**Gordon Lakes Golf Course**

**Fort Gordon, Georgia**

**Marketing Plan 2014**

**Executive Summary**

Gordon Lakes Golf Course in one of the Army’s premier golf course’s recognized by Professional Golf Organizations as well as the community as a must play course. The course conditions are a notch above the traditional army standards competing in a very competitive golf community. In order to survive and grow the game of golf, we must expand our market reach to educate the community about our programs and our availability. We are open to the public yet the community is unaware. We will focus to expand our marketing reach, grow the number of programs we offer, and increase the number of rounds played through an aggressive marketing campaign that will include focus groups, new advertising campaigns, and improved programs. The Installation will grow in size over the next two years along with growth right outside the gates that will increase the number of available customers. Ensuring we are offering the right programs for the right price is key to attracting those new customers who will live in our back yard.

**Keys to Success**

**\***Outstanding Customer Service

\*Course Conditions

\*Public awareness the course is open to the public

\*GPS on all Golf Carts –Differentiates from competitors

\*New and relevant programs to grow the game of golf

\*Dedicated staff that loves, breathes, and understands the game of golf

\*Desire to provide the best programs and services

\*Leadership support

**Market Review – Gordon Lakes Golf Course**

 **Business Review**

The mission of GLGC is to provide world class golf in a very competitive environment to our patrons to support LOE 2 to enhance community life, foster readiness, promote mental health and physical fitness and deliver a quality working and living environment. The Gordon Lakes Golf Course is the Army’s Premier Golf Course offering a challenging 27 hole Golf Course which plays to all golfers of any ability. Designed by the late Robert Trent Jones Jr., the course was strategically constructed to compete with over 13 area Golf Courses. In a market where golf is the premier sport of choice you must compete on the same level of quality. Price is not the determining factor that brings customers to any course in the Savannah River Area. Quality, location, and accessibility are key drivers.

The Course offer’s the ability to play three very distinct courses that are filled with challenging water features, bunkers, and plenty of trees. The club house is state of the art offering a very nice snack bar and pro shop. A tournament pavilion is available to support tournament play or special golf outings. All golf carts are equipped with the latest GPS (Global Positioning System) and a beverage cart supports the golfers while playing. A certified PGA professional is on staff to assist the patrons and offer clinics and instruction. The program supports a very active membership and hosts many professional level tournaments each year. A driving range, putting area, and chipping green is available for practice. A lightning detection system was installed several years ago and allows our golfers to play longer and safer.

**Financial Review**

**Summary**

Gordon Lakes for the past 10 years has been ranked #2 or #3 in profitability for the South East region. They average about 50,000 rounds per year. Weather is a driving contributor for profitability. The course is opened 12 months of the year with seasonal play during the winter months and typically slower play due to the heat in the summer months. A beverage cart attendant delivers food and beverage directly to the players on the course on busy days. For FY13, the course lost a lot of play during the summer due to an extreme rain with over 11” inches. The winter was relatively mild. Overall not a bad year but down from FY12. In FY10 the course experienced a fire which burned down the cart barn right before the beginning of the season. In order to maintain play, golf carts had to be rented at an estimated expense for the year of $75K. In a perfect year, the course could earn $200K however a typical good year is $100K NIBD.

The snack bar is considered a lunch destination for our patrons. Frequented Monday – Friday mainly by non-golfing folks looking for a beautiful location to enjoy lunch, either in doors or on the patio overlooking our breath-taking course. The menu offers the typical grilled items to include some signature sandwiches and salads. Over all the snack bar is profitable but due to converting flex employees to regular benefited, the labor costs consistently run above Army benchmarks. A beverage cart operates on the busiest days of the play and delivers food directly to the golfer.

The pro shop offers a variety of logo’d merchandise and top selling brand items. Your typical golf apparel to include hats, shirts, shoes, shorts, jackets, etc along with some hard goods such as golf ball, clubs, bags, sun glasses, etc. Most clubs are special ordered. There is no labor and minimal operating expenses charged to that department. IMCOM should consider combining all golf course revenues to one department since the labor is shared to obtain a truer picture of profitability. Most items are cost at a 50-75% COGS depending on the item and volume. Beverages and Sandwiches are sold in the pro shop after the snack bar closes.

**Revenue Comparison of Performance Standards**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Revenue | TotalOperating Expenses | Total Labor Expense | Labor % of Revenue | NIBD | % of Total Revenue |
| FY 13 Actual | $1,418,208 | $1,123,924 | $759,899 | 53% | $62,285 | 4% |
| FY13 Budget | $1,702,200 | $1,196,729 | $815,505 | 48% | $205,121 | 12% |
| FY 12Actual | $1,504,259 | $1,150,690 | $789,003 | 52% | $104,684 | 7% |
| FY11 Actual | $1,541,572 | $1,255,732 | $806,287 | 52% | $22,946 | 1% |
| Army Benchmarks |  |  |  | 50% |  | 15% |

**Snack Bar Operation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Revenue | TotalOperating Expenses | Total Labor Expense | Labor % of Revenue | NIBD | % of Total Revenue |
| FY 13 Actual | $258,948 | $147,429 | $120,620 | 47% | $28,219 | 11% |
| FY13 Budget | $325,668 | $159,922 | $131,788 | 41% | $51,668 | 16% |
| FY 12Actual | $292,657 | $152,053 | $123,406 | 42% | $35,394 | 12% |
| FY11 Actual | $298,602 | $146,376 | $119,509 | 40% | $47,634 | 16% |
| Army Benchmarks |  |  |  | 35% |  | 15% |

**Pro shop Operation**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | Total Revenue | TotalOperating Expenses | Total Labor Expense | Labor % of Revenue | NIBD | % of Total Revenue |
| FY 13 Actual | $216,845 | $1,676 | $0 | 0% | $66,470 | 31% |
| FY13 Budget | $263,999 | $0 | $0 | 0% | $76,060 | 29% |
| FY 12Actual | $205,071 | $617 | $0 | 0% | $60,779 | 30% |
| FY11 Actual | $216,109 | $2,151 | $0 | 0% | $55,656 | 26% |
| Army Benchmarks |  |  |  | 0% |  | % |

**Trends and Changes**

Overall financial revenue has declined in FY13 and is projected to decline even further in FY 14. The new gate access procedures are having a devastating effect on customer accessibility. Even with special gate annual passes, the majority of our non-military regulars do not want to go through the hassle of applying for the pass; the process is cumbersome and takes on average 3 months to complete. Fifty percent of our clientele is from off post traffic. We’ve seen a huge decline in this demographic due to the gate procedures. We have to market our programs via different venues than in the past to reach a larger target. There are over 13 area golf courses competing for the same business. Most of our clientele lives off the installation and in many cases they have an area golf course in their back yard. We are competitively priced, yet not the cheapest in town. We expect in the next two years the demand for our services will increase with the installation expansion of 5,000 troops.

**Program Overviews**

The mission of GLGC is to provide world class golf in a very competitive environment to our patrons. The Gordon Lakes Team prides them in offering top notch customer service, as the manager states, “Serve Popcorn” and receives a smile!” Taking care of employees is key to delivering excellence in customer service. We offer many clinics targeted at new customers such as—Hook a Soldier on Golf, Hook and Retiree on Golf, Hook a Spouse on Golf, Junior Clinics, free golf instruction on Saturday’s to our Soldiers for one hour, and many golf tournaments/scrambles targeted at bringing in the amateur golfer. They host about 60 Golf tournaments a year and have hosted professional tours such as the Hooters Tour, Hopkins Tour, Regions Cup, and for FY 14 the Web.Com Tour.

The facilities include a renovated club house furnished lavishly with quality furniture and fixtures. In FY 15 the facility will receive an upgrade to the front entrance to include new store front glass doors to add some light into the main entrance. Other scheduled renovations include a facelift to the existing bathrooms. The Cart barn was replaced two years ago after it caught fire and completely destroyed 90% of the golf fleet. The cart barn is more functional and supports a better traffic flow for both issuing and receiving carts. The Maintenance Facility is state of the art and can service a huge inventory of golf equipment. A Tournament Pavilion can host up to 200 seated players, and a new starter shack and ball shack was added within the past 3 years. All Golf Carts are equipped with the latest GPS system to assist golfers during play.

The grounds from the front entrance to the farthest spot on the courses, is landscaped and cared for by a top notch professional group of greens caretakers. It’s important to give our customers that first great impression the minute they drive down our long drive lined with azaleas. Having over 13 first class courses in the area to include the number one golf course in America, The Augusta National, we have to offer more than a typical Army course. We pride ourselves in having the ability to boast our course is as good as any other Private Country Club in the area…without the price tag. We are rated by PGA.Com as the number one Army Golf Course and we rank number three in the military. That’s something to brag about.

The snack bar is a full service center offering the typical fare plus some manager specialty sandwiches. Overall the snack bar is a very popular lunch destination for non-golfers simply due to the quality of the food and the atmosphere. Surrounded by glass, a patron has a fantastic view of the course and water features to include the putting green right out front. A small meeting room is available for private luncheons, team meetings, or used by our tournament directors.

The pro shop is well stocked with the most popular items a golfer may need and they offer special order for all other requests. The shop is very inviting and located in the center of the facility, convenient access for all customer needs. The manager’s office is close by and readily available to assist the counter personnel and customers as needed. The pro shop is equipped with a GPS Tracking monitor to track carts and keep an eye on speed of play. An emergency distress button is on all Golf Carts and our Pro Shop team can provide assistance fast in the case of an emergency. A lightning detection system is installed on the course to provide customer safety and results in customers being notified by the pro shop team in the event of bad weather. Customers are notified via GPS and an alarm.

**Market Segmentation** (Demographics and Needs Assessment

Gordon Lakes Golf Course (GLGC) ranks at the top of every Leisure Needs Survey for the past 10 years. The course is very well received by the community and considered a must play by our patrons.

GLGC serves a wide range of customers and offers a three tier price structure. Civilians are grouped into one demographic and pay a set price. The Military Personnel to include DOD Civilians are divided into three pay groups with the vast majority being retired military/DOD Civilians. Membership comprises of 230-250 members with majority being retired. The daily play for non-members is about 50/50 between active duty and Civilians (90% DOD and 10% Regular Civilians). Women make up only about 5% of total play with the majority being retired Spouses. GLGC relies heavily on civilian tournament play from our community.

**Fee Structure**

 **Membership**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Category | Week Day Prices | Weekend /Holidays | Membership Annual | Additional FamilyMembership |
| E1-E5 | $9.00/$12.00 | $11.00/$15.00 | $475 | $675 |
| E6 & Above, DoD/VA | $12.00/$20.00 | $14.00/$23.00 | $800 | $1100 |
| Civilians | $13.00/$25.00 | $17.00/$27.00 | $1100 | $1500 |
|  |  |  |  |  |

**Demographic Statistics**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Age | 35-65 |  |  |
| Gender | Male 95% | Female 5% |  |
| Education Level | High School 75%  | College 25% |  |
| Income Level | 50-75K |  |  |
| Geographic Location | Off Post -10-15 miles |  |  |
| Post Population | 20,000  |  |  |
| Daily Post Use | 100,000 |  |  |
| Open to the Public | yes |   |  |
| Issues for Customers | Gate Access |  |  |
| Promotional Offers | Radio and TV Promo’s |  |  |
| Advertisement | Face book | Web | Radio/TV |
| Often do they play | 2 times per week | Retiree’s |  |
|  | 2 times per month | Everyone One Else |  |

**Situational Review – Gordon Lakes Golf Course**

**Competitive Review**

Gordon Lakes is ranked as the number one Army Golf Course by PGA.com simply due to its playability, customer service, and over all course conditions. In an area where there are over 13 quality golf courses (8 public and 5 private), they must offer similar or better facilities in order to be competitive. There are many factors that drive our patrons to our competitors such as location and gate access. Even though we’ve been open to the public for years, patron’s still do not know we are available to everyone. Our overall course plays a little tougher than most, but that’s what our patrons like. We are the only area golf course with GPS on each golf cart and we have the ability to deliver food and beverage directly to our customers. Our Golf Pro frequently visits the competition to steal ideas or just to compare services. Annual price surveys are completed and analyzed. We are not the cheapest place to play but we are definitely one of the best. We have hosted many professional golf tournaments and work directly with the local schools to host their tournaments. The Chamber of Commerce as well as many area corporations books their annual tournaments/fund raisers with us. We have adaptive carts for our patrons who need these services and the club house and amenities are handicapped friendly. We will match or beat our competitor’s prices for special events in most cases. Overall our play is affordable for the quality of golf you receive.

**External Environmental Analysis**

-**Economic Factors**

The last several years’ golf has been on a decline primarily due to economic factors which include raising commodity prices, sequestration, and gasoline prices. Across the board our patrons have less disposable income then they once had. Many folks once they leave the installation do not want to drive back to Fort Gordon. Most of our patrons live 10-15 miles away and in many cases have a public golf course in their back yard. Because we are home to Masters Golf Tournament, all area courses operate a notch or two above the average. The CSRA has a wide array of house hold incomes with a large group in the middle to upper middle class. Our membership pricing is far below the average and doesn’t require an initiation fee. We do allow open play with our membership having the advantage to book tee times prior to our open bookings.

-**Technological Factors**

Our Golf Carts are equipped with the latest GPS (Global Positioning System) which allows two way communications with patrons and the staff. An emergency feature is included and has saved several lives already. The course is equipped with a lightning detection system which allows our patrons to play longer during an impending storm. The GPS allows our Greens Superintendent the ability to restrict play in area’s and locates carts on the course.

-**Political Factor**

The course is open to the public and we treat all of our customers like they are little Generals….everyone is important. There are no regulatory guidelines that restrict play other than the stringent gate entry restrictions. All patrons must obtain a pass and our members are eligible for annual passes. The process is tedious and many patrons have canceled their membership and several large tournaments have elected to go elsewhere. Our tournament directors don’t want their players going through the hassle to obtain the gate passes especially when the tournaments can start early in the morning resulting in delays.

-**Social Factors**

Most people just don’t have time to play golf and so new programs are targeting additional plans to allow patrons to fit golf into their busy lifestyle. Since most patrons live off the installation and they tend to play where it’s convenient regardless of the quality of our course developing programs that allow patrons to play only the amount of golf they have time for is key. Most of our play 95% is from active duty, retired military, or DoD Civilians. We have a growing number of females and minorities, especially in the Korean market. Females made to feel welcome and we’ve seen our play from this group increase 10 fold over the past several years. In order to grow the game of golf, you must get the folks out to try the game. We offer several programs to introduce the game via free clinics to our young Soldiers, Spouses, and new retiree’s. The Hook Soldier program is recognized by IMCOM as a best practice. Patrons have limited time for social events and we must continue to give our patrons when they join us the best experience in order to fight for their time.

**SWOT Analysis**

**-Strengths**

\*Our key strengths lie in our staff. We have well trained, highly motivated staffs who has worked in the Golf industry for their entire lives. They live and breathe golf. Even with the morale issues we are experiencing from the lack of bonus/awards, they remain committed.

\*We are the only area golf course which has GPS on every cart to include our beverage carts.

\*We have a lightning detection system on our course which allows our patrons to play longer when an impending storm is arising. The patrons feel safe and we are able to contact them via GPS for all emergencies.

\* We have a large number of volunteers who invest their time, and provide many services that reduces our overall operating expenses.

\*Our course is breath taking and is well resourced to keep it in World Class condition.

\*The MWR invests heavily into the course conditions and ensures all equipment is state of the art.

\* Customer service is key along with course conditions and we pay our staff well to ensure they stay with us.

\*The location is beautiful and well laid out. Once on the installation, it’s not too hard to find us. The layout of the course includes lots of water features, rolling hills, and just enough bunkers to make it challenging for most.

\*Great support from leadership.

**-Weaknesses**

\*The main weakness, even though we’ve been open for years, our patrons still don’t know we are open to the public.

\*A very important weakness is the current IMCOM standard that restricts our employees from receiving adequate recognition.

\*Hiring practices are too stringent and takes too long to get folks on board.

\*The lack of employee recognition program that allows for cash bonus and raises.

\*The new wage rates – current and pending. Too restrictive for management and too costly for low wage employees.

\*Restrooms need renovated, project keeps getting postponed.

\*Loss of key management position and current leadership won’t allow for replacement.

\*Current requirement to convert staff to either regular fulltime or part-time.

\*Gate procedures limit patron access or deter them from playing due to the long wait time to get on post or obtain an annual pass.

\*Future financial stability due to the labor rates, gate procedures, staff shortages, and pending loss of key people due to retirement.

**-Opportunities**

\*Fort Gordon is growing with the addition of several new units and the expansion of our current Cyber Command. We expect to grow about 10,000 or more possible new golfers over the next two years. The Cyber Command is a very affluent group that should produce a revived interest in our program.

\*The housing growth right outside our gates along with the growth in Grovetown properties should produce a closer target base.

\*Plenty of room for more golf tournaments.

\*Increase membership with the pending growth. Goal of 300 active members.

\*Improve morale of staff with the new requirements to convert flex to RPT/RFT. The addition of benefits can result in happier staff which in return will make for happier customers.

\*Needs assessment supports the continued viability of our Golf Course.

**-Threats**

\*The new gate restrictions are the main threat to our long term financial viability. We are losing patrons and major tournaments daily.

\*The possible impending labor rates will cause a great financial burden on an already gloom financial outlook.

\*Gate Procedures are too restrictive.

\*Loss of employee’s due to the long wait period to come on board. 60-70 days minimum.

\*Loss in NIBD due to the new labor rates…. $10.10 hour for minimum wage and mandatory benefits.

**Goals and Objectives-Gordon Lakes Golf Course**

**Program Goals**

**Goal: Improve existing programs and create new programs throughout the year to achieve financial goals.**

* **Objective:** Create new programs to grow the game of golf throughout the year.
* Increase Membership by 75 players to a total of 300 new members by year end.
	+ Run annual membership drive and give a referring member a gift for the referral
* Increase Golf Tournament play by 20 tournament to 100 per year
	+ Execute the Web.Com Tour September, 2015
	+ Hire three additional instructors that can teach at different levels at affordable pricing NLT 1 February, 2015
	+ Hire new assistant Golf Pro responsible for executing new golf clinics and programs NLT 1 December, 2015
* Implement 2 new programs per quarter as required by IMCOM Business Standards.
	+ Target patrons who don’t have time to play 18 holes. Start a pay for play program…only pay for what you play.
	+ Expand the Hook a Soldier Program by adding a Hook a Kid, Hook a Retiree, and Hook a Spouse.
	+ Work with other DFMWR programs to create new programs to support their activities…Youth Sports, Youth Camps, Spouse Appreciation Day’s, and ECT.

**Goal:**  **Improve employee morale by creating a Great Place to Work.**

* **Objective:** Improve Employee Morale by implementing a variety of programs throughout the year.
	+ Implement new Employee recognition program by 1 October, 15
		- Implement new Peer to Peer recognition program by 1 October, 15
		- Implement the new “I have a Voice”, employee idea program, 1 October, 15
		- Conduct weekly meetings with staff
		- Keep the new Employee of the Quarter board up to date with the employee’s pictures.
	+ Conduct quarterly employee team building events
		- Share more information daily with team about how we are doing. This will help improve buy in and encourage more ideas from the team.
		- Have lunch with staff more often, invite team members from all areas to sit down with the boss and just chat. Minimum each quarter.
		- Conduct quarterly employee mentoring and midpoint reviews.
	+ Spend more time each day talking with team members. (MBWA)
		- Give out more “Atta Team” awards each day…try and catch’em doing it right. Minimum of 10 per week through entire division. Require all managers to provide input for awards.
	+ Have all supervisors/leaders read the book, “The Great Work Place” and implement the 12 strategies noted in the book beginning with Strategy #3 –Create a Director of Fun.

**Goal:** **Achieve Financial Goals** **to include Army Benchmarks, Annual Operating Budgets, and Participation rates for FY15.**

**Short Term Objectives:**

* + Implement the Labor Cost Analysis and use it daily to compare actual labor worked to target labor to achieve IMCOM BOD Standards, 50% overall labor, 35% in snack bar.
		- Reduce the overall labor % to 50% or below by analyzing the current work force against an optimum TDA.
		- Close the course operations on Monday’s during the winter and hot summer months to reduce labor.
		- Implement a new SOP addressing new play day standards for closing the course when conditions are too cold, wet, or other in climate conditions.
	+ Price current Snack Bar menu/Pro Shop Inventory and adjust prices as needed and delete un-popular items. Complete NLT 1 January 2015.
		- Conduct the annual competitive price survey for the snack bar and compare current menu to competitors.
		- Monthly review from Rec Trac the What’s Hot and What’s Not feature for menu popularity and make adjustments as needed.
		- Input all menu’s into the new On-Line US Foods Order guide to allow the program to update current pricing and COGS to allow for better COGS control.
		- Reduce COGS across the board by implementing a daily sensitive food items inventory, conduct more surprise cash counts, and analyze the sales mix data and take action to eliminate un-popular items.
		- Increase the inventory turn-over rate for the pro shop getting rid of un-popular items.
	+ Execute all approved CPMC projects by third quarter
	+ Increase overall total revenue by 10% to achieve the 15% IMCOM BOD standard for NIBD.
		- In the snack bar implement a new on-line order system for the NLT 1 February, 2015
		- Purchase the Customer Notification system to alert customers when their meal, tee time, etc are available.
		- Work with MP’s to establish a better access method for our patrons.
		- Increase rounds played by 20% -50,000 to 60,000 rounds per year.

**Long Term Objectives:**

* + Within next 3 Years develop plan to build new club house.
	+ FY16 Upgrade electrical to building to allow for improved technology to support facility. –data, phone, electrical wiring, etc.
	+ Create 5 Year CPMC Plan

**Marketing Objectives**

* **Sales Dollars:** Increase the Total Revenue by reaching more customers who don’t know we are open to the public by expanding our current advertising approach. Achieve an overall 2 mil in annual sales by increasing the number of golf tournaments by 20, youth programs by 4, and increase golf membership by 75.
* **Sales Units:** Increase total rounds played from 50,000 to 60,000 by implementing effective programming targeting civilian play, youth programs, and minority play.
* **Market Share:** Increase the number of family members joining by promoting specific membership plans that are affordable. Reach out to the new off post housing units outside the gate.
* **Distribution Levels/channel:** Focus on customer service and the training of employees. Hire a new assistant manager and two golf assistants to reach new customers for corporate event, fund raisers, school golf teams, and professional clinics.
* **Advertising Awarenes**s: Conduct and assessment to analyze the current marketing effort for effectiveness and determine why patrons aren’t aware of our programs. Conduct focus groups for both on post users and off post non-users to find out why customers choose to play elsewhere or determine more effective ways to reach them.

**Marketing Strategies**

**Product /Customer**

Gordon Lakes Golf Course has a great reputation as offering a great value for the quality of play they receive. Customers rave about the fantastic greens and the beauty of our course. Without great customer service, customers would choose to play elsewhere. The leadership team will continue to focus on providing great customer service through well trained, enthusiastic employees, who love what they do and who they do it for. First impressions are very important, and ensuring the customer receives a great first view of the course as they drive up to the club house is key. This sets their expectations of what the rest of the course will look like. We will continue to focus on beautifying areas around the course to give that added touch and feel of a top rated country club. Balancing the cost to provide a first class course with the available funds is challenging but achievable.

Products offered through the Pro Shop will primarily consist of high quality logo’d type items, shirts, balls, caps, etc, along with top selling brands of the same type of apparel. We will continue to offer special order/fitting of hard goods. Reducing our on hand inventory to increase our turn –over rate is important. We will focus on creating more relationships with suppliers that can deliver us smaller batches at an affordable price.

Customer as well as employee suggestions are key to providing products/services our patrons want. We have an active suggestion program and encourage our customers through the NICE programs to let us know what they want and provide feedback as to how we are meeting their needs. We encourage feedback and require all of our front counter personnel to solicit feedback from our customers and pass out the NICE cards. The new employee, “I have a Voice Program”, should encourage our staff to share their ideas and in the end improve morale by recognizing their efforts and giving them credit for new and improved programs.

**Pricing/Costing**

Most of the services offered have mandated price structures or IMCOM Business Standards which dictate pricing. Overall, the golf program is very competitive to the surrounding market. We are not the cheapest place to play but when you consider quality of play we are way cheaper than comparable courses. Throughout the year we offer many programs which are free to our patrons to grow the game of golf. If you can get folks to try your program, and offer programs that can develop the potential player, then you can increase your customer base. We will focus on developing new programs that will target the busy individual who wants to play but just doesn’t have time to play a full round of golf. Other programs will include hiring a variety of instructors who charge a different price depending on the level of instruction they are providing to make it more affordable for the beginner golfer to get started. Golf tournaments are key to survival and increasing the number of tournaments we offer is relevant to achieve our BOD Standards. We will match most competitors’ prices for golf tournaments, but in most cases we are already cheaper. Developing new golf tournament packages and promoting these packages to new prospective customers is a primary objective. Management will focus during the winter months on contracting our potential new golf tournament customers to try and fill open dates, especially week days.

**Place/Convenience**

Gordon Lakes is conveniently located on the installation with adequate signage to direct patrons through our gates. However, with the current gate entrance procedures, our guests are finding it difficult to obtain timely gate access. Many tournaments do not want to put their guests through the hassle of having to obtain gate passes which can delay the start of a tournament. We’ve seen drastic reduction in number of attendee’s for tournaments as well as the loss of tournaments. If we can get the patrons to our course they always state we are one of their favorite places to play because of course conditions and the professionalism and tournament support they receive. We have both a covered patio and a tournament pavilion which most courses don’t have. Many of our current customers live between 15-20 miles away and over the past 5 years we’ve seen an increase in new golf courses which are built in and around the most popular subdivisions. With the expansion of the new Cyber Command and the growth explosion of housing right outside our two main gates, we expect demand for our services will increase because we now will be in their back yards.

**Promotion/Communication**

Reaching our current market is important in order to keep our programs relevant, however, too many people, even those who live on the installation are unaware of our programs and of our existence. We must focus on determining why customers are unaware and determine what is the most effective means to reach them and keep them abreast of current events. We’ve been open to the community for over 25 years yet our community partners are not aware they can play our course anytime. Past pricing structures have and some still are not competitive to attract our civilian market. Golf tournaments are a great way to reach new customers and once they come out to play, ensuring we communicate to them they can enjoy our services anytime. Focus groups will be formed for both our on/off post community to see what we need to do to reach them. Currently we promote via television, facebook, and web and sometime via radio. Our staff will perform more cold calls with off post business and attend community events to pass out free passes and literature. Not enough direct contact is being done to grow our program. Our marketing department no longer produces a monthly magazine for our MWR Programs and is focusing on on-line media such as twitter, facebook, and web page. Unfortunately this will not reach new customers who are unaware of the Military way of doing things. We need to build a larger network with our community business leaders and develop a way to reach them. A plan will be developed to determine the way ahead.