
MARKETING THE MASTERS >
ARE PARTNERS PART OF GOLF'S PROBLEM, OR ARE SPONSORS SEEKING SOLUTIONS?



INSIGHT > BRIEFING > 2015

ACTIVATIVE



Marketing The Masters > Partner Problems Or Sponsor Solutions

Golf is in decline! Across the developed world players numbers are falling, courses are closing and viewing numbers are dropping. The sport is in trouble. As golf's most-watched mainstream event, is The Masters an iconic exemplar of the sport's troubles or is it a beacon of hope that offers problem-solving solutions? At its best it is a showcase of elite excellence. At its worst it's a backward looking blend of the Old South and the English aristocracy's Summer Season. For the sponsorship world, the question is whether the activation strategies of those marketing The Masters are exacerbating golf's diminution, or are they tackling the problems in an attempt to reverse the downturn and stop the decline?



GOLF'S DECLINE BY NUMBER

5.3M

Fewer Americans golfers now than in 2006 (National Golf Foundation)

63

Average age of UK golfers playing once a week - up from 48 in 2009 (Sports Marketing Surveys)

-20%

Drop in golf members between 2004 & 2013 (English Golf)

-13%

Fewer US 13-18-year-olds playing compared to 5 years ago (Sports & Fitness Industry Association)

8

Consecutive years of US course closures - 160 of 14,600 in 2013 (Nt'l Golf Foundation)

-3.5%

Decline in global golf sales in 2014 (Golf Datatech)

MASTERS REVENUE STATISTICS

\$115M

Total 2015 Masters revenue - a five-fold increase in 10 years (Golf Digest)

\$30M

Augusta National profit from 2015 Masters (Golf Digest)

\$34.7M

Ticket revenue from 2015 Masters (Golf Digest)

\$12M

Berckmans Place facility hospitality revenue (Golf Digest)

\$6-8M

Cost per brand of an annual sponsorship of The Masters

\$10000

Average black market price of a 2015 Masters ticket

To answer that question one must first understand the reasons behind golf's decline (and inability to attract a new generation) and then analyse whether The Masters and its marketers are causing or solving these challenges.

According to The Economist there are three main drivers to the slump:

- Image: it is seen as an exclusive, elitist and an expensive sport that is the preserve of the wealthy.
- Time: the lengthy duration (four hours per round) and calm, sedate pace no longer fit in with contemporary lifestyles.
- Too Hard & Too Many Rules: it is seen as hard to play (and becoming harder as course designers respond to improved equipment technology with longer, tougher courses) and its rulebook is 200-pages long.

In the past the sport's stars were part of the solution - particularly Tiger Woods, who underpinned interest in the game. But with Tiger in disgrace and decline do the emerging newcomers have the same pulling power?

Today golf's power brokers are experimenting with faster, easier and funkier versions of the sport: from 'foot golf' (a football/golf hybrid) and 'top golf' (hitting gold balls onto big bright targets in outdoor sports bars) to 'urban golf'.

So where do The Masters (golf's first major of the year and perhaps its iconic tournament) and its commercial partners fit into this problem/solution landscape? After all, some argue that the tournament is totemic of the problem.

After all, on the surface The Masters is one of the world's most archaic and taciturn sports properties: it has a mysterious invite-only limited membership elite, a historically sexist policy on women members, a rigid focus on behaviour and dress, an unswerving commitment to maintaining tradition and a secretive, restrictive relationship with broadcasters and sponsors.

Does this mean that these commercial partnerships are part of golf's problem too?

After all, The Masters is run by a private organisation that tightly controls the commercial

aspects of its unusually old-school funding and sponsorship model - one that lacks financial transparency, includes an element of commercial gagging and reflects the sport's closed door, exclusive attitude.

Augusta National takes a secretive, unorthodox broker-style approach to securing its production and broadcast deals - one still partly based on handshakes and gentlemen's agreements.

For example, during the last 60 years Augusta National has sold its domestic TV rights to CBS via covert one-year contracts.

ESPN and Sky add their own on-air personalities, but CBS owns the sole production rights.

There is no official broadcaster bidding - no hint of the type of TV rights auction like virtually every other sports property.

Market watchers agree that The Masters could easily surpass the \$100m per year Fox is paying the USGA to broadcast the US Open for the next 12 years (or the £10m per year Sky pays the R&A for the next decade of The Open rights).

The CBS deals' details have always been an enigmatic, but those formerly connected to the relationship report that CBS simply sends the club a bill for its costs each year and then Augusta National acts as a broker and ensures that its sponsors to pick up the tab.

These sponsors foot the bill in return for a split of the four minutes of TV advertising allowed per hour of coverage.

(CBS isn't allowed to sell other adv slots on the open market in its Masters coverage - thus it simply uses The Masters to boost its ratings).

It is understood, but not officially announced, that the three main brands pay in the region of \$6m to \$8m each.

What's more, there aren't actually that many rights in a Masters package and few visual marketing opportunities due to a ban on on-course branding and 'no camera / no cell phone' rules.

There are no on-site logos, hoardings, flags or billboards (as they might spoil the aesthetics).

The Masters is also the only tournament where caddies do not wear sponsored bibs and instead are dressed in plain white jumpsuits.



Links >

The Masters Website:
Masters.com

CBS The Masters Website:
<http://www.cbssports.com/golf/tournaments/masters>

ESPN Golf Website:
<http://espn.go.com/golf/>

Sky Sports Golf Website:
<http://www1.skysports.com/golf/>



The only branding to be seen on-site is the tournament's own.

(Although the corporate hospitality facilities are lavish.)

There is no question it could generate much more revenue if it adopted a more modern approach to commercial partnerships.

The ticket policy reflects this approach.

Whilst it is hard to get a tournament ticket (as demand is so high and patron badges are handed down from generation to generation), official prices remain 'reasonable' compared to sports with a similar status and demand.

Despite a price rise of \$75 this year (just the second time since 2012), \$325 for a badge that gains access to the four competitive rounds is, according to Golf Digest, 'till one of the great bargains in sports'.

And yet with black market tickets prices averaging \$1000, clearly, with crowds of 40,000 per day, if Augusta National chose to maximise ticket revenue it could generate around \$160m per year

Refreshments are also reasonable: with the Masters price for a sandwich set at just \$1.50.

This even rings true for the official, on-course tournament superstore that sells every imaginable item of Masters-branded merchandise: from the usual array of bags, jewellery, paintings and posters, plus the standard event sunglasses, polo shirts and caps, to more eclectic items such as socks, pants and dog bowls

Some estimates say this shop generates annual sales of around \$50m and yet, oddly for other sports properties but typical of Augusta National, this merchandise is only available for sale for one week each year – Masters Week.

Tradition is everything at Augusta National – maintaining and respecting its old school values and principles comes above financial gain.

What Augusta National gets for not maximising its revenue is complete control.

Reports say the CBS contract includes a lengthy list of dos and don'ts (mostly don'ts).

Reports suggest CBS commentators, announcers and expert analysts can only use

'appropriate' and 'positive' language on air and can't mention money, or any player's shoe manufacturer, clothes endorser or equipment supplier on air.

And they never discuss the issue of Augusta National membership either.

This results in just five hand-picked sponsors of The Masters: three major partners (IBM, AT&T, and Mercedes-Benz) and two supporters (Rolex and UPS).

The sponsorship spots are in demand – despite everything, it seems there are plenty of partnership marketers keen to associate their brands The Masters prestige.

SPONSOR CAMPAIGNS

Of the five current sponsors, all but AT&T seem like the kind of exclusive, premium brands whose positioning and values have synergies with the sport – and thus are reflective of its image problem.

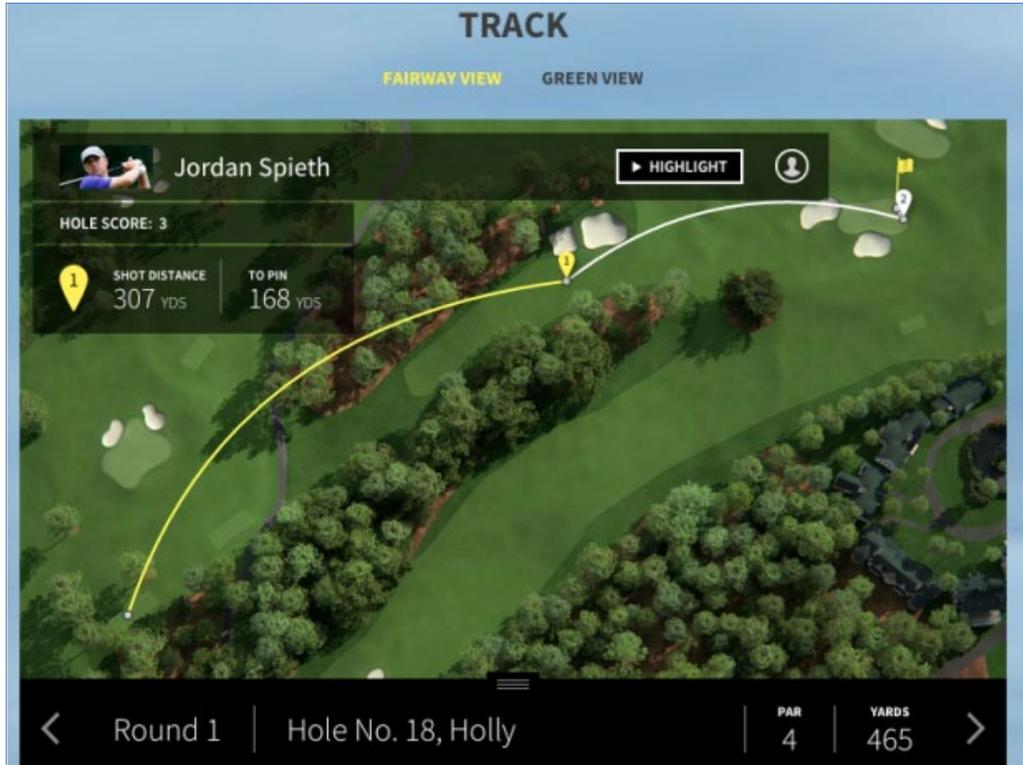
But analysis of their 2015 Masters activation shows not just some of the most sophisticatedly marketed sports properties on the planet, but also some attempts to address the challenges that the sport faces.

Despite all the limits and restrictions, sponsors are working hard to see a return on their Masters investment via innovative value-gaining approaches.

For example, IBM is only allowed a tiny logo in the corner of each page in return for producing the official US Masters' website and apps and yet the quality and sophistication of its digital offering in 2015 was immense.

Indeed, from IBM's on-course live laser and sensor driven data visualisations, to Mercedes-Benz's immersive 3D on-site Performance Centre and dedicated digital channels, the 2015 tournament was progressively activated to use new technology in order to provide deeper fan access to and engagement with the game.

Everyday golf fans may find it tough to get



a ticket to pass through the hallowed gates, but they can benefit from IBM's fully immersive, real-time digital app.

Furthermore, AT&T's strategy of putting eventual winner Jordan Spieth at the heart of its safety-focused Masters 2015 campaign not only suggests skilful ambassador judgement, but also a commitment to social responsibility rather than just using rights to maximising revenues.

This kind of approach would seemingly meet with Augusta National's approval

After all, maximising revenue isn't its primary objective either.

IBM 'Track App & Masters Website' > 2015 saw IBM truly rework and reinvigorate the official Masters app and website.

Sensors, lasers and tracking linking to analytics and algorithms lay at the heart of IBM's The Masters activation, as the US-based multinational technology and consulting giant reimagined The Masters' digital experience through a set of internet-connected devices to capture golf ball trajectories and enable users of its app to follow the on-course action from smartphones, tablets and other web-connected devices.

IBM's second-screen Masters experiences aim to bridge the physical and digital golf worlds to bring fans closer to the live play.

Bringing alive its 'Internet Of Things' skill-set, official technology partner IBM's umbrella, web and app-led activation objective was to develop technology-based utilities that allowed golf fans to get closer to the game in real-time via insightful data analysis infographics for digital users.

Among its array of nifty tools, IBM's key new 2015 technology, called 'Track', enabled the tournament's tech partner to bring the millions of golf lovers unable to make a personal Augusta pilgrimage to be as close to the action as they can by literally tracking golf balls down the course.

The data is funnelled into an aerial map of each hole that lets viewers see how a player navigates his way around the course.

'Track' debuted on the Masters' highly visual website (with a homepage that offers an infinite scroll of widgets updating the action in real-time) and the accompanying mobile apps at start of play on the tournament's first Thursday.

Each widget links to news stories, live streams, photos, videos, infographics, leaderboards, and more.

There are other smart features, including individual pages for each golfer (that offer scorecards, scoring summaries, detailed stats, historical data, and videos of a given player), plus a dedicated page for each of the 18 holes (that includes information like how the hole was designed, cumulative data, aerial flyover videos, and a 360-degree view that lets users click-and-drag for perspec-

Links >

The Masters 'Track'
http://www.masters.com/en_US/scores/track.html

The Masters Website
[Masters.com](http://www.masters.com)

The Masters App
<https://itunes.apple.com/us/app/the-masters-tournament/id309025938?mt=8>

The Masters Livestreams
http://www.masters.com/en_US/watch/index.html

The Masters News
http://www.masters.com/en_US/news/articles/2015-04-10/five_things_for_friday_at_the_masters.html

IBM Website
<http://www.ibm.com/>

IBM Twitter
<https://twitter.com/IBM>

tives from the tee box, fairway, and green).

IBM's official Masters digital platforms moved on from the era of one-dimensional scorecards and data tables, by showcasing real-time data from internet-connected laser sensors stationed right across the Augusta National course via fan-friendly visualisations.

Resulting in play-by-play, real-time visualisation that allows golf fans to interact with the tournament and see the ball's course on every hole on its a simulated course map, the distance of each drive, and other match-relevant data nuggets within seconds of each and every swing of the club.

Other innovative technologies built into the offering include offering iPad users the benefit of using the internal gyroscope to visualise the play from any angle.

According to John Kent, Program Manager of Worldwide Sponsorship Marketing for IBM, the tech sponsor focused on keeping the website and apps simple and clean.

This was part of a joint rights owner/sponsor vision shared by Augusta National chairman Billy Payne and IBM to build digital platforms that carried forward 'the aura of The Masters'.

'He wanted us to create a delightful experience that showcased the beauty and tradition of The Masters,' explains IBM Technology Manager John Kent. 'There's a lot of genuine excitement here, and we wanted to create that on the digital platforms.'

Thus IBM's online leaderboard closely mimics the classic Masters on-course leaderboard at Augusta.

The website also has eight channels of live streaming HD video that offer crisp picture and almost no lag at all.

'It's more engaging for fans, it offers business value, and it helps to expand the audience,' adds Kent.

This 'no-lag, no-crash' digital offering is made possible by using multiple data centres and IBM's cloud platform (which includes predictive software and analytics that take into account traffic data from previous tournaments and social media chatter about a given player).

'Our cloud technology allows us to scale up or scale down when we need it,' explains Kent.

'We're trying to tell a story with the collected data,' adds Noah Syken, IBM's VP of global sponsorships. 'It's an entirely new way to experience a golf tournament.'

IBM promoted its digital activation at The Masters via a relatively low-key ad campaign that included TV and web video focused on data analysis, such as this 'Bobby Jones Golf Swing' film and supporting social media posts.

Comment > Crucial in designing 'Track' and IBM's other Masters web and mobile properties and tools is that the team remained primarily focused on 'telling the story of the Masters' as it



The screenshot displays a web browser window with the URL www.masters.com/en_US/scores/track.html. The page features a navigation bar with 'HOME', 'LEADER BOARD', 'TRACK', and 'WATCH' options, along with the 'MASTERS' logo and 'IBM' branding. The main content area is titled 'TRACK' and offers 'FAIRWAY VIEW' and 'GREEN VIEW' options. A 3D visualization of a golf hole is shown, with a white line tracing the path of a ball from the tee to the green. A player profile for Jordan Spieth is visible, showing a 'HOLE SCORE: 4' and a 'HIGHLIGHT' button. The bottom of the visualization includes a control bar with 'Round 2', 'Hole No. 8, Yellow Jasmine', 'PAR 5', and 'YARDS 570'. The browser's taskbar at the bottom shows various application icons and the name 'David Owen'.



is the sporting and human story rather than the technology that truly counts for fans.

And yet for all this cutting-edge technology, what exactly does IBM get in return for its development of the official US Masters' website and apps?

A minute IBM logo is placed in the top right hand corner of each digital display, a small amount of airtime and very little on-site branding.

Does this really satisfy the Fortune 500 company as it seems to?

IBM has partnered with Augusta National Golf Club since the 90s and its experience of sports sponsorship partnerships dates all the way back to the 1962 Olympics.

In 1996, IBM helped the tournament launch its first website and its digital activation has simply snowballed with the rise of the social-media fuelled, interconnected world.

For IBM, this approach to activating its global flagship sponsorships (an elite set of premium properties that also includes major tennis events like Wimbledon and The US Open and rugby union ones such as the RFU) gives the company an opportunity to showcase our capabilities in front of the world. <

Mercedes-Benz 'Masters 2015' > Early April saw Mercedes-Benz leverage its status as a Global Sponsor of the Masters Tournament through its first event-dedicated digital channels with a mix of entertainment and utility content built around the auto brand's golf ambassadors and promoting the launch of its new GLE Coupé.

Its tournament-specific informative, image-led and video content pieces – revolving around brand ambassadors Martin Kaymer, Bernhard Langer and Rickie Fowler – were seeded across its bespoke 'The Masters' Facebook, YouTube and Instagram platforms.

Whilst it has engaged via a Mercedes-Benz Golf magazine-style web page and blog since 2012 – focusing fully on the golf aspects of the brand including the tournaments and

brand ambassadors – for this year's Masters new dedicated social platforms were added to the activation mix.

In fact, the German automaker kicked off the 2015 golf season at The Masters through its new golf Instagram and YouTube accounts.

The content largely highlights its ambassadors offering behind-the-scenes images and videos of the tournaments – from the pre-event 'Countdown', to the post-tournament 'Review'.

This year marks the 30th anniversary of Bernhard Langer's first Masters victory in 1985 and this was one of the key content themes – with 'Masters Memories' and 'Favourite Shots'.

'The 1985 Masters was certainly one of the most important milestones in my career. You spend years with the ambition of winning that first major. That is what every professional dreams of, and once you have achieved it, it takes you to a new level. There are many great golfers who have played on tour, but only so many have won majors,' said Bernhard Langer.

While Martin Kaymer, who starts out as the reigning US Open champion, offers a set of video shot tips.

Also, both in the build-up to and during the tournament, Mercedes-Benz USA used a range of golf references in social posts about its vehicles this week.

For instance, in posts about the new 2016 C-Class, the brand shared about its Intelligent Drive technology with an image of a pedestrian with a red box around him, indicating the car's intelligence was posted with the text:

'The 2016 C-Class may not come with an option that yells 'Fore!' However, what it does include as part of our Intelligent Drive suite of advanced safety systems is the available Pre-Safe Brake with Pedestrian Recognition.'

Furthermore, more directed posts were published featuring golf clubs or the vehicles on a golf course.

Each brand ambassador drove a Mercedes-Benz GL 450 in Tournament week, with the vehicle fleet also including S-Class models.

Mercedes also provide all players and se-

Links >

Mercedes-Benz Golf Blog
<http://mercedesblog.com/mercedes-benz-plays-golf-as-global-sponsor-for-masters-tournament/>

Mercedes-Benz Golf Website
http://www2.mercedes-benz.co.uk/content/unitedkingdom/mpc/content/unitedkingdom/mpc/mpc_unitedkingdom_website/en/home_mpc/passengercars/home/passenger_cars_world/mercedes-benz-golf.flash.html?csref=mbmagazine_golf_url_240513

Mercedes-Benz Golf Facebook
<https://www.facebook.com/MercedesBenzGolf>

Mercedes-Benz Golf YouTube
www.YouTube.com/MercedesBenzTV

Mercedes-Benz Golf Instagram
<https://instagram.com/MercedesBenzGolf>

Mercedes-Benz Twitter
<https://twitter.com/mercedesbenz>



lected guests of the Augusta National Golf Club with an exclusive vehicle service for the week of the Tournament.

Also at August National itself, the 'Mercedes-Benz Performance Centre' represented the brand as the official Masters vehicle (in fact, this mobile space appears at no less than nine tournaments during the golf season, including The Masters and PGA Championships).

This Performance Center provides an interactive and immersive golf experience and gives fans the chance to review their swing with a professional and play golf in a three-dimensional digital experience.

A range of Mercedes vehicles, of course, are also present at the centre.

The promotional focus was built around the international launch campaign for the GLE Coupé and The Masters promotional elements dovetails with an upcoming multi-channel international ad campaign.

As well as TV spots, traditional ads and online and social media work, the car was presented to Mercedes-Benz VIP-customers from all around the world during the Tournament week.

The car was displayed to Mercedes-Benz VIP customers from all over the world during the week of the Masters Tournament.

As in most other golf competitions that Mercedes-Benz sponsors, at Augusta the German company provides transportation for the players and for the VIP guests of the National Golf Club.

Plus, each of the three main brand ambassadors drove Mercedes-Benz GL 450 during the Tournament week.

The vehicle fleet dispatched for the golf competition also includes several S-Class models.

The brand also produced a 'Mercedes-Benz Golf Kit' for clients and guests at The Masters.

The kit including several components set to compliment watching The Masters.

These range from a branded green cap, a pair of white gloves, a Masters 2015 yardage guide, 12 Callaway Hex Warbord golf balls, a tub of pimento cheese and an invite to the Trump National Golf Club in Los Angeles.

'The partnership with the Masters Tournament is of particular importance for Mercedes-Benz' involvement in sport,' explains Jens Thiemer, VP Marketing Mercedes-Benz Cars, about its eight-year partnership with the Masters Tournament.

'The Masters is a unique event, holding an iconic place in the world of sport. This major gives Mercedes-Benz an opportunity to focus on the shared values of fascination, perfection and exclusivity. So we're very pleased to be partnering with the Tournament now for the eighth year.'

Comment > *The overall objective for Mercedes sponsorships is to deliver on its 'Best or Nothing' brand mantra.*

This goes for its work at The Masters, as well as at its other golf tournaments which include The PGA Championships and the US Open.

This means offering premium experiences for fans, customers and dealers - from gold content pieces to giving its customers a chance to interact with the brand ambassadors at a series of exclusive branded 'meet and greets'.

Mercedes-Benz initially began to get involved in professional golf sponsorship back in the 1980s.

From 2008 to 2013, the automaker was an International Partner of The Masters Tournament and then later became one of the tournaments three Global Sponsors.

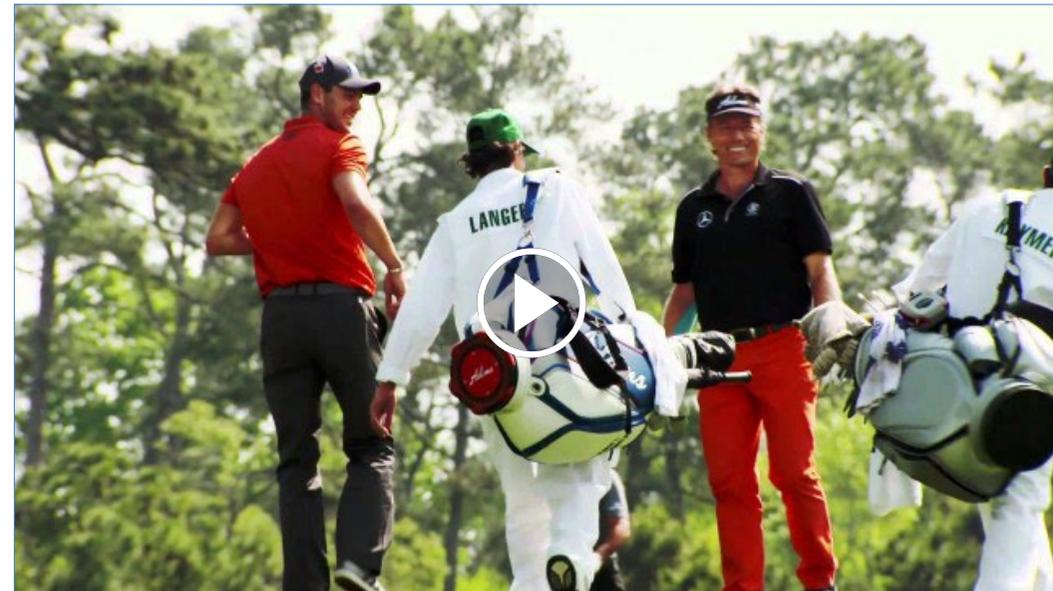
In 2011 it began sponsoring The Open and in 2014 signed a deal with the Professional Golf Association of America.

This deal sees Mercedes-Benz provides the Official Vehicle at the PGA Championship, the Senior PGA Championship and the Ryder Cup.

Mercedes-Benz also sponsors numerous amateur and professional tournaments at national level.

'For us golf's a platform we've been involved in for over 30 years,' says Stephanie Zimmer, head of brand experience marketing at Mercedes USA.

'On our side we have a grassroots golf platform that for us is a way to connect with Mercedes-Benz fans who are interested in the life-style brand.' <







UPS 'Multi-Strand Masters Marketing' > UPS, an International Partner of The Masters, activated its tournament rights with a multi-strand campaign fronted by its golf brand endorsers Lee Westwood and Louis Oosthuizen.

There was no dominant centre to the logistics outfit's 2015 Masters marketing, instead there were a series of interconnected, thematic activation strands each focusing on either one of the ambassadors or a UPS client company.

In addition to the on-air commercial rights and hospitality elements of the sponsorship package, UPS began its tournament activation with a fairly practical and functional, pre-Masters online spot called 'Two Trophies, One UPS'.

This commercial took a practical look at the brand's direct operational role in its two major golfing properties - The Masters & The Open - focusing on transporting the two trophies themselves around the world.

This was followed by additional activation strands - primarily led by social media - focusing on the brand's key golf ambassadors.

As well as the usual sports event, real-time social support for the players (which largely consisted of highlighting good shots and leader board positions), a key element combined Westwood and his caddy Billy Foster.

This included an #AskLeeAndBilly segment - essentially a Twitter-led golf fan Q&A for golf fans to put questions to both Lee Westwood and his caddy (since 2009) Foster, as well as social media content and video interviews and discussions with both of them about the experience and the strategies at The Masters (part of the #UPSSwag hashtag initiative)

This actually continued existing pre-tournament marketing work focused on the relationship between the endorsers and their supporting teams - particularly caddies.

This approach continued after The Masters through a 'Team-Ups' (<http://thenewlogistics.ups.com/sponsorships/golf/teamups/>) feature on 'Golf Ambassadors & Their Caddies' on UPS' own golf site that included offering consumers and golf lovers to ask 'Quick Fire

Questions' to Westwood and Foster,

This interactive engagement opportunity was pushed in late April through online video.

Another Masters social activation strand sued the #AugustaAdvice hashtag and was built around the brand's other participating ambassador Oosthuizen.

It focused on the South African star offering real-time Masters tournament related on-course shot advice on the UPS Twitter feed.

The brand also used its social media channels to highlight some of its previous golf activation and content from late 2014.

This included a 'supply chain' focused campaign called 'Changing The Game' that was built around its client partnership with 'Hopkins Golf' and fronted by company CEO and golf industry veteran Greg Hopkins.

This golf marketing strand is part of an on-going, joint customer/ambassador led set of initiatives focusing on UPS functional benefits.

This also included a 'UPS 3D Printing Services' that was aimed at small businesses and fronted by Westwood.

This first launched in October 2014, and saw a UPS 3D printer in a New York outlet create a replica of Westwood's PING putter.

Another strand (launched in September 2014) saw Oosthuizen pay a personal visit to UPS's very own 'Worldport' distribution facility (and try out the company's flight simulator).

The two golf ambassadors also teamed up together in December 2014 for a light-hearted social initiative called 'Bunker Challenge'.

Comment > *The aim of UPS' golf partnerships is to deliver brand awareness internationally and to help bring customer and employee experiences to life at UPS-sponsored events and at ambassador-hosted golf days.*

Most of UPS' golf marketing revolves around its two flagship property sponsorships - The Masters and The Open (which it claims combine the oldest tournament with and the most prestigious of the majors) with three global golf brand ambassadors (Westwood, Oosthuizen and Jeev Milkha Singh).

Links >

UPS New Logistics Golf Website:
<http://thenewlogistics.ups.com/sponsorships/golf/>

UPS Sponsorship Website:
<https://www.upsponsorships.com/>

UPS YouTube:
<https://www.youtube.com/user/ups>

UPS Twitter:
<https://twitter.com/UPS>

UPS Facebook:
https://www.facebook.com/ups.uk?brand_redir=154423787905266

UPS Google+:
<https://plus.google.com/+UPS/posts>

Its golf presence is further boosted by its role as the Official Logistics and Express Partner to the BMW Masters in China.

The ambassador programme's aim isn't just give UPS' golf presence an instantly recognisable faces (and thus adding a human touch to the golf program), but also to help convey key UPS messaging at tournaments sponsored by UPS.

This often means working with UPS to use golf in order to showcase its services and skills to the sport's senior management fanbase through golf-related campaigns and content that dovetails with the company's wider 'New Logistics' umbrella idea. <

AT&T 'It Can Wait' > AT&T hit the jackpot in early April when it blended its two major golf partnerships – its sponsorship of The Masters tournament and its endorsement of Jordan Spieth – to launch a safety campaign about the dangers of texting whilst driving called 'It Can Wait'.

The added bonus for the telco was that its ambassador front man won the tournament – thus adding a significant awareness multiplier effect to its socially responsible cause campaign.

At the vanguard of this pledge-based initiative was a documentary-style TV commercial, rolling out on 8 April, fronted by Spieth and largely shot at Augusta National itself when he was playing a practice round the previous month..

The spot's narrative reflects a player's Masters tournament journey: not only does it feature the eventual tournament winner hitting golf shots, putting and walking across the famous Hogan bridge, but also arriving at an airport, being in a hotel room and at a coffee shop (always with a phone always in his hand).

"I feel so fortunate to be out on Tour," says Spieth. "The only downside is being away from my friends and family. So I don't know what I'd do without my phone. I use it to stay connected. I use it to remind me of what really matters most."

He then climbs into a Masters courtesy car – a nice little piece of sponsor double-up product placement – and puts his phone in the glove box.

"That's why sometimes," he closes, "I don't use

it at all."

(Perhaps this is also a subtle hint at The Masters ban on cellphones).

The copy read: 'Golfer Jordan Spieth doesn't text and drive, because no text is worth a life'.

The commercial drivers consumers to the campaign microsite – <http://itcanwait.com> – where it offers further information about the dangers of texting whilst driving and urges consumers and golf fans to 'take the pledge'

This spot, Spieth's first TVC for AT&T, debuted during ESPN's coverage of the pre-tournament Masters Par-3 competition on the Wednesday before the main Major tee-off and then, as per AT&T's rights as one of The Master's three global sponsors, moved into the limited commercial space rotation during the tournament.

It also ran on AT&T's social media channels.

According to the campaign press release, what Spieth liked about the campaign was how it captured a day in his life when he's on the road.

'It was intriguing, because it draws people into my personal life – what I'm doing, day in and day out,' Spieth explained.

'I can draw an audience in, but it's something universal. We're hearing more and more stories about teens ignoring the dangers and adults setting a bad example. It needs to change direction.

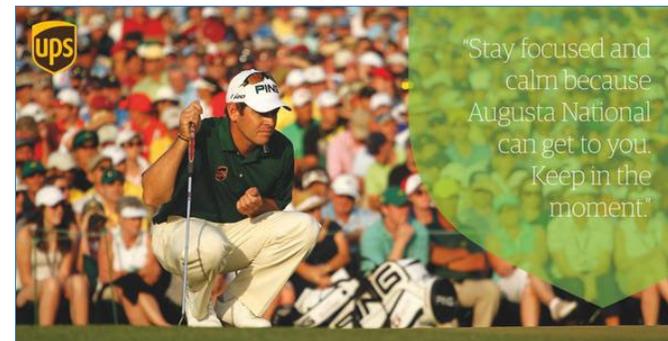
In the PR material Spieth himself stated that he genuinely supports the cause.

'This is more genuine, more natural and has a bigger impact. It's something the entire audience can do. It's not, "Hey, go buy this smartphone" This is very simple.'

Comment > *This is an ongoing AT&T initiative, but this commercial marked the first time AT&T had featured Spieth in its TV creative since it first signed an athlete ambassador deal with the 21-year-old Texan in May 2014.*

AT&T actually first started this project back in 2010 – again its campaign was about the cause rather than the company.

It ran with minimal branding and revolved predominantly around a full-on social media push – this initial phase resulting in more than six million pledges not to text and drive.



Links >

AT&T It Can Wait Microsite:
<http://itcanwait.com>.

AT&T YouTube
<http://www.youtube.com/att>
AT&T Facebook:
<https://www.facebook.com/ATT>

AT&T Twitter:
<https://twitter.com/att>

AT&T Instagram:
<https://instagram.com/att/>

AT&T Website:
<http://www.att.com/>

AT&T Google+:
<https://plus.google.com/+AT/posts>





*Jordan Spieth
age 14*



After Spieth's victory, AT&T followed up the 'It Can Wait' work on 15 April with a more old-school, congratulatory online spot based around archive footage of a teenage Spieth talking about his golfing goals.

This was supported by real-time social media support and congratulatory content.

Both Spieth and AT&T must love it when a plan comes together!

Spieth's multiyear AT&T deal includes making personal appearances and participating in social media and a series of promotions in addition to fronting advertising campaigns.

Spieth's other endorsement deals include relationships with Under Armour, Rolex, Titleist, NetJets and Perfect Sense Digital <

PLAYERS & ENDORSERS

For sponsors who invest in golfing ambassador endorsers and for golf equipment and apparel brands, the clutter-free landscape of The Masters means more emphasis on the players as human billboards than at other properties.

Indeed, Under Armour has no less than 16 logos plastered across Spieth's body for the final round.

Kit and equipment sponsors might benefit somewhat from Augusta's logo-free golfing environment - although the on-air broadcast ban on mentioning brands and the no-logo caddy rules mollify this advantage somewhat.

The golfing world - from property owners and equipment makers, to players and fans - will all hope that 21-year-old Jordan Spieth's victory will act as a boost for the struggling golf industry itself.

Spieth has now established himself firmly in golf's Big 5.

According to a recent SportsBusiness survey of 40 golf industry marketers, tournament directors and media members, Rory McIlroy is the most marketable golfer in the world, followed by Rickie Fowler, Tiger Woods, Phil Mickelson, and in fifth-spot now sits Spieth.

Nike 'Ripples - Woods & McIlroy' > Neither Rory McIlroy nor Tiger Woods came close to the 2015 Masters' Green Jacket, but in terms of off- course sponsor activation both were winners with work led by equipment partner Nike.

On 5 April, the Portland-based sports goliath released a Masters-specific spot called 'Ripple' promoting its golf range featuring Woods and McIlroy with a creative narrative that many took to be something of a passing of the golf leadership baton from the

No Text is Worth Dying for
Join the #NoTextWhileDriving movement on September 19. Take the pledge and make a lifelong commitment to never text and drive. www.itcanwait.com

More than **100,000** crashes a year involve drivers who are texting, causing life-changing injuries and deaths

Teens know that texting while driving is dangerous.

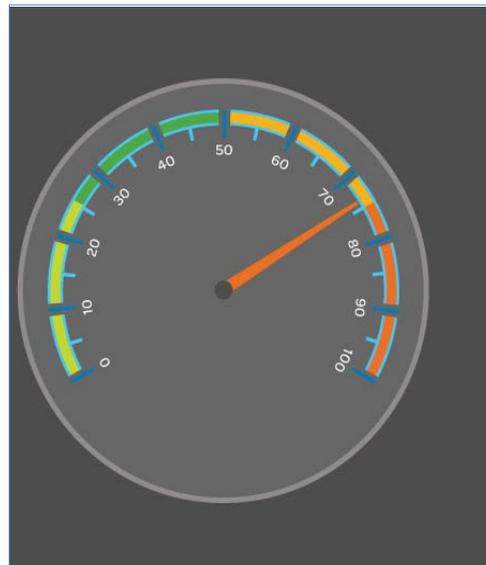
97% say it is dangerous

but...

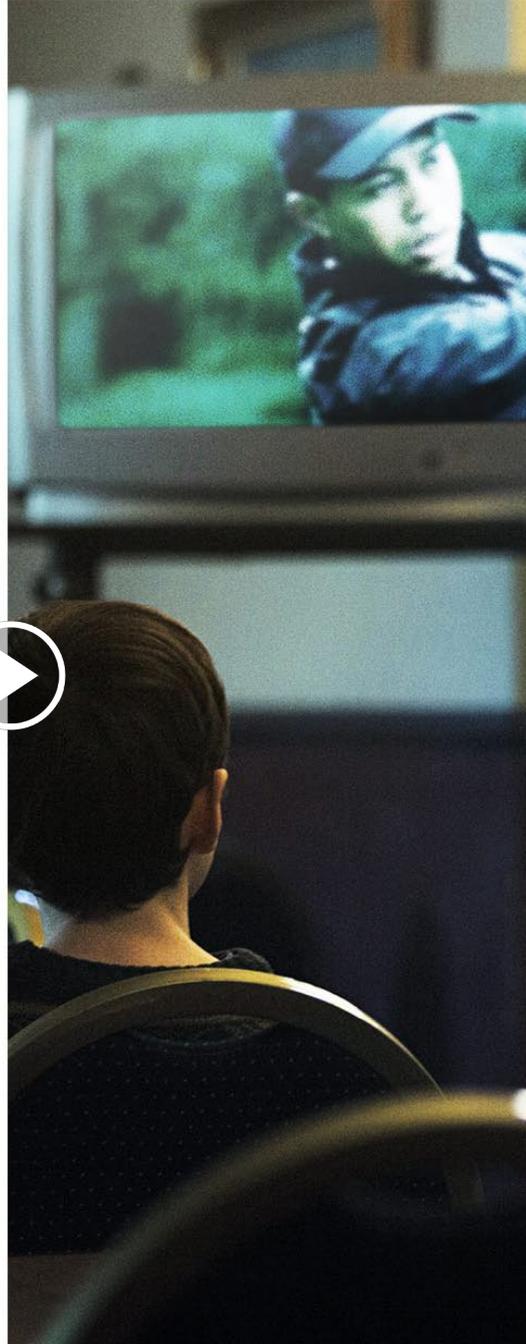
43% of teens admit to texting while driving.¹

77% of teens have seen their parents text and drive - and 75 percent say it is "common" among their friends.²

Texting drivers are 23 times more likely to be in an accident.



74% of drivers admit to glancing at their phone while behind the wheel.



UNDER ARMOUR & JORDAN SPIETH

16 April saw golf's latest superstar Jordan Spieth stepped onto an Under Armour private jet and embark on a victory press tour backed by his apparel partner to celebrate winning the 79th version of Augusta's annual golf major.?

The tour continues the brand's leverage campaign around its latest superstar athlete ambassador.

After all, Spieth's Masters win was also a major victory for sponsor Under Armour (UA) – a brand whose profile and reputation continues to climb.

The Under Armour logo featured on the 21-year-old's hat, shirt, belt, pants and shoes – in fact, the Texan sported no less than 16 UA logos on his clothes for the final round.

Thus flooding television broadcasts and the press with the UA logo – exposure worth millions of dollars in value for Under Armour.

Indeed, according to Adam Grossman, founder of the sports media firm Block Six Analytics, UA received roughly \$6.2m in value based on Spieth's visibility during the tournament.

After Spieth's social media rocketed during his victory, Under Armour moved impressively quickly to capitalise.

It immediately gave the youngster pride of place on its website homepage.

On Underarmour.com, Spieth's photo and various outfits for sale dominate the home page on Monday.

(His website head-to toe look included a \$20 belt, a \$30 cap, \$80 pants and \$75 polo shirt.)

'Thanks to Jordan, our company grew up today,' commented UA CEO Kevin Plank after Spieth's win.

'This [the Masters] is a global event and he's the leading trending athlete in the world right now.'

Plank said Under Armour deliberately dressed Spieth in a 'clean and classic' look that could sell more easily than the more-flashy co-

lours worn by others.

'He was like apple pie with a golf club. There was nothing more Americana than Jordan Spieth this weekend.'

UA followed up on its own and on paid social media platforms to attack the market with golf-related ads and promotions featuring Spieth and the #DriveTheGame hashtag, and a post-Masters Twitter campaign for its 'Golf Pro-Pack' contest.

Plus it will follow this up with a campaign for its first golf shoe – which is out for sale in the coming weeks (for UA – the timing couldn't have been much better).

Comment > Last year UA won Ade Age's prestigious 'Marketer Of The Year' award (see case study) and its upward trajectory seems unstoppable.

The American sportswear outfit, which overtook Adidas in the US market last year with sales of \$1.2bn (£820,000), is now taking on market leader Nike and golf is the Baltimore-based brand's latest battleground.

In sales, UA is still a long way behind Nike's \$8.9bn, but with Spieth's win over Nike's star endorsers Tiger Woods and Rory McIlroy (both of whom are paid in the \$20m-per-year region by the giant Oregon-based brand) golf has become the latest frontline.

This is a relatively recent combat zone.

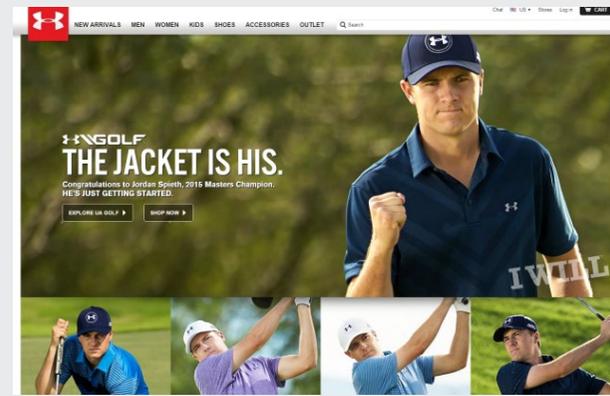
After all, it was only in 2013 that Spieth, then relatively unknown, became Under Armour's first head-to-toe sponsored golfer in a four-year deal.

The relationship was renewed and enhanced in January 2015 when the Texan's impressive showing led the apparel brand to offer him a blockbuster 10-year extension.

A decision that now looks like a master stroke.

'Jordan is an incredible talent and has already accomplished so much in his short career,' said Ryan Kuehl, Under Armour senior category director for global golf and tennis, when the deal extension was announced.

'This long-term commitment to each other emphasizes Under Armour's continuing drive for



Links >

UA Golf Website
<https://www.underarmour.com/en-us/sports/golf/mens>

UA Golf Twitter
[@UAGolf](https://twitter.com/UAGolf)

UA Website
<http://www.ua.com>.

UA Twitter
<https://twitter.com/UnderArmour>

UA Facebook
https://www.facebook.com/Underarmour.uk?brand_redir=1

UA Instagram
<https://instagram.com/underarmour>

UA Pinterest
<https://www.pinterest.com/underarmour/>

UA Google+
<https://plus.google.com/+UnderArmour>

UA YouTube
<https://www.youtube.com/user/underarmour>

Jordan Spieth UA Website
<http://www.jordanspiethgolf.com/sponsor/under-armour>



dominance in the golf category.'

The 21-year-old US golf star could spend the duration of his 10-year UA deal slugging it out head-to-head with Nike's golf star endorser McIlroy to engage with a younger generation of golf fans in the post Tiger era.

Indeed, according to a study before the 2015 Masters study by industry advisors Repucom, the millennials generation are much more likely to look forward to watching Spieth play than more established and older golf stars such as Phil Mickelson.

Click to download Repucom's 'Masters Golf Insights' briefing report.

This could prove crucial to golf's future as a top tier sports and sponsorship event - after all the number of players and the courses have both been in decline for the last five years.

Spieth is just one of an impressive set of both established and young sports stars snapped up by UA in recent years.

From big name ambassadors like Muhammad Ali, Andy Murray (who's deal is worth around £15m) and skier Lindsay Vonn, to other next generation super stars such as boxer Saul "Canelo" Alvarez, dancer Mjissy Elliot and Golden State Warriors Steph Curry (the favourite to scoop this year's NBA MVP award).

This dual, veteran star and next-big-thing combination even fronted UA's recent Spieth TV commercial which saw him play a round of golf with fellow UA ambassador and current Super Bowl MVP New England Patriots quarterback Tom Brady.

Spieth has become the next American face of golf overnight.

Having a youthful winner is a position which will serve UA well for some time to come.

Once again, Under Armour should be congratulated for its far sighted commitment, its brand ambass research and its contemporary activation.

There is little doubt that the twin long term titans of the sports apparel landscape - Nike and adidas - are going to step up their global game if they are to maintain their market leading positions. <





TAKEAWAYS

01 > Logo / No Logo?

With so few on-site/on-course brand opportunities this may be one property at which to go big on logos. Is there such a thing as 'logo overkill'? Under Armour badged Spieth with 16 logos for the final round.

02 > Minimal Rights & TVCs Mean Additional, Non-Tournament Assets Are Of Increased Importance

Thus player ambassadors are typically used as a core creative focus of campaigns leveraging The Masters. Cut through might need more original assets: think off-site experiences, pre-prepared content, or caddies?

03 > 'Values' Judgement: Avoid 'Elitest/Secretive/Controlling' & Seek 'Tradition/Decorum/Excellence'

The Masters is firmly positioned as a premium property - non high-end brand struggle for event synergy? Even the most exclusive brands worry about some property value associations - make yours crystal clear.

04 > Access & Enablement

Few tickets are harder to get than The Masters and few sports are as expensive/restrictive to play as golf. Address these prohibitive golf barriers by offering access pathways to the event/game (esp to youngsters).

05 > If You Are Not Part Of The Solution, You Are Part Of The Problem!

Understand why golf is in decline, tackle the challenge by including solutions at the core of your activation. Consider addressing its image, its values, its demographics, its time/pace-challenges and perceived difficulty.

About Us > The activation of sponsorship rights and partnership marketing is more creatively and strategically complex than ever – but the potential rewards are greater too.

Activative provides unique intelligence and insights that keep our clients - rights owners, brands, agencies and professional services - at the forefront of this evolving landscape.

The old sponsorship model, based on one directional brand-biased claims, vanilla hospitality, logo badging, eyeball metrics, cost per thousand, reach and frequency, is being replaced by one based on authenticity, customisation, dialogue, interactivity and permissive engagement.

Sponsorship is flourishing in this new environment as brands seek symbiotic passionate platforms around which to build consumer conversations.

Activative explores this landscape's emerging strategies, tactics and trends, champions original thinking and innovation and showcases future facing media and new technologies across the sponsorship community - from sports, music, arts and culture, to education, ecology and cause.

Our role is to explore, filter, analyse and advise - we stimulate marketers across the entire space: from traditional sponsorships and to brand tie-ins, to strategic collaborations and commercial partnerships.

A key aspect of the value in our work lies in linking standout sponsorship activation to contemporary socio-cultural, economic and technology trends and in making connections, finding fresh and daring ideas and identifying breakthrough thinking.

We work with some of the world's most forward thinking brands from right across the partnership space - including property owners, brands, agencies, media businesses and other sponsorship professional services companies.

Activative is independent and objective. We are not a mouth-piece for the profession and we have no ties or bias to any agency, rights owner or brand.

Our independent research and objective analysis combine to form directional insights and actionable recommendations.

Our subscribers receive trends' insights, creative stimulus, idea generation, competitor/sector/property analysis and strategic planning intelligence.

Activative's subscription service is based on 3 core pillars:

- > Source: world's no.1 sponsorship activation case study resource
- > Insight: monthly analytical trend/property briefing service
- > Platform: live curated activation online magazine

In addition, for those with a specific challenge or in need of a deeper dive, Activative's research and consulting division offers a range of bespoke services.

From property activation reviews and brand/industry reports, to stimulus showcases, strategy/trend presentations, briefings and workshops, plus responding to specific client project briefs ,our bespoke services are priced according to brief and budget. <

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