8:42am $20.00   8:50am $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

9:06am $20.00   9:14am $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

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Don't Sell Yourself Short: Converting Tee Time Sale Customers
Brendon Beebe - CTO - foreUP

10:18am $20.00   10:26am $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

10:42am $20.00   10:50am $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

11:06am $20.00   11:14am $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

11:30am $20.00   11:38am $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

11:54am $20.00   12:02pm $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

12:18pm $20.00   12:26pm $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

12:42pm $20.00   12:50pm $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

1:06pm $20.00   1:14pm $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

1:46pm $20.00   1:54pm $20.00
18   4   +$12.00   18   4   +$12.00

I spend a lot of my days trying to figure out how to help golf courses run without tee time trades. As the CTO of foreUP, I'm committed to ensuring that courses have the option to operate without them, but there's one problem: **third-party resellers are capable of sending a lot of golfers to your course.**

This comes at a huge cost, including cheapened green fees, additional maintenance, and a worse experience for full-paying members. While selling tee times may increase occupancy, revenue and profit are far more important metrics for your course.

I've spoken with many courses who removed their tee times completely from third party websites, and while the number of rounds dropped significantly, they've seen revenue increase by up to 30%.

Our key objective at foreUP is to help you grow your club and to become more profitable. In this piece, I'll speak to how I've seen clubs use third-party aggregators in an effective and revenue-producing manner.

The problem with third-party customers

Third party sites view your club as their product; they have no reason to do what's in your best interest. They sell *your* business to *their* own customer base. Without the right tools, a course can become dependent on that relationship, even though it's hurting them.

For this reason, *when a third-party customer enters your property your goal must be to convert them into your own recurring customer.* By breaking the dependency on third party sites you'll lower your costs and increase your revenue.

That being said, what should your goal be with regards to customers from third-party sites?

Goal: **Get them to book on your site, and not on the third-party provider's.**

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How do I change third-party customers into my customers?

Provide an amazing experience

Greet your customers by name.

This is a simple one, but studies have shown over and over again the impact that using their name will have on the player's experience.

Remind them of their tee time before hand.

We'll talk more about that in the second section, but this is a hugely important step to take in order to avoid no-shows.

Treat them like they're a regular.

Golf is a sport that revolves around relationships. People want to feel like they belong and that they're using their money well.

What effect will it have?

The probability of selling a product to a third party customer is between 5%-20%. The probability of selling to an existing customer, however, is nearly 70%.

Convert 2% of third-party customers and cut costs by 10%.
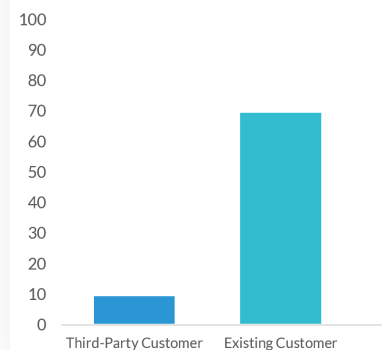
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Communicate Regularly

Gather their contact information.

We recommend that, at check-in, you require an email address (at the very least.) Without an email address you are limited to only text message marketing.

foreUP attempts to make this as easy as possible. As soon as a reservation comes in through GolfNow we create a customer profile within your private CRM. This profile includes a first name, last name, and phone number.
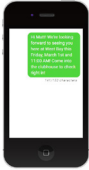
Send a reminder text a day prior to the booking.

This will be your first direct contact with the customer. Be professional and inform them of any special procedure your course has.

Send a thank you email after their tee time, and ask for feedback.

This will be your first contact via email. Let them know how grateful you are for the business and that you hope to see them soon. Ask for feedback and provide a simple form to collect any information you can from them. Give them information on any loyalty programs you have.
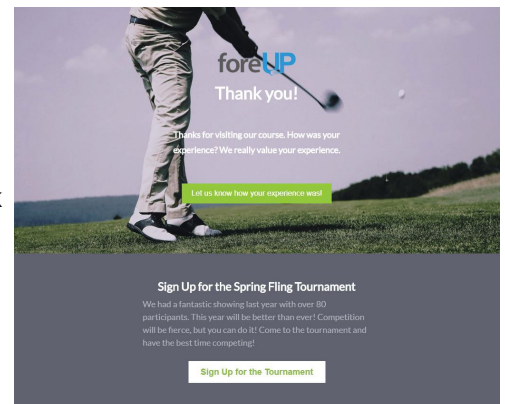
Send an offer the day after their tee time.
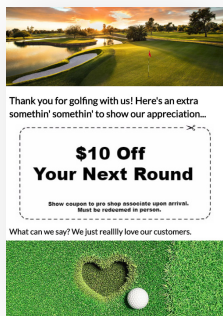
Many times a customer isn't even aware that there is another way to book at your course and believe the best prices will always be at Golf Now. Here is your best chance to convert them. Provide a link to your online booking along with a promo code such as the following:

1. Provide a 10% discount off their next tee time.
2. Offer $10 off a $40 purchase.
3. Free lunch with purchase of tee times.

When sending out course updates and other marketing emails, **make sure to treat customers who came from Golf Now differently.** A customer who has only been at your course once will have different interests than the aggregator, then you will undo all the careful work of getting their email and making them feel like part of the course.
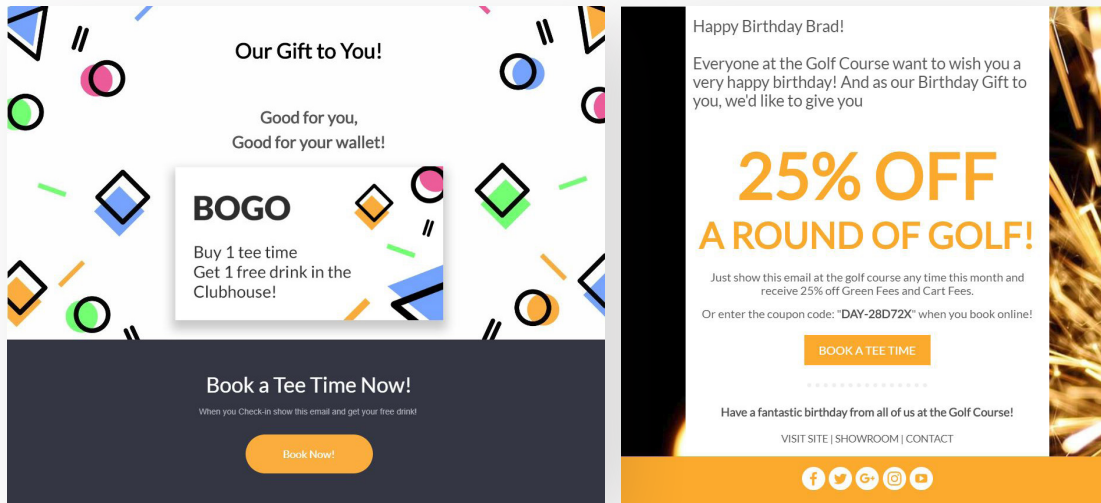
Be creative in your loyalty program

Give them a reason to come back.

For example, offer cash back on all purchases. Even $1 for every $10 could make sense if it helps you convert that 2 % of customers.

Give them a reason to book through your own online booking

Offer them promo codes, tournament coupons, etc. when they book online through your course.

One last note: if you decide to use a third-party aggregator, you must always keep an eye on their tee time prices; **if you consistently offer higher tee time prices than the aggregator, then you will undo all the careful work of getting their email and making them feel like part of the course.**

Sadly, at the end of the day, the player will always go with the lower price, which means that you must offer prices that can compete with the aggregator, otherwise those hard-won customers will ignore your site and just go to the cheaper tee time.

Tired of tee-time trades? foreUP promises to never sell your tee times without your consent. Your players, your data. Keep them both.

Sources: "Leading on the Edge of Chaos","Marketing Metrics"