

# Middle East MICE & Events

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A WEEKEND  
IN MUSCAT INCL  
FLIGHTS



**INNOVATIVE MEETINGS**  
**BUSINESS GOLF**  
On par for success - so much more than little white balls  
**+ PRISON BREAKS**

Bahrain	BD	1.0
Kuwait	KD	1.0
Oman	RO	1.0
Qatar	QR	10
Saudi Arabia	SR	10
UAE	DHS	10
International	US\$	3

**Destination Oman** ..... **How to guides** ..... **Remote viewing**  
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# "I got the contract"

## WHY GOLF MEETINGS WORK

Since its beginnings on the moors of Scotland, hundreds of years ago, golf has not been more hip than it is today; with the likes of Tiger Woods, Ernie Els, Retief Goosen and Annika Sorenstam gracing our fairways; technology enabling them to hit the ball unbelievable distances; and golf fashion becoming very chic.

*Middle East MICE & Events* talked to golf clubs, corporate executives and meetings company MGT Open for their take on 'golf meetings' and the importance of corporate and incentive business to a golf club.

Responses were varied and opinions diverse. European and American businesses have long since recognised the importance of relationship building and how, with the explosion of golf's popularity in the last few years, the sport can create an indispensable business opportunity. While some Middle Eastern clubs are enthusiastically pursuing the MICE market, others are slow in the up take and have not yet grasped the concept of golf meetings.

When asked how important are golf meetings and incentive groups to Emirates Golf Club, Chris Turlik, assistant general manager, said: "In a word: extremely. We have more than 100 corporate memberships with many of them multinationals but several smaller firms wishing to have a membership at a club where they can bring clients not only to play but for meals and to meet others to discuss business. It is impossible to visit any of our outlets at lunchtime and not see several business lunches in progress involving members. If those members feel that bringing their guests to the Club is best for them, we are pleased that we are providing the corporate service they need. Our corporate memberships include a number of guest vouchers per year and these prove to be very popular.

"With the re-opening of the Wadi Course on October 1st, having two course offers us more flexibility in taking large

*Middle East MICE & Events* finds out if golf venues in the desert are an oasis of opportunity for planners

by David van der Meulen

bookings. Despite this and the fact that many companies want to host their guests on the Majlis Course, we still believe that as an overall product, we provide the highest levels of service, value and satisfaction, which bring our corporate customers back every year."

The game as a corporate activity can secure a meeting with an exclusive client, improve team relationships with colleagues, enhance industry relationships, and provide a forum for networking. However, many executives fail at 'client golf' because they mistake business golf for recreational golf; the two are rarely compatible. Business golf is client or colleague focused while recreational golf is focused on one's own golf game...

"The two words 'business' and 'golf' are increasingly in the headlines as Dubai and indeed other destinations across the Middle East, markets itself to the world," said Gerry Kierans of German based MGT Open. ([www.mgtopen.com](http://www.mgtopen.com))

"Business relationships are built on trust, rapport, connection and re-connection - NOT through lunch or trading business cards. Now Middle Eastern managers can learn how to enhance their career and corporate opportunities by using the golf course as a board-room."

It is a fact: "Business is only done with people you really know and trust!" added Kierans. "In Golf, unlike tennis and racquetball, there is no net or barrier and the handicap system allows everyone to play competitively."

What would be the response if a punter rang and asked: "Hey, can I meet you at your office for five hours?"

It's not rocket science to know what the response would be! Yet, invite the same person for a round of golf and you get his undivided attention for five hours plus. After the game is over, you are best friends and chances are, he signs the contract!

*Middle East MICE & Events* will be closely watching the development of 'golf meetings' by providing regular updates and case-study success stories.

## Important Statistics

A major international hotel chain conducted a study of global executives and their views on the sport of golf. CEO's from 401 top-level global companies were interviewed. Here are the results:

- 93 per cent said: "Playing golf with a business associate is a good way to establish a closer relationship."
- 80 per cent agreed: "Playing golf is a good way to make new business contacts."
- More than 33 per cent said: "Some of my biggest business deals were made on the golf course."
- Of the 60 percent of women who play golf with business clients, more than a third said: "Playing golf resulted in additional business for them."
- Five per cent of business professionals see golf as 'the sport of business.'



- 25 per cent of business decision-makers play golf.
- 48 per cent of executives see the golf course as an ideal business environment.
- 20 per cent of the FTSE-100 chairmen belong to the same golf club.
- 38 per cent of executives use golf as an "international language" to break language and cultural barriers.
- 27 per cent of executives see golf as ideal to get ahead with their careers.
- 41 per cent describe golf as "a perfect way" to get to know business associates.
- 25 per cent of executives see golf as a sport for young managers.

## Common misconceptions

1. Only the BIG BOYS do it. NO, it is not just for MEGA companies but for small to medium-sized businesses, independent professionals and consultants.
2. Only the OLD BOYS do it. NO, popular with business professionals of all ages.
3. Only the 'BOYS' do it. NO, female managers also benefit from G.O.L.F.  
GOLF does not mean... **Gentlemen Only, Ladies Forbidden.**
4. Only for super athletes. NO, for anyone of average ability and health. Only 10 per cent break 100 and no one really cares about your score - just their own.
5. Only for 'Mega' deals. NO, actual business deals are not normally concluded on the golf course but the essential trust and relationship building that precedes successful business deals is established on the golf course.
6. Only for those who can afford the high expense of equipment and memberships. NO, business golf can be affordable both with equipment and also by paying green fees if membership costs in your area are beyond your budget.
7. Only for the weekends. NO, business golf is also a work-week sales call.
8. Only inexperienced golfers need business golf training! NO, even experienced golfers, who may already know the basic golf etiquette, can refine and develop their business golf strategies.

STATISTICS COURTESY OF MGT OPEN (WWW.MGTOPEN.COM)

## GOLF MEETINGS DIRECTORY:

Riffa Golf Club, Bahrain  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +973 17 750777  
Email: info@riffaclub.com.bh

The Mena House Oberoi Golf Course, Egypt  
18 hole/par 68  
Tel: +20 2377 3222  
Email: obmhogm@oberoi.com.eg

Dreamland Golf & Tennis Resort, Egypt  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +20 22 400577  
Email: dreamgolf@ie-eg.com

Katameya Heights Golf & Tennis Resort, Egypt  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +20 2 7580808  
Email: kataneta@egyptonline.com

Royal Valley Golf Club, Egypt  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +202 414 6538  
Email: marketing@royalvalley.com

Sharm El Sheikh Jolie Ville Moevenpick Golf & Resort, Egypt  
18 hole  
Tel: +20 69 3603200  
Email: gmgoftsharm@hotmail.com

El Gouna Golf Club, Egypt  
18 hole/par 74  
Tel: +20 2305 7843  
Email: golf@elgouna.com

The Cascades at Soma Bay Golf Resort & Country Club, Egypt  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +20 65 3549854  
Email: cascades@hurghada.ie-eg

Hilton Pyramids Golf Resort, Egypt  
36 holes / two par 72 courses  
Tel: +202 8553333

Doha Golf Club, Qatar  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +974 4832338  
Email: info@dohagolf.com

Abu Dhabi Golf Club, UAE  
18 hole/par 72 and par 3 course  
Tel: +9712 5588990  
Email: abudhabigolf@sheraton.com

Tower Links Golf Club, UAE  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +9717 2279929  
Email: info@towerlinks.com

Arabian Ranches Golf Club Dubai, UAE  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +9714 3663000

The Montgomerie, Dubai, UAE  
18 hole/par 72 and par 3 course  
Tel: +9714 3905600  
Email: info@themontgomerie.ae



Emirates Golf Club, Dubai, UAE  
Two 18 hole/par 72  
- Majlis and Wadi courses and par 3 course  
Tel: +9714 3801919  
Email: marketing@dubaijgolf.com

Al Badia Golf Club, Dubai, UAE  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +9714 2325778  
Email: golf@albadiajgolfresort.com

Jebel Ali Golf Resort & Spa, Dubai, UAE  
9 hole/par 36  
Tel: +9714 8836000  
Email: jagrs@jaihoteis.com

Dubai Creek Golf & Yacht Club, UAE  
18 hole/par 72 and par 3 course  
Tel: +9714 2956000  
Email: egonzales@dubaijgolf.com

Nad Al Sheba Club, Dubai, UAE  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +9714 3363666  
Email: info@nadalshebaclub.com

Al Hamra Village Golf Club, UAE  
18 hole/par 72  
Tel: +9717 2445657  
Email: realestate@rakceram.com

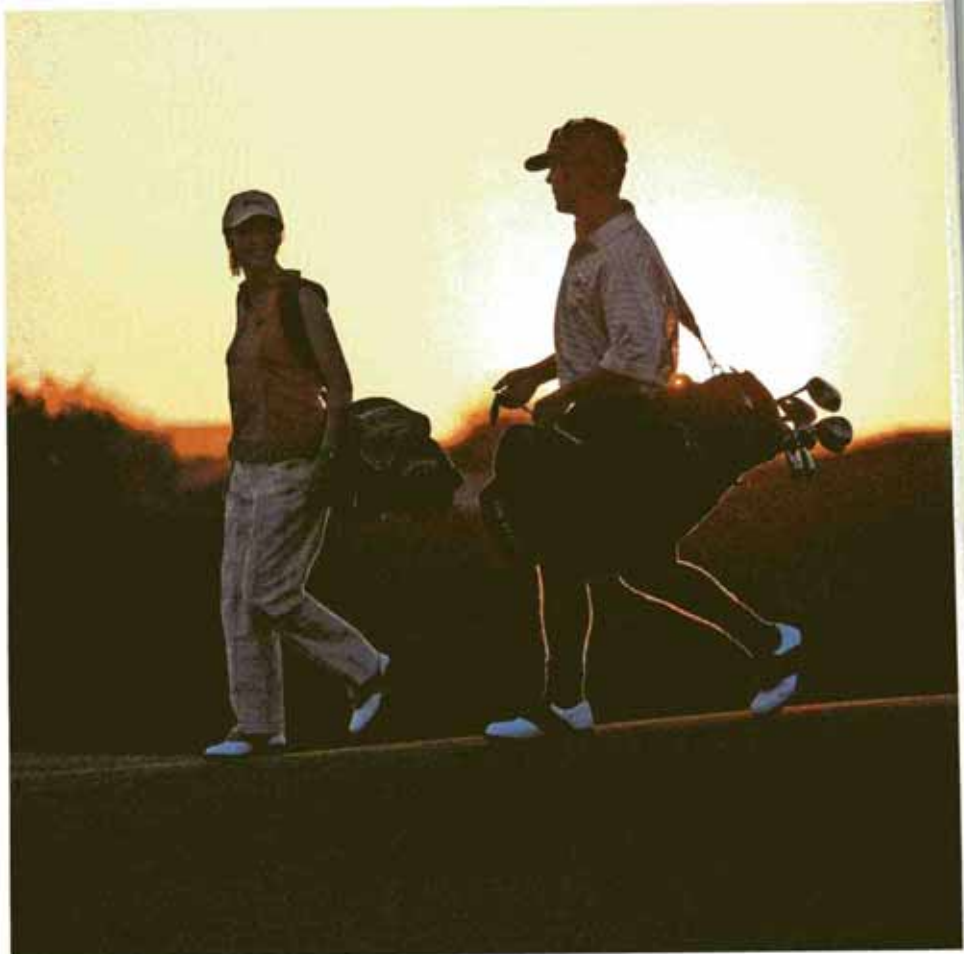


**FIVE MINUTES WITH  
CHRIS TURLIK**  
assistant general manager,  
Emirates Golf Club, Dubai.

How important are golf meetings and incentive groups to your golf club? Corporate golf days provide a huge part of our business and our members appreciate the need for us to juggle space on the course to accommodate this. There are companies who have had a corporate day every year since the club opened in 1988. Such events become fixtures on our calendar and we block dates up to two years in advance. Of course, these corporate golf days don't stop with golf and invariably, the hosts will provide dinner and drinks as well as attractive prizes for the golf. The evenings are often the focal point of the day because everyone has a chance to mix as opposed to on the course where they are with three other people. Most corporate golf days see more than 80 players on one shotgun (all players tee off at the same time on different holes) and the fact that the hosts re-book year after year tells us that a golf day makes good business sense for them.

**Are you placing increased importance on this market?**

While our corporate calendar is largely full, we are now focusing on the smaller scale of business, which is no less important. Business lunches in our Le Classique restaurant provide an elegant but professional setting with first-class service and on the golf side we are seeing more individual bookings for clients so we are trying to cater more for that. The demand for corporate membership is at an all-time high and although subject to the long waiting list we have, we do try to understand the need for golf in today's corporate world and always try to work out a solution for all concerned.



## Benefits of business golf

- Enhance your career potential
- Climb the corporate ladder
- Deepen relationships with both clients and colleagues
- Meet new exclusive clients, intimately, for five hours!
- Develop your socialising and relationship strategies
- Improve your global networking and leadership skills
- Eliminate restrictive 'organisational rank' and corporate formalities'
- Build 'in-company' team spirit by having your company meetings at the golf course
- Thank clients and employees; brainstorm, problem-solve; introduce new company plans; resolve bad accounts or disputes; and assess prospective employees before they are hired
- Reduce managerial stress and improve the health of your body, mind, and spirit
- Organise more effective golf events by inviting non-playing clients to your tournament and show your appreciation to all your clients

### Did you Know...

- Golfers yell 'fore!' shoot a 'seven', and write down 'five' on their scorecard.
- Golfers should NOT think about more than 300 thoughts during their swing.
- The average golfer only hits a 2-hectare fairway 10 per cent of the time BUT can mysteriously hit a two-centimetre branch 90 per cent of the time.
- The ball seen in the rough 50-metres away is never your ball.

**It's successful when the company and club arrange a mix of activities introducing individuals to golf in an environment of golf and business!**

NICK TARRATT, GOLF ADVISOR, EMAAR ARABIAN RANCHES GOLF CLUB