

COULD A KEY LIME PIE UNLOCK COACHING REVENUES?

By Ian James, RetailTribe CEO

The golf industry is bedeviled by a “heroes-and-celebrities” approach to marketing. Images and stories of great people and great golf courses fill magazine pages, dominate hours of television and now they populate Facebook feeds.

So how’s that working for us? Did we attract a million golfers in 2015? Did we encourage the 50 million-plus Americans who have tried the game then dropped it to return? Did our star-power fixation fill tee sheets and coaching programs?

Recently I sat with the CEO of a prestigious golf community. He was concerned that his restaurant was underutilized by the homeowners. This despite the fact that, in the CEO’s words, “We’ve got a 3-star Michelin chef!” But he waxed enthusiastic about a solution he’d hit upon, involving a recent hire. “We recruited a 20-year-old who knows all about social media,” he said with assurance. “She’s been posting pictures of Chef Francois on our Facebook and Twitter feeds.”

How wonderful, I thought. Back to the same well, using star power to try and dazzle our audience.

That’s not the mindset you’ll discover from Mike Leemhuis, president of the Ocean Reef Club in the Florida Keys. Mike is well known for his ability to deliver a world-class operation and service. That challenge kept him going full tilt at Congressional Country Club and it keeps him extremely busy at Ocean Reef, as well. But despite the man’s heavy operational duties, Mike still shows himself to be one of the best marketers of golf you’ll find anywhere.

First, of course, he covers the basics, understanding that the skill and motivation of his staff is key to delivering a world-class operation. He knows he needs a great director of golf and head professional, supported by quality up and down the personnel chart. He knows he needs a great director of instruction and a team of top-notch coaches. And yes, he knows he needs a 3-star Michelin chef, or the equivalent.

As a marketer though, Mike knows that the quality of the personnel is just a starting point. He is constantly making sure that it translates to a customer experience and level of enjoyment people will rave about. Customer experience is something he markets very well and, in fact, very simply.



Would this image inspire you to visit a restaurant?



Better looking than any chef, if you're interested in eating.

Filling all the tables in the restaurant? That certainly is a constant goal at Ocean Reef. But rather than expend resources making a celebrity of his chef, Mike chooses to show the result of what culinary skill provides. In other words, what you, the customer, can and will experience.

As a resident of Ocean Reef you will find that the marketing of the culinary program is about you and about your dining pleasure. Being that you live in the Keys, it’s very possible you enjoy Key Lime pie.

Check out RetailTribe's web page <http://www.retailtribe.com/features/caradverts> with a number of great car advertisements. The page includes marketing insights as to why the car ads are so effective in driving sales.



Well, Mike has laid down the challenge. Is the Key Lime pie at Ocean Reef the absolute best? Come and try it.

The following week he'll showcase an Asian Fusion dish and the week after a simple steak. After a couple of months you'll have seen something that's a

personal favorite and there's your excuse to visit the Ocean Reef restaurants.

We can translate this to the car business, as well. It's a tough trick, marketing-wise, to promote Audi or Lexus or whichever brand. The car makers know you can find out everything you need to know about the specifications and performance of their cars on their website and on any number of review sites. They know that in any marketing they're doing, they need to appeal to the customer's values or interests.

RetailTribe has created a web page with a number of great car advertisements - <http://www.retailtribe.com/features/caradverts> - together with some commentary about why they are so successful in driving sales. If you read last month's article on the different markers the different generations have, you'll find this relates well to it.

Dee Forsberg, with her two-site instruction facility west of Minneapolis, is fast becoming the Mike Leemhuis of the coaching world. Understated. Good at her job. With marketing that shines a light on her golfers and their experience.

There's nothing complicated. It's very simple. Many of you may wonder if it's too simple, as you strive to be become celebrities and heroes. But, as it turns out, a post or two a week that shows Dee's golfers having fun encourages those who see the posts to want to join in.

Dee Forsberg McCullagh shared **Dee Forsberg Golf Instruction's** video.

9 January at 17:11 · 🌐

133 Views

Dee Forsberg Golf Instruction added a new video **Jada's video for the Best Pee Wee Golf Swing**.

9 January at 17:09 · Minneapolis, MN, United States · 🌐

Like Page

Jada makes learning golf look EASY.

Like Comment Share

Dee Forsberg, Proponent Group member, pushes all of her marketing levers to shine a light on her golfers and their experiences.

A semi-private club in California moaned that “despite having the best social media team in the industry” they had failed to get their members and local golfers to embrace their ‘Dawn Patrol’ in the summer months. They had hammered away with a series of ads for cheap golf, breakfast included, for those willing to tee off between 6 and 7 a.m.

We turned their thinking around (with the same social media team) and got them to stop advertising the deal and to start posting pictures of foursomes teeing off in the Dawn Patrol time slot, and enjoying

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— *Ian James, RetailTribe*

their breakfast afterwards. ‘Dawn Patrol’ now doesn’t need a discount.

Your ultimate Key Lime pie is a golfer playing a particular golf shot you’ve coached them to play successfully. So why is the Internet full of videos of our 3-star chefs (the coaches) telling us how to bake the Key Lime pie? There should be more videos of the student as they learn to master a challenge.

Let’s see if 2016 can be a year where we showcase the Key Lime pie. Let’s flood the Internet with posts and pins and pictures of our students playing golf shots you’ve taught them to play. **PG**

Do much less selling in your Marketing



We create Campaigns and Content that inspire golfers to engage with their expert.

For world class marketing designed to drive more customers, contact Rick Williams on 215-622-6324 or rickwilliams@retailtribe.com.

Coaching works

Big reasons to swing on plane



**And golfers will buy a whole lot more from you,
worrying less about price.**