ClubCorp Enhances Communications Strategy and Creates New Member Benefit with VCT’s ePublishing Services

Founded in 1957, Dallas-based ClubCorp is the world leader in private clubs. Internationally, ClubCorp’s affiliates own or operate nearly 170 golf courses, country clubs, private business and sports clubs, and resorts. ClubCorp has in excess of $2 billion in assets.

Among the company’s nationally recognized golf properties are Firestone Country Club in Akron, Ohio (site of the 2006-2010 World Golf Championships - Bridgestone Invitational); The Homestead in Hot Springs, Virginia (America’s first resort, founded in 1766); and Mission Hills Country Club in Rancho Mirage, California (home of the Kraft Nabisco Championship).

The Challenges:

Through a collaborative communications assessment, VCT was able to help ClubCorp pinpoint its core communications challenges of protecting brand identity and maintaining high standards across 170+ clubs. As a respected owner and management company in the private club industry, ClubCorp knew significant modifications were necessary in order for the Company to achieve its goals of professional communications and distribution consistency across all clubs. Limited resources at the club level meant that ClubCorp needed a solution that would limit the administrative burden on Club staff and ensure that quality was not compromised.

Since member retention was at the heart of its success, the need for a communications tool that would consolidate corporate and club-level communications and double as an added benefit for its members was imperative. With engaged members and measurable conversion tracking, ClubCorp would be able to build loyalty and entice corporate sponsors and brand partners to pay for additional exposure to its membership.

The Solution:

VCT introduced a versatile, ClubCorp co-branded eMagazine uniquely designed for each club. Articles, images, hyperlinks, and multimedia options are easily customized at the club level, yet conditional content and personalization options can also be managed at the corporate level, including dynamically inserting sponsor promotions based on underlying member demographics. By leveraging VCT’s fully-managed services, ClubCorp now has access to skilled interactive marketing professionals who assume the ePublishing responsibilities so that key club staff members can be deployed to other priorities.

Entertaining content such as how-to videos, recipes, golf instructional hints and tips,
contests, and member spotlight articles aim to engage readers and to initiate open streams of communication. Corporate promotions and appreciation offers further communicate the value of being part of a larger network of private clubs.

With optimized click-through capabilities, the eMagazines offer convenient access to online event registrations, dining reservations, tee time reservations, online bill payment, and important information housed on ClubCorp websites.

VCT also provides club-specific metrics reporting, as well as detailed and consolidated roll-up reporting across all Clubs, lists, and divisions, giving ClubCorp and its sponsors a better understanding of member interests and the needs specific to each club.

**Results:**
When compared to the performance of their previous email efforts, ClubCorp recorded an average 95% increase in open rates with the new LoyaltyBuilder™ service. This increase is likely a result of limiting email blasts and consolidating corporate and club-level communications into one highly anticipated eMagazine with additional member benefits.

An increase in member loyalty is reflected in the significant decrease in opt-outs. Across its clubs, ClubCorp is now averaging a 0.1% opt-out rate. With improved branding quality, increased personalization, and more engaging content, club members view their eMagazine as an extension of their membership benefits.

Since implementing VCT’s LoyaltyBuilder™ service, ClubCorp has experienced a 10-fold increase in click-through rates—nearly a 1740% increase from rates recorded with ClubCorp’s previous email systems. With improved click-through rates and convenient access channels, it is not surprising that website traffic across all ClubCorp clubs also shows significant increases on eMagazine distribution days.

open and click-through rates have been experienced since leveraging VCT’s services.

Opt-out rates have decreased considerably and traffic to ClubCorp websites shows measurable increases.

**Quotes**
“We have been able to consolidate our communication practices into a meaningful, reliable service that takes much of the guesswork out of planning around various divisions, clubs and high-level initiatives. The impact of using VCT’s services has allowed us to more consistently meet the demands of our members and how they would like to receive communication regarding their club, despite the limited resources in the field.”

- Amy Bryan
  Digital Marketing Manager
  ClubCorp USA

“I must say that I have been very impressed with the quality and professional look of the eMagazine since day one, but the metrics report provided really makes this tool all the more useful! Kudos to the VCT Team! I look forward to continued success with our eMagazine!”

- Samantha Chapman
  Member Relations Coordinator
  Town Point Club

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