

How to Convert Your Chapter Golf Tournament to a COVID-19 Friendly Event

Chapter Leaders: This toolkit is designed to help you and your chapter navigate hosting an in-person golf fundraiser tournament during a pandemic. Follow the steps in this guide to help you breakdown the key components of a successful golf outing.

CRPs: Use these ideas to take replication to the next level. This template will help chapter leaders through the transition process of turning a traditional in-person golf event into a more COVID-19 friendly golf event.

CATEGORIES

Evaluate Interest from Potential Attendees & Sponsors

Since COVID-19 has upended our traditional way of doing things, we need to understand how likely it is that potential participants are willing to still golf in a tournament.

Send Survey

- a. Send a simple survey gauging the interest from potential attendees & sponsors. You can use a free survey tool such as SurveyMonkey or Google Forms to make the process simple and easy.
- b. **Here are some sample survey questions:**
 - i. If we were to still host this event in-person with proper safety measures in place, would you still attend? (Y/N)
 - ii. How would you evaluate your decision on whether to attend? Share the questions or issues you will need to weigh to make the decision.
 - iii. What are your concerns (if any) regarding it being an in-person event?
 - iv. What could we do to make you feel as safe as possible to attend?

Logistics

Safety protocols have changed the way that people engage and interact. Walking through the entire event process can help you identify areas where processes or guidelines need to be adjusted. We've outlined a few key areas and questions you'll want to evaluate.

1. Registration

- a. In the era of social distancing, determining how you will interact with participants upon their arrival and throughout the event is key.

- a. Due to safety guidelines, does your venue allow any on-site day of registration or will it all need to be completed ahead of time?
- b. During the registration process, clearly outline and communicate registration rules and guidelines to attendees and sponsors so they understand and agree to the rules.
- c. Will you need to restrict/limit registration numbers to meet safety guidelines?
- d. To protect the chapter, having a required waiver is best practice. Anyone attending the event must sign in to participate. We recommend including this in all your emails (including adding it to your signature).
- e. [Here is an example](#) of a waiver that the American Cancer Society has leveraged that you could adapt for your organization. We suggest running it by your legal team.

2. Social Distancing

- a. To limit interaction and promote social distancing during the event, its best practice for all participants to purchase any add-ons, event registrations or other items online prior to the event.

2. Tournament Format

- a. In order to adhere to safety guidelines, it is recommended that you shift the tournament format from a shotgun start to assigning participants tee times ahead of the event.
- b. Schedule tee times every 10 minutes to ensure social distancing and to prevent people from playing too late in the day.

3. Golf Cart Usage

- a. Connect with your venue to understand if there are there any safety guidelines that impact the use of golf carts.
- b. Are there specific protocols that need to be put in place?
 - i. For example:
 - 1 person per cart
 - Plastic shield/barrier
 - If there is a limit of carts per group, do some participants use a cart, while others are required to walk?
- c. How are you communicating any golf cart guidelines to attendees and sponsors to set expectations prior to the event?

4. Volunteer/Attendee/Sponsor Attendance

- a. With current circumstances, it is best to reduce the amount of people who need to be present at the tournament.
- b. **Attendees:** Attendees can arrive up to 15 minutes before their tee time. Upon completion of the course, attendees should depart the event. No hanging around.
- c. **Sponsors:** As a hole sponsor, once the last tee time group passes through, sponsors should pack up their items and leave the event.
- d. **Volunteers:** If you have additional volunteers present to help the tournament run smoothly, as soon as their job is complete, allow them to leave the event.

5. Weather

Weather can be unpredictable, so you and your chapter will want to make sure you have backup plans in case things do not go the way they're supposed to.

- a. What is the policy if it rains?
- b. What is the policy if there is lightning?
- c. How long will you allow a rain or lightning delay before cancelling the event?
- d. What is your chapter's refund policy?
- e. Will there be a reschedule if the event is rained out?

6. Understand the Golf Club Rules

- a. What are the state and local guidelines for masks in the location of your event?
- b. What is your venue's policy regarding mask wearing?
- c. Are communications regarding mask and social distancing policies built into your communication plan?
- d. Are there other guidelines or restrictions that your venue has in place and is asking guests to adhere to?

7. Food & Beverage Management

Hosting a COVID-19 friendly in-person event can make food and beverage very tricky. However, we have outlined a few tips and questions to ask to keep you on top of your game.

a. Food Options

- i. What pre-packaged options does your venue have available?
- ii. Do you need to bring in an outside caterer to provide bagged breakfast, lunch and snacks?
- iii. What safety measures are those handling and preparing the food taking?

b. Hospitality/Experiences

- i. Bar Options

1. How will drinks be served?
 - a. Pre-mixed? Bartender?
2. Does the venue provide a bartender and does the service experience meet any COVID-19 restrictions in your local area?

8. Member Experience

When hosting a golf tournament, it is always fun to add some additional ways to enhance the member/attendee experience. Below are a few options for you to consider.

- c. **Mulligan:** Provide attendees a chip/token in their swag bag for them to use when they need a do-over. If this is an item they need to purchase ahead of time, include it as a pre-purchased item during the registration process to minimize transactions and interactions between people.
- d. **Grenade:** Each golfer has one opportunity to pick up their ball and throw it vs. hitting it with their club.
- e. **Liquorice Rope:** Pre-packaged liquorice ropes can be found online (thank you Amazon!) or at any bulk goods store. Include one (or two) in the swag bag to be used as a gauge for how far someone can move their ball to get a better shot if needed.

Sponsorships

Sponsorships are a critical item to help make any event a success. In order to preserve sponsorship revenue, you may need to evaluate your sponsorship benefits and adjust any benefits that do not align with a COVID-19 friendly event.

1. List out your traditional sponsorships

- a. Which ones are still viable with safety measures?
- b. Which ones need to change because there is no way to safely execute on the sponsor benefit?

2. Sponsorship Options

For the sponsorship options that need to be updated or changed, what are viable alternatives? We have provided some ideas and examples below to get you thinking:

- a. **Bloody Mary Bar = Juice Bar:** Due to the COVID-19 impact, some local governments are moving slower on issuing liquor licenses, and government restrictions have limitations on gatherings with alcohol.
 - i. If you have alcoholic elements at your event that might not be able to come to fruition, try using a juice or smoothie bar option.

- ii. **Sponsor Face Time:** Assign time slots to sponsors based on tee times.
 1. For example, the hole sponsor for Hole #1 needs to be at the course from the first tee off time to when the last golf group passes Hole #1. Then the sponsors can leave, protecting some of their time and helping with the number of people onsite at the event.
- iii. **Sponsor Sales Tip:** Sponsors like the assigned tee times because it allows them to see and interact with all attendees while getting time back to their day vs. having to be at the event all day.
- a. **Swag Bags:** Sponsors provide swag ahead of time for a pre-packaged swag bag for attendees. Any swag provided at a hole sponsor table must be individually packaged.
- b. **Signage:** For meal or snack sponsors, instead of signs, using stickers on the breakfast or lunch bags is a great way to incorporate sponsorship branding into the packaging.
 - i. Think of other ways to bring sponsor branding to life (e.g. stickers, custom printed paper bags, etc.) Custom stickers can be found in a variety of online stores such as Zazzle and StickerMule.
 - ii. Cost Savings! Limiting signage can act as cost savings since printing large banners can add up fast!

2. How to Sell and Communicate the Changes to Sponsors

- a. Show what traditional sponsorships are, then share the alternative and how their visibility or engagement with attendees is similar (or better).
 - i. E.g. Sticker on lunch bag = same as signage as they walk into a luncheon. In fact, it might be more visible.

All sponsorship options and costs associated with each are suggestions and meant to act as a starting point for your chapter. You may need to update sponsorship categories, cost and benefits to align with your venue, golf course and unique situations that pertain to your chapter.

SPONSORSHIP CATEGORY	COST	BENEFITS
Caddyshack Title	\$3,500	2 - 4somes, Title Booth at Entry, Elite Signage & Marketing
Golf Carts - ALL	\$1,500	Signage on all carts, giveaway opportunity on carts
Registration / Volunteer Golf Shirts	\$1,000	Provide people at registration; a golf shirt for all volunteers - "Volunteer" on the breast plate; chapter logo on one sleeve; company logo on the other sleeve
Drone Sponsor	\$750	Provide drone coverage plus pics to be used in chapter marketing and the virtual banquet
Photography Sponsor	\$500	Sponsor Signage
Bag sponsor	\$500	Supply bags for all golfers w/company logo. These are the bags that will be used for the "swag bags"
Hats/visors	\$500	Provide logo'd hats or visors to all golfers

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COVID-19 Masks	\$500	Provide logo'd masks to all participants
Towels	\$500	Provide Towels for every golfer w/ company logo
Putting Green	\$500	Sponsor Signage
Beverage Cart (#1)	\$900	Ride along & meet all teams/golfers personally, signage, buy drinks for the golfers
Beverage Cart (#2)	\$900	Ride along & meet all teams/golfers personally, signage, buy drinks for the golfers
Bloody Mary/Juice Bar	\$750	2 reps may serve Bloody Marys or juice for breakfast, Company name & signage at bar; Plus cost of liquor (dependent on COVID-19 restrictions)
Margaritas @ Turn	\$750	2 reps may serve margaritas at the turn, Company name & signage at Gazebo; Plus cost of liquor (dependent on COVID-19 restrictions)
Cigar Bar	\$500	Provide cigars to golfers at the turn
Hand Sanitizer	\$500	Provide logo'd hand sanitizer to all golfers
Par 3 Sponsor (Holes #X,#X,#X,#X)	\$800	Signage on all Par 3's - Buy all Par 3 holes for \$800
Breakfast Sponsor	\$500	Sponsor Signage & stickers on bags
Lunch Sponsor	\$1,000	Sponsor Signage & stickers on bags
Snack Bag Sponsor	\$500	Sponsor Signage & stickers on bags
Hole Sponsor (1)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (2)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (3)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (4)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (5)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (6)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (7)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (8)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (9)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Host a Golf Pro at a Hole (Hole #10)	\$750	Signage at hole where a Golf pro at the hole can shoot one ball per foursome
Hole Sponsor (10)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (11)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (12)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (13)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (14)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (15)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (16)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole in One Sponsor (Hole #16)	\$500	Sponsor signage on green and tee box
Hole Sponsor (17)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box
Hole Sponsor (18)	\$700	Sponsor signage at each tee box

Communication for Attendees & Sponsors

1. Set expectations

- a. Define a day/time that attendees and sponsors will receive updates and information critical to the event.
 - ii. For example, maybe you let them know that you will be sending an update on Wednesdays and everything they need will be in those emails.

3. Timeline

- a. Determine how far in advance you need to start consistently communicating to attendees, sponsors, volunteers, etc.
 - i. For example, are you going to send communications weekly starting 5 weeks out from the event?

4. Transparency and simplicity

- a. Keep your email communication updates simple, bulleted and easy to read.
 - i. Color code information based on your audience
 1. For example, content that is relevant for attendees is in black. Content that is relevant for sponsors is in green, etc.
 - ii. This is helpful if you're sending a single communication to all parties (attendees, sponsors, volunteers, etc.)
 - iii. Color-coding the content can make it simple for the reader to determine what information is important to them.

Post-Event

1. Banquet/Awards

During times when safety and health continues to be a top priority, if you traditionally host a banquet and/or awards ceremony after your golf event, we recommend taking that event online in the days following the event.

- a. **Platform:** Select the technology platform you will leverage to host the event.
 - i. Options can include Zoom, Teams or other virtual collaboration technologies.

- b. **Timing:** Host the banquet and awards ceremony a few days after the golf tournament.
 - i. This will allow you time to incorporate any photos, videos or details from the event into your presentation and banquet.
- c. **Agenda:** Map out your agenda and content flow ahead of time. Coordinate with any individuals who may be speaking. An optional agenda template is outlined for you below:
 - i. Welcome & Thank You: Welcome the guests and thank them for attending.
 - ii. Sponsor Highlight: Thank your sponsors for their support and provide them visibility to the attendees
 - iii. Highlight Reel: Share videos, photos, etc. that represent highlights from the event.
 - iv. Present Awards: Present the awards to your recipients.
 - 1. Ensure that you have a process to capture their information so you can mail (or email) them an award/gift that comes with their recognition.
 - 2. You can use a simple, free tool such as Google Docs, Google Forms or Survey Monkey to capture this information.
 - v. Wrap Up & Thank You: Thank everyone who attended along with all of your sponsors for making your outing and banquet a successful event!
- d. **Documenting the Golf Outing:** One of the best ways to promote your chapter and your upcoming events is to highlight how amazing the golf outing was. Don't forget to take pictures, video, drone footage, or other documentation to share moments from the event at the banquet.
 - i. Note that a photographer, drone operator or other items can be great sponsorship opportunities.
- e. **Raffle:** Hosting a raffle is always fun and can be a great way to incentivize individuals to attend the virtual awards banquet since it may be a different experience than what people are used to.
 - i. Use prizes that you can send to raffle winners virtually.
 - ii. These could be items that you can easily purchase from a site such as Amazon.
 - iii. Virtual gift cards are also a great option since all you need is a name and email address. Again, these prizes can be a part of a sponsorship opportunity.

Hosting an event is never easy and adding additional factors into the mix due to health and safety concerns can make it even more challenging. However, we're hoping that this document provides a roadmap to guide you through the process and ensure you're hitting on all the major elements of a successful & safe golf outing!

If you put on your event and have any lessons learned or takeaways, share them with your CRP and other chapter leaders. We are all still learning how to handle this new normal!