

## Brad Jaycock

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Everyday consumer confidence is growing with the ease and security of online purchasing. Customers are accepting the fact that e-commerce is a convenient way to make a purchase, and as a result the multi-billion-dollar e-commerce industry is quickly becoming a larger part of our everyday lives. Despite the huge potential market, many businesses are unaware of the e-commerce trend and could very quickly find themselves in “catch up” mode.

### INCREASING ONLINE TRENDS

As the following statistics indicate, e-commerce in Canada is growing exponentially. With these statistics and knowledge in hand the question becomes how does it apply to the golf industry and how can the individual golf course capitalize on these trends? Here are a few interesting statistics:

- E-commerce sales growth in Canada for this year is expected to be 14.3%, whereas the anticipated US growth is 13.8%. By 2016, predicted Canadian e-commerce sales growth rates should hover around 11%, with US e-commerce sales growing at a rate of about 9.4%.

## Taking Your Golf Shop Online



- The Canadian population has a very high percentage of Internet users. Around 79% of the Canadian population had an internet connection in 2010 and about half of them shop online, according to Statistics Canada. That will climb by the end of this year, eMarketer.com predicts.
- eMarketer.com estimates that this year, 71.6% of internet users in the US will make a purchase online, compared with 60.8% of web users in Canada. By 2016, penetration in the US will rise by less than 6 percentage points to 77%, while the reach of online buying in Canada will go up more than 9 points to 70.1%.
- According to a June 2012 report by MasterCard, overall Canadian retail sales for the first six months of 2012 came in at a modest growth of 2.2%. The report also indicates an impressive growth in e-commerce, up 24.9% compared to the first six months of 2011. E-commerce sales grew for the ninth consecutive month above the 20% threshold.
- Approximately 50% of all Canadian e-commerce purchases are done through U.S. based websites.

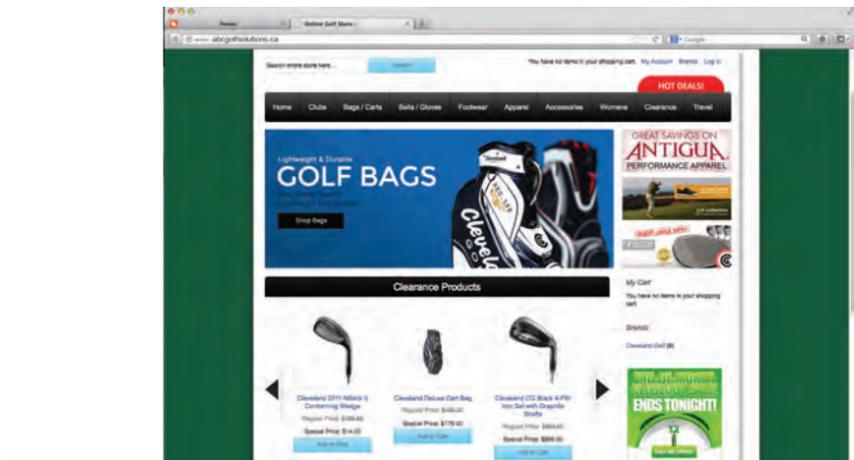
## ONLINE GOLF SHOP

In most cases an e-commerce store is typically an extension of a current retail operation that has been a part of the mix for most retailers for years. Although this is not a new business model or even a new business idea for most, it is for the green grass retail business. It is certainly not new to the golf manufacturers or suppliers who have been supplying product to the big box online stores for quite some time now. However, the manufacturers are now looking to golf courses to expand their green grass accounts.

E-commerce at the green grass level is a win-win solution for both the manufacturers and the golf courses. The manufacturers can reach potential consumers through the pro shop at the golf course and expand their product exposure while the golf course can now maintain a relationship with their consumers year round.

Outside of a few operators that have built their own e-commerce stores, most golf course operators have found it difficult and very costly to setup and manage. It takes a full time staff to monitor, market, and update an online retail environment. As a result most e-commerce golf shops have a limited inventory consisting of mostly gift cards, gift certificates and some green fee packages.

There are alternate systems like the newly launched GolfCourseGolfShop.com that make e-commerce for courses easy. The customized but centralized e-commerce site filled with inventory direct from the manufacturers provides a long-term sustainable



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revenue stream for both the golf course and manufacturers. The golf course’s customers can gain access to a large selection of in-line products as well as specials, deals, and closeouts that have not been available at their course. It is cost effective to have a custom online store that looks and feels like the golf course’s, but is managed and run by a trusted provider.

### ONLINE EVENT REGISTRATION

Another angle to explore as you consider technology advancement at your facility is to provide an effective online event registration for your golfers. Online registration isn’t new, as you have been purchasing your concert and hockey tickets online for years; however what is new is that now you can have your club’s payments for events, lessons, leagues etc., deposited directly to your account, increasing cash flow and reducing receivable issues.

When you make it easier for people to join an event, participation rates will increase. There are many online registration services available, and you may want to explore one similar to Golf EMS which operates directly from your website and provides the host club all the players contact information after the transaction is complete.

### E-COMMERCE AND YOUR COURSE

Michael McNamara, Vice President of Research and Analysis for MasterCard Advisors Spending-Pulse said: “While overall retail sales growth in Canada has been modest through the first half of 2012, the e-Commerce growth rates are truly impressive. The growth in online sales is a good indicator of how Canadian retailers are capitalizing on the shift of sales from brick and mortar locations to online sales channels.”

There is no doubt that a new technology age is upon us in the golf business. Consumer spending behaviours and preferences are changing. Are golf courses willing to evolve with them and profit from the advances in this changing digital landscape?

# Increase Your Pro Shop Sales Year Round With A New E-Commerce Solution!

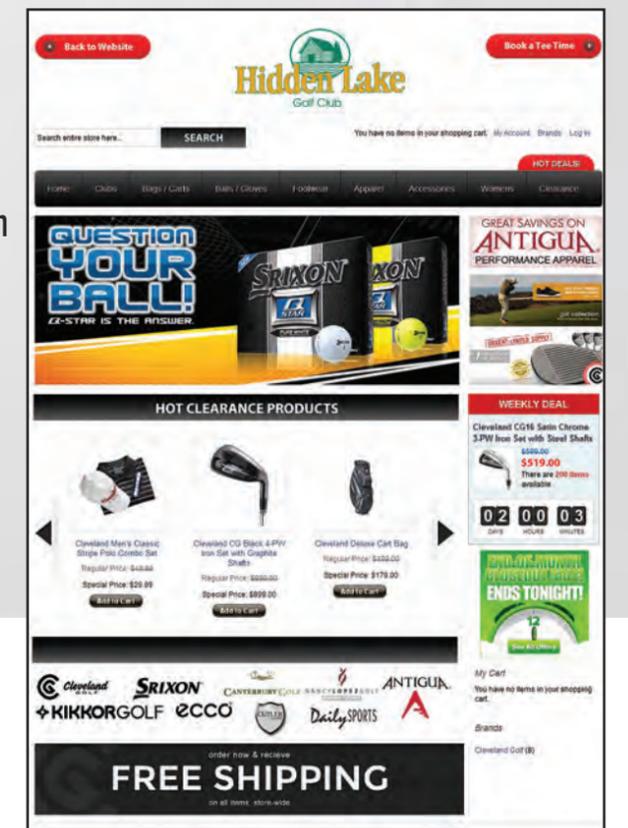
0 Risk | 0 Time | 0 Investment | 365 Days of Incremental Value

**Golf Course Golf Shop.com** is an innovative, turnkey Online Retail Solution to increase both sales and profits for your Golf Shop Operations.

## Key Benefits:

- ✓ Never see, feel, touch or pay for any of the inventories that are in your E-store.
- ✓ Receive commissions on E-store sales each month.
- ✓ E-store is easily imbedded into your current website.
- ✓ E-store is completely managed by GolfCourseGolfShop.com including inventory, shipping and sales reporting.
- ✓ E-store products can be shipped directly to the customer or to the golf shop for customer pick up.

**Fact: Last year, Canadians spent \$15.3 billion shopping online; 83% of those shoppers placed orders with businesses in Canada.\***



**Find out how to enroll at no cost!**

For additional information or to sign up, visit [golfcoursegolfshop.com](http://golfcoursegolfshop.com)