

# **GOLF BUSINESS**

2004  
**Profile Survey**

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The findings cited in this report are based on a survey sponsored by the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) on behalf of their publication, GOLF BUSINESS.

## **PURPOSE**

Through the use of a mail survey representing key recipients in GOLF BUSINESS' domestic, qualified circulation, the purpose of this research project was to provide the editors and advertisers with a profile of this audience.

Specific areas of inquiry included:

- recipients' readership, use, and opinions of GOLF BUSINESS
- their preferences for future topic coverage
- their awareness of the publication's NGCOA affiliation
- their readership of other industry and business-related publications
- the nature of their jobs and purchasing involvement

The survey sample of 900 was selected in systematic fashion by GOLF BUSINESS and Readex from key segments in GOLF BUSINESS' domestic, qualified circulation. The sample for the survey represented 13,252 recipients (or 75% of GOLF BUSINESS' entire 17,597 circulation) at the time of selection.

## **METHOD**

Data was collected via mail survey from June 2 to July 19, 2004. The survey was closed for tabulation with 383 usable responses—a 43% response rate. As with any research, the results should be interpreted with the potential of non-response bias in mind. It is unknown how those who responded to the survey may be different from those who did not respond. In general, the higher the response rate, the lower the probability of estimation errors due to non-response and thus, the more stable the results.

The margin of error for percentages based on 383 usable responses is  $\pm 4.9\%$  at the 95% confidence level. That is, 95% of the time we can be confident that percentages in the actual population would not vary by more than this (in either direction). The margin of error for percentages based on smaller sample sizes will be larger.

*(Please refer to the Appendix for details of the population definition and mailing series.)*

**ABOUT READEX**

Readex is a nationally recognized independent research company located in Stillwater, Minnesota. Its roots are in survey research for the magazine publishing industry, but its specialization in conducting high-quality survey research (by mail and/or the Internet) has brought it clients from many other markets, including associations, corporate marketers and communicators, and government agencies. Since its founding in 1947, Readex has completed thousands of surveys for hundreds of different clients.

As a full-service survey research supplier, Readex offers professional services, and in-house processing of all phases of each project (traditional mailing, broadcast emailing, and data processing) to ensure complete control over project quality and schedule. Analytical capabilities include a range of multivariate statistics and modeling techniques in addition to the more traditional stub-and-banner tabulations.

This survey was conducted and this report was prepared by Readex, Inc., in accordance with accepted research standards and practices.

**FINDINGS**

## Work Profile

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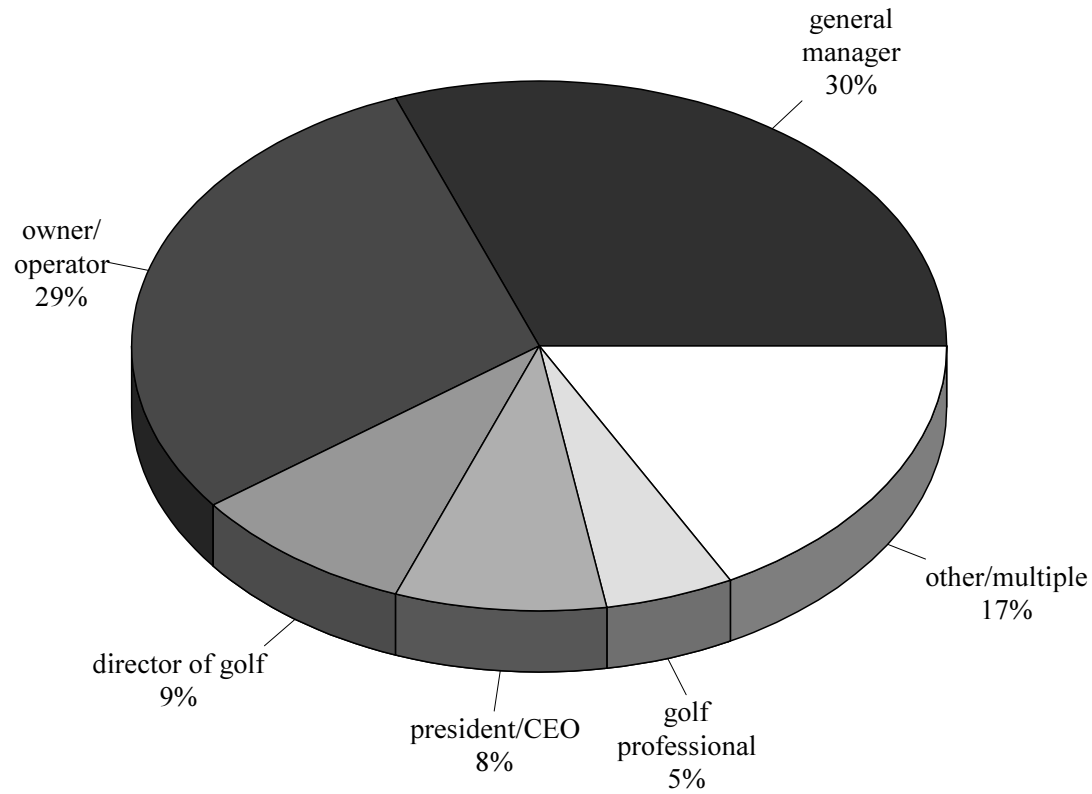
The majority of key recipients<sup>1</sup> have job titles/functions of either *general manager* (30%) or *owner/operator* (29%). No single other job title/function was cited by more than 9%.

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<sup>1</sup> “Key recipients” refers to the 383 individuals from key segments in GOLF BUSINESS’ domestic, qualified circulation who responded to the survey, representing 13,252 individuals (or 75% of GOLF BUSINESS’ entire circulation of 17,597) at the time of selection.

## Job Title/Function

### FINDINGS Work Profile



base: 383 key recipients

## Work Profile

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Organization types are varied. Nearly one-third (31%) of key recipients describe the nature of their organizations as *privately-owned daily fee*. Other organization types indicated by about one in five were *private* (24%) and *semi-private* (19%). No single other organization type was mentioned by more than 8%.

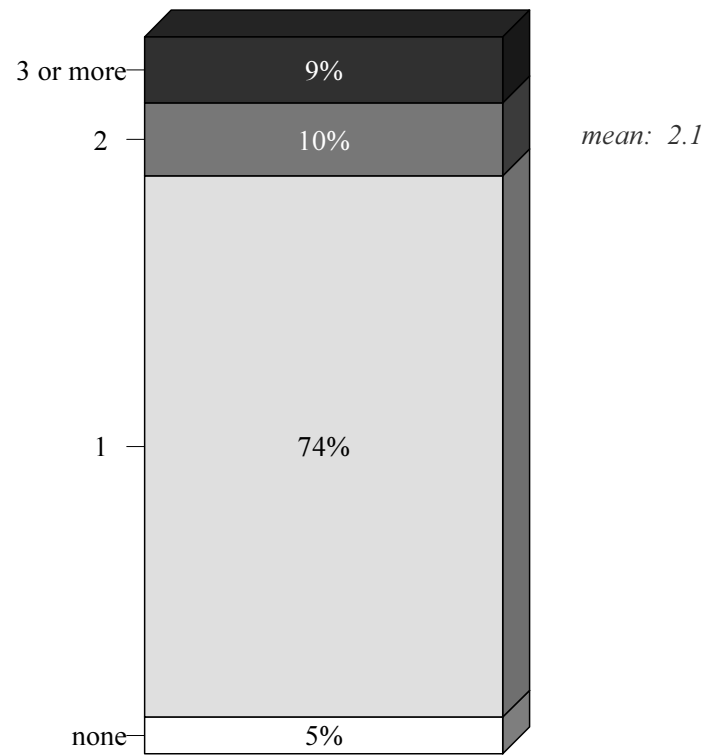
Key recipients' facilities earn revenues, in part, by charging greens fees. The average greens fee for a typical round of golf at key recipients' facilities is about \$28. One-fourth do not charge a greens fee or are at a private facility. Relatively few (16%) have greens fees of \$50 or more.

The vast majority (93%) of key recipients are responsible for at least one facility. On average, they are responsible for 2.1 facilities.

About one in seven (15%) are affiliated with a golf course management company.

## Number of Facilities Responsible For

### FINDINGS Work Profile



base: 383 key recipients

## Purchasing

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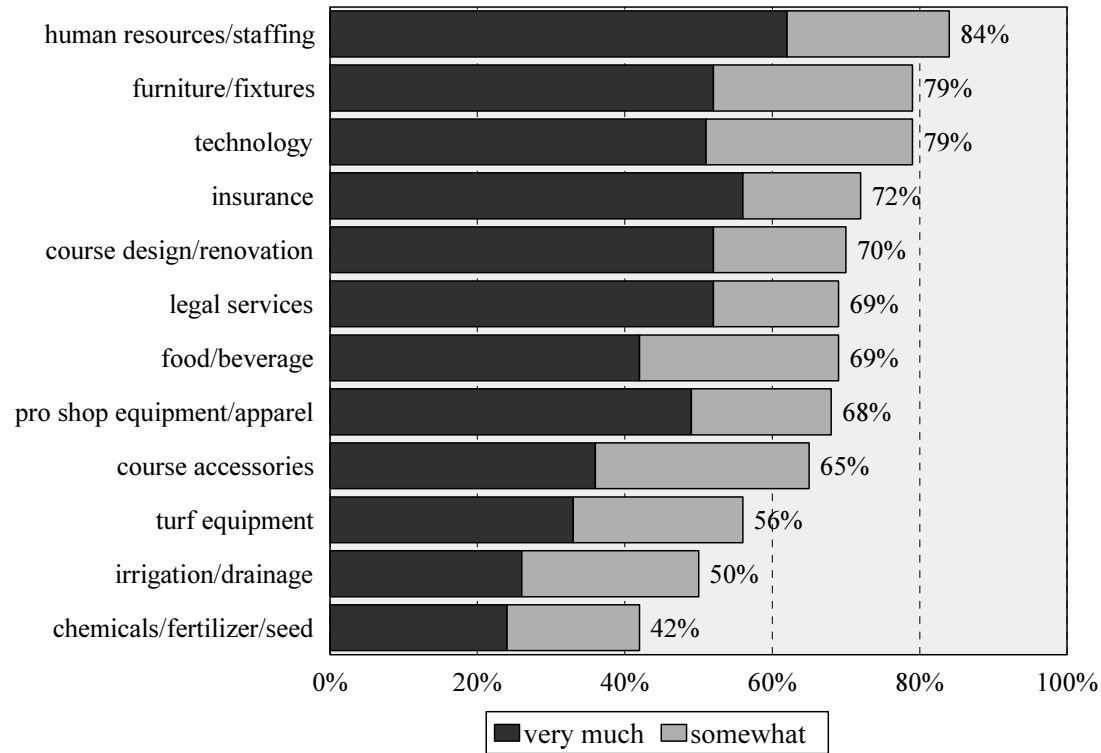
Nearly all (95%) key recipients are involved in some way in their organizations' purchases of products/services (hereafter referred to as purchasers), including 80% at the highest level of involvement—*approve items within budget*.

More specifically, when asked about their purchasing involvement for 12 products/services for their organizations, over four in five (84%) of these purchasers indicated they are involved very much or somewhat in purchases of *human resources/staffing*. In fact, key recipients appear to be involved in numerous areas of their organizations, as at least two-thirds indicated they are involved very much or somewhat in purchases of *technology* (79%), *furniture/fixtures* (79%), *insurance* (72%), *course design/renovation* (70%), *legal services* (69%), *food/beverage* (69%), and *pro shop equipment/apparel* (68%).

As to what factors influence purchasers to become more involved than usual in purchases for their organizations, the most influential factor appears to be *amount to be spent is high* (58%), with the typical purchaser who rated this factor becoming involved at about \$3,000. This factor was cited slightly more often than *purchase affects entire organization* (50%) and *it's my area of expertise* (49%) as factors that influence their decision to become more involved in purchases. Other factors cited were: *it affects the course image* (47%), *general economic conditions* (40%), *staff not knowledgeable* (38%), and *purchase is my idea* (31%).

## Purchasing Involvement

### FINDINGS Purchasing



base: 362 purchasers (multiple answers)

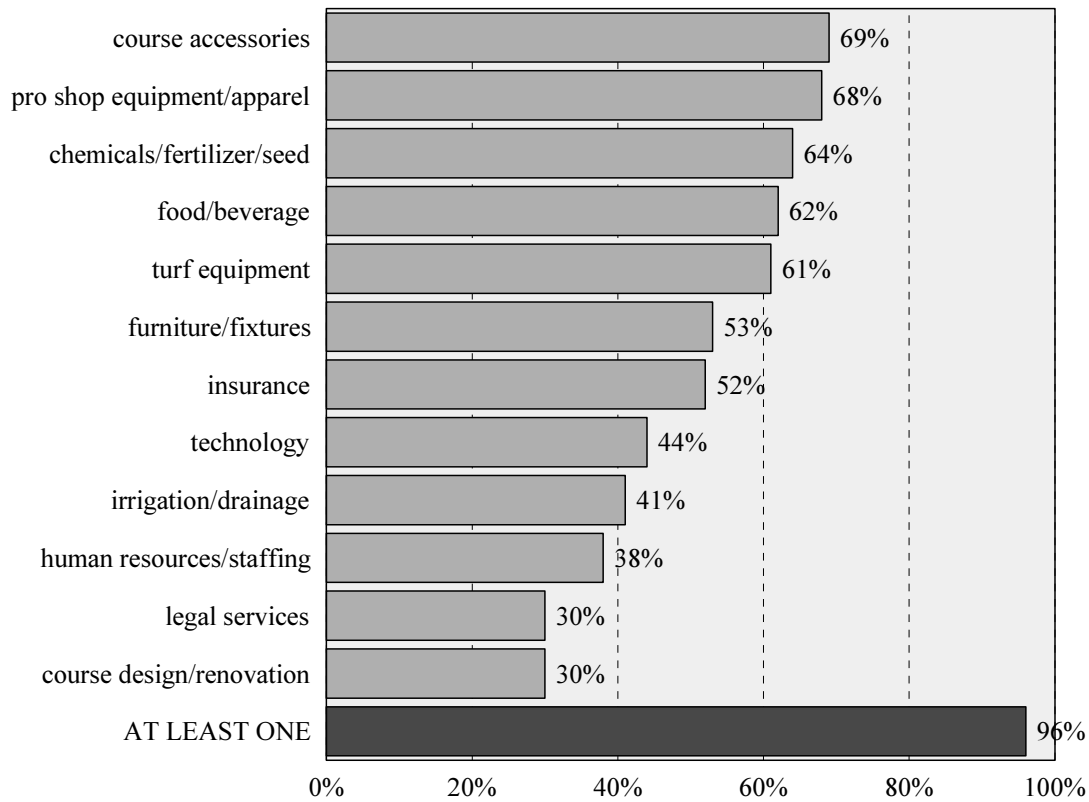
## Purchasing

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96% of purchasers plan to purchase at least one of 12 items asked about for their organizations in the next 2 years, with nearly seven in ten planning purchases of *course accessories* (69%) and/or *pro shop equipment/apparel* (68%). Additionally, over three in five indicated planned purchases of *chemicals/fertilizer/seed* (64%), *food/beverage* (62%), and/or *turf equipment* (61%).

**Products/Services Planned for Purchase**  
in next 2 years

**FINDINGS**  
Purchasing



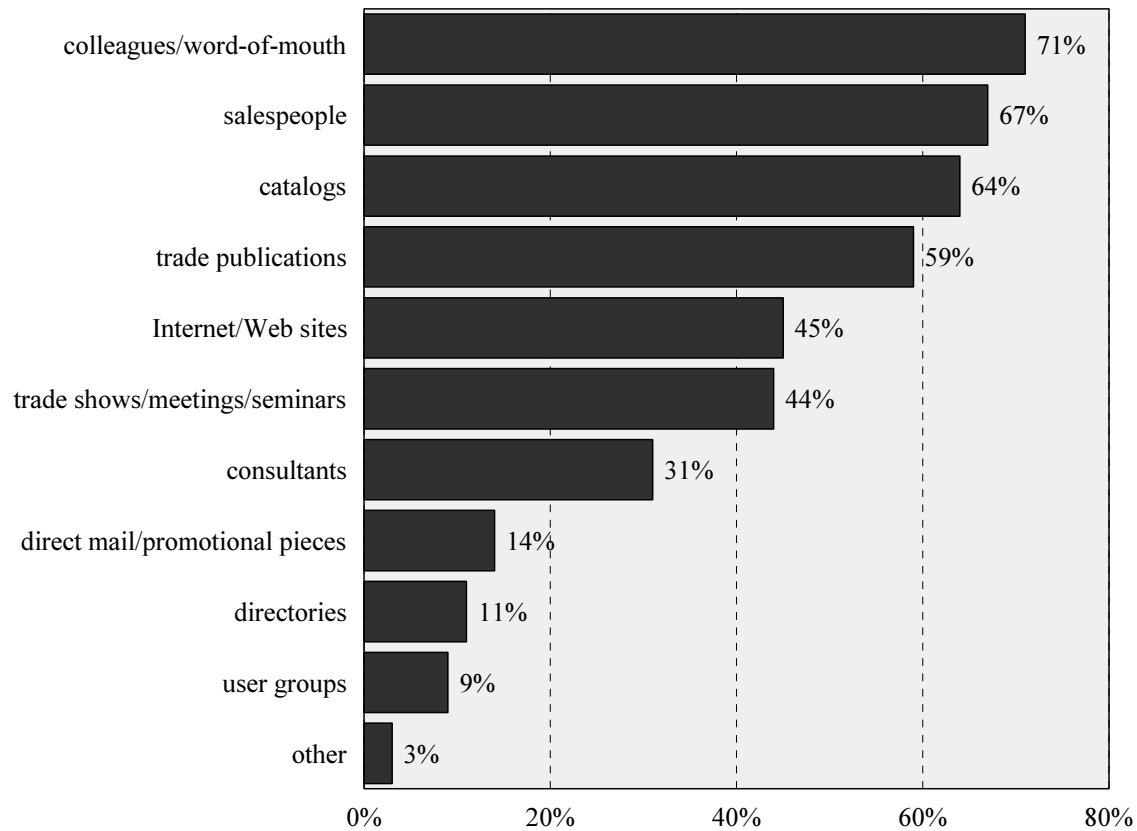
base: 362 purchasers (multiple answers)

## Purchasing

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Purchasers use numerous resources when considering purchases of products/services for their organizations. About three in five (59%) indicated they use *trade publications*. Other mentions by about two-thirds or more were *colleagues/word-of-mouth* (71%), *salespeople* (67%), and *catalogs* (64%).

## Resources Used for Purchasing Information



base: 362 purchasers (multiple answers)

## FINDINGS

Purchasing

## Readership, Use, and Opinions of GOLF BUSINESS

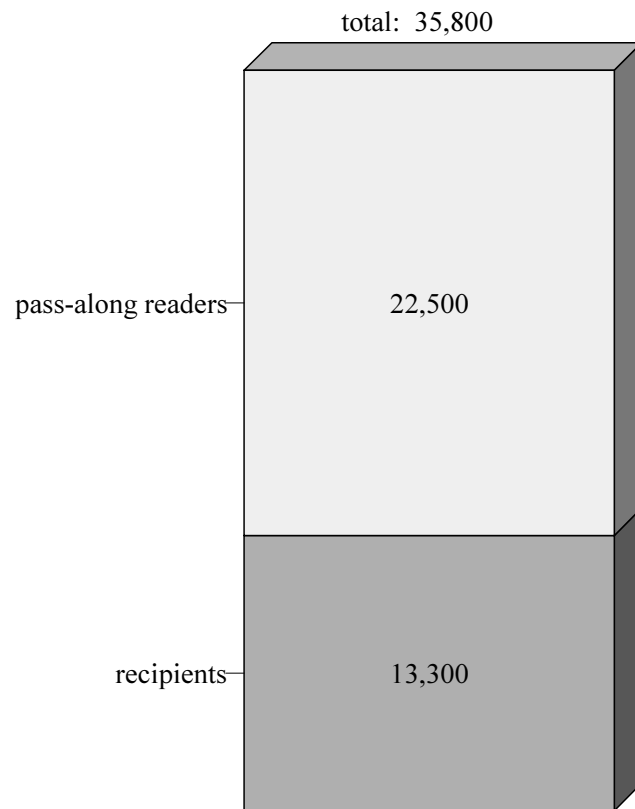
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GOLF BUSINESS key recipients are loyal readers of the publication. The typical key recipient has read or looked through all 4 of the last 4 issues of the publication and spends 42 minutes reading or looking through a typical issue (including all the times it is picked up). Half save their issues for reference. Over three in four (77%) pass their issues to at least one other person. On average, key recipients pass their issues to 1.7 others, extending GOLF BUSINESS' reach to over 35,000 readers.

Over three in four (76%) find the content of the feature articles in GOLF BUSINESS *about right*. Comparatively few find it either *too simple* (5%) or *too complex* (1%).

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## Extended Reach



mean # pass-along readers: 1.7

base: 383 key recipients

## FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and  
Opinions of GOLF  
BUSINESS

## Readership, Use, and Opinions of GOLF BUSINESS

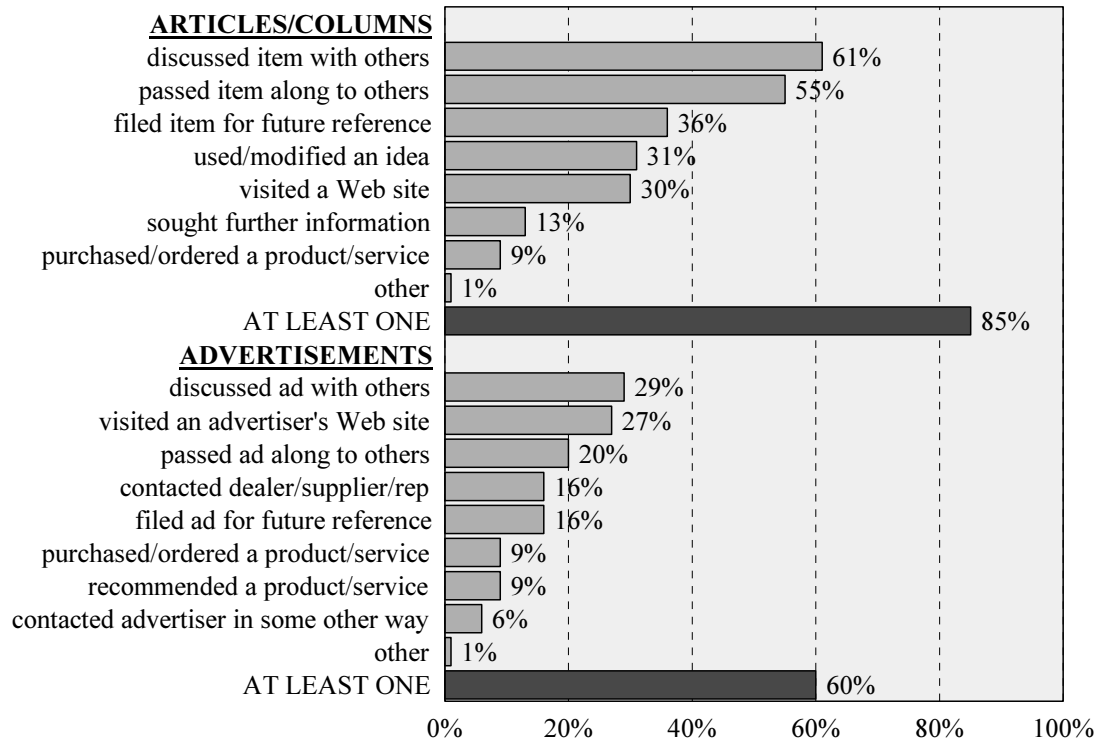
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GOLF BUSINESS also prompts its key recipients to take action. 85% have taken at least one action in the last 12 months as a result of reading articles or columns in GOLF BUSINESS. Over half *discussed item with others* (61%) and/or *passed item along to others* (55%).

A substantial proportion (60%) have also taken at least one action in the last 12 months as a result of reading advertisements in GOLF BUSINESS. Over one in four *discussed ad with others* (29%) and/or *visited an advertiser's Web site* (27%).

Given the proportion who use trade publications as a resource for considering purchases of products/services for their organizations as well as the number of additional readers GOLF BUSINESS brings in, GOLF BUSINESS is a valuable venue for advertisers to reach potential purchasers of their products/services, particularly as 38% indicated advertising in GOLF BUSINESS makes a company/product more credible.

**Actions Taken Due to Reading**  
in the last 12 months



**FINDINGS**

Readership, Use, and  
Opinions of GOLF  
BUSINESS

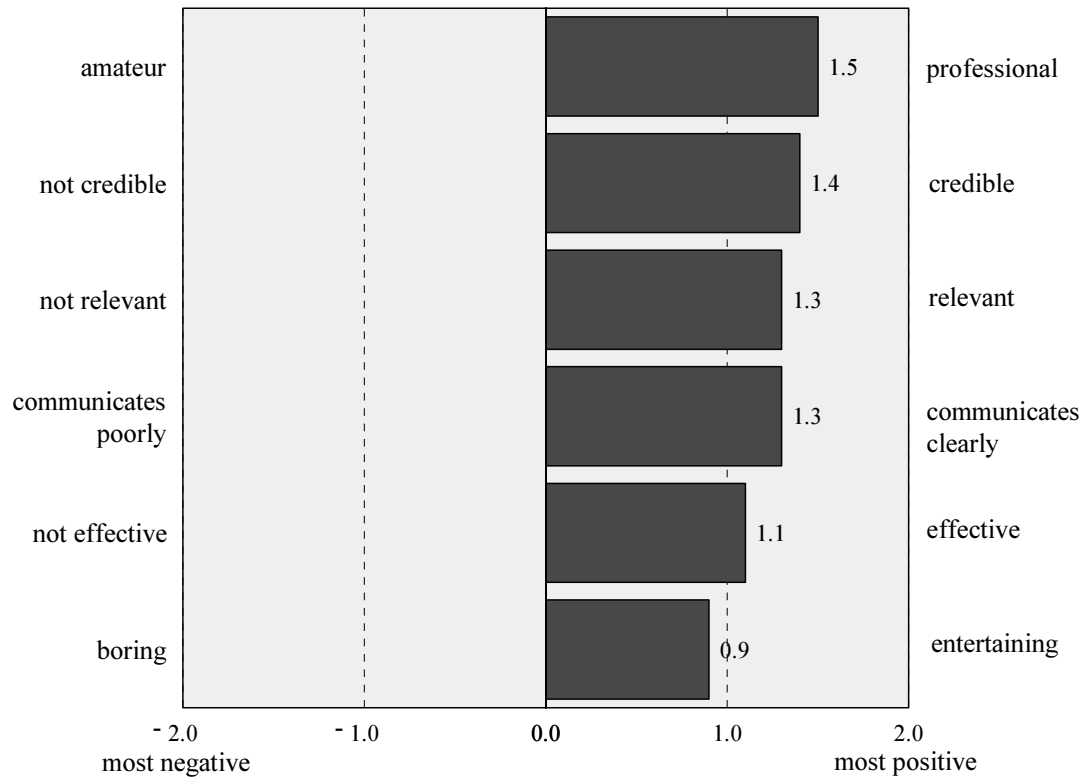
base: 383 key recipients (multiple answers)

## Readership, Use, and Opinions of GOLF BUSINESS

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Using a 5-point rating scale, where +2 = most positive rating of the attribute and -2 = most negative rating of the attribute, key recipients were asked to give their opinions on six editorial criteria of GOLF BUSINESS. Based on the scale's midpoint of 0.0, GOLF BUSINESS is performing well. All six criteria received mean ratings above the scale's midpoint (based on those rating each).

## Ratings of GOLF BUSINESS



base: those rating each

## FINDINGS

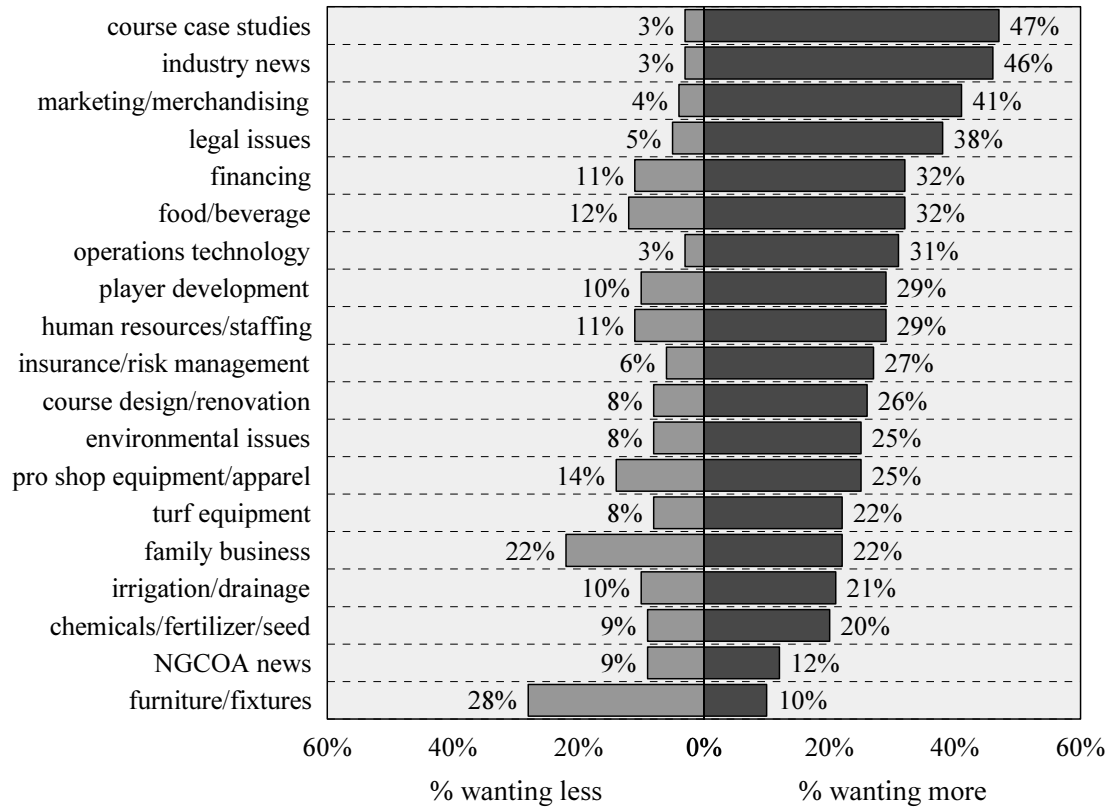
Readership, Use, and  
Opinions of GOLF  
BUSINESS

## Readership, Use, and Opinions of GOLF BUSINESS

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Key recipients were asked whether 19 topics should receive more, about the same, or less coverage in GOLF BUSINESS. In general, key recipients are satisfied with the amount of coverage GOLF BUSINESS provides in most of these areas. However, there are a few areas that could be examined, as recipients would like to see slightly more coverage of *course case studies*, *industry news*, and *marketing/merchandising*, whereas they would like to see slightly less coverage of *family business*.

### Topic Coverage Preferences



base: 383 key recipients

### FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and Opinions of GOLF BUSINESS

## Readership, Use, and Opinions of GOLF BUSINESS

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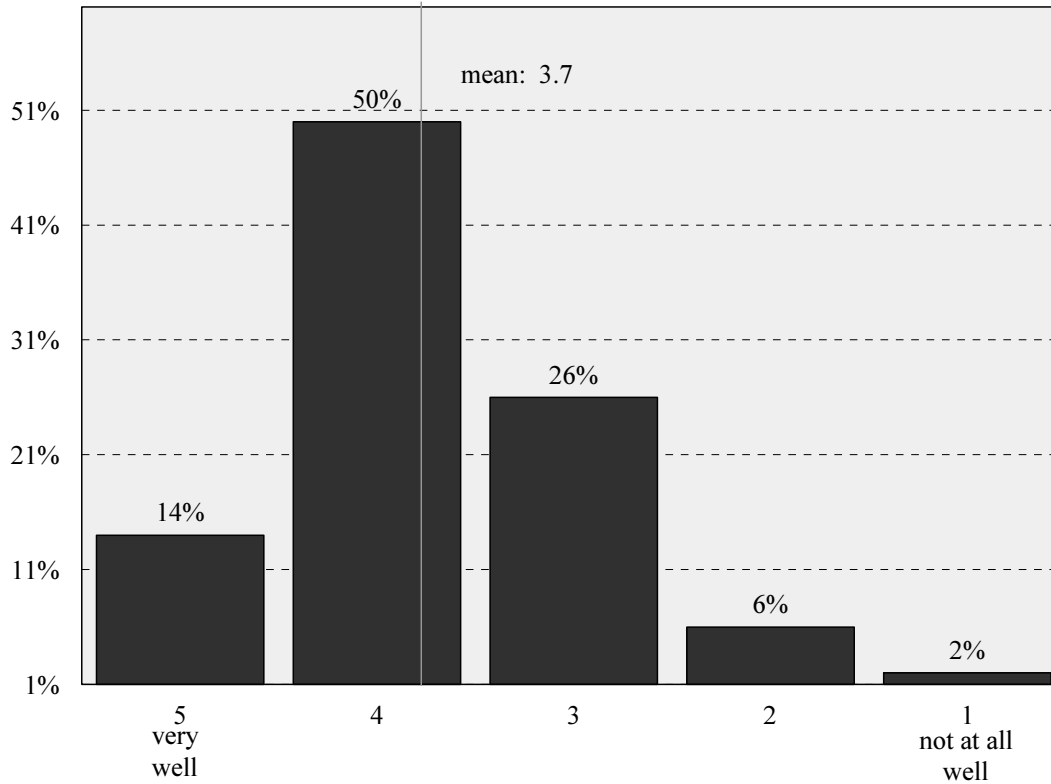
Key recipients were asked to indicate their interest in seeing seven topics in GOLF BUSINESS, using a 5-point rating scale, where 5 = very interested and 1 = not at all interested. Based on those indicating a 4 or 5 on the scale, about half or more expressed interest in seeing *consumer golf news* (59%), *general economic news* (52%), and/or *entrepreneurship* (49%). A moderate proportion expressed interest in seeing *career development* (45%). Fewer indicated interest in seeing information on *personal finance* (31%), *golf travel* (28%), and/or *personal technology* (PDAs, laptops, Blackberrys, cell phones, etc.) (28%).

GOLF BUSINESS meets key recipients' needs well. Using another 5-point scale, this time where 5 = very well and 1 = not at all well, key recipients were asked how well GOLF BUSINESS meets their needs. Key recipients gave GOLF BUSINESS a mean rating of 3.7, above the scale's midpoint of 3.0.

69% were aware prior to receiving this survey that GOLF BUSINESS is affiliated with the National Golf Course Owners Association (NGCOA) and most (61%) think this affiliation makes the publication more credible.

## Overall Rating of GOLF BUSINESS

% indicating how well it meets needs



base: 383 key recipients

## FINDINGS

Readership, Use, and  
Opinions of GOLF  
BUSINESS

## Other Publications

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Key recipients are actively involved in the industry, as nearly all (92%) read regularly (at least 3 out of 4 issues) at least one of ten other competitive publication asked about in the survey. However, the only publication regularly read by at least half is GOLF COURSE MANAGEMENT (51%). Comparatively, seven in ten (69%) have read 3 or 4 of the last 4 issues of GOLF BUSINESS.

Additionally, GOLF BUSINESS would be the publication of choice by the highest proportion of recipients if they could read only one. 27% would choose this publication over any other one asked about, nearly two times more than its next closest competitor, PGA MAGAZINE (15%).

Compared to industry publications, a much smaller proportion (45%) read regularly (at least 3 out of 4 issues) at least one of ten business publications asked about. The only publication indicated by over one in five was WALL STREET JOURNAL (21%).

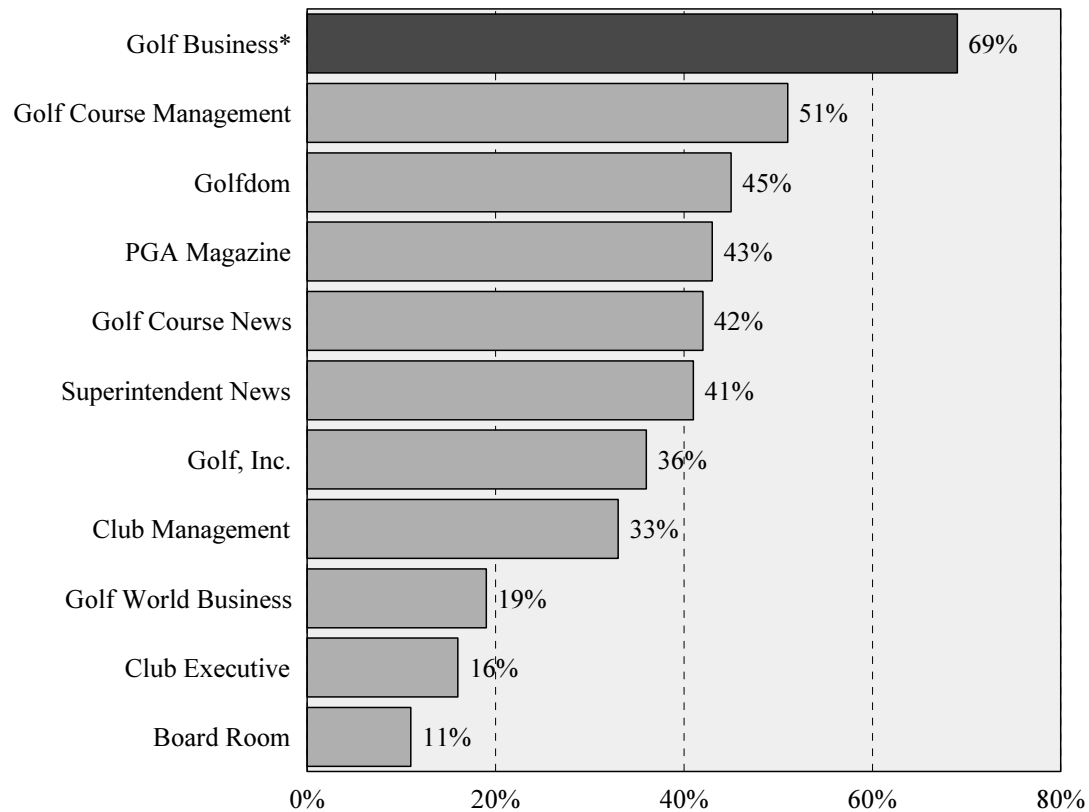
## Other Industry Publications Read Regularly

at least 3 out of 4 issues

### FINDINGS

Other Publications

base:



base: 383 key recipients (multiple answers)

\*based on those who have read or looked through at least 3 of the last 4 issues