

“5 Steps to conducting a successful Golf Event”

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When contemplating running a golf event there are a 5 primary steps to conducting a successful golf event. The following 5 steps have been compiled after years of experience of administering both VERY successful events and those that have become less than successful. Golf events CAN be a very successful tool, whether being utilized to raise funds or entertain, as with most undertakings the success of each event is indicative of the planning and execution. We hope the following 5 steps will help in the planning and eventual success of your event!

STEP 1 – DEFINE YOUR PURPOSE / SETTING GOALS

- Tackling the first part of this step should be easy. Possible purposes for a golf event could be any of the following:
 - Charity Golf Event
 - Non Profit Organization Fundraiser
 - Public Relations
 - Association / Organization Networking
 - Customer Appreciation
- Once you have decided which purpose is fueling the event it will help decide other factors in the planning stages.
- Setting Goals –
 - When setting goals be SPECIFIC. For example, if the event being run is on behalf of a business conducting a customer appreciation outing the budget being formed will cover golfing fees / food and beverage options / prizes and will NOT have to be shaved to “make money” at the end of the day. The event will want to entertain clients with an enjoyable event that isn’t too much of a burden on the wallet.
 - If the event is a fundraiser the budget will be driven by the bottom line wish of raising “X” amount of dollars. DO NOT enter with the idea of “whatever is left over” will be donated. This philosophy NEVER works out in the long run and doesn’t hold you accountable for following a budget.
 - When setting your budget goals remember the following items:
 - Golfing Fees
 - Food and Beverage Fees
 - Advertising/Marketing Fees
 - Gratuity Fees
 - Prizes
 - Amenities / Goodie Bags

STEP 2 – RECRUIT COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- DO NOT attempt to run a golf event alone! The idea of running a golf tournament is a fun idea based on the recreation of the event, however, if not planned appropriately with enough help it can turn into anything BUT a fun event at the end of the day. The following are a few tips on how to recruit potential committee members:
 - BE EXCITED about the idea. If you display excitement for not only the event but the process you will attract others with like agendas.
 - PUSH THE “WHY”. Concentrate on the “WHY” when recruiting others. Most people by nature want to help causes or those they feel are in need. Push the “WHY” and you will cater to these people.
 - HOW DOES IT BENEFIT the volunteer? Whether a fundraiser or corporate event the Volunteer wants to feel as if they are a piece of the ultimate success of the event. Don’t only let them be a part of the WORK, but, allow them to be a part of the planning process and the enjoyment of the event. Shower them with THANKS both publicly and privately to ensure they feel good about what they have achieved and hopefully will retain their services for years to come.

STEP 3 – CHOOSE THE RIGHT FACILITY

- When searching for a facility realize that each venue will have PRO’S / CON’S based on the event’s ultimate expectations and budget. Keep the following in mind when trying to find the perfect fit:
 - Search for a PARTNER, not a rate – When conducting an initial search it would be logical to let the golf rate dictate your nominees. While budget concerns do weigh heavily on the choice DO NOT pick a facility SOLELY based on this factor. SACRIFICE should not be a part of a facilities rate. If you find a PARTNER in your event, the facility will do everything they can to help in the planning and administration of the event. Here at Cool Creek we offer the following amenities that unfortunately have disappeared from other golf facilities:
 - Initial planning meeting with Outing Coordinator
 - Continued communication ensuring that
 - ALL details are accurate
 - We as a facility can help in anyway
 - Full Service Bag Drop service day of event
 - Cart Staging including:
 - Participant Cart Signs
 - Facility created Rules Sheets
 - Facility created Score Cards
 - Goodie Bags (if supplied)
 - Proximity Marker Creation / Placement / Retrieval
 - Sponsor Sign Placement / Retrieval

- Co – Op Marketing
 - Flyer Distribution
 - Email Marketing
 - Website Placement
 - Tournament Schedule Placement
- These are just the standard types of facility provided services that add to the overall success and enjoyment of your event by all involved – Coordinators / Volunteers / Golfers

STEP 4 – SELLING SPONSORSHIPS

- Sponsorships are mostly utilized by those conducting either a charity driven event or fundraiser. Sponsorships are PRIMARY to the overall financial success of these types of events. As a rule a fundraiser should attempt to break even with expenses with their “registration fees” compiled from golfers. With no expenses to cover outside of this fee all of the money generated from sponsorships will result in the ultimate \$ amount to be utilized by the non -profit or donated to charity. The following are examples of how sponsorships could be marketed:
 - Value added Sponsorship
 - Hole in One Sponsor – Typically sponsored by a travel agency or car dealership. Adds value to the golfers in the event and can usually be provided in exchange for a foursome in the event.
 - On course contest Sponsor – Not usually provided for ANY exchange but, still a value added sponsorship and amenity to golfers in the event. Prizes can be donated which can be given out by utilizing an on course contest such as Closest to the Pin, Longest Putt Made, Longest / Straightest Drive etc.
 - Goodie bag Sponsor – if a sponsor can be found to either directly fund a goodie bag for the players or provide the goodie bag themselves it would benefit the golfer. Items in goodie bag could include snacks, beverages, advertising materials, small gifts.
 - Advertising Sponsorship
 - Golf Cart Sponsor – for a stipulated \$ amount a sign can be mounted to each cart. Usually a fairly high \$ amount based on the fact that a large amount of exposure is given to the golf carts both prior and during play.
 - Hole Sponsor – DO NOT limit this sponsorships. This is the most frequently used sponsorship method and while it does not bring in the BIG \$ amounts, quantity will equate to those amounts desired. If possible offer both TEE and GREEN sponsorships offered at the same price. Typically either individual golfers or local businesses will utilize this option. The success of this sponsorship will be completely indicative of the number of doors knocked on, phone calls placed, people contacted. SELL , SELL, SELL.

STEP 5 – RECRUITING GOLFERS

- Based on the type of event that is being held there may or may not be a pool of golfers to pull from. Most of us know a golfer. Golfers in general are very passionate about the game and are always looking for opportunities to golf. With this being said this is where it is very important to have found that **“PARTNER”** in a facility that can help recruit if the host coordinator is open to “outside” play within their event. Once the golfers are recruited, especially for a first year event, it is MOST IMPORTANT to make sure that not only will these golfers return for year two, but, they recruit more golfers. The following are 3 ways to do so:
 - Offer the event at a reasonable price. In order to do this you must
 - Know your market – how much are other events held at the facility you are utilizing going for? What do they offer in exchange for the registration price?
 - DO NOT OVERPRICE. It is very easy to overprice the event in year one in fear of losing money. A first year event can be a scary undertaking, understand if you plan and budget appropriately there is little risk and being “safe” with your price will only hurt in the long term.
 - Offer a great VALUE by adding :
 - COMPLIMENTARY beverages
 - GOOD prizes – ensure that 1st place gets a prize at least equivalent to their registration fee per player.
 - AMPLE prizes – the more golfers that leave with something helps spread the word of mouth on VALUE. WORD OF MOUTH = lasting power.
 - ONE NICE MEAL – do not feel like lunch and dinner need to be offered. Quality is more important than quantity with the meal. Offer snacks throughout play to hold them over for dinner. Concentrate on the after golf meal as everyone will be at the facility waiting for results of the competition.
 - Conduct a smooth event.
 - Success is achieved while working in the details. Communication with your venue and caterer is vital to a smoothly run event. Make sure that the expectations created by your golfer are formed by your marketing and registration process. Make sure everything that will be offered is spelled out in the sponsorship and registration forms. Once that info is relayed LIVE UP TO the expectation.

Follow these 5 steps and we are sure you will be happy with the result! To find out more information on how to obtain Cool Creek Golf Club and it’s professionals as **“PARTNERS”** to your event please feel free to contact Nate Blanchette, General Manager at: nblanchette@coolcreekgolf.com.