

MEMBERSHIP

MEMBERSHIP
JOURNEY



Membership
give it a shot





01

FACT FINDING

What is available to me?

Having a look around the local options to find the most attractive offers

Whether it is a membership, green fees or coaching, golfers will likely look to get an initial understanding of what the golf club offers. For those looking for membership, they will want to know the price, what benefits there are of being a member and who to contact to make an enquiry. To do this, they may seek out the opinions of members via friends or contacts (more on this later) or go down the route an online search. They may well be researching all the local clubs and their membership offers to create a comparison that will enhance their ability to decide which they are most interested in trying out.

- Clubs have the ability to inform prospective members and sell themselves via their online presence, including the club website, social media channels and via online advertising.



02

FIRST IMPRESSIONS

How welcome do I feel? Is this the club for me?

Visiting the club for a first impression of what membership might be like

- They may have played the course before, or have friends that are already members, but most prospective members will want to get a feel for what the club has to offer before committing to joining. This will include trying out the facilities (course, practice facilities and any other amenities included), get a feel for the welcome they receive, the hospitality on offer, the community of members and then, if they like what they see and experience, to speak to someone in person about becoming a member.
- This is the club's opportunity to showcase its finest points, be it the golf course, the customer service or the welcoming and sociable community of members. Getting this right will create a sense of need and willingness to pursue the idea of membership further.
- It's worth remembering that in most cases, this visit will be in the guise of a visitor, be that via paying a green fee or making use of the facilities.



03

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORY

Can the club be flexible with my needs?

Working out which membership category may work best for them and whether any campaigns or trial options are available

- Not all prospective members are interested in or looking for the same thing out of their membership. Lifestyle, time limitations, competitiveness and social preferences will differ, meaning that a one-size-fits-all offer is not necessarily appropriate. They will therefore look for the different options that membership categories offer, whether there is a trial offer available, or whether any offers or recruitment campaigns are available to offer good value. A good experience would include feeling listened to and appreciated as an individual, certainly not just another sale.
- Having a mixture of categories and timely offers in place are essential if a club are looking to create an offer to suit a varied range of lifestyles and preferences. This is especially appropriate for clubs looking to be more attractive to a diverse audience, or those that are looking to attract a certain type of member.



04

COMMITMENT TO JOINING

Will I be introduced
to people?
How excited do I feel?

Time to make the commitment and get started

- The prospective member has been tempted by the offer and is now sold on the club and are now keen to settle into life as a club member. Now is the time to make the commitment. It's important that the new member continues to feel appreciated and welcomed throughout this process, fully versed in what to expect as they look to settle into club life and aware of the opportunities they have to meet new people, mixing with like-minded members and making the most of their new membership.
- An easy process that focusses on providing a welcome, generating a sense of excitement and belonging instead of the transaction itself, would reaffirm that the right choice has been made. A consistent and efficient sales process that is centred around the new addition is key to getting this right. This is the point that the process of retaining the new member begins, so introducing them to members that can help support their introduction to club life, such as Captains, buddies and club staff is an important step.



05

SETTLING IN

Do I feel comfortable -
What is the induction
process like?

Settling into life as a member

- The period of settling in is vital – getting the most out of the facilities, making new friends and realising the valuable benefits and opportunities exclusive to them as a member are key to building an early and sustainable sense of satisfaction and in embedding themselves within the community, again confirming that they have made the right call. Depending on what the member is looking for, this could include playing in competitions, attending social events or having the opportunity to invite friends and family to the club.
- The first few months of settling in at a new club, be it the first membership held, the first after a period of inactivity or a change of scenery having left another club, can be an uncertain one. This is due to an inevitable unfamiliarity with behavioural norms, rules and etiquette guidelines, trepidation around meeting new people and finding opportunities to play and socialise.
- It is important that a robust induction programme that supports the member in settling in and provides a great welcome. Further still, a key consideration should be to introduce a tracking process that monitors how well they are settling into life at the club, allowing for any shortcomings or lack of engagement to be recognised and acted upon. Retaining member-centric communication adds to the sense of value and belonging, whilst providing an opportunity to gain feedback.



06

PART OF THE ROUTINE

Who shall I play with this week - Shall I recommend to my friends?

Part of the routine - A home from home

- By this point, the new member has made the club a part of their routine, playing and using the facilities as regularly as they can or want to and are dreaming of the course whenever they are away from the club. Social circles have been established, they are on first name terms with the staff and they are advocating the club to friends and family – the most powerful marketing tool for the club.
- Whilst they may not be a likely leaver due to any lack of satisfaction, it's imperative that the sense of value and belonging is continuing to be enhanced. Maintaining high levels of customer service, regular and relevant communications and providing the opportunity to feedback via a members' survey are practices that should be prioritised, reviewed, and carried out on a regular, structured basis. Providing members with the opportunity to introduce friends and family to the club, be it into membership, coaching or social events, benefits retention as much as it does recruitment.
- It's also vital to continue to monitor the how often members are playing or using the facilities, so to be able to pick up on under-utilisation – a key reason that many golfers leave. Whilst it may be circumstantial due to lifestyle changes such as work, family or new financial restraints, and out of the club's control, ensuring that there is an option or category that may be better suited to the member, such a as a flexible option, is worth reviewing.



07

GETTING INVOLVED

I love it here -How can I give back to the club?

Loyal, passionate and wanting to give something back to the club

- The final step of the membership journey involves the member showing a willingness to give up their time to give back to the club and making a meaningful impact to the club through volunteering. This could involve offering to help induct new members via a buddy scheme, captaining a club team, organising a social event, or applying to sit on a committee. This shows the ultimate sense of loyalty and displays dedication and care for the club and its development, so it is important that opportunities are there to allow this sense of dedication and loyalty to be shown.
- Once again, clubs should take this opportunity to maintain and enhance the members' sense of value and belonging, but also ensure that opportunities to volunteer in a capacity that suits them is available and accessible to anyone willing to give up their time for the club.
- Taking the time to speak to members to get a sense of whether they would be interested in volunteering, what skills and experience they could provide and reviewing roles to fit to make them more appealing and manageable would be a good place to start if you are looking to grow or improve your volunteer workforce.