

Quest 2016 – Splus 6

Golf

Guidance Notes

Issue 4 – July 2016



Outcomes

- To develop and deliver a sustainable and integrated golf business model which makes the best use of the course and associated facilities
- To increase roundage through effective and innovative marketing of facilities and services
- To increase participation in golf particularly amongst under-represented groups and make a contribution to the health and wellbeing of the local community in the process
- To maximise efficiency and effectiveness of the operation

Suggested Guidance

PLAN
How do you plan to develop a sustainable, long term business model?
EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE <ul style="list-style-type: none">• There is a single coherent plan with clear outputs and outcomes• Demographics are analysed to understand local demand and supply• National and regional trend data is analysed• National and local insight is used and designed to attract and retain new players• There are links with the National Governing Body; use is made of the Golf Foundation’s guidance and there is information and support from the county golf/ sports partnerships• There is a robust marketing plan and process• There is evidence of long term planning• A grounds maintenance plan is in place for the course and is reviewed regularly• There is a coaching/ teaching plan to attract new players and improve the skills of existing players. There is a welcoming front of house offer.• Food and beverage service support the golf operation• Staff are involved in the development of the various plans• Customer feedback informs the planning process and objectives

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- Objectives and performance is shared with staff.

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE

- Is the business model bringing together the key functions of golf in a single coherent plan with clear outputs and outcomes, for example key functions of the golf professional, grounds maintenance, food and beverage and marketing. Are there clear objectives in the plan with clear actions, timescales and responsibilities
- Is there a strong focus on demographic analysis to understand local demand and supply factors
- Is there good analysis of national and regional trend data for the sport
- Is good use made of national and local insight on target markets/audiences and best practice/successful interventions, is this designed to attract and retain new players
- Are there links with the National Governing Body; is use made of the Golf Foundation's guidance on the promotion of golf for new customers and under-represented groups (particularly for children, young people and women). Is there also information and support from the county golf/sport partnerships
- Is the model underpinned by a robust marketing plan and process; does this bring together:
 - Investment in the place, programming of tee times/club time/events
 - Promotion to existing golfers, societies and to new markets (specifically young people, women and black and ethnic minority populations)
 - Price for off peak/peak periods; casual use and 5/7-day membership packages
- Is there evidence of long term planning around investment in the course, in grounds maintenance equipment and skills; is the use of indoor and outdoor space maximised where possible
- Is there a grounds maintenance plan and specification in place for the course and is this reviewed regularly. Does this incorporate or link to planned provision for building and improvement works for tees, greens, fairways, bunkers, pathways and course lay-out over a 3-5-year period; is it designed to improve the core product for the existing market, to speed up play and also to attract new players
- Is there evidence of a coaching/teaching plan operating at the course to attract new players, target audiences, under-represented groups and improve the skills of existing golfers? Are professional services providing a welcoming front of house offer, for example shop and retail including custom fitting
- Are food and beverage services designed to support the golf operation, for example around breakfasts, lunches, bar provision as well as society and club offers? Is the offer marketed to attract secondary functions/ events to help maximise income and throughput
- Are staff involved in the development of the various plans, for example business plan, marketing and promotions plan, grounds maintenance plan, coaching and teaching
- Are customer focus groups and feedback processes providing input into the planning process and course objectives
- Are business plan objectives and performance data shared with all the frontline staff

DO

How have you created new demand?

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

- Online booking system promotes off peak times and manages peak times
- Golf Club arrangements are set out

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- Society packages are promoted
- Management information and booking systems are well developed
- A junior development plan is in place with entry and exit routes
- There are initiatives to promote the game to children and young people
- A women's development plan is in place with entry and exit routes
- Golf is promoted for people with disabilities
- Footgolf is actively promoted
- A Driving Range and/ or practice facilities are provided
- Quality hire equipment is available for new customers to try golf and help promote sales
- Efforts are made to promote and develop female coaches/ professionals
- The website is used effectively to communicate; social and digital advertising is proactively used
- Membership packages are designed and promoted to maximise income/ yield per round
- A range of membership packages are offered and promoted, alongside pay and play opportunities
- The resident golf club proactively promotes its membership benefits

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE

- Is an online booking system used to promote off peak times and manage peak times efficiently
- Are Golf Club arrangements set out in a formal agreement which does not limit public access to peak periods particularly at weekends and promotes widest possible access to club facilities and services
- Are society packages actively promoted
- Is management information and booking systems well developed to provide detailed information on who is using the facilities
- Is a junior development plan in place; does it provide clear entry and exit routes for young players including development pathways into club and competition structures
- Are there initiatives that feature in the promotion of the game to children and young people, for example with local schools; family based programmes; teaching programmes and the design/layout of course facilities
- Is a women's development plan in place with clear entry and exit routes operating; does this involve individual and small group teaching programmes, course design and club development and competition pathways
- Is golf for people with disabilities actively promoted at the course; is consideration given to the needs of people with visual and mobility impairment including provision of buggies
- Is Footgolf actively promoted as one means of attracting new players to the game and/or new users to the facilities
- Is a Driving Range and/or practice facilities provided; is this linked to a teaching and development programme which promotes the game to under-represented groups
- Is quality hire equipment provided to encourage and assist new players to try out golf and/ or help to promote further retail sales
- Are efforts made to promote and develop female coaches/professionals to help promote the game; is the use of local role models promoted where possible

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- Is the website used effectively to communicate with existing and would be users; does it include activities, promotions, plans and standards as well as course lay-out and the latest weather information. Is there proactive use of social media and digital advertising to attract new business
- Are membership packages designed and promoted to maximise income/yield per round and provide a degree of “weather- proofing”; is pricing for pay and play flexible and does it target subsidy effectively to help promote peak and off peak usage in equal measure
- Are membership packages offered and promoted to young people, families, intermediates, women and seniors alongside pay and play opportunities
- Is the resident golf club proactive in promoting its membership benefits; does it run regular events, competitions and promotions to encourage new members to join and stay with the club as part of a formal Club Agreement

How have you invested in and developed the golf course- the core product?

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

- Consultants or other organisations are used to set standards and review grounds maintenance arrangements
- An asset management plan and machine replacement plan is in place
- Procedures and processes are based on current legislation and Health and Safety Executive’s guidance
- Specific training, instruction and PPE is available for staff carrying out tasks
- Improvement works to the course are planned, communicated and well organised
- Re-location onto temporary winter tees and greens is minimised
- First aid training and provision is reviewed and emergency scenarios practiced
- There are regular audits and surveys of trees and water features
- There are regular course walks with club and member involvement
- There is specific training and recognised qualifications for staff involved in the food and beverage operation
- An environmental action plan is in place to reduce utility consumption, promote recycling and reduce the carbon footprint
- Procedures and policies are part of an integrated quality management system
- PGA standards are built into the training plan for qualifications for professional golf staff
- Staff are trained in customer care and work to defined standards; these standards are communicated to customers
- Marshalling is well managed and organised; paid or volunteer staff are used
- A training plan is in place and there is evidence of teambuilding and team working

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE

- Is a golf consultant used; or is there access to an agronomist, or are other organisations used, (such as the Sports Turf Research Institute) to set standards for the course and review grounds maintenance arrangements and performance on a regular basis
- Is there an asset management plan and machine replacement plan; is it linked to the budgeting process; and does it assist in improving the customer experience
- Are procedures and processes based on current legislation; is the Health and Safety Executive’s guidance used, for example around high risk activities such as use of machinery, chemical and fuel storage, chemical spraying, sharpening cutting equipment, personal protective equipment (PPE) and control of substances hazardous to health (COSHH)

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- Is there specific training, instruction and PPE available for staff, for example for undertaking tasks such as spraying, the use of pesticides, driving tractors, the use of chain saws and brush cutters
- Are improvement works to the course and associated facilities planned, communicated and well-organised to both minimise disruption and to improve the quality of the product
- Is re-location onto temporary/winter tees and greens minimised
- Is first aid training and provision regularly reviewed and are emergency scenarios regularly practiced/evaluated
- Are there regular audits and surveys of all trees and water features on site with actions taken as appropriate
- Are there regular course walks with club and member involvement
- Is there specific training and minimum recognised qualifications for staff involved in the food and beverage operation around HACCP and food safety management systems
- Is there an environmental action plan in place that considers fertilizers, chemical weed killers, pest eradication, water runoff as part of a drive to reduce utility consumption, promote recycling and reduce its carbon footprint
- Are procedures and policies clearly developed, defined and documented as part of an integrated quality management system for staff
- Are PGA standards for qualifications for Golf Professional staff built into the training plan
- Are all staff trained in customer care and work to defined service standards, for example front of house, bar, café, retail and maintenance staff; are these standards communicated to the public and users of the course alongside etiquette and course rules
- Is marshalling well managed and organised; are paid or volunteer staff used as appropriate. Are staff used to provide customer care/welcome, regulate speed of play, control tee times at peak periods and provide financial checks and controls
- Is a training plan in place for staff; is there evidence of teambuilding and team working in pursuit of service objectives

MEASURE

How do you measure efficiency and effectiveness?

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

- Measures are in place for a range of areas and are improving
- Maintenance spend/ costs are meeting industry guidelines and standards
- Tuition and teaching is measured and reviewed
- Membership numbers and types are measured against targets set
- Use by juniors and women is increasing
- Club memberships are increasing and are more representative of the community
- Satisfaction levels are improving
- New members converted from the lesson programme is calculated
- Club feedback is assessed and monitored
- Accreditation has been achieved

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SUGGESTED GUIDANCE

- Are the areas measured and are they improving, for example:
 - Roundage
 - Yield per round
 - Time per round
 - Secondary turnover and gross profit
 - Retail and shop turnover and gross profit
 - Retention rates of membership
- Are maintenance spend/costs measured; and are they meeting industry guidelines and standards
- Is tuition and teaching measured and reviewed on a regular basis
- Are membership numbers and types (including juniors/intermediates/women/over 60s) measured against targets set and reviewed accordingly
- Is Junior usage and women's usage increasing
- Are club membership numbers increasing; and are they more representative of the local community
- Is satisfaction levels improving for:
 - The golf course
 - Value for money
 - Clubhouse service
- Is there a process for calculating how many new members/ users are converted from the lesson programme
- Is club feedback assessed and monitored
- Is accreditation achieved, for example Golfmark and ISO 14001/18001

REVIEW

How do you adopt best practice in the industry?

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

- Performance is compared with other golf courses or other similar facilities
- The financial and business plan is reviewed against targets and industry trends
- Performance is compared year to date and year on year
- Postcode and member mapping is used proactively
- Staff and stakeholders are encouraged to put forward new ideas
- Customer surveys results are reviewed and customers are informed about plans/ actions that are to be taken
- Regular internal performance reviews are undertaken and actions are taken
- External audits take place and actions taken where required
- Policies and procedures are regularly reviewed and updated
- Marketing actions are reviewed to assess cost/ benefit

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SUGGESTED GUIDANCE

- Does the facility compare its performance with other golf courses or with the performance of other similar facilities, for example via National Benchmarking Service (NBS), Sports Marketing Surveys, Association of Public Sector Excellence (APSE) and NGB/Sport England participation data
- Is the finance and business plan reviewed against targets and industry trends with due consideration of external factors including weather conditions
- Is performance compared with year to date and previous year and months performance, to identify trends; are actions in place to address these trends
- Is postcode and member mapping/profiling used proactively to help target marketing drives and campaigns
- Are staff and stakeholders encouraged to come forward with new ideas that could improve the customer experience
- Are customer satisfaction survey results reviewed; and are customers well informed about what plans and/or actions are in place to improve the facilities and service based on the results
- Are regular internal performance reviews undertaken; and are findings/improvements actioned
- Are external audits taking place; and is action taken accordingly linked to a clear improvement planning process
- Is there a process in place to regularly review and update relevant procedures and policies
- Are marketing actions carefully reviewed to assess cost and benefit

IMPACT

Has what you have done made a difference to your results?

EXAMPLES OF BEST PRACTICE

- Roundage and throughput is performing well against regional and national trends
- Membership retention is increasing
- Club membership base is growing and widening
- Financial performance is improving in all areas
- Occupancy is up particularly at off peak times
- Participation of various groups is increasing and representative of the community
- Marketing return on investment is improving
- Customer satisfaction survey results are improving
- Staff satisfaction levels are improving
- The course and operations are making a contribution to local priority needs and outcomes

SUGGESTED GUIDANCE

- Is roundage and throughput performing well against regional and national trends for the sport
- Is membership retention increasing against national golf participation trend data
- Is the club membership base growing and widening against national golf participation trends.
- Is the financial performance improving, for example through improved yield per round and increased turnover/profitability across teaching programmes; food and beverage sales and society take up
- Is occupancy up particularly at off peak times

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- Is the following increasing and are they more representative of the local community:
 - Participation by young people
 - Participation by women
 - Participation by black and ethnic minority populations
- Is marketing Return on Investment assessed and improving
- Are customer satisfaction survey results improving; are they reflecting the year on year improvements to the quality of the golf course particularly in relation to tees, bunkers; speed of play; welcome and quality of clubhouse service and facilities
- Are staff satisfaction rates improving
- Is the course and its operation making a contribution to local priority needs and outcomes, for example promoting health and well-being; encouraging independent living, promoting volunteering/skills development and greater use of outdoor facilities for people who may be inactive or sedentary