

STRIKE WHILE THE IRON IS HOT



By Lorin Anderson, *Founder*

My gray hair will attest that I was around for all of Tiger Woods' rise to unparalleled golfing stardom. When I started at Golf Digest just out of college Tiger was 12 years old and was already regularly mentioned in national golf media. I had the fortune of watching about half of his 14 major victories in person and feeling the

incredible electricity that was in the air when he took over an event and left in his wake a bunch of fellow competitors scratching their heads.

It has now been 10 years since he won his last major at the 2008 U.S. Open. We have Associate Members who during their teaching careers have not witnessed any of Tiger's major wins.

But, the past few weeks have been a wake up call for the industry that Mr. Woods moves the needle like no other athlete on the planet even at age 42. When he showed up at San Diego and was competitive he provided Golf Channel with its best Sunday ratings ever. When he finished T-2 at the Valspar of all places, he basically tripled the audience from a year earlier!

I can also tell you that I ventured out to Bay Hill for a day to see how Tiger's body and swing looked up close. I can report that he seems very healthy, more at ease than I've ever sensed before and hitting shots very similar to what we all saw 10-15 years ago.

So what does this mean for you? Quite simply, be prepared to ride the tidal wave of enthusiasm and interest in the game as it won't last forever as we learned nearly a decade ago. But, based on his first half-dozen outings since returning to competition in December, it looks promising that something akin to the "old Tiger" could be around for a couple of years or so. Get ready

now because it will likely hit a frenzied pitch this week if Tiger is in the hunt on the back nine on Sunday at Augusta.

All good marketers want to know which way the winds are blowing and right now everyone is talking about Tiger and spending more time following the Tour. So how does this translate into more business for you? First, "share of mind" matters. What people are reading about, watching on SportsCenter and hearing during lunch hour discussions creates linkages. Right now they are hearing, seeing and talking about Tiger. This share of mind gets them thinking about taking their kids to the driving range this weekend, thinking about signing up for the after work golf league or thinking about buying a new set of clubs because they realize the set in the garage is 10 years old. And, hopefully they become primed to want to maximize their new or refocused interest in the game by actually wanting to get better at the game, too!

A few tips for leveraging the incoming Tiger Tide that can help lift your business prospects this Spring include:

- 1) Ratchet up your social media posts every week when Tiger is playing and include popular hashtags when posting.
- 2) Increase your budget on Facebook to get your posts in front of thousands more golfers in your area who may not be familiar with you for just a few dollars a day.
- 3) Add more beginner program inventory such as Get Golf Ready or LPGA 101 as there is always a significant uptick in new golfers when the game is leading Sports Center like it has the past couple months.
- 4) Appeal to parents who will want their kids exposed to more golf by starting your summer camp sign-up marketing blitz next Monday after the Masters ends.
- 5) Increase email marketing with specific calls to action, say from every other week to weekly as long as Tigermania rolls on. It won't last forever so take advantage now. **PG**

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