

# The Golfweek Amateur Tour

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Washington DC/Metro Area

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## **Introduction**

The Golfweek Amateur Tour is entering its fourteenth season of running stroke-play tournaments for golfers of all ages and levels of play. The Tour “promotes the sport of golf by providing an atmosphere of friendly, fair, and well managed competition for amateur golfers in the pursuit of excellence” (Golfweek Amateur Tour). The Washington DC/Metro Area tour is in its second year of operation and is looking forward to great growth and expansion. At the end of the 2010 season, the DC/Metro Tour had over 30 official members, hosted 12 tournaments, and was represented in the National Amateur Golf Tournament in Hilton Head, South Carolina by a few of the areas’ players. The goal for our marketing plan was to increase membership by 120 participants in the DC/Metro tour and to prove return on investment for the Tour and for our potential sponsors.

## **SWOT Analysis**

### *Strengths*

- Fairly inexpensive tournament prices for an amateur golf tour
- New tour, new courses to play at
- New challenges to learn from
- More opportunities to improve their game
- Support from other area tours

### *Weaknesses*

- Lack of brand equity in the area
- Tour is only in its second year
- Lack of systems - operational, marketing, sales
- Target market decreased due to past and current economic state

### *Opportunities*

- Entering 2nd year and looking for expansion in the DC/Metro area
- Establish a strong brand in the area
- Chance to expand membership
- Chance for high return on investment for ourselves and our sponsors

### *Threats*

- Other established tours and other tournaments in the area
- Economic state; people unwilling to spend money
- Poor weather conditions

### **Competition Analysis**

The competition that we faced in this marketing strategy was other groups in both of the Sport Marketing classes; all of the groups were assigned the same project, and therefore had the same goals and objectives as us. We strove to select three companies to sponsor a regional golf tour, which was the DC/Metro area of the Golfweek Amateur Tour. These sponsors included one national company and two local businesses. With that being said, our competition for this project was the other groups in the class competing to have their marketing plan and sponsors chosen by the Golfweek Amateur Tour. Other competitors that have an impact on our marketing group and the DC/Metro tour are other amateur tours in the area. These standing tours could take business, current members and potential members away from competing in the Golfweek Amateur Tour in the DC/Metro area. Examples of other amateur tours in the Washington, DC, Virginia, and Maryland areas are the Richmond Amateur Tour, the Baltimore Amateur Tour, and the Washington DC Amateur Tour.

## **External Threat Analysis**

In order for planning and organization purposes, one must document possible threats that could be incurred which would have an effect on the business of the Golfweek Amateur Tour. After finding those threats one must also back them up by having pre-planned recovery steps for what could happen. For example, the largest threat for a golf tour would be weather. Depending on the weather, an event may be cancelled. A recovery step for this particular threat would be to have a plan for a rain date of when the rescheduled tournament should be. Other external threats include competing tournaments and tours in the area and other recreational, business, or family opportunities and commitments that the members may have when tournaments are happening. Location of a tournament and traffic and the time period in which a tournament is hosted could also be external threat. While the Tour is only able to directly control their events, outside forces and events should be taken into consideration because they could adversely affect the tournaments. With that being said, the tour must realize those external threats and create backup plans accordingly.

## **Internal Analysis**

As a group, we worked very efficiently and all of the group members put in an equal amount of hard work to help make this project run smoothly and successfully. This entails the development process as well as the execution process. All of the group members did their share of research of the Tour and looking into potential sponsors for the DC/Metro area tour. We worked together to find ways to measure the results of advertising and marketing for the tour. As a group, we all agreed on our promotional item and put up our own money to buy the items needed. The group worked well together and did what we had to do to implement our ideas for the benefit of the Golfweek Amateur Tour.

## **Marketing Mix**

### *Product:*

- Golfweek Amateur Golf Tour

### *Place:*

- 12 different locations [See Appendix A]

### *Promotion:*

- The promotional item was a pack of items commonly used on the golf course. Each pack included in each pack is four tees, a ball marker, and a divot repair tool.

### *Price:*

- The cost of becoming a member of the Golfweek Amateur Tour is currently priced at \$85 from December through the end of January. Starting February 1<sup>st</sup>, the price of membership increases to \$90 per person. The price for the tour card for the Washington DC Metro area paying by credit card is \$88.00; however, this includes processing fees from the company the payment goes through. The tournament prices for each regular season event for the DC/Metro tour vary from \$75.00 to \$99.00 – the Championship tournament is priced at \$180.00.

### *Public Relation:*

- We created fliers and brochures to post at the golf courses that will be hosting tournaments throughout the season. Also, we will hang the fliers and place brochures at the locations of our local sponsors businesses [See Appendix B.1 & B.2]. We also plan on implementing a radio spot to advertise the Tour. DC/Metro tour business cards would be an easy way for a person to let a friend or family member know about the tour and the new member can contact a Tour official with any questions they have. We would also

advertise in local publications, such as the Washington Post, and through social media by talking about the tour on Facebook, LinkedIn, and Twitter.

### **Target Market**

Our target market for the Golfweek Amateur Golf Tour is made up of a wide range of participants. The age range that we have selected to make many decisions based from are 15 to 65 years old. Also our target market is people that are above average income level. According to the Washington Post (2006), the Washington Metropolitan Area is the most educated and affluent metropolitan area in the United States. The estimated median household income for the District of Columbia is \$58,553 (Census, 2008). The target market that is the most suitable fit for the tour is most likely going to be the upper middle class and above. We viewed various demographic figures of the DC area and there are many factors that could have an impact on the tour. [See Appendix C]

### **Sponsors**

We strategically selected three sponsors for the Golfweek Amateur Golf Tour. The national sponsor we chose was Softspikes, the original plastic cleats company. The two local sponsors we chose were Sheehy Lexus of Annapolis and Golf Etc. of Silver Spring, Maryland.

#### *Softspikes – National Sponsor*

Softspikes was created in 1993 after a metal spike ban campaign. Their goal was to create a spike that was not made from metal. “The eventual design, a plastic, fan-like spiral design, became the industry's first and only patented non-metal cleat” (Softspikes, 2009).

Why we chose this sponsor? We selected Softspikes as our national sponsor because they revolutionized the non-metal cleat inserts. When you are on the golf course, you will most likely be wearing golf shoes. When you wear your golf shoes as much as tour players will likely wear

their shoes, the spikes will eventually wear down. Our marketing group figured that since Softspikes has many different types of spikes that fit various types of golf shoes, this sponsor would be an excellent fit for our tour and with our members and potential members.

*Sheehy Lexus of Annapolis – Local Sponsor*

The Lexus dealer that we would be using as one of the local sponsors is located in Annapolis, MD. Sheehy Lexus has received many outstanding awards in the past years, which makes them a reputable company for us to have our name attached to. This dealer has received the Baltimore-Annapolis Area's only Elite of Lexus Dealer for the past seven years, and was the only Lexus Benchmark Service dealer in the area too. Along with this long lasting award, they have also been named the top Lexus dealer in the country in sales satisfaction (Sheehy, 2010).

Why we chose this sponsor? When you think of cars that can be associated with golf you think of Buick, Lexus, Cadillac, BMW, and Mercedes. We chose Lexus because we are representing an amateur golf tour; participants will likely have some extra spending money, but not enough to be purchasing Porsches and Ferrari's. Because of this reason, we view Sheehy Lexus as an affordable, family friendly, yet extravagant car which likely fits the wants and needs of our consumers.

*Golf Etc. – Local Sponsor*

Golf Etc. located in Silver Spring, Maryland works towards "providing you with an uncommon specialty golf retail experience that includes a unique blend of performance, style, and value" (Golf Etc., 2007).

Why we chose this sponsor? Golf Etc. as our other local sponsor, we feel as if it can really be beneficial for the tour as well as the company itself. We believe that Golf Etc. has the opportunity to drive up sales on site at each tournament and after the tournament on their website

and at their store. Golf Etc. sells all kinds of golf equipment and apparel. They also have services to improve your game. The company provides state of the art analysis technology which includes Doppler radar and video golf swing analysis technologies. During the analysis of the golfers swing they can identify swing speed, ball speed, and ball spin characteristics. Then the golf professionals give recommendations of which shafts and club heads and golf balls to use by looking at the data collected. Since this is an amateur tour and many of the players are looking for ways to improve their game, this sponsorship seemed to be a good fit.

**Sponsorship Propositions:**

*Softspikes*

Our national sponsor, Softspikes, will receive four slots for participants in each tournament. Along with these slots, they will be able to have a Sampling/Sales tent at each tournament during the season. They will be the key sponsor of four holes on each course. Softspikes has the opportunity to get their new products, as well as current products, visible in a new area. Seven DC/Metro Tour members will be selected to have the opportunity to test drive any type of spikes they are interested in for a whole round of golf and will have the opportunity to purchase a box of the spikes they tested out at the end of the round for a discounted price. Softspikes aligns fantastically with our demographics for the tour – all golfers need spikes. Softspikes are known for their comfort and great traction on courses; there is no question why they are deemed to be the number one choice amongst golfers worldwide.

*Sheehy Lexus of Annapolis*

Our first local sponsor will be given the opportunity to have a car at the entrance to the golf course. Also we would hold a hole in one competition, in which the winner would have a chance to win a Lexus provided by the dealership. There will be a Lexus tent/ giveaway stand,

where they will give away coupons for discounted oil changes or tune ups, as well as key chains and pens. Also at the tent, there will be car salesmen to answer any questions participants may have about the cars or Lexus in general. The car up for grabs from the hole in one competition would be placed underneath this tent where participants can come in and view the car they have a chance at winning. Sheehy Lexus of Annapolis will also sponsor four holes on each course. The demographics of our participants indicate that they are of the upper-middle class or higher, which means they have more expendable income than that of the regular household. Typically, persons in this demographic enjoy having more of a luxury car, but one that is affordable. This leads us to conclude that a sponsorship with a Lexus dealership is a great choice for both the tour and for the dealership themselves.

#### *Golf Etc.*

Golf Etc will host a longest drive competition and the winner will get a \$100 gift card to the store. Golf Etc will be given the opportunity to have signage throughout the course, as well as sponsoring four holes. In addition, they will have a tent, in which they will have merchandise for sale and samples of some of their new products. They will also have giveaways available such as visors and a sleeve of three balls. For the members who heard the radio advertisement with the promotional code, the ball sleeves will be provided from the store. Golf Etc. fits our demographic because it is a golf supplies store; all golfers need supplies and equipment. The store offers many name brands, and by being members of the tour, having the chance to receive discounts or samples will increase return on investment for the store and the tour memberships.

#### **Promotional Items**

We thought of numerous ideas about suitable promotional items for the tour that were affordable to our group members. We came up with the idea of a combo pack with four golf tee,

a ball marker, and a divot repair tool. This, we felt, was best because every golfer uses those items when playing the sport and we were able to personalize the ball marker with the Golfweek Amateur Tour logo as well as the golf tees having text on them reading; Golfweek Amateur Tour. The total cost of the promotional items was \$24.80, shipping included with each unit costing \$3.95. This was very economical because the Golf Tee Store allowed us to order any number of combo packs that we needed. The website also allows the customer to buy in bulk as well. The price per unit is cheaper if you buy in bulk and if you buy over 200 the price per combo pack is \$1.95 so the tour could buy however many they feel is suitable for the entire season to hand out to each golfer in each tournament. This item is fairly cheap and can be used by every member golfer in the tournaments. [See Appendix D]

### **Financial Cost**

The initial cost of joining the Golfweek Amateur Tour varies from \$85.00 to \$90.00 per player. This fee is for your tour card and the tournaments that the tour runs cost anywhere from \$65.00 to \$140.00 per event depending on the market and whether it is a championship tournament or a regular point tournament. The price for the tour card for the Washington DC Metro area is \$88.00. The tournament prices for each event for this tour vary from \$75.00 to \$99.00, excluding the championship. There are 12 regular season tournaments listed for the Golfweek Amateur Tour for DC Metro area, and each prices for the different events are listed on the website at [www.amateurgolftour.net](http://www.amateurgolftour.net). If a member of the tour would play in every tournament the total cost of this would be \$1,159.00 including the membership fee. This number does not include the price of the DC/Metro Championship tournament, of which the entry fee is listed at \$180.00 for a double points tournament.

## **Implementation and Control**

We would push promotion of the DC/Metro Tour by advertising the events at each of the host golf courses, local driving ranges and golf stores, along with at the location of our potential sponsors.

We created a flier and brochure advertising the local tour and provided the contact information and website - we decided to catch attention by using an attractive golf course background. The golf course pictured as the backdrop for the flier is Squire Creek Country Club and Golf Course in Choudrant, Louisiana; home golf course to Louisiana Tech. These fliers and brochures would be hung in the various golf courses, likely in the Pro Shop, with the hopes of attracting golfers from each particular course who many not know about the tour or simply have not chosen to take part in the tour. The fliers will have pull strips on them with a special offer, which is \$5 off the tour membership card. This is an easy way to measure the effectiveness of advertising with fliers, and the return on investment of that particular marketing strategy. Also, we would like to hand out a few business cards for the DC/Metro Tour to each member at registration in the hopes that they would pass the cards on to their friends. On the cards would be the number and email address of a Tour representative so the prospective could ask questions; when they contact the Tour, the return on investment could be tracked.

Our local sponsors were Sheehy Lexus of Annapolis and Golf Etc. of Silver Spring, Maryland. As a sponsor of the tour, we would ask Sheehy Lexus to display the advertisements for the DC/Metro tour in their dealership. As would go for Golf Etc. of Silver Spring; however, since this is a golf store, the saturation for advertisements is much higher. Due to the saturation of golf advertisements at the store, it would be in our best interest to place our fliers at the cash registers and the entrances and exits so they are fresh in consumers' minds when they leave.

With strategic location of our fliers, we would hope for and expect high return on investment. Also, our group thought it would be beneficial to create a radio spot to advertise for the tour in the DC/Metro area; this spot could be placed on rock stations, as opposed to hip hop or rap stations, to have a good aim at our target market. The stations we plan to advertise on are WWDC 101.1 FM rock and WASH 97.1 FM soft rock. These stations we believe will target the most people in our marketing segment. The radio advertisement would also include a special offer, which is a sleeve of 3 golf balls from Golf Etc. The participants of the tournaments would have to say the code word: "MULLIGAN" to receive their sleeve so we can measure the effectiveness of the radio advertisement.

With the hopes of expanding the membership numbers, it is most beneficial to create a working database to input members and their information. The database we created is a simple to operate Excel spreadsheet - this could easily be converted to an Access database if the users are comfortable with advanced computer software [See Appendix E].

## **Results**

We will be able to track the return on investment with each of our sponsorship deals and all of our advertisements. For the advertisements, we will be asking as the participants at registration how they found out about the tour. But more specifically, with the radio advertisement, at the end of the radio spot we will say the code word "Mulligan" and at registration if the participant were to say the code word, they receive a free sleeve of three golf balls from Golf Etc. Another type of advertisement was the paper ads such as the flier and brochure. If you bring the brochure to the registration table you will be get a \$5 discount on membership, this was the same idea with the flier but there are pull strips on the bottom. The participant would just pull one of the strips off and bring it to registration to receive \$5 off of

their membership fee. Also the business cards will be available to give out to current members to recruit new members with, that way the new member has contact information of a Tour official that way new members can have any questions they have answered.

### **Conclusion**

As we analyzed many factors in overall marketing of the Golfweek Amateur Tour and in selecting the sponsors, we feel that we chose the best ways to get to the specific demographic we are looking to target. By being able to measure the effectiveness of our marketing and advertising, we can clearly tell which methods work the best, and if we can continue to change with people and keep up with technology and society the Tour will be one step ahead of the game. We feel that the target market meshes well with our chosen sponsors and promotional item. By reviewing demographics of the area, and coming up with sponsors and advertisements, we can have confidence in striking an interest to the potential members of the Golfweek Amateur Golf Tour in the Washington, DC Metropolitan area.

## Appendices

### *Appendix A: Schedule*

## 2011 DC/Metro Schedule

4/2/2011 @ 9:00 AM	<b>2011 DC Metro Season Opener</b> @ Blue Ridge Shadows Golf Club Front Royal, VA
4/16/2011 @ 9:00 AM	Northwest Golf Course Silver Spring, MD
5/1/2011 @ 12:30 PM	Stonewall Golf Club Gainesville, VA
5/14/2011 @ 10:00 AM	Hunters Oak Golf Club Queenstown, MD
5/21/2011 @ 9:00 AM	Virginia Oaks Golf Club Gainesville, VA
6/11/2011 @ 1:00 PM	Maryland National Golf Club Middletown, MD
6/25/2011 @ 11:00 AM	PB Dye Golf Club Ijamsville, MD
7/9/2011 @ 9:00 AM	The Links at Challedon Mt. Airy, MD
7/23/2011 @ 9:00 AM	Rock Harbor Golf Course Winchester, VA
8/6/2011 @ 11:00 AM	Old Hickory Golf Club Woodbridge, VA
8/20/2011 @ 10:00 AM	Musket Ridge Golf Club Myersville, MD
9/10/2011 @ 12:00 PM	Whiskey Creek Golf Club Ijamsville, MD
9/17/2011 @ 11:00 AM	<b>2011 DC Metro Tour Championship</b> @ Blue Ridge Shadows Golf Club Front Royal, VA
9/18/2011 @ 9:00 AM	<b>2011 DC Metro Tour Championship</b> @ Blue Ridge Shadows Golf Club Front Royal, VA

Appendix B.1: Advertisement Flier

**The Golfweek Amateur Tour  
DC/Metro Area**

Contact us by :  
Email/Telephone/Mail

Email:  
[dc@amateurgolftour.net](mailto:dc@amateurgolftour.net)

Telephone:  
717-676-1749

Send your inquiries to:  
The Golfweek Amateur  
Tour  
Attention: Tim  
Newman  
350 West Market Street  
Suite B  
York, Pennsylvania  
17401

[http://www.amateurgolftour.net/dc\\_tour\\_pages](http://www.amateurgolftour.net/dc_tour_pages)

\$5 off membership  
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Appendix B.2: Brochure

6/25/2011- PB Dye Golf Club –  
Ijamsville, MD

7/9/2011- The Links at Challedon – ML  
Airy, MD

7/23/2011- Rock Harbor Golf Course –  
Winchester, VA

8/6/2011- Old Hickory Golf Club –  
Woodbridge, VA

8/20/2011- Musket Ridge Golf Club  
Myersville, MD

9/10/2011- Whiskey Creek Golf Club  
Ijamsville, MD

9/17/2011- 2011 DC Metro Tour  
Championship @ Blue Ridge  
Shadows Golf Club – Front Royal,  
VA

9/18/2011- 2011 DC Metro Tour  
Championship @ Blue Ridge  
Shadows Golf Club – Front Royal,  
VA

2011 DC Metro Tour Schedule:

4/2/2011- DC Metro Season Opener @ Blue  
Ridge Shadows Golf Course – Front Royal, VA

4/16/2011- Northwest Golf Course - Silver  
Spring, MD

5/1/2011- Stonewall Golf Club - Gainesville, VA

5/14/2011- Hunters Oak Golf Club –  
Queenstown, MD

5/21/2011- Virginia Oaks Golf Club –  
Gainesville, VA

6/11/2011- Maryland National Golf Club  
Middletown, MD

**GOLF WEEK  
AMATEUR TOUR**

DC Metro Area

### Appendix C: Demographics Chart

People QuickFacts	District of Columbia
Population, 2009 estimate	599,657
Population, percent change, April 1, 2000 to July 1, 2009	4.8%
Population estimates base (April 1) 2000	572,055
Persons under 5 years old, percent, 2009	6.2%
Persons under 18 years old, percent, 2009	19.0%
Persons 65 years old and over, percent, 2009	11.7%
Female persons, percent, 2009	52.8%
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White persons, percent, 2009 (a)	40.6%
Black persons, percent, 2009 (a)	54.0%
American Indian and Alaska Native persons, percent, 2009 (a)	0.4%
Asian persons, percent, 2009 (a)	3.2%
Native Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander, percent, 2009 (a)	0.1%
Persons reporting two or more races, percent, 2009	1.6%
Persons of Hispanic or Latino origin, percent, 2009 (b)	8.8%
White persons not Hispanic, percent, 2009	33.5%
-----	
Living in same house in 1995 and 2000, pct 5 yrs old & over	49.9%
Foreign born persons, percent, 2000	12.9%
Language other than English spoken at home, pct age 5+, 2000	16.8%
High school graduates, percent of persons age 25+, 2000	77.8%
Bachelor's degree or higher, pct of persons age 25+, 2000	39.1%
Persons with a disability, age 5+, 2000	115,980
Mean travel time to work (minutes), workers age 16+, 2000	29.7

### Appendix D: Promotional Item





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