

## Change People's Lives, Change the Golf Landscape

# MEMO TO TEACHING PROS: YOU'RE THE GAME-CHANGERS THIS INDUSTRY NEEDS

by Ian James, RetailTribe CEO

Forgive the strong sense of urgency you may detect in this article. It stems from the fact that RetailTribe is on a crusade. Our company is banging a loud drum within earshot of the various PGAs, of management companies, club management associations, golf unions, ownership groups, even the big-brand manufacturers. Our mission at the moment is to get all stakeholders to invest more heavily and more seriously in the most valuable marketing asset our industry has—high-quality instructors. For this to happen, instructors themselves will need to tell their stories more frequently and with a greater impact.

For all the new technology and the ever-increasing communication channels, it's still true that what you say and what you do makes the big difference. That's especially the case if what you say and do makes a strong, positive emotional impression on the people in your audience. Whether it's face to face, in a stamped, addressed envelope, on a homepage, in an e-mail or a social post, the words and images you use, and the order you use them in, are critical.

It's my opinion that the most important words for a golf coach are the ones that I very, very rarely see being used, or see being demonstrated in pictures or videos.

You *change lives*. You don't just coach, give lessons, explain course management and provide us

with a vision of a "swing plane." YOU CHANGE LIVES! Tell us about that. And show us. And when you're done, tell us and show us again and again.

Then, just when you think we might be bored with the notion that you, the golf coach, alter the course of people's lives, find another way to show us and tell us.

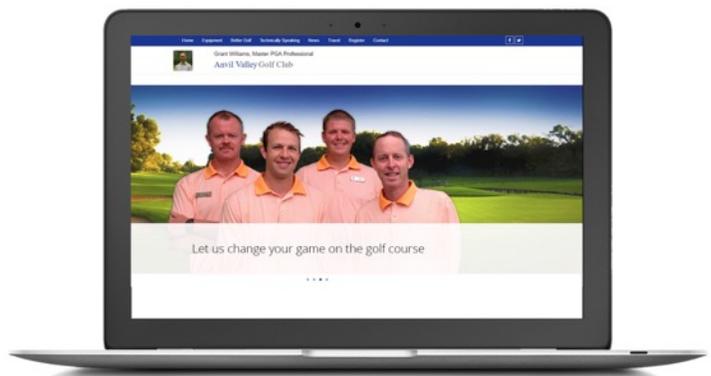
We need you to embrace that challenge. So here are three marketing best-practice tips for anyone in the business of changing lives.

**Your value proposition should be everywhere. It should be on the walls, on outdoor signage, under your e-mail signature and sprinkled throughout your website and social-media home pages.**

### 1. Make sure your 'storefront' lets people know what you do

Whatever the actual name of the academy or the teaching practice you operate, make sure you've found a four-word or five-word value proposition that plants your flag in the market and make certain you've got it displayed as boldly as possible. Now, come to think of it, "We change lives" is only three words—three powerful words. "Creating better, happier golfers" is a big, bold statement that only takes four words to express. And "Making your golf more fun" is just five.

That proposition should be everywhere. It should be on the walls, on outdoor signage, under your e-mail signature and sprinkled throughout your website and social-media home pages. Helpful hint: You haven't displayed the message in enough places unless you, your staff and spouse think you're overdoing it.



**At RetailTribe, we've designed a whole new marketing platform for coaches that's designed to allow content to be easily and consistently published in all the online channels. It's a legitimate game-changer, but only if you seriously want to change the game. What you have to say to people, about the amazing things you do, is what counts.**

In our content, we talk about you changing lives, or providing more fun and enjoyment, or delivering happiness on the golf course. Every business needs a 'Why' factor that answers the customer's basic question, and we use our content to provide a *Why* that hits home. We even talk about you providing golfers with moments more exquisite than those "Coke Moments of Happiness," when golfers apply what you've taught them and strike a perfect golf shot.

Now it's true that the golfer may be interested in *What* you do, and at some point will want to know details about scheduling and price. The golfer may also have some interest in the *How* of your operation, your system and your program. But trust us, they are much more interested in the *Why*. Nothing wrong with *What* or *How*, but it's always the *Why* that drives behavior. It makes people act. It creates movement on their part toward engaging with you.

**We talk about you providing golfers with a more exquisite moment than those "Coke Moments of Happiness," when your golfers apply what you've taught them and strike a perfect golf shot.**

## 2. Show and Tell, every week

How easy is it to take a photograph? How easy is it to add 15 words of encouragement? How easy is it to post the words and pictures? This isn't a 30-minute effort once a week. It's five minutes, maximum, once or twice a week, invested in the most powerful marketing you can do. Showcasing a golfer (or golfers) who have experienced improvement having more fun, striking a better golf shot, cannot be beaten as a marketing investment.

Each week, post at least one very short story about how one of your students has shown marked improvement.

There are a number of Proponent Group instructors who do this very well, and you can check with them on the impact it has. By the way, using all the channels allows you to explode the most powerful marketing tool – word of mouth – to a far, far bigger audience.

**Create Post**

Send an email to everyone subscribed to your website. You can also post directly to your Facebook and Twitter profile. To set up posting to your social networks click here.

**Graham sinks it, every time!**

Graham Woods was struggling with his putting skills and had no confidence on the greens. He recently came for a putting assessment and putter fitting, where we were able to reduce his average putts per round from 38 to 31.

We fitted him with a new Odyssey Big T putter with a shorter shaft (33" compared to the standard 35"). During the assessment, we worked on improving setup and posture at address, allowing him to square the face at impact, and measurably improving his aim. Graham also worked on his distance control by practicing drills we taught him.

He has since reported back that he is sinking more putts of various lengths and has had fewer 3-putts in his last 3 rounds. Well done, Graham!

Book your putting assessment now and let's improve your performance on the greens:  
<http://grantwilliams.com/greensidegolfer/contactus>

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Please select where you would like to post your message. You may select multiple areas to post to:

- New Pin that is tagged as "News"
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 Graham sinks it, every time!
- Facebook
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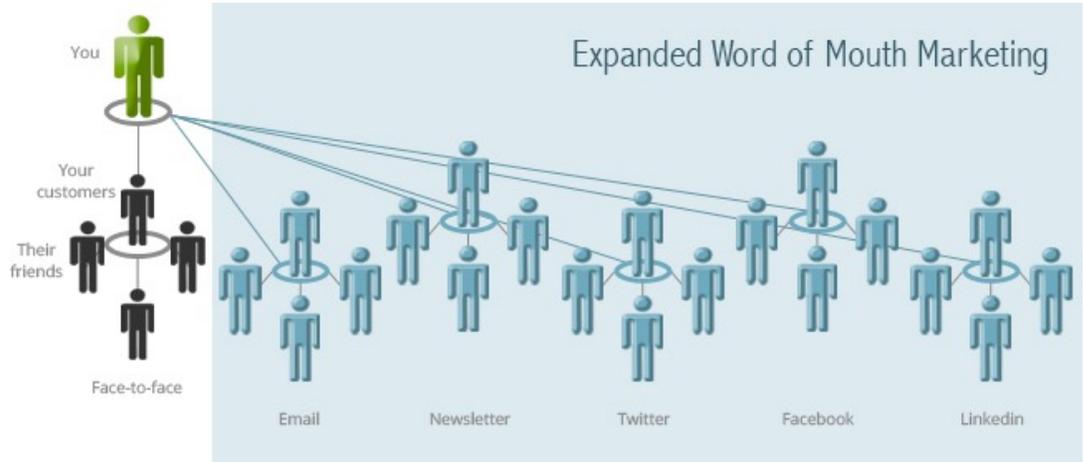
**And if this wasn't easy enough to do, we've now provided coaches with one central place where they can create their post and then distribute it via their website, via e-mail and via all their social-media channels. But again, it isn't the technology that's so powerful. It's you, the teaching professional, changing lives.**

### 3. Make sure your audience recognizes themselves

We could all be a little more sensitive about who we choose as models in our images. We at RetailTribe have encountered legitimate criticism for the overwhelming prevalence of Caucasian male models in the hundreds of articles we create. We've now invested in a group of models representing a diverse range of age, gender and ethnic background.

The reason this point is so very important for you is that customers need to recognize themselves in your promotional materials and posts. If they see an image of someone who seems to have their background, aspirations and concerns, they will be much more likely to connect with your message emotionally.

If this is too simple for you or seems like it's too little effort, then I'm happy. The more time you're engaged with changing lives or learning how to change lives quicker and better, the happier I am.



**Tapping into social media's full power can amplify by many times how you improve lives.**

We need you on the front line. We believe very passionately that the golf industry has undervalued the impact of golf coaches and golf instructors on the well-being of their golf communities. We believe that we need to grow the tribe of golf coaches who've made themselves experts on the What and How of service, technique and instruction, and now have made it their mission to change lives—with tools to emphasize the customer's all-important Why.

Don't be shy about what you do. The golf industry greatly—even desperately—needs you to change people's lives.



**Steve Cottingham has a very large Indian population in his local area. Including a video of a “before” (didn't look at all like a golfer) and “after” (now he looks like a real golfer) with an Indian student had an immediate impact on the number of contacts Steve gained from this community.**

All coaches should have Assessment pages on their websites that they can routinely drive golfers to. But you must have a variety of images covering your target golfer groups on that page (far right). Don't expect to attract Mary Millennial if all you ever show is Traditional Ted.

Dee Forsberg is as good as it gets in showcasing her target students in posts and e-mails (at right). Dee is very focused on juniors but manages to blend her posts between two vital themes, "visibly improved performance" and "groups having fun." PG



Find the quickest way to more fun and enjoyment  
We'll provide you with the quick and easy steps to better golf



"With any golfer, no matter how experienced and skilled or inexperienced and less able, there are always simple adjustments that will add consistency to their golf game. Whatever your level, investing 30 - 45 minutes with us to discover how to hit more better shots than usual will make your golf game so much more enjoyable."

# 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](mailto: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.