

Teaching Teachers



Build it, and they will come: PGA Professional Lou Guzzi addresses what's needed at a golf academy to optimize the experience for students



Lou Guzzi, 2003 Philadelphia PGA Section Teacher of the Year has been teaching golf for eons. Thus, he knows what makes students respond and not respond. So when it came time to move his Lou Guzzi Golf Academy to a new location (Talamore Country Club in Ambler, Pa.), Guzzi put a lot of thought into how to

increase his business volume, keep students coming back, and get them to recommend the facility to new students, as well. What did he do?

Says Guzzi: "As a PGA teaching professional, I believe that it is my responsibility to create a teaching environment that provides students

with nothing short of a first-class learning experience. This will eliminate distractions and allows both student and teacher to focus solely on the lesson. Standing on the range with not much more than a name on a golf bag and a few simple tips is not going to cut it in today's competitive teaching market.

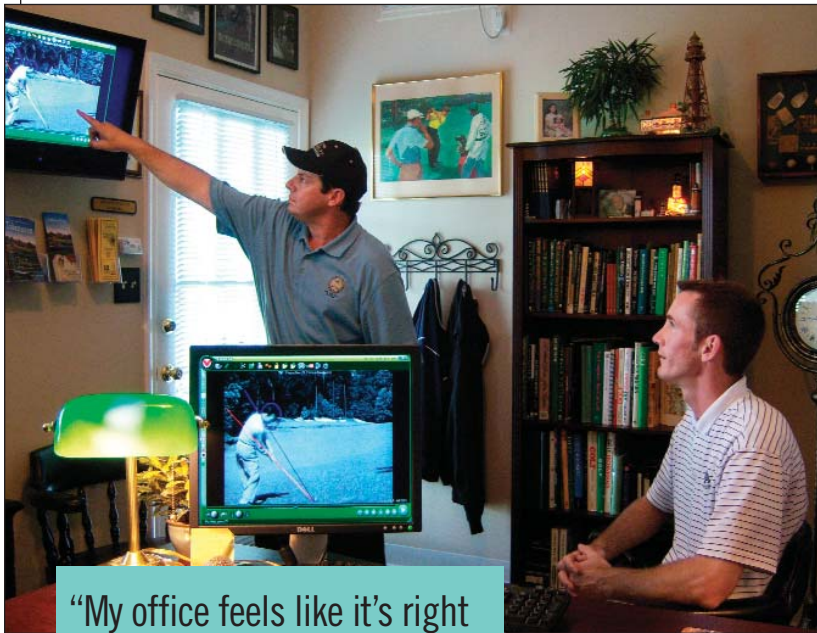
"Once first-time students have a lesson in our Academy's Teaching Center, they quickly realize that the teaching experience they just received is like nothing they've had in the past, which quickly fills my lesson book.

"To successfully move the Lou Guzzi Golf Academy to Talamore Country Club, I worked with the owner of the facility to design a teaching building right on the practice range. We started with a simple drawing. What happened over the next

news worthy

Faldo Golf Institute by Marriott has unveiled a service whereby prospective students have the ability to book golf instruction at its gofaldo.com Web site – for all its U.S. locations.

"As more and more travelers rely on the Internet to schedule activities for their vacations and trips, we felt it was a natural step to offer this convenient service," says PGA Professional Chip Koehlke, Faldo Golf Institute's director of instructional programs.



“My office feels like it’s right out of **Golf Channel’s “Golf Talk Live”** set, which provides another aspect of instruction in first-class style.” —Lou Guzzi, PGA

six months was incredible, as we now have a beautiful 1,200-square-foot, state of the art teaching facility that I believe is one of the finest in the country.

“The building gives us the ability to teach year-round and features two teaching bays, each with its own retractable doors that open onto Talamore’s practice range. These doors can be closed at any time due to weather, making the center an indoor teaching facility. The building is equipped with nets, an indoor putting green for video work, and loads of teach-

ing aids, including a rolling wall.

“The purpose of the indoor putting surface is to record the stroke on video, and then analyze, correct and develop the proper mechanics of the stroke. Once we have a mechanically sound stroke, we can go out onto the putting green and focus on the art of putting.

“Video capturing software is set up in the teaching bay and is always ready. A laptop computer captures the video and can instantly display it at either the teaching bay on a 42-inch LCD screen or in private on a 26-inch LCD screen mounted on the wall of my adjacent office.

“I really wanted our studio to feel academic and students to experience a college classroom-style learning atmosphere. My office feels like it’s right out of Golf Channel’s “Golf Talk Live” set, which provides another aspect of instruction in first-class style. In addition, we have a beautiful bunker outside the door for those needing a quick tune-up before the end of a lesson.

“The inside of the building is roomy and spacious. Golf murals on the walls immerse our students in an environment conducive to learning. Remember, a private lesson should be private and with this teaching building, my students and I are in a golf-learning vacuum. They get 100 percent of my attention and I get 100 percent of theirs. It’s an awesome environment for learning, and an experience for the student like no other.” ■

instructor’s Gadget

PortaPro Video

Armed with a tiny bullet camera that rotates 360 degrees, the PortaPro Video system (\$2,995, portaprovideo.com) promises to forever “enhance the way the golf swing is taught and learned.”

The device, which was invented by Mikol Hess, is designed to be simply installed on a golf car – it’s as non-invasive to the car as possible and is mounted on a bracket and attached to the car’s roof with heavy-duty velcro. The camera won’t start recording until the foot brake is engaged, so there’s no delay in the pace of play. The camera records the lesson in clear, high-resolution video. It has programmable logic controls and a direct drive digital video recorder.

Immediately following the end of a lesson, footage can be easily burned to a DVD with the push of one button, so that



students can review the lesson at home and work on swing points the instructor suggested during the lesson. The camera weighs just half an ounce.

The benefit of this product is that it allows for a flowing, coherent, well-structured on-course lesson – without

having to change camera angles and interrupt the lesson. The system also provides an opportunity to generate revenue for the golf shop – instead of having only the ability to record lessons on the practice range, it offers the ability to record more comprehensive, on-course lessons where players can actually put the instructor’s suggestions into practical use.

Because it’s fully integrated into the golf car, golfers can record their entire round and not have it impede with the flow – nor have it hold up the pace of play. The

camera can record close-up and panoramic video, and a new camera rotates 360 degrees. Ideally, the student stands 12 to 14 feet away from the camera.

