



EGCOA Conference a Huge Success

Published in ClubNetworker, Issue 41, January 2010

More than 200 delegates attended last year's fourth [European Golf Business Conference](#) in Amsterdam, The Netherlands. A growing number of golf courses were represented, compared to last year's conference in Berlin. This demonstrated the significance of the event to a large number of participants.

Speakers that contributed to the EGCOA Conference's huge success included:

- **John Lindberg** – gave a presentation with the latest data about the Swedish golfer. The survey revealed new information on the loyalty of golf players to commit to different clubs.
- **Jeroen Boesmans** – presented “Vision 2015”, a research project for the Dutch golf market. Part of the topics unveiled the details on the supply and demand for golf courses, as well as the overall economic frame that the Dutch industry operates in.
- **Bo Dahlberg** – showed the Capital Golf initiative, based on the situation of Huvudstadens Golf, a chain of golf courses around Stockholm. His presentation was a great contribution to the session that focussed on initiatives to grow the game of golf.
- **Mike Hughes** – opened a new world with his ‘Get Golf Ready’ programme. An initiative of the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) together with the US golf industry, the aim is to make it easier for new people to enter the world of golf.
- **Roy Scheerder** - shared insights that focussed on the similarities between the airline industry and the golf business. It tends to be very likely that both industries have a lot in common, like a similar commercial approach towards new customers and pricing and inventory policies.
- **Jo Maes** – presented New Media tools that have been developed and will probably become a widely used applications to better facilitate and improve the customer experience. In addition, he explained the four key factors (technology, reliability, speed, knowledge) the new network tools obtain.
- **Jaap Funnekotter** – delivered a very lively and fascinating presentation on the trends and developments in the area of hospitality. He discussed new models and practices that can be directly implemented at every golf course to better serve a client.
- **Alexander Iguchi** – shared a 'standard operating procedure' approach towards customer service. He further explained and showed examples of these SOPs that can be implemented in golf course management.

- **Mark Bodt** – took the stage during the General Meeting of the EGCOA. He explained thoroughly the European Union directive concerning the VAT level on golf and its implementation on a national level. He also focussed on the development on the EGCOA initiative to level the VAT for golf.
- **Laurent Oger** – also gave a presentation during the General Meeting of the EGCOA about the EU directive establishing a framework for company action to achieve a sustainable use of pesticides.
- **Neil Hobday** - presented the development of the Trump International Golf Links in Scotland, pointing at the timeline, the progress and all the obstacles of its creation.
- **Mark Sandilands** - Development Panel– A lively and open discussion amongst world famous golf course architects that have executed their talents throughout Europe and abroad. It turned out to be a very useful discussion that pointed out the key issues for the future development of golf courses. (Panellists: Jeff Howes, Peter Harradine, Tom Doak).
- **Gordon Irvine MG**– told the inspiring story of the lost Askernish golf course in Scotland and shared insights on the interesting project that was held there to fully renovate the old Tom Morris course in cooperation with volunteers that all share the same passion for golf courses.
- **Laurence Pithie** – presented a set of challenges that have to be overcome and opportunities that lie ahead for golf course maintenance. He has also showed environmental aspects that have to be considered while taking “The Next Step” and moving forward.
- **Jonathan Smith, Benjamin Warren** – Sustainability Panel – The experts of the Golf Environment Organisation (GEO) moderated the panel dedicated to sustainability. The discussion evolved in a lively and meaningful debate on all issues concerning sustainability and showed how to incorporate these into a golf course business model. (Panellists: Andrew Brown, Jeremy Slessor, Jim McKenzie)

The EGCOA would like to gratefully thank all the participants and sponsors for their participation and their great contribution to the success of this year’s conference