



Marketing Committee Annual Report 2015

The main goal of the Marketing Committee is to create, develop, implement and evaluate marketing initiatives to grow the game of golf from a provincial perspective. Below you will find an outline of the key marketing activities undertaken this past season.

FAM Tours:

GNL, in partnership with the Provincial Tourism Division, Western Destination Marketing Organization, Destination St. John's and the Atlantic Golf Organization, hosted three (3) FAM Tours during the season. These tours included freelance writer Brian Kendall, On The Tee Editors Alistair Orr and Rick Parnham and Calgary Sun Golf & Travel writer Wes Gilbertson. There have been two articles written from these tours and additional articles will be in publication during the spring and summer of 2016.

GNL Website:

The Marketing Committee secured the services of 1-2-1 Marketing to provide web development and hosting services for GNL's new website. This initiative included transferring information from the old site, redesigning the new site, and coordinating the systemic placing of information in various categories for ease of access. The new site was activated on April 15th.

Annual Golf Guide Publication:

In partnership with The British Group, GNL oversaw the development and production of the 2015 Golf Guide. Individual courses provided content, editorials, contact information and photographs. When completed, the guides were distributed to the provincial Visitor Information Centers, member courses, major hotels and various accommodations throughout the province. GNL has been informed that The British Group will no longer be involved in the commercial print business and the organization is presently in discussions with another local printing company to provide printing services and to publish the guide for 2016.

Provincial Travel Guide Golf Page:

GNL secured a full page ad in the 2015 Provincial Travel Guide. Content and pictures were supplied by GNL. Other than providing the content design, there was no cost charge to the organization for this page as the provincial government provided the page free of charge. The value of this in-kind donation is estimated at \$6,000.00.

Monthly e-Newsletter:

Utilizing the new brand standards, the annual e-Newsletter was created and distributed monthly from May through September. A Christmas edition is also scheduled for distribution later in November. The e-Newsletters are circulated to approximately 8,000 user names in the GNL database. GNL also entered into a partnership with The Grain Magazine to circulate a number of publications related to the professional major championships and special editions on travel and equipment. This publication continues to be a great marketing tool with an average open rate of approximately 21%.

GNL Facebook and Twitter Pages:

GNL continued to utilize Facebook and Twitter pages as an affordable way to post articles, photos and information related to provincial golf activities. With more and more people using social media versus websites and e-mails to receive and relay information, these initiatives are becoming more important every year. This year GNL placed more focus on personal stories and event information which resulted in an increase in viewership and likes.

Annual Golf Pass Program:

Member courses provided sixteen (16) golf passes to the organization to assist in implementing a number of initiatives. Passes were packaged for the Telegram Mega Auction, provided to each of the major corporate sponsors, and used as incentives to attract advertisers in the Golf Guide.

Telegram Mega Auction:

Once again, GNL participated in the 2015 Mega Auction hosted by The Telegram. Golf passes contributed by the courses were used to create regional golf packages that were auctioned off in the Mega Auction. This revenue was in turn used as credit for advertising to support the weekly Golf Report with some banner ads in The Telegram.

Weekly Golf Report:

This year, 14 weekly reports ran in the Telegram from June 11 through September 9. Content for the page featured local experts discussing rules, etiquette, golf tips rules and other helpful advice. A number of courses provided information and content for featured stories and news briefs. We would like to thank everyone who helped make this a successful weekly feature. The Telegram has again agreed to provide the page in 2016.

Sponsorship Program:

GNL had four major corporate sponsors for 2015: Provincial Airlines, The British Group, Super 8 St. John's and Collingwood Spirits & Wines. Each corporate sponsor provided various products and services that were used to assist and promote GNL activities and initiatives throughout the year.

Atlantic Golf Organization:

For the sixth year, GNL partnered with the other three provincial Atlantic golf marketing organizations (AGO) and Tourism Atlantic (ACOA) to promote and market the Atlantic golf industry. Initiatives include advertising during the Web.com event held at Ashburn Golf Club in Halifax, various FAM Tours and extensive television advertising during the RBC Canadian Open. The organization is presently reviewing a program for next year that will include GNL as the administrator for the project. GNL will receive a financial contribution for leading the project.

Women's Golf Initiative:

Through the financial support of Golf Canada Foundation Women's Foundation and the support of a number of member courses in the St. John's region, GNL implemented an initiative to attract women to the game through a "Women's Beginner Golf Program". GNL is looking at implementing the program on a smaller scale with one of the members in one of the central or western regions of the province.

SportFest:

GNL participated in SportFest, an interactive 2 day event created by Sport NL to bring awareness of individual sports to school aged kids and the general public. This year the event was hosted at the Pepsi Center in Corner Brook from June 19th through 20th. The GNL booth included a driving area, putting green and a display booth with general information on golf throughout the province. The event attracted well over 5,000 patrons.

Thank you Member Courses:

The Marketing Committee would like to take this opportunity to thank each participating course for its very generous donation of passes, use of facilities, human resources and numerous other resources that help support GNL initiatives. Without this support, these initiatives would not have been possible.

Thank You Committee Members:

I would like to thank the members of the Committee for their dedication and contribution over the past year. Patti Hamilton and Ted Stonehouse will not be returning and I would like to thank them for their valuable insight, hard work and dedication.

Respectfully Submitted By:

Paul Kelly
GNL, Director of Marketing
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