

Start with Content – Leave Social Media for Later

By Ian James, CEO, RetailTribе

Content is king. I will paraphrase that: Content rules. It's a truth I am completely convinced of. You can rent every billboard along the highway but if what you present doesn't catch the driver's eye and call him to action, you've squandered your investment. You can buy the most expensive advertising slots on TV, but the commercial you air better make a strong statement.

A quick analogy: When a golf instructor is on the lesson tee, the guidance he or she gives must be technically correct, certainly, but it also has to be communicated in a manner that the student can understand, then act upon. Yes. The content of your communication as a coach is what counts.

The digital world is no different. I'm often asked about Facebook vs Twitter; email vs social; website vs blog. I don't care what medium you use, but I do care about what you say in whatever media you select.

If you can indulge me, I need to briefly rant against the frauds who give talks or write articles insisting you use Facebook, or Twitter, or invest in blogs, or constantly seek a better website. These people are selling technology. As golf instructors you know better than anyone that a new driver doesn't turn an average golfer into a good golfer.

I attended a PGA-endorsed presentation at the recent Merchandise Show given by two consultants who extolled the virtues of a business Facebook page and Facebook advertising. Guess what these consultants are geared up to do? For a fee, they can design you a Facebook business page, train you how to add pizzazz to your page, then teach you how to pay Facebook money to make sure all your fans receive your posts. That makes it sound like the value lies in having this page. It's not. It's in what you say—either on that page or somewhere else.

I met with the CEO of a firm called Members First a few years ago. His company builds great websites for country clubs. Guess what his biggest frustration was. None of his over 300 customers ever add meaningful content to their websites. He shakes his head to see this. Without regular updates, what's left online is an expensive electronic brochure.

Now along come the so-called "search consultants." Their message is strident. It comes down to this: "Your website isn't optimized." And yes, for a fee they can push you up the search rankings. They can even spend some of your money on Google ads to

bring more golfers to view the site. Now, praise the heavens, a crowd can find you. Even someone from Siberia or Senegal can find you. It's a global world. Everyone's listening now. So what have you got to say? The answer, in the case of those country clubs with fancy static websites, is very little.

Become a short game wizard

Golfers who are in single figures need to become wizards of the short game to protect pars and to set up and take birdie opportunities.

If we can get your average score from 40 yards in to less than 3, close to 2.5, then you will probably take another 3 or 4 shots off your handicap.

In fact, I'd be interested to discover what your score would be, if I played your ball from 100 yards in.

So, for \$600 paid up-front or \$180 a month for 4 months, I'm going to try and take at least 4 shots off your handicap by making you a short game wizard.

Interested? Scroll down to learn more or you can take the decision now, and [contact me](#), and we can start turning your Wedge and Putter into magic wands.



Have you noticed how the short game always seems to be out front?



Included in the Program

- ▶ Short game handicap assessment
- ▶ Technique evaluation
- ▶ Personal development program
- ▶ One on one coaching
- ▶ Accompanied golf and a **FREE** 100 yard challenge
- ▶ Supervised practice with **FREE** range balls
- ▶ Practice program
- ▶ Progress log and regular evaluation
- ▶ **FREE** equipment assessment

Control of distance on Pitch shots

Most better players get the ball down the right line with their Pitch shots, but improved scoring happens when the ball is on the right distance.

Getting up and down from around the green

Using chip, short pitch and lob shots from all around the green, including that horrible fluffy greenside rough, to hit it close.

Bunker rescues

Better players would prefer the sand in many cases. We want you to be as comfortable from the greenside bunker as well as confident with 30 and 40 yard longer bunker shots.

Making you a master of the 15-foot zone

Watch the TV and you'll see the Professionals sinking Putt after Putt in the 15-foot zone. In fact, they'll sink 80% of flat putts inside 10 feet. That means more birdie opportunities drop.

Challenge yourself to improve this season. If you're a single figure golfer, then let's start a journey to better golf by making you a wizard of the short game. Who knows how low you could go?

This program is the most fun you could have for \$600 or just \$180 a month.



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Don't be too specific in your content. It doesn't matter how many lessons are included. What matters most is the measurable result the golfer can expect.

There is a world of golfers, even in Senegal or Siberia, who want to listen to golf instructors. Remember: We golfers who play the game want to get better at it. You welcome that. You as the teacher want us to spend time and invest money on instruction. But where does it all start?

Not with the medium, be it digital or old-fashioned. You're focused on content, and here are three content types you should produce on a regular basis.

Visual success stories

When you've created an improvement for a golfer, take their "before" swing and put it alongside their new swing. You probably have video software that does this as part of your coaching suite. Use that. If not then use a photograph or photographs.

Describe the swing change or changes in a non-technical way. Avoid complexity. Resist the urge to show how much you know about the swing. Include an explanation of the physical result. "John is now hitting his tee shots straighter, even with a slight draw, and is at least 20 yards longer."

This content type should be the foundation of your marketing. The most important thing it does is tell your reader that you improve golfers—very often golfers just like them. Defining the result gives them a sense of the scale of improvement possible. The use of a real person with real result builds trust.

Give us advice on practice

Give us measurable drills that we can go and do ourselves. Give us a benchmark to aim for with each drill or practice routine. If we're short of that benchmark, then we know we probably need to come and see you.

Dave Pelz is the master of this technique. And most of his drills are amazingly simple. He has one for a bunker where you don't even hit a ball. What this drill will do for

most golfers though is clearly highlight for them that they need help.

You don't have to create videos each time. In fact with many drills the fact that they can be printed or viewed as a static screen on a mobile device, provides the golfer with the chance to carry your content with them onto the range.

Keep creating results-led improvement programs

Don't sit with just a lessons page on a website that rarely changes. Who wants to read a list of rates per 45 minutes? Each month make at least one offer. For July it might be: "I'm looking for five golfers who want to become short-game wizards. If you've mastered the short-game fundamentals, but want to know that from 40 yards, in almost any situation, you're going to give yourself a good chance of getting up and down, then this program is for you."

Of course you're going to have to include price and what the program will include, but avoid being specific in your content. It doesn't matter how many one-on-one lessons there are. What matters most is the measurable result the golfer can expect.

The three content types above don't include online coaching. Which is interesting because most coaches feel their content needs to be dominated by video of them providing detailed swing insights. "Here's how to make sure you square the putter at impact"

I know that most experts advise you to create these videos, so I feel a little unsure about my advice. I would recommend that any content you provide specifically ought to raise the questions in the viewer or reader's mind, that only you can answer on the practice tee. I'm not sure you want them running off after watching your video and trying to put into practice your advice on their own.

What I am sure of is what I said at the top: Content is King, and skilled coaches are sitting on a gold mine of content that every golf facility needs to create more golf.

Let RetailTribe Make 2014 Your Best Year Ever



"I cannot believe the results that RetailTribe has achieved for me, my business and my golf club. Shop sales are through the roof and I have more coaching demand than I can manage. Every PGA Professional, golf club or instructor should be using RetailTribe."

-Monte Meyer, PGA Professional, South Hills G.C.

You'll be surprised at how easy we can make effective marketing for you. Just give us 20 minutes and we'll show you how we can make an impact for you.

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