

Richmond, VA January 15th, 2009-River City Hospitality, LLC announced today that Boomergolfnews.com recently published an interview with River City Hospitality President and CEO Stephen Wilson recently. The article may be found at http://www.boomergolfnews.com/news_item.php?id=404. Below is a transcript...



Many golf businesses are struggling right along with the rest of the commercial enterprises in this country. One of those is River City Hospitality, LLC, a provider of event-planning services at professional golf tournaments. Boomer Golf News recently quizzed River City President and Chief Executive Officer Stephen Wilson about the challenges facing his firm.

Boomer Golf News (BGN): Can you provide a brief description of your business?

Stephen Wilson (SW): River City is a boutique provider of premium, event-planning services during golf events including the Buick Invitational Tournament, Masters Golf Tournament and U.S. Open Golf Championship.

Our clients range from start-ups to Fortune 500 firms. Core products are corporate entertainment packages encompassing event tickets and access to VIP hospitality tents. We also provide ancillary services such as reserving tee times, securing hotel or housing accommodations, booking dinner reservations, answering pre-event questions, distributing event literature, assisting with customer invitations and onsite event support.

We receive incremental income through monetization of our [website](#), online "golf store" and advertising.



BGN: How has the event-planning business changed over the years?

SW: When I entered it in the mid-1990s the business was still new, with only a couple of corporate-hospitality providers offering access to premier sporting events. More providers eventually emerged, often mirroring each other, with price usually being the sole way of differentiating one from the next.

But over the past few years many providers have become increasingly specialized. Those that have been able to adapt to changing market conditions have thrived, while those that have been resistant to change have suffered.

BGN: How has the economic downturn affected your business?

SW: Golf is still as popular as ever. Attending a premier golf event like the Masters remains a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity. That said, we have had to adapt our strategy to remain an attractive option in increasingly tough economic times. The days of lavish, large-scale corporate packages are becoming a thing of the past, with smaller, more focused, and highly customized outings becoming the norm.

We have been more selective in who we target and avoid certain poor-performing industries altogether. As a result, we have not seen a drop-off in our business, though sales have been flat.

BGN: When do you predict the situation will change?

SW: Many economic analysts think the worst is behind us and the market will begin a tepid recovery in the second half of 2009. That, coupled with particularly attractive upcoming venues for some of our core golf events, has us hopeful for a strong 2009.

BGN: Does what people expect for services vary from region to region?

SW: Our events are scattered throughout the United States. We see little change in customer expectations on a regional basis. Our clients are all demanding and expect superior service.

BGN: What does the future hold?

SW: We are very excited about introducing new products over the next couple of years. In 2008 we debuted our sponsorship division and our online golf store. We are interested in forging relationships with celebrities so our clients can play in pro-ams. We are also looking at options for charity golf events.

River City Hospitality, LLC is a premium provider of corporate hospitality services at premier sporting events including the Buick Invitational Tournament, the Masters Golf Tournament, and the U.S. Open Golf Championship. River City Hospitality's goal is to provide its clients with an environment that is conducive to strengthening business relationships. As such, River City Hospitality's events are "turn-key." Headquartered in Richmond VA, River City Hospitality is a trusted partner for entertaining key customers and prospects. For more information please visit www.rivercityhosp.com.