



Play Golf America

Play Golf America Programs Continue to Set Record Numbers in 2008

Play Golf America has firmly established itself as a highly respected initiative for impacting the growth and business of the game. PGA Professionals, golf facilities and most importantly, consumers, participated in Play Golf America programs at record levels during 2008, with nearly 7,000 facilities serving as host sites for Play Golf America programs. In 2008, there were 700,000 participants in group lessons at these facilities and 7.1 million total participants in organized play related to Play Golf America.

Throughout 2008, Play Golf America focused on building upon successful programs, such as PGA Free Fitting & Trade Up Month, PGA Free Lesson Month, Women's Golf Month and Family Golf Month. Included in Family Golf Month are special promotions targeted at junior golfers including Take Your Daughter to the Course Week and Bring Your Kids to the Golf Range. Once again, Play Golf America Days allowed consumers to take advantage of complimentary lessons and try new equipment from various manufacturers at demo days. Special events held throughout the year brought golf to venues where golf is typically not found, including major league baseball games, WNBA games, collegiate football and baseball games, NHL hockey games and NASCAR races, to name a few.

Play Golf America, an innovative growth-of-the-game initiative, was launched in 2004 as an industry-wide comprehensive marketing campaign designed to increase participation among new and existing golfers, and attract former golfers back to the game. Equipped with the PlayGolfAmerica.com Web site as its foundation, along with pre-existing player development programs, such as PGA Free Lesson Month and Link Up 2 Golf, Play Golf America promoted the simple message for Americans to "Get out and play golf. Play more golf. And play better golf!"

The PGA of America developed Play Golf America with the support of such Allied Associations including: the LPGA, National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA), PGA Tour, USGA and others GOLF 20/20 Conference participants. The program utilizes PlayGolfAmerica.com to serve as a link for consumers to access fun, affordable and informative programs in their area.

■ PUBLIC RELATIONS & ADVERTISING/PROMOTIONS

Play Golf America enjoyed another strong year in 2008, reaching consumers through public relations, advertising and promotions. These efforts played a significant role in the success of Play Golf America, with 7.3 billion impressions achieved since the program was launched in 2004. That equates to a total cumulative value of \$138 million.

Play Golf America once again used a national PSA television campaign with inventory provided by The PGA of America, PGA Tour, USGA, LPGA and GCSAA, enabling Play Golf America PSAs to be aired on the major networks and cable outlets. A variety of Play Golf America PSAs have been produced since 2004. Most recently, the Leo Burnett Advertising Agency developed a series of spots in 2007, using light-hearted situations, such as Fred Flintstone, a putting parrot and a 101-year-old woman, "Elsie," who made her first hole-in-one. These spots showed the broad appeal of golf for players of all ages and skill level. The common message behind these PSAs directed consumers to PlayGolfAmerica.com, as it gave examples of how to use the site to find local golf programs.

Alday Communications, Inc., of Franklin, Tenn., has led a proactive publicity effort to support Play Golf America



PGA Professional Jeff Roth instructs a youth participant at the Play Golf America Day at Oakland University's Golf and Learning Center in Rochester, Mich.

with almost 10,000 media placements in the past five years.

With the National Promotions extending throughout the calendar year, Alday Communications has been able to garner placements in highly respected media, including Golf Channel, *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Wall Street Journal*, *Golf Digest* and *Golf World*. In addition, PGA of America officials and PGA Professionals have promoted Play Golf America on more than 2,100 local, regional and national radio outlets, including XM, Sirius, ESPN, Sports Byline and Armed Forces network radio.

■ PlayGolfAmerica.com

PlayGolfAmerica.com has served as the primary resource since 2004, to link consumers with fun, affordable golf programs. The site also combines a variety of dynamic content promoting various programs, along with a wealth of golf information with the intent for PlayGolfAmerica.com to be the central resource for golfers of all abilities. In 2008, more than 4,700 facilities actively used PlayGolfAmerica.com to promote their player development programs, a 535 percent increase since Play Golf America was launched. In addition, unique visitor traffic increased each year, with calendar year 2008 resulting in a 165 percent increase over the first year.

■ NEW FOR 2009 - GET GOLF READY

As the 2009 featured program and next step for Play Golf America, Get Golf Ready is an industry-wide, nationally branded program designed to bring new golfers into the game in a fast, fun and gratifying way and to bring former golfers back to the sport.

Get Golf Ready was created to expand golf's participant base by providing education and instruction at golf facilities throughout the country. Participating facilities will administer Get Golf Ready by providing personnel and resources to promote and staff the program, ensure compliance with guidelines and provide periodic reports regarding the status and success of the program.

The objective is to deliver a consistent Get Golf Ready experience at an affordable price for adult consumers from coast-to-coast, where they will learn the game through a series of group lessons and transition to on-going playing opportunities. By participating in this experience, students will be well on their way to becoming bona fide golfers.

Get Golf Ready will be the featured program on PlayGolfAmerica.com. Consumers will be directed to search for a program in their area. Since being launched in 2004, a primary focus of Play Golf America has been on player development and to grow golf participation by introducing new people to the game through structured group instructional programs. Get Golf Ready will be delivered using casual formats, offering people new to the game the experience, skills, knowledge and confidence to enjoy golf.

■ PGA FREE FITTING & TRADE-UP MONTH (APRIL)

In the 3rd year for PGA Free Fitting & Trade-Up Month, 3,106 PGA and LPGA Professionals across the country provided free 15-minute expert equipment fitting sessions, as they assisted 33,750 consumers in finding the appropriate equipment to help them improve their game. The PGA of America teamed with *Golf Digest*, the PGA Trade-In Network and the PGA.com Value Guide to sponsor this equipment-themed consumer promotion at golf facilities around the country during April 2008. Based on reports from PGA Professionals, PGA Free Fitting & Trade-Up Month generated a combined median spend of \$3,870 per facility, including \$2,382 in hard good sales, an 8% increase over the previous year.

■ PGA FREE LESSON MONTH (MAY)

Celebrating its 11th Anniversary, PGA Free Lesson Month continued to be the mainstay in helping grow the game since the program was introduced in 1998. Throughout the month of May, PGA Professionals nationwide reach new golfers and help existing golfers improve their game with free, 10-minute golf lessons. From 2004 to 2008, an average of 6,467 PGA and LPGA Professionals participated and averaged 114,890 annual free lessons, a 91% increase over the first six years of the program, before Play Golf America was launched. A total of 574,450 free lessons were given from 2004 to 2008. In 2008, PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$2,560 from consumers, a 4% increase over the previous year.

From the beginning, *Golf Digest* has been an active partner with PGA Free Lesson Month, by listing thousands of participating PGA Professionals annually and

promoting the program on several May issue covers. Over the years, Golf World and Golf Channel have also been involved. Nike Golf has served as the official sweepstakes sponsor throughout the Play Golf America era, with a highlight coming in 2008 through a cause-marketing donation of \$15,000 to the Tiger Woods Foundation.

■ WOMEN'S GOLF MONTH (JUNE)

Due to the overwhelming success of Women's Golf Week over the first three years, organizers extended the promotion to the entire month of June in 2008. Women's Golf Month is aimed at increasing participation of women in golf while making learning and playing golf fun in a women-friendly environment. Host facilities offer complimentary golf instruction to women 14 years of age and older, and also offer a variety of other activities, including networking receptions, golf rules and etiquette seminars, club fitting and equipment demonstrations, golf apparel fashion shows, luncheons, playing experiences and contests. LPGA Hall of Fame golfer Nancy Lopez and PGA/LPGA Professional Suzy Whaley served as national spokes people for 2008.

From 2004 to 2008, Women's Golf Month has averaged 845 participating facilities, including more than 1,200 facilities each of the past two years. During that same four years, the promotion has averaged 26,400 annual participants and has totaled more than 105,600 throughout the all four years.

Women's Golf Month is an industry collaboration and is co-managed by the Executive Women's Golf Association (EWGA), Golf Course Superintendents Association of America (GCSAA), Ladies Professional Golf Association (LPGA), National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and The PGA of America. Other leading organizations in golf, including the PGA Tour, Club Managers Association of America (CMAA) and the United States Golf Association (USGA), provide ongoing support as well.

■ FAMILY GOLF MONTH (JULY)

While Play Golf America was originally slated for adult player development, a cultural shift that placed a high demand on family time, created an inherent evolution to expand the Play Golf America target audience to families. Throughout July, participating facilities offer family golf clinics and family golf play days for a nominal fee. Popular programs designed to motivate families to play golf have included: Kids Play Free, Family Play Days, family tees, plus other cross promotions. These programs provide a structured, yet casual opportunity for families to learn and play the game of golf together and promote golf as a regular family recreation activity for all participants. Golf enthusiasts and Grammy award winners Vince Gill and Amy Grant, along with their daughter, Corrina, served as national spokes people for Family Golf Month in 2008.

In 2008, there were 86,860 consumers participating in Family Golf Month at 1,090 facilities nationwide. PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$4,740 per facility.

■ TAKE YOUR DAUGHTER TO THE COURSE WEEK (JULY)

The National Golf Course Owners Association teamed with The PGA of America to promote “Take Your Daughter to the Course Week.” Last year marked the program’s ninth year and the third year that it was promoted under the Play Golf America marketing umbrella. Take Your Daughter to the Course Week was designed to introduce young girls to the game and encourage family interaction on the course. Since 2004, the Take Your Daughter to the Course Week promotion averaged 1,150 facilities (an 155% increase over the first four years of the program, before Play Golf America.) The 2009 Take Your Daughter to the Course Week is scheduled for July 6-12.

■ BRING YOUR KIDS TO THE GOLF RANGE (JULY)

Bring Your Kids to the Golf Range began as a *Golf Digest* Publications and Golf Range Association of America (GRAA) initiative, promoted under Play Golf America in July for Family Golf Month. Throughout July, participating facilities provide special offers on range ball purchases for families and may host family clinics, contests and other events. Families may participate at multiple facilities and make multiple trips to the same facility to take advantage of Bring Your Kids to the Golf Range offers while encouraging junior golfers to learn and play more golf.

■ PGA FAMILY COURSE PROGRAM

The PGA of America teamed with U.S. Kids Golf to launch The PGA Family Course Program in 2007. This nationwide initiative provides PGA Professionals a means to make golf more enjoyable for all members of a family, regardless of age and ability. U.S. Kids Golf produces PGA Family Tee Markers, which will enable any golf course to make the transition into a beginner-friendly “short course.” Participating facilities are recognized and promoted as “PGA Family Courses” including a complete list on PlayGolfAmerica.com. There are more than 300 golf courses nationwide using this program and recognized as PGA Family Courses.

■ JUNIOR GOLF

Play Golf America was originally launched a player development program geared for adults. As this industry leading initiative continues to evolve, programs have expanded into include Families and Junior Golf under the Play Golf America umbrella. Initial efforts have included hosting a link to JuniorLinks.com, a leading junior golf resource managed by the USGA on PlayGolfAmerica.com, as well access to the PGA First Swing for juniors and other programs. PGA professionals recently reported 73 percent of all Play Golf America facilities host junior golf camps, reaching some 409,000 juniors, a 4 percent increase from 2008.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA DAYS

The PGA of America expanded its free-to-consumer Play Golf America Days with 39 PGA Sections once again hosting events nationwide. A total of 91 Play Golf America Days were scheduled throughout 2008, an increase from 79 in 2007, 51 in 2006 and 12 in 2005. More than 28,000 consumers attended the 2008 events, taking advantage of free 10-minute lessons from PGA Professionals and had an opportunity to demo the latest golf equipment from participating equipment sponsors. More than 1,300 PGA Professionals—an average of 14 per event—participated by giving instruction.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA SPECIAL EVENTS AND COMMUNITY RELATIONS

PGA Professionals were the driving force behind several successful Play Golf America special events held in conjunction with The PGA of America’s high-profile events and other industry programs. Play Golf America special events were conducted in conjunction with the Senior PGA Championship, the PGA Championship, the Ryder Cup, Special Olympics, WNBA Basketball games, spring training and major league baseball games, an NHL hockey game, collegiate football and baseball games and several PGA Tour Events.

The highlight was providing free Play Golf America activities on-site of golf’s major championships for the first time ever. Promoted as “PGA Learning Centers presented by American Express,” PGA Professionals provided a variety free 10-minute lessons and golf instruction to spectators attending the Senior PGA Championship at Oak Hill Country Club, the PGA Championship at Oakland Hills Country Club and the Ryder Cup at Vahalla Golf Club. Collectively, over 21,000 fans were treated to these experiences.

■ EXECUTIVE WOMEN’S GOLF ASSOCIATION (EWGA)

Since its inception in 1991, more than 80,000 women have benefited from membership in the Executive Women’s Golf Association (EWGA). The EWGA is a non-profit organization that provides women the opportunity to learn, play and enjoy the game of golf for business and life. In 1991, the EWGA had 1,500 members. Today, the EWGA has grown into a network of more than 20,000 members in 124 chapters across the United States and Canada. The PGA of America has been a proud supporter of the EWGA over the years. In 2001, The PGA expanded its relationship and has since provided more than \$500,000 in grants to help support the growth of EWGA chapters and membership nationwide.

■ GOLF FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

One of the core principles of The PGA of America is that golf is truly a game for everyone, no matter what barriers may stand in their way. Play Golf America expanded to promote opportunities for individuals with disabilities to play the game. The Play Golf America Web site - PlayGolfAmerica.com - offers links to stories and resources available, including PGA Professionals who have experience in instructing individuals with disabilities. This included a special search as part of the PGA Free Lesson Month promotion, which resulted in 10% of participating PGA Professionals giving lessons to an average of 3 people with disabilities.

A tremendous success in 2007 was the launch of The PGA of America/Disabled Sports USA Military Golf Program. The program teaches or re-teaches the wounded soldiers the game of golf and how to use it as a rehabilitation tool. PGA Professionals provided weekly, two-hour instruction sessions over a seven-week period at sites near the nation's three primary military hospitals - Walter Reed Army Medical Center in Washington, D.C.; Brooke Army Medical Center in San Antonio, Texas; and Naval Medical Center in San Diego, Calif. The program concludes with a three-hole golf scramble with the soldiers and PGA Professionals.

■ PATRIOT GOLF DAY

Patriot Golf Day began in 2007, inspired by Major Dan Rooney, a PGA Professional and USGA member from Broken Arrow, Okla., and the founder of the Folds of Honor Foundation. The nationwide campaign, extended over the entire Labor Day Weekend in 2008, asks golfers at public facilities to donate a minimum of one dollar in addition to their greens fee, while golfers at private facilities asked to make contributions to benefit the Folds of Honor Foundation.

The second annual campaign resulted in donations of nearly \$2 million from thousands of facilities, to provide educational scholarships to the families of those who have been disabled or died in the line of duty. Patriot Golf Day is jointly supported by The PGA of America and the United States Golf Association. The 2009 Patriot Golf Day will be conducted Sept. 4-7, during the Labor Day weekend.

■ PGA PRESIDENT'S COUNCIL

The PGA President's Council on Growing the Game is a tremendous source of pride and strength for The PGA of America. Each year, The PGA identifies and recognizes PGA members who are committed to making an impact on the game by hosting and reporting on a variety of adult player development programs nationwide. In 2008, 5,842 PGA Professionals qualified for The PGA's President's Council on Growing the Game, which marked a 45 percent increase in PGA members named to the President's Council since the first full year of Play Golf America in 2005.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA AWARDS

Once again, The PGA of America paid tribute to those PGA Professionals and PGA Sections that demonstrated extraordinary efforts in conducting and/or supporting Play Golf America initiatives to grow participation in the game, by presenting both the President's Plaque and the Herb Graffis Award and at the Section and National levels. The 2008 President's Plaque was awarded to PGA Professional Bob Collins, PGA general manager, director of golf and part owner of Oak Tree Country Club in West Middlesex, Pa, for his dedication to growing the game for the past three decades. The Philadelphia PGA Section was selected as the recipient of the 2008 Herb Graffis Award, presented annually to a PGA Section for extraordinary or exemplary contributions in player development. The award is named for the late honorary PGA member and renowned golf journalist who was one of The PGA of America's most noted contributors.

■ PLAY GOLF AMERICA RESOURCE CENTER

To support golf professionals with the development, promotion and management of Play Golf America programs, The PGA of America maintains the Play Golf America Resource Center, an online administrative resources area that is accessible to the program's host sites through PlayGolfAmerica.com. The Play Golf America Resource Center features a number of marketing tools and templates that participating facilities can download on a regular basis. To increase the utilization of these resources, The PGA of America created a new Custom Event Registration Tool that provides a streamlined process for facilities to schedule events associated with Play Golf America national promotions and post them on the Web site.