly revisit membership development. Annual competitive analysis.
- Fine tune and monitor key performance indicators (KPIs)]
- Focus on Budget Process. Challenge every line item request.
- They provide superior service from a well-vetted and trained staff.
- Pay attention to the Big 3: Golf, Dining and Fitness
- Communicate often and with purpose to the members.
- They have an eye on the 10,000 ft. level and the future.
- There is always a focus on improvement.
- They have no personal agenda items at the Board level.

Director of Operations - Interview & Operating Review

Kyle Swierzinski is a very capable, dedicated employee. In my opinion, the Club is very fortunate to have him. He is the glue holding the operation together through these trying times. He knows a great deal already about all areas of club operations. Again, with that being said, this section of the report will cover the challenges present in the overall business operation of the Club.

Obviously, there are numerous check and balance failures that occurred over the last several years. I'm going to list the major issues that allow employees to take advantage of the Club. First, and foremost, there is NO detailed operating budget. That is a major issue, but certainly not the only one. There is no bidding process as part of the department purchasing on behalf of the Club. All Department Directors order what they want, when they want, until the Board says "Stop buying anything." The bidding process is needed to ensure getting the best goods and price for the Club. It also keeps the Department Directors honest, by not being tormented to cross an ethics line related to staff equipment and/or kickbacks. With no budget and no ordering process, the Department Director would have no idea what might be being tacked into his department's make-shift budget line items. Once all bids are in, the Director of Operations

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must sign off on the purchase before the order is placed. This process alone will save the Club tens of thousands of dollars annually. Invoices need to be signed off before being paid, by the Department Director who placed the order, the Director of Operations/GM, and the Treasurer of the Board. Although a pain in the butt, the Board President should sign all checks.

The online bank statement needs to be reviewed daily by the Operations Director, weekly by the Club's Treasurer, and monthly by the Club's President. Trust always, but verify. This recommendation is a minimum; however, the Club may want to do more. The accounting firm that does your annual review also needs to have short term access.

Human Resources and Payroll is an area in which the Club has challenges. The Employee Handbook needs to be updated. All Department Directors need to create or update an Employee Handbook for their department. Both handbooks need to synch with each other. (Example: The amount of vacation offered needs to match, etc.) One of the major issues is the lack of security of employees' personal information, which is in an unlocked file cabinet. Member information is also unsecure.

Currently, it appears that Kyle is the only one creating the monthly financial statements, and he is the only one who can log into the bank statement. Please don't put everything on one man's plate. A good man will move on to a more professional position; a bad man will rob you blind again.

Other areas and issues to consider are a technology audit of the building, which should be conducted every five years. There is certainty that the Club is paying for phone lines, etcetera, that aren't being used.

The Guard Gate is a major problem continuing to chase away anyone inquiring about golf without a tee time. Singles, many times, don't have a tee time, but will play in the first available spot. Couples considering membership, many times, will drive over to inquire in person. Some of the gate attendants are gruff and do not extend a warm greeting. They just stare at you until you speak first. Golf Clubs that are semi-private are in the inclusion business. That is not happening at this Club's front gate in a consistent, well-trained manner.

There is a question pertaining to liability insurance and naming the Club as also insured within the fitness operation. It does not appear to be in place.

Club liability insurance is a large line item on all club budgets. This insurance should be shopped on an annual basis. It is not wise to use a member insurance representative to provide/write the Club's insurance.

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Barter, of any kind, is just not a healthy way to do business. This will generally lead to misunderstanding, misrepresentations and distrust.

The payroll company ADP seems to do a good job. Over-payments to cover the payroll have been found just setting in the payroll account. Again, this is a check and balance issue. There are 29 total employees on the payroll account, excluding Food & Beverage. This needs to be thinned out for seasonal business. Twenty-nine is a high number based on how the Club operates; twenty-two is more the norm.

Along with the club's new Membership Sales Program, the Club also needs a Retention Program (One is enclosed within.) and a new member on-boarding process. The on-boarding process should provide a new member's handbook that they sign off on once they have read it. It is not enough to simply have them on the website.

The Club has an older payroll time card clock. This system lends itself for employees to check-in to extra, unworked hours. At a minimum, Department Directors have to double-check scheduled hours and time card hours. Finding pennies turns into dollars and much more in a short time when great care and spot-checking occurs regularly. A staff company is used by Course Maintenance Department to supply some labor. This is generally never a good idea because the staff company employees are untrained and many cannot e-verify.

The golf cart lease is a standard cart lease. It appears there is documentation that precludes any type of cart, except Club Car. This type of provision eliminates competitive bidding. The golf cart lease should be shopped hard every time it comes up for renewal.

The restaurant lease seems to be all over the place. Some minor parts of it, such as how the golf shop snack income is accounted for, do not make sense. At a minimum, the Club needs a 7 day a week beverage cart, and delivery by the beverage cart of any called in orders from the sign on #8.

In closing this section, it is important to say that this Club is operated too much for the members, and not as a semi-private club business.

One last thought: Consider selling the pool and tennis operation to the Master HOA.

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Golf Professional - Interview & Operations Review

Travis Stoelting is a personable and capable Golf Professional. He has not acquired membership in the Professional Golfers Association of America. I would highly recommend the Club to strongly encourage Travis to attain PGA membership within 4 years. The education and training he will acquire with this program will exponentially fast track his continued development. It is my opinion that Travis and his staff are doing a good job of operating the Golf Department. With that being said, my job is to make the Board aware of issues and provide suggestions for improvement.

One of the most important roles your Golf Department Head has to do is have a system to develop a database of golfers who use the facilities. This includes data collection in numerous areas of the club and mining all the data gathered within the Club's tee time booking engine and point of sale system. You currently do not have access to Golf Now data. That is a problem, because an up-to-date and accurate database is one of your marketing life lines.

Problems are just waiting to occur with the Club's nightly deposit routine. There is not a safe in the golf shop and the safe in the office is not a drop safe. As a result, the daily receipts and cash set unsecured in a drawer in the golf shop. There is also no real accountability for an end-of-day money drawer that is under or over for the day.

Golf or tennis lesson providers do not pay a percentage back to the Club for use of the courts, range turf and range balls. Between 15-25% is very common in today's club marketplace.

The Golf Professional's staff needs a system to ensure that they get out and play with all members, not just some. I spoke with Travis about successful ways I've done it or seen it done over the years. It can be as easy as hanging a sign in a member gathering area listing the dates each staff member is going to play that month. Members can sign up right there to join the professional on one of those days. A good system that works will drive more revenue to the facility long term.

The golf shop purchasing, merchandising and sales portion of the business has some major issues. Based on total pro shop sales of $214,000, excluding $34,000 additional in snack sales, the amount of inventory to support these sales is $71,000. The current amount of inventory in the golf shop is $134,000. Having an open-to-buy program (I discussed this with Travis.) and sticking to it will ensure proper inventory levels and, therefore, proper inventory turn ratios.

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Additional issues in this area revolve around not having a proper special order and pay system. This can be as simple as a proper special order log book that follows the order to a conclusion (Again, I spoke to Travis about this.) The buying process has to be refined to order specifically for the 20% of buyers who create 80% of the shop's revenue. And finally, very few shops stock hard goods anymore. This business is all fitting and custom ordering. The golf shop needs to get involved with this trend. Many Pros order hard goods that just set in inventory to fulfill a staff agreement requirement (Free merchandise for the Pros). One big related issue is the Pro's ordering from a buddy sales representative. Competitive bidding needs to happen to keep all concerned appropriately in the game. (I also discussed this with Travis.)

Let's move forward into Human Resources related to this department. This department does not offer its employees a golf operations handbook which they sign off on. This manual is the operational "Bible" for the department and needs to be detailed and customized for this Club. This handbook has everything from opening and closing details to instructions on cart rotation and care—a comprehensive "how to" manual. It should also lay out a schedule of formal staff meetings.

This department has no operating budget. Without a budget and the related proper department purchasing requirement, there are no double-check systems in place. This is the reason theft easily occurs at clubs.

Clubs have got to stop the use of multiple single carts in a foursome. The wear and tear on the turf from this practice is just not a smart thing for clubs to allow. Clubs also have to stop member groups from taking tee times that ultimately go unused. These prime time tee times can be sold for a premium. Members have to be responsible!

The golf shop should start using dynamic pricing for public green fees. Your prime time is more valuable than other times. 7:30-10:30 AM is that window at most semi-private clubs.

Many times, once a guest of a member or a daily fee player gets past the parking lot bag drop area, the first thing they encounter is the putting green and driving range tee as they head to the golf shop. These two areas need to be front and center and not an after-thought. If these amenities are not in top-notch condition, and professionally set up, including directional roping, signage, teaching/club fitting area, space-divide (10' apart) hitting stations, non-tattered flags/targets, and clean 1st quality range balls, you will have lost an opportunity to set a great tone for the day.

Currently, the golf staff is responsible for membership sales and retention. Membership sales related to the golf staff only occurs if a prospective member walks into the shop. The Club does the occasional mass mailing in hopes of attracting member candidates. Virtually nothing is

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being done related to retaining your current members. This combined minimal effort is a recipe for disaster. We strongly recommend that you research our 85/50 membership sales program on our website podcast and start to use it. This program works every time the members embrace it and get involved to secure the Club's financial future. Healthy clubs have 6-10% attrition annually. These members who are leaving have to be replaced . . . and more!

Communication between the Golf Professional and Course Superintendent is essential for the enjoyment of all golfers. The communication at this Club is inconsistent. In my opinion, there are many times and circumstances the two are not on the same page. This leads to detail items falling through the cracks. These two professionals, at a minimum, have got to have 3 meetings a week. This will ensure all operational detail is considered and, where needed, compromise occurs. The proper Board and committee operating model as recommended in this document will help to guide (not micro-manage) proper communication.

Communication also needs to be effective between Golf Operations and Food and Beverage. A knowledgeable leader in the GM or Operations Director role can ensure a seamless transition for event groups from golf course to dining room.

With only one point of sale unit in the golf shop, it appears that Golf Operations payroll is larger than it should be. A recommendation for this area is present on the proposed budget enclosed in this report.

Golf Course Superintendent - Interview & Operations Review

James Baron is a personable man and certainly cares about Meadowood. His real love and main skill set seems to be mechanical in nature, including keeping the hydraulic irrigation system working. He has done a number of jobs in the course maintenance department over the years. His formal agronomic education seems to be limited to onsite trial and error. His job is made tougher by the Club's lack of a proper advisory committee structure. With no disrespect to the committee chair, but a committee of one is generally a micro-managing dictatorship.

James has a hard time finding employees, and when he does, keeping employees. He also tries to hire through a labor staffing company. This is never a good idea, as most available laborers with these companies cannot e-verify. The lack of even a minimal health care benefits package puts the club in an uncompetitive position in the labor market. James is generally working with 6-7 full-time staff, including himself.

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James, like all of the other department heads, does not have an operation budget. This situation makes it very easy for a dishonest bookkeeper to create invoices and charge them off to make shift course maintenance line items. These directors had no budget and never saw any real financials. They had no way to know, and for that matter, neither did the Board.

Numerous other issues exist in the course maintenance department. There is no gas log book; the gas pumps are not secure during the work day; and the water company uses gas from course maintenance, as does the golf shop for utility carts. The gas that the Pro Shop uses seems excessive.

Further issues include no employee handbook/manual and no signing off on information within a department manual. The Club also does not provide uniforms, other than a single tee shirt.

James Baron ends up being the Superintendent, Irrigation Specialist, and Mechanic. This is a recipe for disaster. You need to have a dedicated Irrigation Specialist and also a Mechanic. I've seen clubs that are struggling financially share those two positons with a nearby club.

I mentioned this before, but it's worth reviewing one more time. Overall Club communication is poor. It is poor from the Board to the Directors, and equally poor between directors and, ultimately, to their staffs. Transparency does not exist and management direction is achieved through micromanagement that generally is not a directive of the full Board. Having board members and blub members in the dark is never a good thing.

Other areas that will need to be cleaned up are Balance Sheet Valuations. Many items have remained on the Balance Sheet for a very long time. For instance, a truck (valued at $7600), is still on the balance sheet. This truck has been dead for some time and sits in the boneyard.

Drainage is a major issue in both bunkers and fairways. James Baron estimated course closing related to drainage at 20 to 40 days (or parts of days) annually.

From a seat outside looking in, further concerns in this department revolve around getting the job done in a timely manner. There just doesn't seem to be any urgency to complete a project. Windows have been missed and will continue to be missed: proper staffing, agronomic knowledge, workable Board Model, and right-sized advisory committees.

A more educated and enlightened review of this Department will be presented within the report by KPI's Agronomist. With that being said, if KPI had just purchased this facility, we would be searching for a solid Agronomist and a mechanic, at a minimum. This setup would allow for James Baron to be the number two man, working crew chief and irrigation specialist.

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How Much Should We Spend on Course Maintenance?

Some National Averages:

"Every additional foot on the Stimpmeter slows rounds down by 7 minutes." USGA

Average Total Maintenance Cost by Course Type

Municipal	$621,190
Private	$1,083.647
Semi-Private	$312,476
Daily Fee	$294,456

Labor Expense by Course Type

Municipal	$349,839
Private	$630,104
Semi-Private	$312,476
Daily Fee	$294,456

Largest Expense Categories of the Course Maintenance Budget

Labor	57%
Equipment Lease	5%
Chemicals & Fungicide	8%
Fertilizer	5%
Equipment Repair	5%
Fuel & Lubricants	3%

Beware of Water Cost

Water cost varies greatly between regions. Courses in the Southwest spend on average $238,000 a year.

Equipment Costs Have More Than Doubled in 3 Years

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Lease or buy? In general terms, lease the pieces that have everyday use—things like mowers, sprayers, and bunker rakes. Buy the pieces that are used only occasionally—tractors, aerifiers, vacuums, truck with dump bed, etc.

Keep in mind that things like flags, tee markers, ball washers, etc. represent a $4,000 line item on the Budget.

Average per acre cost in the US to maintain:

Putting greens	$69,000
Tees	$ 8,000
Fairways	$ 9,000
Bunkers	$41,000
Rough	$ 2,000

Our Course Maintenance expert, James Rattigan, will enhance and make points of recommendations that could vary from these general guidelines.

KPI Secret Shopper - June 23, 2023

Club Name:	Meadowood Golf and Tennis Club Fort Pierce, Florida
Date:	23 June 2023
Golfers:	Brent and Jamie Clarke

The below reports the results of a “Secret Shopper” experience while playing golf at Meadowood Golf and Tennis Club on 23 June 2023. It includes an executive summary and the Secret Shopper Check List. Photographs can be provided separately.

Executive Summary
This secret shopper experience was conducted on 23 June 2023. While the weather was sunny and warm, it was apparent that the course had previously received significant rain. That wetness combined with the poor condition of the greens, brings into question whether the course should have even been open for play. Regardless, 18 holes were played and lunch was eaten in the club restaurant. The remainder of this summary is broken into observations, areas for improvement, and recommendations.

Observations

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- The course is well designed, taking advantage of the land for a stimulating round of golf.
- Most staff were generally friendly and wanted our experience to be enjoyable.
- Signs from the front gate to the course and from hole-to-hole on the course were clear and effective.
- The golf cart was in good repair and stocked with sand and a score card.
- The snack bar staff was pleasant for lunch, and we enjoyed our meal, although $51 for two medium size salads and two sodas seems a little pricey.

Areas for Improvement

- The most visible area for improvement is course condition/maintenance. No one was ever observed doing maintenance on the course during our visit (save for one person filling some holes on the practice green). It is understood the greens have not recovered from aeration (and that will always adversely affect a golfing experience). It is also understood that maybe fairways were not being mowed due to excessive water. However, there was so much else visibly needing maintenance (much of it low hanging fruit), that it was surprising that no one was working on the course. Of particular note:
    - Tee boxes are in need of leveling and grass repair.
    - Bunkers need edging and weeding.
    - Bunkers need uniform sand.
    - Bunkers need pumping down from excess water.
    - The bushes surrounding the path between #9 green and clubhouse are so overgrown, it cannot be navigated without being hit by branches.
    - Cart path ends need leveling and signage.
- Another area for improvement is recruitment. Despite stating interest in learning about the club (as a couple), no one attempted any level of recruitment.

Recommendations

- Address the low-hanging fruit maintenance items, like bunkers, shrubbery and missing cups at water coolers.
- Add “Scatter” signs or ropes to minimize damage where cart paths end and smooth the path to grass transitions.
- Be proactive in the pro-shop. Build rapport. Ask questions to improve the experience. Talk about memberships. Sell things.

1. Tee Time Acquisition—By phone to Golf Shop Was it efficient and easy?

N/A. As directed, this tee time was made via the GolfNow website. However, on the first attempt, an aeration warning was shown on GolfNow, so I did call the pro shop. The female that answered was knowledgeable and confirmed aeration, necessitating rescheduling the date.

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That said, communication with the pro shop was frustrating in that the phone kept fading in and out during the conversation, requiring repeating communication.

2. Front Gate Access and Experience
With a tee time: Access was convenient and quick.
As a single, without a tee time: N/A
As a potential member: Technically N/A

As I pulled up the front gate attendant kind of just looked at me so I looked back, waiting for a "Welcome to Meadowood. How may I help you?" kind of thing. When that didn't happen, I said I had a tee time. He asked the name, checked something, and said we were good to go.

3. Parking Lot Ease of Access
Was there adequate directional signage? Yes
Was it clean and orderly? Yes

Nothing remarkable about the parking lot and bag drop was easy to identify although one anomaly is that the bag drop is set to have you drive on the left against the flow of traffic.

4. Bag Drop
Was it easy to find and use? Yes
Was it clean and orderly? Yes
Was it attended or have a button to call? Yes

Bag drop was easy to locate. It was attended and it had a call button. As stated above, the only anomaly is that it has you enter against the normal flow of traffic.

5. Outside Service Attendant
Were you greeted? Yes
Was the attendant efficient? Yes

The Outside Service Attendant was dual-hatting as the starter. He was friendly, loaded our clubs, told us the tee sheet was mostly empty so we could tee off early, and directed us toward the pro shop.

6. Pro Shop Staff
Were you greeted? No
Was the check-in process easy? Yes
Was the shop orderly, with eye-catching displays? Yes
Did the shop attendant have adequate merchandise, golf and course knowledge? Yes

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This was a little interesting. When we found the pro shop (and it was open), there was no one in it. We wandered around for a bit looking for someone and without luck decided to find the locker rooms/restrooms on our own. As we were heading to the locker rooms, we ran into the pro shop attendant in the hallway, coming out of another area of the building

When we returned from the rest rooms, the pro shop attendant was watching TV, so I cleared my throat to get his attention. He asked who we were and said we were good to go. I told him we were also interested in the club, and he said to have a look around. I told him we were going to the range and then to play. At the range, we realized there were no range balls so that necessitated returning to the pro shop to get balls. That took additional time because he was on the phone. Ultimately, he provided range balls at no cost, citing our first visit. I do not know how the range ball system is run normally.

There were several missed opportunities to recruit a potential new member as well as the failure to offer range balls, causing extra customer effort. On the plus side, he did offer a yardage book which came in useful on the course, particularly on par 3's which are not labeled well for distance.

7. Golf Cart Staging Area
Was it close to check-in area? Yes
Were your clubs set up on the cart? Yes
Did the cart have adequate divot sand? Yes
Was the attendant helpful? Yes
Was the attendant professionally attired? Yes
Was the cart clean inside and out? Yes

The carts were staged at the bag drop area so that was very convenient. I have no concerns about the process or the cart itself. The few employees we came across during our outing appeared professionally attired, although I did not notice if they were wearing Meadowood Club logo wear.

8. Starter
Was the starter pleasant, knowledgeable and efficient? Yes

As noted above, the starter and the Outside Service Attendant were the same person. The comments in #5 above apply.

9. Pace of Play
Was tee time on time? Yes (early)

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How many players were in your group? Two
Was a ranger present on the course? No
Did the ranger speak to your group? N/A

Our tee time with GolfNow was 10:28 am and we teed off early (at starter's recommendation) at 10:10 am. As a twosome, we didn't come across another group until the 15th hole, finishing the round at 1:21 pm, for a round total time of 3 hours and 11 minutes.

10. Course Conditions
Were the boxes mowed? Yes
Were the markers placed on a level lie? Sometimes
Please rate the condition of the tee boxes: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - Three
Were the fairways mowed? Yes
Was there an apparent divot filling program? Yes
Please rate the fairway conditions: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - Six
Were the bunkers raked? Yes
Were there adequate rakes in the bunkers or on the cart? Yes
Were the bunkers edged? No
Was there adequate quality sand in the bunker? No
Please rate the condition of the bunkers: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 - Two
Were the greens mowed? Yes
Were the greens rolling freely? No
Were the greens mostly weed-free? No
Please rate the condition of the grass: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Two

As a single data point (23 June 2023), course condition and maintenance at Meadowood are the area that clearly need improvement. To set the stage, while the weather was sunny and hot, the course must have had significant previous rain as the course was very wet. Additionally, the greens had not recovered from an aeration performed two weeks prior and showed signs of a recent re-sanding. Since Meadowood does not have continuous cart paths, "cart path only" is not an option. With the damage being caused to the very wet course and the poor condition of the greens, I'm not sure the course should have been open for play on 23 June.

Further, most bunkers appeared in disrepair without defined edges, weeds growing throughout, inconsistent sand, and (in the case of 23 June) deep water in many. The white tee boxes were often crowned and lacking grass.

One thing that was particularly striking is that during the 4+ hours we were on or around the course (on a Friday), we never saw a maintenance person on the course. The total of course work we witnessed was one person filling some holes on the practice green.

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11. Condition of Driving Range
Please rate the tee box hitting area: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Five
Were the range balls clean? Yes
Were the range balls in good condition? Yes

As stated earlier, it is not apparent to a first timer how one gets range balls. This range has a continuous turf mat the length of the hitting area and did have a trash receptacle, club cleaner, and yardage board. It did not have signs for hitting expectations ("Mat-only", "Hit between signs" etc.). If the expectation is to hit off mats only, there is no method to tee up and practice a driver. Also, the grass around the hitting mats is spotty.

12. Putting Green Condition
Please rate the Putting Green condition: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – One
Approximate stimp meter speed: Eight
Did putting speed match the course greens? Unfortunately, Yes

The practice green had been aerated and dressed, but after two weeks of recovery, it seemed in disrepair. Like the greens, there are weeds and very inconsistent rolls. There was some damage (maybe from sandhill cranes?) and the filling of these holes (on the practice green) was the only maintenance observed on the course.

13. PGA Golf Professional
Was the Professional hospitable? N/A
Was it easy and welcoming to book a lesson? N/A

No PGA professional was identified during our time at Meadowood.

14. Membership Sales
Was the process professional? N/A
Was it easy to get information? N/A
Was the information collateral professionally done and easy to follow? N/A

No recruitment attempt was attempted, despite us stating interest in what the club had to offer. There was a summer membership placard in the golf cart, but I felt that was incongruous with the condition of the course.

15. Food and Beverage
Was there a beverage cart? No
Was the cart attendant interested in doing a good job? N/A

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Were there adequate offerings on the lunch menu? Yes
Were they priced fairly? Seemed pricey.
Was the food served hot? N/A
Was it easy to pay in all areas? Yes
Was the service good? Yes

There was no beverage cart which would have been welcome on such a hot day. There was at least one water thermos on the course. Unfortunately, there were no cups in the cup holder. We ate lunch in the restaurant at about 1:15 pm. There were two other people at a table also having lunch. The wait staff were pleasant and caring. We went “off-menu” to test the system, and both asked if the chef could substitute ground beef for the chicken in a salad. The chef did that for us although there was an upcharge on the bill (that wasn’t discussed beforehand). Meadowood automatically adds a $20 gratuity onto the food bill.

16. Corporate or Charity Event Outing
Was it easy to get information? N/A
Was there professionally done collateral? N/A
Was it seamless between golf and food and beverage? N/A
Was someone interested in securing your outing business? N/A

17. Overall Experience Grade
Please rate your overall experience: 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10 – Five

See Executive Summary

Here are examples of the forms/questionnaires we used in our surveys/evaluations of the club:

KPI Secret Shopper Checklist
KPI Member-Golfer Interview Questions
KPI Employee Interview Questions

Operational Recommendations

Throughout this comprehensive report, numerous recommendations are discussed. This page is meant to be a catch all, not a comprehensive list. Some of these will be listed in multiple areas.

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- Charge 2.5-3.5% fee on all credit card sales.
- It would be very nice for your members and green fee players to have a call-in food opportunity, to pick up at the turn or be delivered by the Beverage Cart Operator. Negotiate with the Food & Beverage vendor.
- Sell the Pool/Tennis complex to the HOA. They need it; you don't need it.
- The front gate access is a problem; it must have all-access for golf, range, and dining.
- Oversight and Accountability need to drastically improve. The proper management, and Board oversight, is the key to future success. A proper Board Model is essential.
- ALL revenue sources need to flow, at least partially, to the Club. (Ex. Golf & tennis lessons)
- Creation of a proper operating Budget is essential to success. A club without a Budget is like a football team without a playbook.
- Get 4 bids on absolutely everything over $400. (Your employees will hate this.)
- You can't afford, nor do you need, your current 3rd party tee time provider.
- You have to have educated, knowledgeable, professional employees, who are fully invested in knowing their Budget inside and out, running the day to day club operations.
- Create a long-range capital plan and reserve study 5-10 years.
- Assessments of ANY TYPE chase members away. Eliminate where possible. Budgeting/Operations needs to start throwing off 6-10% of gross revenue to be in a position to fund capital improvements.
- Country Clubs incur 3% - 5% general cost increase annually. Annual similar dues and green fee increases will ensure you cover. Walk a tight rope here based on your annual competitive analysis.
- Try to form a buying Co-op with other area clubs. If you go to a 3rd party full-management contract, you will have access to their vendor partner suppliers.
- Database collection is the most important thing you can do to ensure long term success. You need the analytics housed in your tee sheet, as well.
- KPI's recommendation is to hire a 3rd party operator to handle the accounting. Great Life Golf can do this for Meadowood with professional ease for $42,000 annually. If interested, contact Jason Harshbarger, CFO, Great Life Golf: 717-503-2175.
- At a minimum, the Club needs to have a proper check & balance set of systems in place. Bank statements must be protected with multiple people (President, Treasurer, and 3rd Party Management Provider) all receiving bank statements or access.
- A strong advisory to the Board Committee structure is essential. Each committee should have a related staff member as a seated voting committee member. (Ex. Director of Golf on Golf Committee)
- A complete clubhouse technology audit should be conducted. You are likely to find phone lines, etc. that are not being used, but you are paying for.
- Gas disappears from golf clubs. Set up gas usage logs, inventory regularly, audit, and secure the tank.

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- High end golf balls and gloves disappear from golf clubs. Pay close attention to these items.
- Cash disappears from golf clubs. Do not ignore end-of-day shortages. Hold associates accountable for the shortage.
- Demo club inventory disappears. Proper logs, deposit, and inventory are essential.
- NON member residents help themselves to course amenity usage after hours. Clean this up and all of a sudden, you have a new member or two.
- Club members overbook tee times and then don't show up with enough players. This simply cannot happen. These prime time tee times are easy to sell.
- One person, micromanaging-dictatorial committees do not work. This is a major problem at Meadowood in all departments.
- General Manager/Operations Director needs to spot check inventories every month.
- Golf Shop Inventory is $65,000-$70,000—too high for the amount of sales.
- Maintenance Inventory is $62,000. A club like Meadowood doesn't need any more than $39,000 to $40,000 in inventory on hand.
- Recommend an "open to buy" program for the golf shop. I have emphasized to Travis the importance of this.
- There appears to be a few items on the Club's balance sheet that have been sitting there that need to be cleaned up. Kyle is researching and adjusting.
- The Club needs to have at least a piece of ALL revenue produced at the Club. (Ex. Club collecting 15% on all lesson revenue is now the norm.)
- The way the $12,000 Social Committee Liability is handled is a mess. Transparency would be difficult to obtain with the current situation.
- Golf shop special orders and subsequent billing needs to be improved. A special order logo book that follows the order and sales to a conclusion will help.
- Start inviting your public players to get a GHIN handicap. $35-$40 charge, annually.
- Golf shop snack sales are again difficult to keep clean and transparent with the current restaurant lease.
- Golf shop point of sale system causes too much searching and time delay to complete a merchandise sale. Also, it's way too easy to have a proper inventory with potential SKU issues.
- Range sales are very low. Should be 40,000 minutes. Proper daily set up with teaching and fitting station will help. The practice areas need to be a strong priority of the Superintendent.
- Travis Stoelting – requirement to become a PGA meeting with 4 years.
- Training in all departments is needed. Start with regular staff meetings.
- The front door of the Club, parking lot, bag drop, carts, putting green, range and golf shop need to be a priority. First impressions will always matter.
- Push residents and club members to support the restaurant. You don't want it back.

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- Communication is generally inefficient and not transparent. This starts with a proper governance structure.
- Data collection activities, your membership sales and retention program are your life line.

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KPI GOLF MANAGEMENT

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.

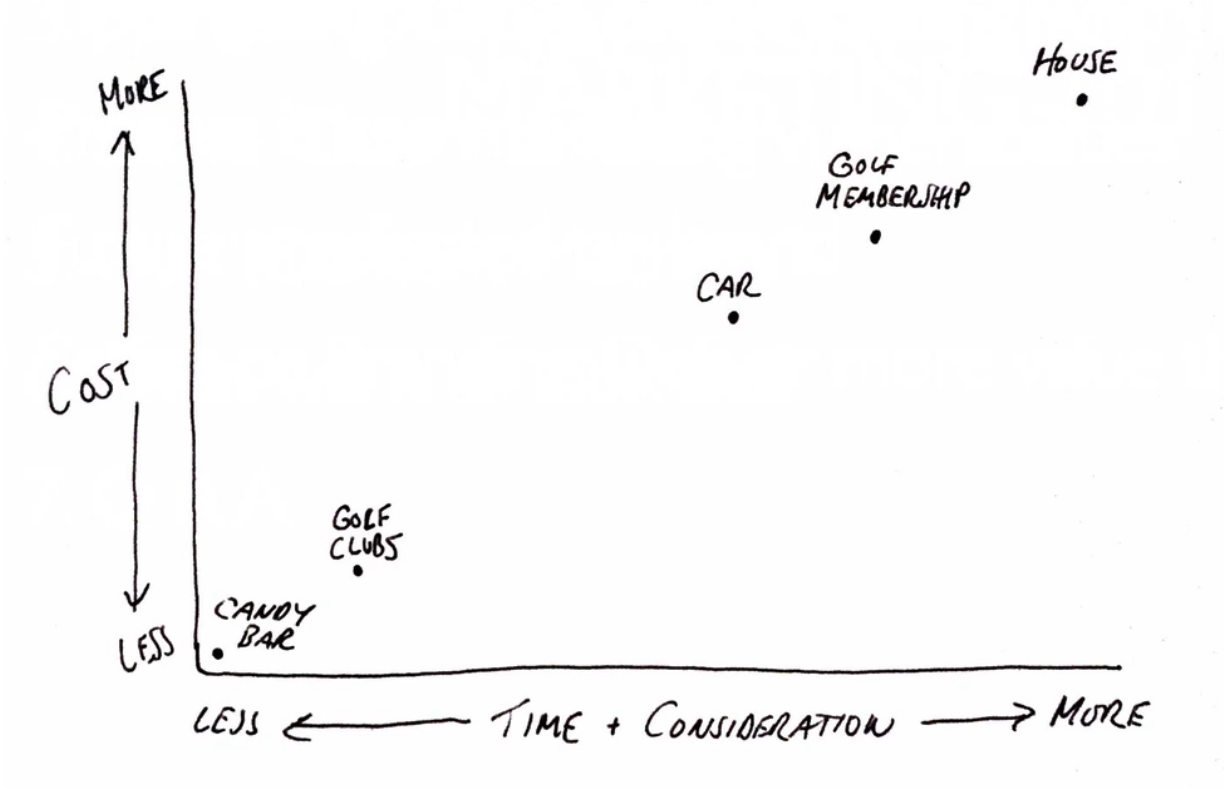
Membership Sales is a Considered Buying Process

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

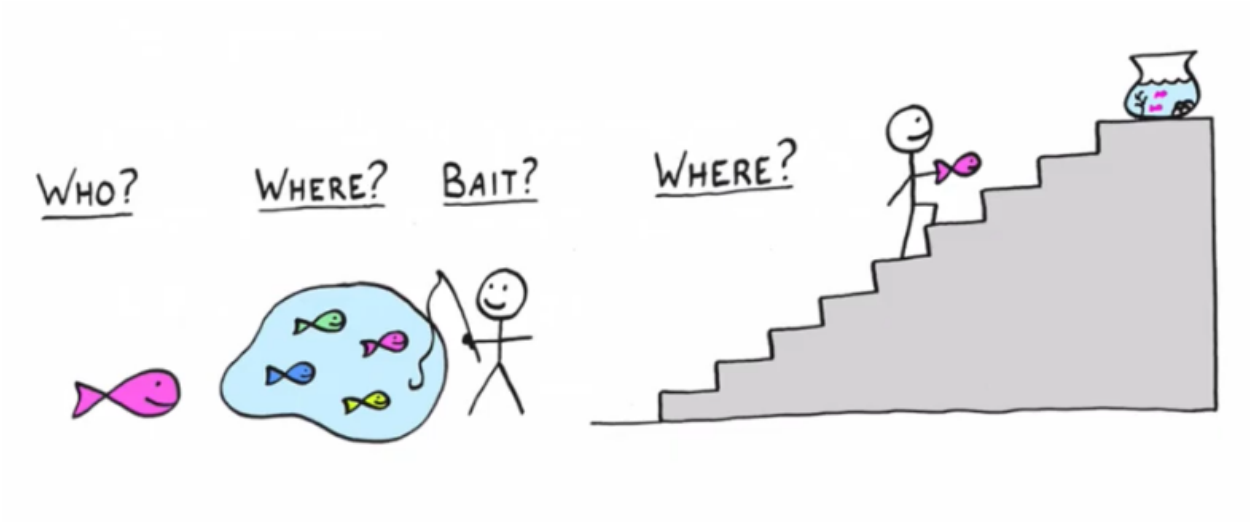
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The World's Simplest Marketing Formula

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.

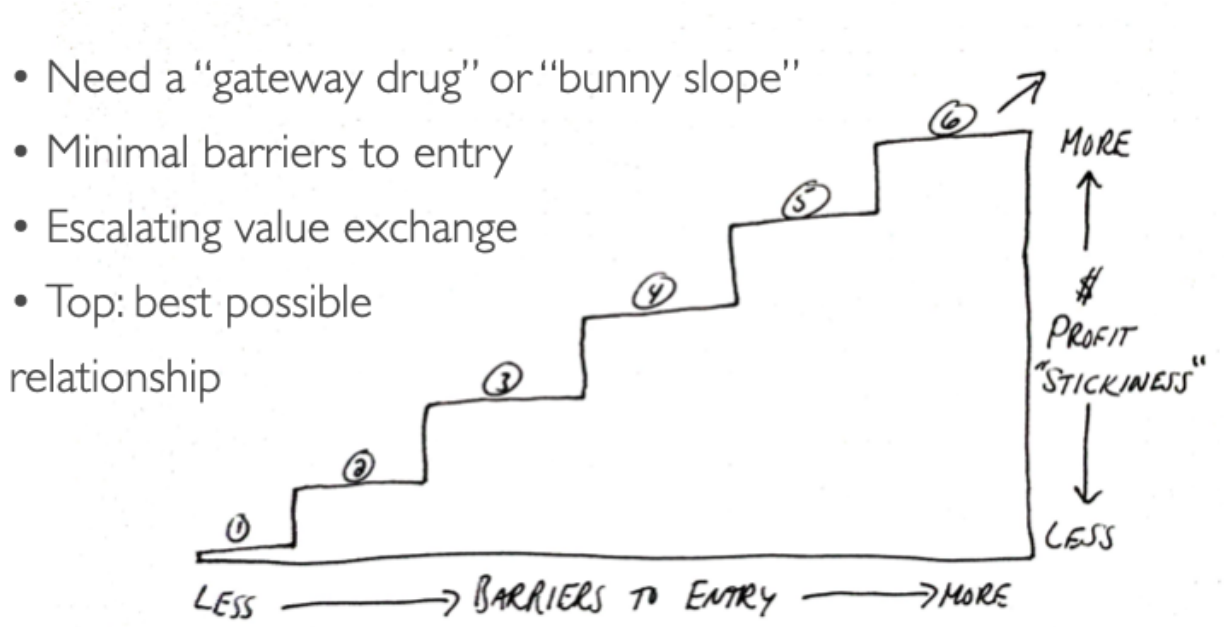
Once they get a small piece of experience, it's easier to sell or invite them to the next logical "tier"...perhaps it starts with a free group clinic, then moves to a series of private lessons. From there, the pro introduces the player to a couple members for an evening 9 holes, or a morning Saturday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