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an electronic bulletin from
Tourism Partnership North Wales

Online booking drives profit for golf clubs

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Online booking drives profit for golf clubs



Nick Kitchen (left) and Roger Lewis at North Wales Golf Club, Llandudno.

A new online booking service is creating a cash bonanza for golf clubs in North Wales.

On average the income coming from green fees has gone up by 20 per cent – with some clubs reporting an increase of 40 per cent.

The scheme is being backed by Tourism Partnership North Wales, the body responsible for the strategic development of the visitor economy in North Wales.

The staging of the Ryder Cup at the Celtic Manor, in Newport, next year has been a big driver in developing golf as a key component of the tourism industry.

After the Olympics and the football World Cup, it's the third biggest event in the sporting calendar.

According to Roger Lewis, Tourism Partnership

Golf Coordinator for North Wales, the region is already riding the Ryder Cup wave thanks to increased investment from the Welsh Assembly Government.

As part of the overall Golf Wales campaign, Mr Lewis has recently been promoting North Wales as a top destination at events in Sweden and at the world famous Gleneagles course, in Scotland.

He said: "We identified a couple of years ago that we're unable to take bookings at weekends and evening times, particularly from people abroad and from out of the area when they were just literally looking to go online or ring a phone.

"A lot of the golf clubs haven't got full-time secretaries so it was very difficult to book a tee time to play a round.

"We have developed a website that has an

online booking system that people can use 24/7 and North Wales is leading the field with so many clubs working together in one cluster and via one website.

"We now have 21 of the 25 of the clubs in our current North Wales programme signed up to the scheme.

"The success of this scheme has been made possible by the commitment of the clubs to golf tourism and our partnership with local authorities.

"Via the www.golf-northwales.co.uk website, which was built and is operated by a Belfast company, BRS, customers can not only book online but also see images of the different golf courses as well as details about special offers and nearby accommodation.

"We are becoming an increasingly popular destination for golfers from the North West of England who can take advantage of the new deals and offers on the website.

"As well as our better known clubs, we have a



Nefyn and District Golf Club

whole host of previously hidden gems right across North Wales.

"There are some wonderful courses and the links golfing here is second to none.

"Being online enables us to reach people in places we would have never imagined before with Europe, especially Sweden, being a good example.

"One golf club, Aberdovey, has had a 40 per cent increase in traffic from Northern Europe just this year alone.

"We are also attracting a good number of golfers from Sweden as well as attracting an increasing number of German golfers.

"Even though we are in tough times economically, we're finding the green fee levels throughout North Wales are up considerably, on average by around 20 per cent.

"Golf is providing a huge boost to the economy because the golfers are not just coming and paying a green fee.

"We're trying to convert their visit to play golf into a weekend stay or a golfing package lasting a few days.

"I believe the average spend for a golfer is £150 per night and when you add it all up golf is contributing millions of pounds to the regional economy.

"Without the Ryder Cup we wouldn't have had the funds from the Welsh Assembly Government and Ryder Cup Wales to promote ourselves in the same way.

Nick Kitchen, the Manger of the North Wales Golf Club in Llandudno, is a big fan of the online booking system.

He said: "I have been very impressed with the way everybody is working together now and the booking service has had a tremendous impact - we're up 20 per cent on last year."

"The online booking as a total figure of green fee revenue at the moment equates to about 25% of what we're doing and it's growing as a percentage all the time."

For more information go to www.golf-northwales.co.uk or ring 0845 450 5885.

