

Interview of Marcus Ekeberg, founder of Greenfee365, the easiest platform to search, book and pay your green fees on line. After a true success in Spain, the solution will be soon available in Portugal, France and Italy.

Tell us in a few words who are you?

I am 31 year old guy who living in Gothenburg in Sweden since the last 6 years, father to a little 3 year old daughter (who takes up most of my time when not working.) I have a great interest in golf obviously but beside golf I love photography, art and of course good food and wine. I think it's important to find the little things in life that makes it special.

You are a true entrepreneur, why did you choose the golf industry as a business area?

Yes, founded my first company when I was barely 18 and since then I've been going strong. The golf industry is extremely interesting from many perspectives, it's an old and very conservative industry. But also an industry that is going through a real shift in everything how it's consumed to how the experience on the golf course is being enhanced by technology. From a consumer perspective I saw a gap on the European tee time market from a really smooth booking platform that easily allowed me to find, book and play. There are a lot of sites selling green fee's and tee times, but many not live and often it's quiet complicated so I wanted to create the seed to the Booking.com or Netflix of golf, a true on-demand platform.

Tell us why you created greenfee365.com last year?

I worked almost 4 years for a golf club called Los Naranjos I Marbella with their digital presence, e-commerce etc. What I found during that time was many flaws in the industry that could be improved, automatized and optimized. Both from a golf club perspective, where I wanted to give the golf clubs a turbo-charged e-commerce platform where they are in 100% control of their product, prices and availability.

From a golfer perspective I wanted to make it really easy to find, book and play golf. What we do is connecting the right golfer with the right golf club. Check our minute challenge to see how easy you can book 3 tee times on 3 different clubs in one checkout.

What makes your solution different from the others?

First of all, every golfer that buys a tee time on Greenfee365 is not our customer, it's a customer to the golf club. We have users on our platform and the golf club has customers. So it is actually the golf clubs themselves that decide if they want to be on the platform, their prices, campaigns etc. We on the other hand have a smart algorithm in the core-engine so we know our users and are able through hypertargeting and marketing intelligence find the right golfer for each golf club. What also separates Greenfee365 from many other solutions on the market is that we only invite golf clubs that we can sell live tee times for, so that you as a golfer always can be sure your booking has been made. Then the platform is really fast, safe and convenient. Our goal is to always be the easiest platform to find, book and play.

Also, it's 100% free to join and our model is performance-based so golf clubs only pay a commission on generated sales.

You talk a lot about knowing the customer journey of a buyer, explain why is it important?

Relevance, in today's society no matter if you live in Sweden, France or somewhere else. You don't have time to waste on things that doesn't interest you. As a provider of a platform like Greenfee365 we must be experts in knowing how our users will behave in certain steps of the buying process. As well as being able to tell if the users is interested in golf club X or golf club Y.

You've chosen to focus on the Spanish market, why not in Sweden to start with?

Spain and the southern parts of Europe is high-volume market in terms of selling green fee's and experiencing golf. There is also a stable flow during the whole year in Spain for instance, in Sweden we have the climate against us. But one of the main reasons for starting in Spain was the network I built during my years working for Los Naranjos in Marbella, so it felt natural to begin down there.

Tell us a concrete example of before and after greenfee365.com for a golf club?

After a golf club starts to place availability in our platform they will pretty soon see an decrease in manual and time consuming tasks at the office – like answering the phone, emailing and answering requests.

But the golfers will still come to the club and play. A key differentiator for the golf club is also that when golfers from Greenfee365 arrive to the golf club, the golf club know who they are – since we don't keep customer data locked in a golden chest. So we have examples where golf clubs have increased their own data base with more than 350% using our model.

Since the golf club can use Greenfee365 at their own disposal and place what times and prices they want in the platform they can really use it as a tool to enhance their existing sales. We calculate that most golf clubs will see an increase in between 10-15% of sales in channels controlled by the golf club themselves through us.

What are the next steps?

Our next step is to move in to Portugal, France and Italy and start working with golf clubs on these markets. What is particularly interesting is that we already have served many French golfers who booked their tee times in Spain through us, they have also requested and asked when we are coming to France so they can use Greenfee365 when they are "home" aswell. But France is also an amazing golf nation with a lot of beautiful golf clubs that we want to make visible to European and worldwide golfers. We are already in discussion with some really high-profile clubs in France aswell so it's safe to say that Greenfee365 is coming...

The logo for La Petite Balle Blanche is written in a green, cursive script. The word 'La' is smaller and positioned above 'petite'. 'petite' is written in a standard cursive style. 'balle' is written in a larger, more decorative cursive font. 'blanche' is written in a similar cursive style to 'petite'. A thin green underline is positioned beneath the word 'blanche'.