

Case Study

Palmetto Dunes Distinguishes Itself with a Turf-Friendly Way To Travel

GOLF

Palmetto Dunes, Hilton Head, SC

Hilton Head Island is the home of more than 20 spectacular golf courses designed by some of the biggest names in golf, including Arthur Hills, Arnold Palmer, Robert Trent Jones, Jack Nicklaus and George Fazio. Palmetto Dunes, one of the island's premier destination resorts, hosts three of these courses, enabling them to offer a challenging experience to golfers of all skill levels. Over the years, Palmetto Dunes has established a reputation for excellence and leadership by continually evolving its facilities and services. In 2006, this evolution led them to embrace one of the newest innovations in golf – the Segway® Golf Transporter (GT).

Introduced by Segway Inc. in 2005, the Segway GT provides an exhilarating golf experience. According to Chip Pellerin, director of golf sales and promotions at Palmetto Dunes, the innovation of the Segway GT not only distinguishes the resort from other golf properties on the island, but it also keeps golfers moving at a smooth pace and is easy on the turf.

"We had seen Segway GTs at the Orange County Convention Center during the PGA Merchandise Show and thought we should take a serious look at them," says Pellerin. "A short time later, we conducted a demo of the machines, and even sent a couple of people out to the Kierland Resort in Scottsdale, Ariz., which had been using them at their golf facilities for several months. In June of 2006 we took delivery of 12 Segway GTs, and began training our golf personnel on the units."

Segway GTs Appeal to All Age Groups and Generate Repeat Customers

After developing policies and procedures governing their use, Pellerin and his staff began offering the Segway GTs to golfers on July 1, 2006. The units, which are now available on each of the three courses – the Robert Trent Jones, George Fazio and Arthur Hills – have been busy ever since. Golfers pay an up charge above their greens fees to use the Segway GT for a round of golf.

"The reception by the public has been very positive and enthusiastic," says Pellerin. The Segway GT is a unique experience, and it is quite common for players to reserve them in the morning, play one round and then come back in and reserve them again for the next day. It's catching on and creating a lot

of attention for Palmetto Dunes. We feature the Segway GTs on our Web site, and in news releases and mailings that we have done. We also created a new banner for display in the airport. Word is getting out and we see a great range of ages using them on the course. They seem to appeal to everyone."

Pellerin's staff provides each golfer with a 15-30 minute training program. Golfers arrive at the course 30 minutes in advance of their tee time and are shown how to operate the Segway GT on the course. Staffers work individually with each person to ensure that they are confident and comfortable with riding. Once the golfers head out on the Segway GTs, they can move quickly through the course.

"We've always looked for ways to separate ourselves from competition, and this has definitely done that. It is a great marketing tool."

- Chip Pellerin,
Director of Golf Sales
and Promotions,
Palmetto Dunes

"We are finding that the pace of play on Segway GTs is at least as fast as on golf carts, and maybe even better," says Pellerin. "We have also had no issues with the turf. The golfers are enjoying them, and they are going back home and telling their friends about Palmetto Dunes. We've always looked for ways to separate ourselves from competition, and this has definitely done that. It is a great marketing tool."

NOTE: Segway GT was the name of the original golf model. The x2 Golf is a new version that has been updated with new LeanSteer™ technology and other added features.

Executive Summary

THE CHALLENGE

- Distinguish the resort's golf courses from other courses on the island
- Maintain the pace of play with a turf-friendly way to play golf

THE SOLUTION

- Acquire 12 Segway GTs and station four at each of the resort's three courses
- Publicize the Segway GTs via public relations, advertising and the web site

BENEFITS TO THE CUSTOMER

- Palmetto Dunes becomes the first course on the East Coast to offer Segway GTs
- Heightened visibility for Palmetto Dunes properties
- Strong re-booking and referrals for the Segway GTs
- Generates new golf revenues
- Turf-friendly performance
- Excellent pace of play

Segway Ireland
Maxem Technologies
Ltd,
Unit D2,
Southern Link
Business Park,
Naas, Co. Kildare
Ireland

web: www.segway.ie

www.segway.com

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