



The *MAJOR* of Golf Business

From Dunedin to Orlando, 65+ Years of Moving the Golf Business Forward The History of the PGA Merchandise Show

The PGA Merchandise Show, now the world's largest and most influential golf business event, grew from humble beginnings in Dunedin, Fla., in 1954, when a handful of golf merchandisers assembled in the PGA National Golf Club parking lot during a series of PGA winter tournaments. By 1957, the number of manufacturers' representatives had become so large, approximately 50 by then, that PGA officials leased a tent.

The PGA Merchandise Show moved when the Association's winter tournaments relocated to Florida's East Coast. In 1963, the Show was held at the Port St. Lucie (Fla.) Country Club; from 1964–73 at PGA National in Palm Beach Gardens, Fla. (now BallenIsles Country Club); and in 1974, moved back to Port St. Lucie, still under a circus-sized tent.

The PGA Merchandise Show and winter tournaments moved to Orlando, Fla., in 1975, where the show was indoors for the first time at the Disney Contemporary Resort. In 1982, The PGA of America relocated to the new PGA National in Palm Beach Gardens, a mile from its former headquarters. The PGA Merchandise Show was subsequently moved to the Miami Beach Convention Center, where it remained for three years.

Due to the continuing demand for increased space capacity, The PGA moved the Show to the new Orange County Convention Center (OCCC) in 1985 and again the Show was quickly filled to capacity. As the PGA Merchandise Show grew so did the West Building of the Convention Center, which added 200,000 gross square feet in 1989 and nearly doubled in size to 1.1 million gross square feet in 1996.

In 1998, The PGA of America sold an equity share of its golf shows to Reed Exhibitions, the world's leading trade show organizer. In partnership, The PGA and Reed, under the umbrella of PGA Worldwide Golf Exhibitions, produce and manage the PGA Merchandise Show in Orlando and the PGA Fashion & Demo Experience in Las Vegas.

Since the PGA/Reed partnership, the PGA Merchandise Show has evolved to become an all-encompassing global platform for the introduction of new products, indoor & outdoor product testing, wide-ranging education seminars, industry symposiums right on the show floor, national awards presentations, fashion features, player development programs, professional networking events and more.

Several industry programs have been added to the PGA Show since the partnership that remain valuable resources for the industry today including vendor and buyer appreciation programs (1999), the New Product Zone (2001), Demo Day (2003), PGA Magazine Invitational Tournament (formerly Pro-Pro Tournament Series) and the indoor Equipment Test Center (2004), specialty exhibitor pavilions and the PGA Forum (2007), PGA Mentor Lunch and AGM Product Preview & Reception (2008), the Inventors Spotlight Pavilion (2011), Outdoor Instructional Workshops, Golf Fitness, Wellness & Instruction Pavilion & Stage (2013), Live "Morning Drive" daily broadcast by the Golf Channel (2014), Performance Textile Fair (2016), *PGA Show Insider* (2016), "My Show" (2017), streamlined topic tracks in the PGA Show Education Conference (2018), Adaptive Golf Center (2018), PGA Show Digital Job Board (2018), Golf Facility Innovation Center and Racquet & Paddle Sports Conference (2019). In 2020, the National Golf Course Owners Association Golf Business Conference and the Racquet & Paddle Sports Show became co-located with the PGA Show.

Nearly 40,000 PGA Professionals, golf retailers and industry executives from more than 80 countries and all 50 U.S. states typically attend the annual PGA Merchandise Show to launch the business of golf for the new year. Product presentations by golf's top market leaders combined with product testing at the PGA Show Demo Days and at the Equipment Test Center on the PGA Show Floor, an evening golf resort/lifestyle fashion show, multiple fashion designer presentations, teaching clinics, education seminars, career workshops, industry awards, networking receptions and more fill a busy PGA Show Week schedule.

In 2021, the 68th edition of the PGA Merchandise Show, Jan. 26-29, will instead drive business, education and networking through a cutting-edge, highly-interactive virtual experience and marketplace. The virtual platform will allow PGA Professionals, golf retailers, industry leaders, manufacturers and media to participate from the safety of their homes, facilities or offices during the ongoing global pandemic. Learn more at www.PGAShow.com.