



Play Golf America

Play Golf America Continues Growth in 2009

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 2009, with nearly 7,300 facilities serving as host sites for Play Golf America programs. In 2009, there were 650,000 participants in group lessons at these facilities and 6.7 million total participants in organized play related to Play Golf America.

Throughout 2009, Play Golf America focused on building upon successful programs, such as PGA Free Fitting & Trade Up Month, PGA Free Lesson Month, American Express 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 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, 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 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.



PGA Professional David Podas of Minneapolis Golf Club instructs double amputee Nick Nelson at the Play Golf America Day at The Par-30 Course near Hazeltine National Golf Club in Chaska, Minn., site of the 91st PGA Championship.

■ PUBLIC RELATIONS & ADVERTISING/PROMOTIONS

Play Golf America enjoyed another strong year in 2009, reaching consumers through public relations, advertising and promotions. These efforts played a significant role in the success of Play Golf America, with 1.17 billion impressions in 2009 equating to total cumulative value of \$45.7 million.

Play Golf America once again used a national PSA television campaign with inventory provided by The PGA of America, USGA and LPGA, enabling Play Golf America PSAs to be aired on the major networks and cable outlets. Most recently, the new "Pack Your Bags" PSA was launched in May 2009, using a family getaway theme to show how fun and affordable the game can be. The common message behind this PSA is to drive consumers to PlayGolfAmerica.com to find PGA or LPGA instructors and programs in their local area.

Another highlight was a one-hour reality-based TV Show produced by The PGA, dedicated to Get Golf Ready which aired twice on CBS (May and October).

Alday Communications, Inc. in Franklin, Tenn., has led a proactive publicity effort to support Play Golf America with more than 15,000 media placements since 2004.

With the National Promotions extending throughout the calendar year, Alday Communications was able to garner placements in highly respected media outlets, including *USA Today*, *The New York Times*, *Sports Illustrated*, *Wall Street Journal*, *NBC Nightly News*, *Golf Channel*, *Golf Digest* and *Golf World*. In addition, PGA of America officials and PGA Professionals have promoted Play Golf America on more than 6,400 local, regional and national radio shows, including Sirius/XM, ESPN, Sports Byline and Armed Forces Radio Networks.

■ PlayGolfAmerica.com

The PlayGolfAmerica.com Web site 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 2009, a record of nearly 5,300 facilities actively used PlayGolfAmerica.com to promote more than 15,000 player development programs. In addition, consumer traffic to PlayGolfAmerica.com increased each year, with calendar year 2009 resulting in a 21 percent increase over 2008.

■ 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 administered 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 students learn the game through a series of group lessons and transition to on-going playing opportunities. By participating in this experience, students are well on their way to becoming bona fide golfers.

Industry support exceeded expectations in its inaugural year as the 1,100 facilities certified to host Get Golf Ready surpassed projections by 60 percent. Host facilities experienced an average of 27.8 students through September, with 76 percent already continuing to play.

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

In the fourth year for PGA Free Fitting & Trade-Up Month, 3,013 PGA and LPGA Professionals across the country provided free 15-minute expert equipment fitting sessions, as they assisted 30,900 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 2009. Based on reports from PGA Professionals, PGA Free Fitting & Trade-Up Month generated a combined median spend of \$3,210 per facility.

■ PGA FREE LESSON MONTH (MAY)

Celebrating its 12th 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, a total of 5,241 PGA and LPGA Professionals nationwide reached new golfers and help existing golfers improve their game with free, 10-minute golf lessons. In 2009, PGA and LPGA Professionals gave more than 80,075 annual free lessons and reported generating a combined median spend of \$1,670 from consumers.

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.

■ AMERICAN EXPRESS WOMEN'S GOLF MONTH (JUNE)

American Express Women's Golf Month is aimed at increasing participation among 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, PGA/LPGA Professional Suzy Whaley and fitness expert Donna Richardson Joyner served as national spokeswomen for 2009.

In 2009, American Express Women's Golf Month had 1,185 participating facilities with 29,700 participants. PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$1,480 per facility.

American Express 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), also provide ongoing support.

■ 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. In 2009, there were 98,550 consumers participating in Family Golf Month at 1,197 facilities nationwide. PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$4,310 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. The 2010 Take Your Daughter to the Course Week is scheduled for July 5-11.

■ AMERICAN EXPRESS/PGA FRIEND OF A CARDMEMBER

As an affordable approach to PGA Professional instruction, Cardmembers were invited to take a lesson from one of 1,700 participating PGA Professionals, pay with an American Express Card and bring a friend at no additional cost. Approximately 42 percent of these professionals reported giving an average of 9.6 lessons. PGA Professionals reported generating a combined median spend of \$896 per facility.

■ 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 with 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 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.

It is reported that more than 500 facilities offer the PGA Family Course or similar programs. In 2009, they averaged 492 rounds on these tees at the affordable mean rate of \$13 resulting in a \$6,400 impact to the facility.

■ JUNIOR GOLF

The PGA made preliminary strides towards a new, expanded junior golf strategic plan. An initial step was building out junior golf content on PlayGolfAmerica.com and adding junior activities as a program type. Plans for the new USGA-PGA Junior Alliance were announced followed by initial efforts towards the Course Access and After School Programs. While both programs are set to launch in the next fiscal year, a nationwide search for junior golf rates was added to PlayGolfAmerica.com. The After Schools program is projected to be piloted in eight Sections – Dixie, Illinois, Indiana, New Jersey, Northern Texas, South Florida, Southern California and Wisconsin.

PlayGolfAmerica.com also added a search for a Junior Rate, with more than 1,300 courses sharing this information for parents and young golfers to find.

■ 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 60 Play Golf America Days were scheduled throughout 2009. More than 21,300 consumers attended the 2009 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 867 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. More than 80 Play Golf America special events were conducted in conjunction with the Senior PGA Championship, the PGA Championship, WNBA Basketball games, spring training and major league baseball games, an NHL hockey game, collegiate football and baseball games, NASCAR and several PGA Tour and LPGA Tour events. These events connected with more than 38,000 golf enthusiasts.

The highlight was providing free Play Golf America activities on-site at golf’s major championships. 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 Canterbury Golf Club and the PGA Championship at Hazeltine National Golf Club, where nearly 42,000 fans were treated to these experiences.

■ EXECUTIVE WOMEN’S GOLF ASSOCIATION (EWGA)

Since its inception in 1991, more than 100,000 women have benefited from membership in the EWGA (Executive Women’s Golf Association). The EWGA is a tax-exempt organization that provides women the opportunity to learn, play and enjoy golf for business and for fun. In 1991, the EWGA had 1,500 members. Today, the EWGA has grown into a community of 20,000 members in more than 120 local chapters across the United States and in 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.

■ DIVERSITY

An important strategic direction for Play Golf America is promoting the game to everyone across the country, utilizing proactive initiatives to foster diversification. In 2009, minorities accounted for a significant portion of participation in various programs, including Get Golf Ready (25 percent), Consumer Events (31 percent) and PlayGolfAmerica.com on-line registrations (26 percent). Cooperative programs with organizations such as the National Society of Black Engineers, Pan American Golf Association and North Carolina A&T University have helped account for these figures, as well as hosting Play Golf America events in targeted markets.

■ GOLF FOR INDIVIDUALS WITH DISABILITIES

Promoting golf to individuals with disabilities continues to be a focus for Play Golf America. The Web site hosts a search of more than 1,000 PGA Professionals experienced in instructing individuals with disabilities. As part of PGA Free Lesson Month, these Professionals were cross promoted and reported giving nearly 800 ten-minute lessons to individuals with disabilities. The PGA also expanded its relationship with Dennis Walters to bring his inspiration show to 10 special events where special interest groups were attending.

■ 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 founder of the Folds of Honor Foundation.

The nationwide campaign, held over the entire Labor Day Weekend, asks golfers at public facilities to donate a minimum of \$1 dollar in addition to their greens fee, while golfers at private facilities asked to make contributions to benefit the Folds of Honor Foundation.

The third annual campaign resulted in donations of more than \$2.1 million from 4,500 facilities, to provide post-secondary educational scholarships for children and spouses of military service men and women killed or disabled while serving our Great Nation. Patriot Golf Day is jointly supported by The PGA of America and the United States Golf Association. The 2010 Patriot Golf Day will take place during the Labor Day weekend, Sept. 3-6, 2010.

■ 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 2009, a total of 5,842 PGA Professionals qualified for The PGA's President's Council on Growing the Game.

■ 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 at the Section and National levels.

The 2009 President's Plaque was awarded to PGA Professional Kyle Heyen, PGA head professional at Hiwan Golf Club in Evergreen, Colo., for his dedication to growing the game for nearly three decades.

The Midwest PGA Section was selected as the recipient of the 2009 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.