

"Online tee time booking has been amazingly successful at Childwall."

Childwall converts its members to online tee booking

Many golf clubs used to claim that 'We don't have tee booking here!', yet for competitions still expected members to write their names down on a list on the notice board against a preferred tee time...



This irony hasn't escaped some of the sharper-minded club managers and secretaries, especially when they've found names that were illegible and 'no-shows' on the day itself. Peter Bowen, Club Manager of Childwall GC is one of them, and his success in overturning this attitude and converting his membership to tee time booking is a modern parable for every golf club.

Wanted: an online competition booking system

At Childwall, competitive golf is very popular; monthly medals will see 130+ names on the list. Peter's main concern was not only finding a way of dealing with the problems of illegible names, names that were written over other names, and between 3 to 10 no-shows per competition, but the pernicious issue of the members that would hang around at the club waiting for the entry list to go up, and effectively deny places to those who couldn't get to the club until the weekend.

"The BRS booking system is very easy for anyone to use, and once they understand that, they usually tell me they'd never realised it was that simple!"

What he wanted was a competition booking system, and when he saw the BRS Golf presentation at his local GCMA North West meeting two years ago, he knew he'd seen the answer. The problem was changing the minds of the 13 man Committee, all of whom were dead against tee time booking. For the first time, he persuaded the Committee to listen to a presentation from Brian Smith of BRS Golf, and after 45 minutes of hearing the case for online booking, and getting logical answers to all the usual objections, the entire Committee went from 'No way' to 'How soon can we have it?'

Online entry: fair to everyone

Peter ensured the new system was properly communicated to the members. For all those not on the Internet or without a PC at home, a PC was installed in the clubhouse. Now, for every competition the list goes live 10 days before the event at 12.00pm and by 12.30 the entries are usually full. Being online means everyone has a fair chance to enter, and such is the success of the system that even the members who were originally against tee time booking now think it's a great idea.

"We've not had one issue with it since it was installed. The BRS booking system is very easy for anyone to use, and once they understand that, they usually tell me they'd never realised it was that simple! Having registered their e-mail address, once they book and enter members receive an e-mail from the online booking system to tell them they've booked to play at a particular time. This means there's no excuse for 'not knowing' which often happened when a member put his mates' names down on the list."

No more illegible names

"It's totally resolved the illegible names problem for me, and we can see exactly who's who, which helps eliminate the no shows. But best of all, it's fair: everyone who wants to play in competitions has the same opportunity to get their names on the list, whether in the clubhouse, the office or home."

Extending online booking to Open events

"We're now putting all our Open competitions onto the online booking system, but we're extending the concept to include online payments as well, as it is easier for visitors to pay online, and for me to manage the entry fees. They go straight into our bank account, and I get an e-mail confirming their entry."



"Online tee time booking has been amazingly successful at Childwall."

BRS: 'the perfect solution'

"Online tee time booking has been amazingly successful at Childwall. I used to hear all the usual objections; now, we're even getting members booking while they're on holiday abroad, because now they can. One delightful chap e-mailed me to tell me he was making an 'international booking' from Majorca; another regularly books online while he's travelling around the UK during the week."

It's worth adding that besides managing competitions more easily, Peter has also found managing Childwall's society business more straightforward. The online booking system is ideal for capturing all the society information and requirements, and has effectively become his office's Club Diary. But there's no doubt its main benefit lies in the administration of the competitions.

"The BRS system is the perfect solution for what was a major headache for me and the clubhouse team. With as many as 3-4 competitions a month during the season, to have eliminated all the hassle and be fair to every member who wants to enter seems to me to be a big step forwards when it comes to the advantages of joining a members' golf club."

"Online tee time booking has been amazingly successful at Childwall."