



Gloucester Golf Club Gloucestershire



Starting a new chapter at Gloucester Golf Club

How the club used **Understanding Your Market** to transform its fortunes



Background

Gloucester Golf Club, on the outskirts of the City of Gloucester, has a beautiful hillside course, overlooking picturesque countryside. It also boasts a 13 bay covered driving range.

The club opened in 1976, but recently, with the club losing £100k a year, the owners decided to close it. Following several lengthy discussions the owners agreed to lease the course back the members, and on November 11th 2017, a 20-year lease was signed on behalf of Gloucester Golf Club Members Ltd.



Support

The club has a long standing relationship with England Golf and in particular, with the local Club Support Officer, Debbie Casling. At the very start of the process Keith Wood, General Manager, was in contact to make sure he understood the full range of support available to the club.

➔ The starting point

Keith used England Golf's Club Governance Guide to help him create the management structure of the members' club. Four existing members were appointed as directors – each with the appropriate skill set required to carry out their role – to support Keith in moving the club forward.

The new management had to change virtually every area of the club and, particularly, turn around the finances. They wanted to look at ways to bring in new members while retaining those who had remained loyal.

With the financial support of the County Golf Partnership, the club used the Understanding Your Market resource which produced a series of reports for the club. The results were analysed and interpreted with the support of England Golf Senior Regional Manager Gavin Anderson and Club Support Officer Debbie Casling.



SUCCESS STORY

Gloucester Golf Club Gloucestershire



A real eye-opener!

The results showed the current membership mainly fitted the profiles of the Older Traditionalist, Younger Traditionalist and Relaxed Members. Nothing unexpected here at a traditional members' club and this was also reflected in the analysis provided of the local potential market.

However, what really stood out was that Gloucester was attracting significantly higher than average numbers of Late Enthusiasts. They clearly liked what they found at the club, but they weren't becoming members.

England Golf's research shows that Late Enthusiasts enjoy playing golf and feel it is healthy, sociable, relaxing and fun, but also consider that expense is a real barrier to them.

The Understanding Your Market reports also told the club that there were large numbers of potential players fitting this profile who lived within a 20-minute drive time of Gloucester.



Action

The club used the information to decide how to promote the club, as well as the type of messaging and media they used.

The focus of their marketing message was on price, given the competitive price they offer in comparison to other nearby clubs, and they targeted their marketing in postcode areas they felt confident would give them good results.

The report also made them consider other things at the club, such as the customer journey. Historically, the entrance gate was always closed, and the driveway to the clubhouse unwelcoming. This can give the perception of a club being closed or inaccessible to those who aren't members.

Following delivery of the segmentation report, the club very quickly made changes and began to leave the gate open as well as investing in signage to line their driveway. The club instantly noticed a difference and has received numerous compliments since making such a simple change.

Finally, having a better understanding of their members and the local market made them realise the significance of having a covered driving range on site. The decision was made to close the driving range, refurbish it and then relaunch it to make it more appealing for both members and passing trade.



124
NEW MEMBERS
INCREASED REVENUE
BY **£70,000**



£15,000
ADDITIONAL INCOME
FROM NEW ONLINE TEE
BOOKING SYSTEMS



The results

Following the support of the local England Golf team and utilising the Understanding Your Market reports, the club has made an incredible turn around in their fortunes. Since January 2018 when the reports were delivered, the club has grown their membership by 124, which has generated them an additional £70,000 in revenue.

In addition, use of a tee booking system, which allows bookings to be made through their website and other 3rd party websites, gives them three potential booking channels for green fee income. This has added an extra £15,000 in revenue. Alongside this, the driving range business is booming with a further £20,000 more than in the previous year.



The future

The outlook is looking very bright for Gloucester Golf Club, thanks to the commitment of Keith and his fellow directors, as well as the loyalty of their members.

The club has recently employed a new Head Professional and will focus on women's recruitment in 2019, making use of the national Get into Golf campaign and continuing their relationship with the local support team.

WHAT THE CLUB SAID



“We very quickly knew we wanted to use England Golf and the specialist advice they provide as much as we could. Our meeting with Gavin and Debbie provided invaluable information which we were able to action immediately, and we have continued to see significant impact as a result. The future is now very positive, we have a very happy and excited golf membership, and we owe a big thanks to Gavin and Debbie for all their support.”

Keith Wood, General Manager