



Case Study: Space Coast Golf Clubs

Space Coast Golf Clubs Soar to New Heights with Active Network, Golf's Technology

Each of Brevard County's three municipal golf courses features challenging holes, beautiful views and a team focused on bringing world-class golf to County residents and guests. Finding equally impressive technology solutions amidst budgetary constraints proved difficult...until Active Network helped them reach the top of their game.

Brevard County's Golf Services Manager Dennis MacKee has a host of reasons to feel good about his job. He oversees three popular municipal courses located on Florida's Space Coast: Spessard Holland with breathtaking views of the Atlantic Ocean, The Habitat with its scenic, natural environment, and The Savannahs with spectacular views of Space Shuttle takeoffs. The irony? In the vicinity of the Kennedy Space Center and Cape Canaveral – where cutting-edge technology is regularly put into practice – the county golf courses were not quite as groundbreaking when it came to their computer capabilities. Then, they decided to get Active.

"We were really in the dark ages before we got into this," laughs Brevard County's golf manager MacKee. "We had a paper tee sheet and a different POS system; the two weren't integrated. We also had a closed system onsite; the three golf courses weren't even able to talk to each other." This setup caused a slowdown throughout all golf course operations, from customers wanting to book tee times across courses to ordering items for the pro shop to providing financial data to the county. "Being a government agency," explains MacKee, "you can't have a variance in your sales tax collections, it has to be smack on. So if we had any blips in the reporting, accountants literally had to get in their cars and drive to the courses to do an audit trail for all of our financial matters." Now that Active Network is part of their present, MacKee is happy to declare that those concerns are ancient history. "Let's just say," says MacKee, "that things are much better now."

Easy to Implement, Easy to Use

Any golf course seeking to significantly upgrade their technology faces a multitude of obstacles from networking and computer costs to extensive learning curves that can affect both the organization and customers. Active Network provided Brevard County Golf Operations with an easy-to-use solution that saved them thousands of dollars in networking expenses and had minimal impact on the staff and golfers during the changeover in their busiest season.

Customer at a Glance

Customer: Space Coast Golf Clubs

Solution: GEN

URL: www.GolfSpaceCoast.com

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– Dennis MacKee,
Brevard County Golf Services
Manager

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Active Network's Key Benefits

Efficient Multi-Course Management

Finding an economically viable software solution to connect and manage three geographically-dispersed municipal golf courses – plus management and accounting at a fourth location – seemed an impossible task for a group working without an existing wide area network. Active Network replication capability enabled Brevard County to save thousands of dollars in implementation costs and the opportunity to work with a multi-course software solution with some significant benefits. Here is a breakdown of how Active helped Brevard County golf, and how that solution can also help you.

Share Data Cost-Effectively

By replicating the database across a simple Internet connection, the clubs are able to share all their course data without incurring the expenses of a costly network. Member information is updated to a central database, so when a customer registers at one course, they can check in at any of the other Brevard County municipal courses with ease.

Bringing aboard the new software, Brevard's golf managers could see that the Active Network solution was user-friendly, but they were concerned that some of their long-term employees might stumble through the learning process. "One of the concerns we had was the training of the staff," recalls Golf Accountant Debbie Ueda, "some of whom had been with the county a long time." As Manager MacKee explains it, their Active Network consultant "had everybody practice offline for a week or two in the back room, allowing the staff to get comfortable with it. As a result, when the system went live, the only difference was that it was real." For the actual implementation, the three course installations were completed in the evening and the courses opened the next morning as normal, all during peak season. "The fact that we actually opened the next day under those conditions was pretty amazing," affirms Ueda.

Improving Operational Efficiency

Brevard County Parks and Recreation is constantly thinking of ways to enhance customer service, maximize their resources and improve their financial management systems and reporting capabilities. Active has provided management with an unprecedented capacity to monitor activities on each of their clubs from any location, ensuring that Brevard's municipal courses are operating at maximum effectiveness and efficiency.

- ▶ **Increased Management Oversight.** "Debbie Ueda and I can provide oversight to all three golf courses from a fourth location," explains MacKee. Savannahs PGA Professional Greg Sanders reinforces the value of that feature. "I can be up in my office and pull up a tee sheet, see who is playing and what category they are in. Each customer on the tee sheets is color coded; you can see the type of customer a person is, whether they have an annual card or discount card or are a volunteer."
- ▶ **Enhanced Inventory Control.** The versatility of Active Network allows staff the ability to check inventory at each course's pro shop. "With three locations and the transparency of the system," explains MacKee, "we don't need to keep as deep an inventory of merchandise at each location because staff can transfer items between the courses rather than having to special order an item. That could otherwise cost you your order completely or certainly at the least cost you time."

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Active Network's Key Benefits

View Course Activity in Real Time from Any Internet Connection

Designated Brevard County golf staff can access all three courses' tee times and activities from the office, at home or from any of their facilities. If one course is booked, a clerk can easily check availability and secure a tee time at one of the other courses. The system allows staff to view a snapshot of rounds, receive revenue information and other course data, as well as generate comprehensive reports for each individual course or consolidated reports for all three courses.

Be Confident That Your Course Data Is Safe

Replication provides a built-in, automated back up for all course data and transactions. This piece-of-mind protection ensures that there is no lost data in the event of a communications failure or power outage; it also provides a secure backup in the event of fire, theft or flood.

Maximizing Participation by Targeting Underutilized Tee Times

While it is easy to understand how Active can save courses money by streamlining day-to-day operations, Brevard County's golf group was also excited to tailor their marketing plans according to the now clearly-defined playing patterns of their members and drop-in players. "As a result," affirms MacKee, "we have absolutely managed our revenue-per-round better."

"Using the software," adds MacKee, "we've made some smart decisions relative to morning specials at one course and afternoon specials at another. Not only did we know what tee times we needed to be booking to manage our load, we knew what cannibalization was going to occur if we adjusted our rates. We're doing a very good job not only of managing our load, i.e., the number of people we can put on the course, but of managing our load at the most appropriate dollar rate."

High Performance Under Extreme Conditions

In 2004, Brevard County experienced severe weather conditions, battling three separate hurricanes during an audit of their courses. Golf Accountant Ueda recalls the fact that the government had begun the auditing process prior to the installation of Active's software. "We received a list of their issues during the prior audit. Then, they left us alone for awhile because we were dealing with a lot of damage and trying to get back on our feet. When the auditors came back, they saw the changes we were able to implement with the new system and were extremely pleased with what they saw, now that we now had control, auditability and oversight." "When auditors tell you that their various needs were met by the new software," MacKee adds, laughing, "well, how's THAT for a recommendation!"

