

Exciting Stories of Your Success

By Ian James, CEO, Retail Tribe

When a business sends out information to its customers and prospects, we call that public relations, or PR. The basic form of PR communication is the press release, and people who write them do the golf coach a nice favor. How? By churning out dull, dry, forgettable messages.

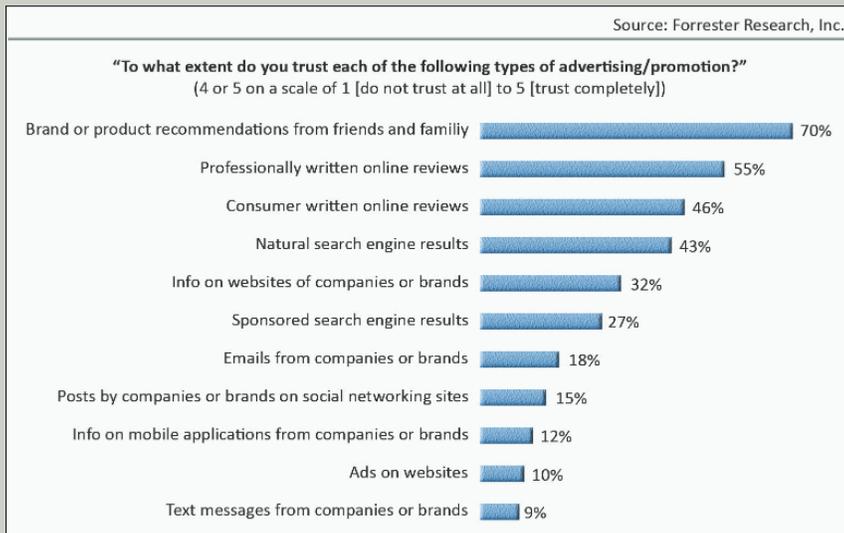
Meanwhile, golf coaches are in a position to produce PR that is interesting, exciting and highly persuasive. On a regular basis you can create messages that will inspire customers to beat a path to your website, your Facebook page and—most importantly—your lesson tee or teaching studio.

Virtually all the PR produced by corporate America has a tedious, obligatory tone. Most likely their goal is to sound factual and credible—unfortunately for them it's an unsuccessful strategy.

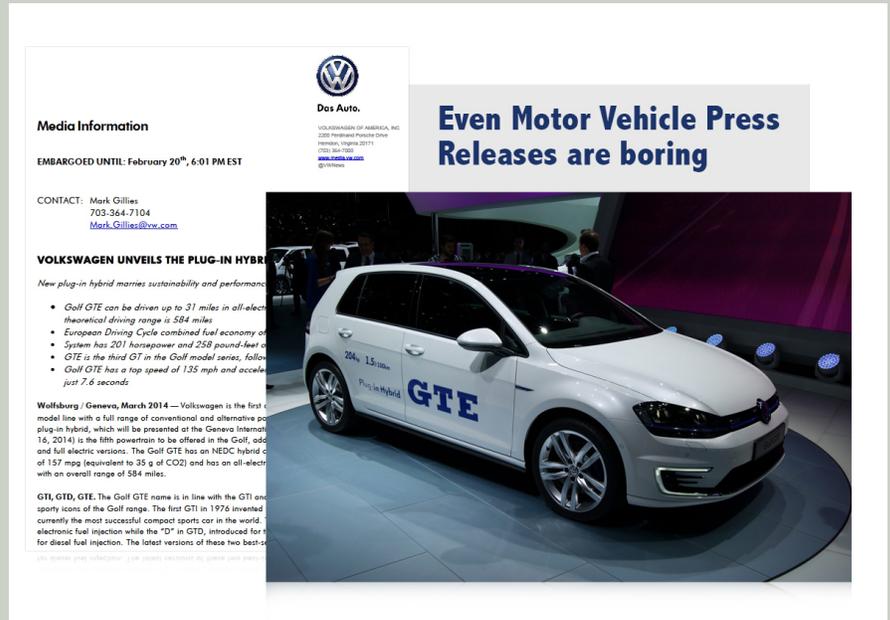
As the chart below shows, customers don't believe what corporations and suppliers tell them.

What they do believe is stories about people who seem familiar to them. In particular they believe those stories when a legitimate expert is involved. That expert is you, and the people in the stories you're able to tell are happy, inspired, improving golfers.

So, it's time to take advantage of this legitimate PR advantage. Every week, publish at least one coaching success story about a player you work with. Golfers who read



Customers don't believe what corporations and suppliers tell them.



Most public relations efforts by corporations fall flat.

these stories will identify with the students you describe. It's a simple but powerful tactic—you merely congratulate the enthusiastic, motivated golfers whose skills and scoring have improved under your tutelage. When you do, the person reading will automatically think about their own potential for improvement.

Of course, there's an art to good storytelling. Keisha Brown, a Content Editor for RetailTribe based in Dallas, has this feedback and simple advice for you to follow:

"I work with many Golf Professionals and they are so modest and humble. It is hard to get them to tell stories about their success. But when they do, they have a tendency to start the story at the beginning, and to talk in detail about the technical swing improvements. You tend to lose people with that approach. Start at the end—i.e., the positive result—then stress the fact that your own well-designed programs are the source of the positive outcome."

Now a horrific story: A recent online survey we conducted at several golf clubs indicated that less than two percent of male golfers between 8 and 20 handicap were interested in having any form of coaching during the next 12 months. That handicap range—your 80s and 90s shooters—represents the largest group of potential customers. Their lack of interest in coaching is one of our industry's great failures.

Many of the people in that group are struggling through their rounds. If they're not enjoying their time on the golf course, how likely are they to stay in the game? The golf industry has a significant "churn" problem. We lose too many players. Of the players we don't lose, too many of them play just a minimal number of rounds. On the recruiting side, golf actually does well: New participants enter the game at a healthy, steady rate. If we could get a whole lot more of them to stick around we would be a stronger, more profitable industry now and into the future.

3 Start at the end: the result, even if it's just an expansion of the title. Less than 25 words.

4 Avoid being technical in the 'how'. The 'how' is not what swing change you made. It's the process. That is what you want others to decide to follow. Less than 50 words.

5 Endorsement is very, very valuable. What appeals to most is the enjoyment on the way to the result. Golfers fear lessons are humiliating and torment.

6 Your communication should have your contact details so that the reader can contact you.

1 The title must tell your story for those who don't read. Usually this will include a result.

2 A photograph will help readers to identify themselves. They may recognize the golfer and that strengthens community and validity.

Martha Aldich breaks 100

Congratulations to Martha, who broke 100 last week and quickly repeated that performance in her next round.

Martha completed a Get Golf Ready class as her introduction to golf a couple of months ago. She then graduated to a group coaching program and here she is 8 weeks later.

"Steve has made learning golf fun. I've met so many people and now I feel like I'm a golfer."

You are, Martha. Congratulations.

[Click here](#) to see our Get Golf Ready schedule. If you know someone who wants to see if they could become a golfer, then get them to call us on (972)-743-2619.



Reinvigorate your audience about the value of golf instruction by celebrating successes and including testimonials.

Before you tape another swing-tip video, think about how you can get the vast majority of golfers excited about signing up for one of your coaching programs. The first step is simple: Crank up your personal PR machine and tell some great stories.

Proponent Success

Golfers Respond to 'Coaching Product' Offers

Paul Kaster, Proponent Group member and an instructor at Royce Brook Academy of Golf in Hillsborough, N.J., has started to embrace the philosophy that he can create and promote limited-space products that are linked to a specific skill and competency.

In his second week with RetailTribe he put together and promoted a half-day school to build awareness of the Royce Brook Academy and Royce Brook Golf Club to his local market. He secured his six students and \$1,620 for half a day's work.

"I have never been this busy in Fall. Not only does the RetailTribe marketing solution allow me to reach out to golfers more easily, but Rick, my RetailTribe Campaign Manager, is full of great ideas on how to grow my engagement with more golfers." – **Paul Kaster**, PGA Professional, Royce Brook Academy of Golf



Paul Kaster

"Selling the Result Really Works"

"Rick (a RetailTribe Campaign Manager) told me to run a 30-yard pitch shot challenge for three hours. I sold more wedges in

three hours than I'd sold in the previous three months. And guess what? I also sold coaching programs.

Then he encouraged me to run a "Speed Challenge" for three hours with the new PING G30 metalwood. I sold over \$5,000 of merchandise in those three hours, with more in the week after. Selling the result really works." – **Bill Abrams**, PGA Professional, Balmoral Woods

Bill is another PGA professional who has embraced "Better Golf as a Merchandising Strategy." In fact, Bill now adds his own ideas to our library of "Playbooks." But guess where the best ideas always come from? That's correct—once a golf professional starts thinking in this way, dozens of good ideas on how to sell the result will come forth. Our staff will struggle to keep up with you.

Meanwhile, in his comment above Abrams is being modest. The 30-yard charity pitch-shot challenge was actually his idea. And he's already got a lot more to follow.

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.

Contact Ian James at IanJames@retailtribe.com or 972-743-0038 or visit us at www.retailtribe.com.



Bill Abrams