GOLF 20/20

The 2011 Golf Economy Report

Executive Summary

SRI International

OVERVIEW

The 2011 Golf Economy Report represents the third study estimating the economic impact of the golf industry in the United States (2000, 2005, 2011).[1] This research represents part of a larger strategy by the World Golf Foundation, and the golf industry's allied associations, to measure the longitudinal growth and impact of the game over time. The results presented in this report focus primarily on the economic activity supported by the game of golf in 2011, but also highlight changes since 2000 and 2005.

Over the past decade, the golf industry has endured two significant U.S. economic recessions (in 2001 and in 2007-09). In spite of a challenging economic environment, the game of golf continues to offer lifelong recreational opportunities and enjoyment for millions of people in the U.S. In 2011, golf attracted approximately 25.7 million participants.[2] Since the second Golf Economy Report in 2005, the total number of traditional golf facilities contracted slightly from 16,052 to 15,751 in 2011, but remains at a higher level than in 2000. Facility attrition and weaker revenues for some types of facilities (such as daily fees) were most likely a result of declines in overall participation and spending given the weaker economic conditions in the latter half of the decade.

SRI estimates that **the U.S. golf economy generated $68.8 billion of goods and services in the year 2011.** This represents an overall decline of 9.4 percent from 2005 (when the estimated size of the golf economy was $75.9 billion), primarily reflecting a contraction in golf real estate and capital investment, which includes new course construction. Relative strengths were in core golf facility operations, tournaments and associations, and golf-related travel, which increased by 6.4 percent, 21.6 percent, and 14.2 percent, respectively. By comparison, inflation grew 13.4 percent over this same time period.[3] When the indirect and induced economic activity driven by golf's core and enabled industry segments are taken into consideration, SRI estimates that **golf generated a total economic impact of $176.8 billion in 2011, supporting approximately 1.98 million jobs with wage income of $55.6 billion.**

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[1] This report was researched and written by SRI International, and commissioned by the World Golf Foundation and GOLF 20/20, with support from the Allied Associations of Golf.

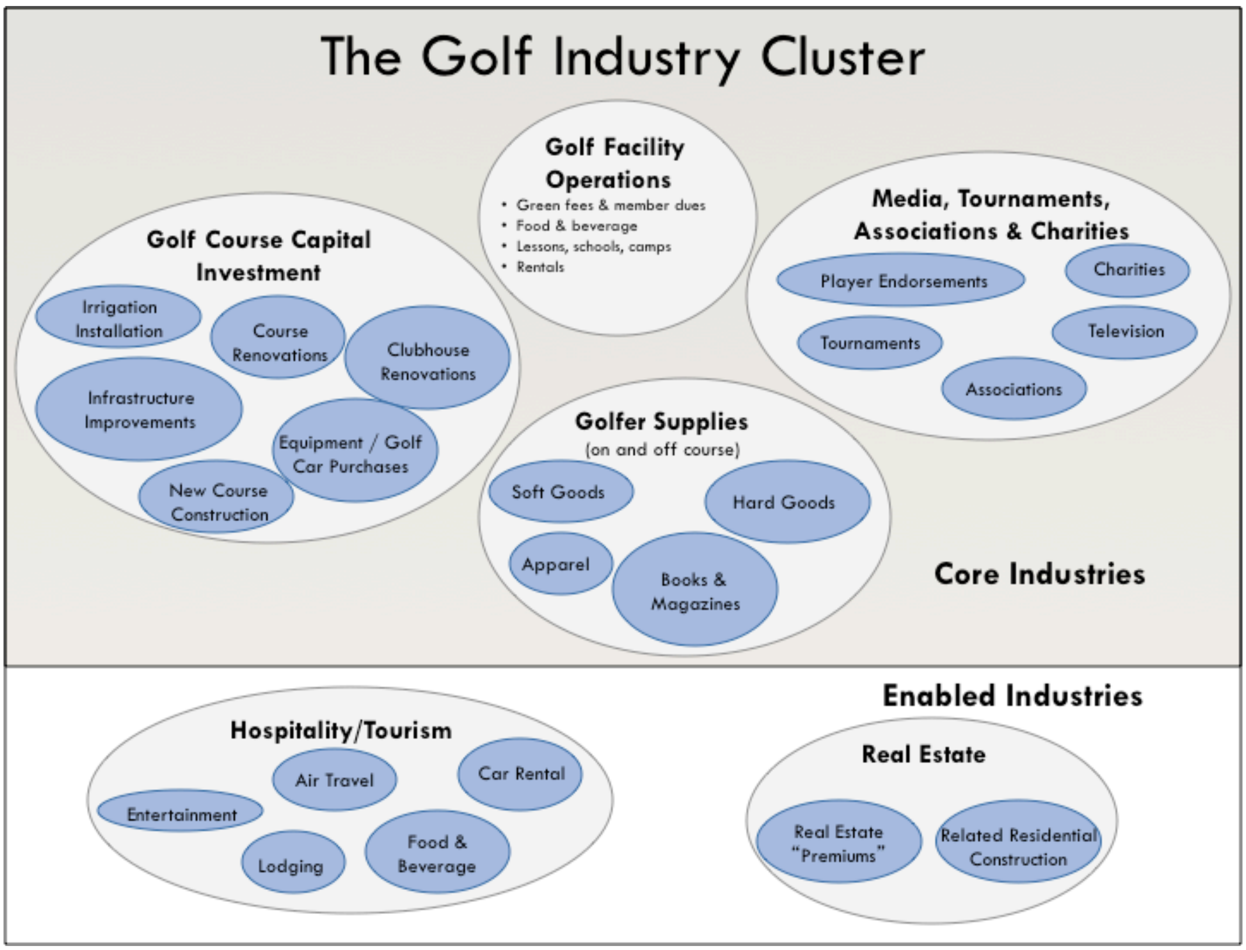
[2] National Golf Foundation.

[3] U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis, GDP Deflator.

ANALYTIC FRAMEWORK

The Golf Industry Cluster map pictured below illustrates the analytical framework developed and employed by SRI and GOLF 20/20 to measure the comprehensive set of golf-driven industry components. This framework, originally developed to measure the size of the golf economy in the year 2000, was again applied to the estimation of the golf economy in 2005 and 2011.

The golf industry cluster can be divided into two major categories: core industries and enabled industries (see figure below). The golf industry cluster begins with the golf facilities themselves and with the other core industries that produce goods and services used to operate facilities and to play the game: golf equipment and apparel designers and manufacturers, golf course architects, golf associations, and club management services. The game of golf further enables a number of other industries, such as golf-related tourism and real estate development.



Having defined the core and enabled golf industries, it is possible to estimate the size of each industry segment and to total them for an overall estimate of the size of the golf economy. Economic multipliers can then be applied to calculate the ripple effects of these economic activities in terms of: (1) impact on total economic output, (2) total employment, and (3) total wage income. However, this process is complicated by the fact that, while most of these industries produce golf-related goods and services, many companies may not limit their activities exclusively to the golf industry. Therefore, in general, our approach is to include only those revenues that are directly attributable or linked to the game of golf. In so doing, we used a number of different estimation techniques to ensure that our final estimates are reasonable and robust.

THE 2011 GOLF ECONOMY

Size of the Golf Economy

The table below presents SRI's estimates for the size of each of the six golf industry segments and the overall golf economy in 2000, 2005, and 2011. While the U.S. golf economy grew 10.7 percent from 2000 to 2011, there was a noticeable decline of 9.4 percent in the latter half of the decade, from 2005 to 2011. From 2000 to 2005, the expansion of the U.S. golf economy was driven by growth in facility operations revenue, golf real estate, and golf tourism. **In the most recent 2005 to 2011 period, the decline in the U.S. golf economy was driven primarily by weaknesses in two industry segments: golf real estate and golf course capital investment, which includes new course construction.**

Size of the U.S. Golf Economy by Industry Segment in 2000, 2005 and 2011 ($ millions)

Core Industries	2000	2005	2011
Golf Facility Operations	$20,496	$28,052	$29,852
Golf Course Capital Investment	$7,812	$3,578	$2,073
Golfer Supplies	$5,982	$6,151	$5,639
Endorsements, Tournaments & Associations	$1,293	$1,682	$2,045
Charities	$3,200	$3,501	$3,900
Total Core Industries	**$38,783**	**$42,964**	**$43,509**
Enabled Industries			
Real Estate	$9,904	$14,973	$4,745
Hospitality/Tourism	$13,480	$18,001	$20,555
Total Enabled Industries	**$23,384**	**$32,974**	**$25,300**
TOTAL GOLF ECONOMY	**$62,167**	**$75,939**	**$68,809**

Note: Columns sum based on rounding of individual estimates. Numbers also have not been adjusted for inflation but are expressed as nominal dollars.

In spite of the recent downturn, the $68.8 billion U.S. golf economy remains significant, and comparisons to other industries illustrate this point. Revenues generated by golf's core industries, alone, exceed that of spectator sports, performing arts, and other amusement and recreation industries (which include skiing facilities, marinas, fitness and recreational sport centers, and bowling). (See table below.) The total golf economy is approximately 74 percent the size of television broadcasting, cable, and other subscription programming, and is approximately 83 percent as large as the motion picture and video industries.

Size of the U.S. Golf Economy in Comparison to Other Industries, 2011 ($ billions)	
Performing arts companies[1]	$15.1
Other amusement and recreation industries (including skiing facilities, marinas, fitness and recreational sport centers, bowling, etc.)[1]	$32.3
Spectator sports (including baseball, basketball, football, hockey, etc.) [1]	$33.1
Golf (core industries only)	**$43.5**
Motion pictures and videos[2]	$83.1
TV broadcasting, cable and other subscription programming[2]	$92.4
Golf (including core and enabled industries)	**$68.8**

Note: Revenues for comparison industries adjusted from 2010 dollars to 2011 dollars using the GDP deflator.
Source: [1] U.S. Census Bureau, Performing Arts Companies (NAICS 7111), Spectator Sports (NAICS 7112), and Other Amusement and Recreation Industries (NAICS 7139 excluding NAICS 71391, Golf Courses and Country Clubs), "2010 Service Annual Survey, Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation Services"; [2] U.S. Census Bureau, Motion Pictures and Videos (NAICS 5121), TV Broadcasting (NAICS 51512), and Cable and Other Subscription Programming (NAICS 5152), "2010 Service Annual Survey, Information Sector Services."

While the total golf economy declined 9.4 percent in nominal terms from 2005 to 2011, golf's core industries grew 1.3 percent, demonstrating resilience and stability in core operations associated with playing the game. By comparison, many other U.S. economic indicators and industries were down dramatically during this period that included a major global and U.S. economic recession (2007-09). For example, from 2005 to 2011, total U.S. private residential construction spending fell by 74.4 percent.[4] Equally significant, average monthly U.S. nonfarm employment in 2011 (131.4 million employees) was still down 6.2 million from the peak average monthly employment of 137.6 million in 2007.[5] (See the following chart.)

[4] U.S. Census Bureau (2012), "Single Family and Multi-Family Home Construction Spending" data.
[5] U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012), "Employment, Hours, and Earnings from the Current Employment Statistics" data.

Figure 1 Total Nonfarm Employment, 2005-2011

Source 1 U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (2012)

Golf's Economic Impact

Golf's impact on the U.S. economy includes the direct effects of economic activity in the core and enabled golf industries, as well as the indirect and induced (or multiplier) effects on the overall economy. In economics, the idea of the multiplier is that changes in the level of economic activity in one industry impact other industries throughout the economy. For example, a fraction of each dollar spent at a golf facility is, in turn, spent by the facility to purchase goods and services for golf facility operation; these are indirect effects. In addition, golf course employees spend a portion of their disposable incomes on personal goods and services, and this stimulates economic activity in a myriad of other industries; these are induced effects.

Therefore, golf's total (direct plus multiplier) economic impact includes both the direct employment and wage income of those employed in golf-related industries, as well as the secondary employment and wages supported in other sectors of the economy through subsequent purchases of goods and services by golf industry employees.

In 2011, the $68.8 billion national golf economy generated:

- A total economic impact of $176.8 billion for the U.S. economy, including the indirect and induced economic impacts stimulated by golf sector activity;
- A total employment impact of 1.98 million jobs; and
- Total wage income of $55.6 billion.

The table below presents the total economic activity supported by each of the six golf industry segments in 2011.

Multiplier Impacts on U.S. Economy by Golf Industry Segment, 2011

Industry	Direct	Indirect	Induced	Total Output ($ millions)	Total Jobs	Total Wage Income ($ millions)
Golf Facility Operations	$29,852			$86,442	971,737	$27,595
Golf Course Capital Investment*	$2,073			$1,771	14,086	$545
Golfer Supplies**	$5,639			$6,533	65,230	$1,984
Endorsements, Tournaments & Associations	$2,045			$6,568	70,172	$2,276
Charities***	$3,900			-	-	-
Real Estate ****	$4,745			$10,782	85,744	$3,314
Hospitality/Tourism	$20,555			$64,733	769,508	$19,842
Total	**$68,809**			**$176,829**	**1,976,477**	**$55,556**

Note: Columns sum based on rounding of individual estimates. Some of the industry segments included in the direct economy calculations are excluded from the economic impact estimation, because they do not represent new economic activity or their inclusion would result in double-counting. Economic impact analysis is calculated on $58.4 billion of direct golf economy revenues. The following industry segments are excluded in the economic impact analysis: (1) *capital investment—only new golf course construction is included for this category since other types of golf facility capital investment are typically financed through facility revenues (and therefore not included because of double counting); (2) **golfer supplies—only the retail margin from the sale of golfer supplies is included in economic impact estimation, since the U.S. is a net importer of golf equipment and apparel; (3) ***charitable giving—this is a transfer of income rather than new economic activity; and (4) ****real estate—new golf-related residential construction is included for this category, but the golf premium (the additional amount a buyer is willing to pay for a home located on/near a golf course) is considered a transfer of assets rather than new economic activity.

Economic multipliers vary depending on the number of linkages to the local and regional economy and to the average wage associated with the golf industry segment. Golf industry segments with higher average wages and more linkages to the regional economy (larger purchases of goods and services) will have larger economic multipliers compared to segments with lower average wages and fewer linkages to other industries in the local economy. This is because the increased spending associated with sourcing more inputs locally and with higher wages (and typically greater disposable income) will support more economic activity and jobs in industries that are both indirectly related and even unrelated to the golf industry.

The following table compares changes in the golf industry's direct and total economic impact on the U.S. economy in 2000, 2005, and 2011. In 2000, only the size of the direct golf economy, not the golf economy's total economic impact, was estimated. The size of the direct golf economy in 2000 was $62.2 billion. In 2005, the golf economy expanded significantly to $75.9 billion driven by strong residential construction and consumer spending and the overall health of the U.S. economy. In 2011, the direct golf economy contracted to $68.8 billion due primarily to significant declines in golf real estate and golf capital investment, including new course construction. The table shows the related declines in total economic output, employment, and wage income associated with the lower level of direct economic activity supported by the game of golf.

Golf's Impact on the U.S. Economy in 2000, 2005 and 2011

Core and Enabled Industries	**2000**	**2005**	**2011**
Direct Impact ($ millions)	$62,167	$75,939	$68,809
Total Output Impact ($ millions)	Not estimated	$195,115	$176,829
Total Jobs Impact	Not estimated	2,066,404	1,976,477
Total Wage Income Impact ($ millions)	Not estimated	$61,183	$55,556

Core Industries

Golf Facility Operations

At the center of any golf economy are the golf facilities—the largest component in terms of revenues. The revenue that flows through a golf facility comes primarily from green fees, membership fees, range fees, golf car rentals, and associated spending on food and beverage. This revenue, in turn, supports a host of supply sectors, including golf equipment manufacturers, food and beverage providers, and turfgrass equipment and maintenance service providers. The country's 15,751 golf courses, 1,000 stand-alone ranges (indoor and outdoor), 1,366 miniature golf facilities, and 415 golf academies/schools generated $29.9 billion in revenues in 2011. In nominal terms, facility operations revenue in 2011 was higher than in 2005, but when adjusted for inflation, revenue in 2011 ($29.9 billion) was actually lower than in 2005 ($31.8 billion in 2011 dollars) in real terms. According to the National Golf Foundation, the total number of rounds declined by 7.3 percent, from 499.6 million in 2005 to 463.0 million in 2011,[6] but inflation grew by 13.4 percent during that period, which may account for why 2011 revenues are not as low as may have been expected.

[6] NGF (2012). *Rounds Played in the U.S. – 2012 Edition.*

Golf Facility Revenues in 2011 ($ millions)	
Golf Facilities	$28,944.6
Practice Ranges & Alternative Facilities	$907.1
TOTAL[1]	**$29,851.7**

Note: [1]Golf facility revenues exclude on-course merchandise sales, which are included in the Golf-Related Supplies industry segment. Column does not sum due to rounding.

Golf facility revenue is sizable on its own, and compares favorably to other popular sports. For example, all professional spectator sports—including baseball, basketball, football, and hockey—generated revenues of $33.1 billion, and fitness and recreational sports centers had annual revenues of $23.0 billion.[7]

Golf Course Capital Investments

Golf facilities generate economic impacts beyond operational revenues through investments to upgrade and maintain facilities and infrastructure, and through the construction, expansion, and renovation of courses. SRI measures two types of capital investments: capital investments at existing facilities, and new course construction. In 2011, SRI estimates that golf facilities spent $1.6 billion on capital investments. This represents a substantial decline from the $2.2 billion (or $2.4 billion in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation) invested by golf facilities in 2005, reflecting a much weaker economic landscape.

In addition to maintaining and renovating existing facilities, considerable investment is made each year in constructing new golf courses. Investment in golf course construction includes the costs of constructing the golf course, clubhouse, pro shop, and maintenance buildings, as well as the initial outlay on equipment and course amenities.

In 2011, approximately 75.5 golf course construction projects were underway (63 new facilities and 12.5 major golf course expansion projects, in 18-hole equivalents). These 75.5 projects represent a sharp decline from the 308 construction projects undertaken in 2005. New golf course construction has been in sharp decline since 2006, reflecting a correction of golf course supply and demand. SRI estimates new golf course construction contributed $515.8 million to the U.S. economy in 2011, which is significantly lower relative to 2005 ($1.4 billion, or $1.6 billion in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation).

[7] U.S. Bureau of the Census, *2010 Annual Survey: Arts, Entertainment, and Recreation Services*, 2012. Revenues for comparison industries were adjusted from 2010 dollars to 2011 dollars using the GDP deflator.

In total, golf course capital investments were $2.1 billion in 2011, as compared to $3.6 billion in 2005 (or $4.1 billion in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation).

Golf Course Construction and Capital Investment in 2011 ($ millions)	
Existing Facility Capital Investment	$1,557.4
New Golf Course Construction	$515.8
TOTAL	**$2,073.2**

Note: Column sums based on rounding of individual estimates. Only the New Course Construction category is included in the economic impact analysis, because it represents new economic activity. Golf course capital investment is typically financed through golf facility revenues, so including both Golf Course Capital Investment and Golf Facility Operations in economic impact analysis would result in double counting.

Golfer Supplies

In 2011, American golfers spent significant sums on items, such as golf balls, golf clubs, golf apparel, and golf books. The U.S. is home to a number of companies that manufacture golf equipment, golf apparel, and other golfer products. The economic value that accrues to the U.S. economy comes from both the production and retail sales of such items. However, because the U.S. is a net importer of golfer supplies, we focus on the retail side of the picture at the national level.

In 2011, Americans spent $5.6 billion on golfer supplies. Of this amount, the largest proportion, or $3.5 billion, was spent on equipment, such as golf clubs, golf balls, and golf bags. Americans purchased $1.6 billion worth of apparel, including popular clothing with golfer brands (e.g., Adidas, Greg Norman Collection, Nike, Inc., Page and Tuttle Golf, PING, etc.) that are worn on and off the course. Golf media (excluding TV) represented approximately $523 million of total purchases in 2011. Golf media include golf magazines, such as *Golf Digest, Golf Magazine,* and *Golf World*; golf video games, such as *Tiger Woods PGA TOUR 12*; golf DVD sales, such as Tom Watson's *Lessons of a Lifetime* and Butch Harmon's *About Golf*; and golf books, including golfer biographies, course guides, instructional books (such as Tom Watson's *The Timeless Swing*), histories of the game, and other golf-related topics. In total, golfer supplies totaled $5.6 billion in 2011.[8]

Compared to 2005, consumers in 2011 spent less on golf equipment, golf apparel, and golf media. The decline in consumer spending on golf equipment is driven by a number of factors,

[8] In calculating the economic impact of these retail sales, the economic multiplier is applied to the margin that the retailer makes from the sale of the golf product (i.e., the retailer's net revenues after covering the cost of purchasing the wholesale golf equipment or apparel from the manufacturer). The margin that U.S. retailers and golf facilities made on the sale of golfer supplies in 2011 totaled $2.1 billion.

including the U.S. recession of 2007-09, the weak economic recovery, and the decline in rounds played at golf facilities. Spending on golf apparel increased slightly in nominal terms, but declined in real terms over this period. The decline in spending on golf media reflects a drop in subscriptions and retail sales, the paradigmatic shift from print to digital media, and the price and ad revenue compression associated with the shift from print to digital media.

Consumer Purchases of Golfer Supplies in 2011 ($ millions)	
Equipment	$3,524.9
Apparel	$1,591.7
Media (excluding TV)	$522.6
TOTAL	**$5,639.2**

Note: This includes on-course and off-course purchases of golf equipment, apparel and media.

Endorsements, Tournaments, and Associations

This segment of the golf economy encompasses industries driven by golf's entertainment and advertising value, in addition to its recreational value (e.g., watching the U.S. Open and other golf championship events on TV). It includes economic activity driven by holding and broadcasting major golf tournaments; spending by national, regional and state golf associations; and corporate endorsements of individual players. Total revenues for this industry segment reached $2.0 billion in 2011, compared to $1.7 billion in 2005 (or $1.9 billion in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation).

Tournaments

Major golf tournaments directed by The PGA of America, the PGA TOUR, the USGA, and the LPGA generated approximately $1.2 billion in 2011, compared to $954 million in 2005 (or $1.1 billion in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation). Tournament revenues include fees generated by selling broadcast rights to tournaments, corporate sponsorship of events, spectator ticket sales, and merchandise.

Associations

Numerous golf associations represent different segments of the industry in the U.S. (e.g., golf professionals, course owners, club managers, superintendents, etc.). These associations provide valuable services to their members, including updates on equipment and rules, personal job and retirement benefits, certifications, professional development assistance, referral services, and other information. The major national-level associations, such as the CMAA, GCSAA, NGCOA, and The PGA of America, are represented at the state or regional level by chapters/sections. In 2011, the aggregate revenues of these professional associations were approximately $554 million, compared to $464 million in 2005 (or $526 million in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation).[9]

Endorsements

Some golfers are themselves mini-advertising and product endorsement industries, often earning more off the golf course than on the golf course. Endorsement earnings can come from both golf-related industries (such as club and apparel manufacturers) and completely unrelated industries, such as food and automobiles. While golf superstars are the most visible of these endorsement recipients, many other professional golfers receive smaller sums for endorsing products. In total, SRI estimates that golfers received $320 million for endorsements in 2011, compared to $265 million in 2005 (or $300 million in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation).

Tournaments, Association and Associated Revenues in 2011 ($ millions)	
Major Tournaments	$1,171.0
Associations	$554.4
Player Endorsements	$319.7
TOTAL	**$2,045.1**

Charitable Giving

The U.S. golf industry makes substantial contributions to a variety of charities. Golf course owners, operators and golf professionals are happy to serve as access points for annual fundraising by local service organizations. Golfers pay fees to play in charitable golf tournaments, with the net proceeds going to local charities or local branches of national charitable foundations. Revenues accruing to golf courses have been included in the Golf Facilities segment above, and the net portion going to charities is included here. According to National Golf Foundation research (2002, 2011) the amount of charitable giving attributed to the game of golf in the U.S. increased from $3.2 billion in 2000 to $3.9 billion in 2011.

Charitable Giving in 2011 ($ millions)	
TOTAL	**$3,900**

Note: Charitable giving is not included in economic impact estimation, because it represents a transfer of income rather than new economic activity.

[9] A small number of associations (though representing a large share of economic impact) secure a large percentage of their revenues from professional golf tournaments. These tournament-related activities are included exclusively in the "Tournaments" section.

Enabled Industries

Real Estate

Golf courses are a key amenity in resort and vacation properties, as well as primary residences. Golf supports real estate activity on two fronts: through new residential construction, and through a golf course's positive impact on the value of existing homes. SRI estimates 19,152 new golf community homes were constructed in 2011, with total golf residential construction spending of $3.1 billion, down from an estimated 63,840 new golf community homes constructed in 2005 with total golf residential construction spending of $11.6 billion (or $13.2 billion in 2011 when adjusted for inflation). The steep decline in the number of golf residences constructed mirrors the sharp decline in total U.S. new home starts (which fell by 70.5 percent from 2005 to 2011)[10] and total U.S. private residential construction spending (which fell by 74.4 percent from 2005 to 2011)[11] from the peak in 2005. The financial crisis and recession of 2007-09 hit the real estate sector hard, and it has yet to fully recover.

Additionally, SRI estimates that sales of existing homes in golf communities generated $1.6 billion in increased real estate value or premium (the premium is the additional amount a buyer is willing to pay for a home or property located on a golf course or within a golf community). This is down from an estimated $3.3 billion real estate premium in 2005, reflecting a significant decline in both existing home sales (which fell by 39.8 percent from 2005-11) and average sales price. In total, SRI estimates the total value of golf-related real estate to be approximately $4.7 billion in 2011.

Golf-Related Residential Real Estate in 2011 ($ millions)	
Golf-Related Residential Construction	$3,139.6
Realized Golf Premium	$1,605.5
TOTAL	**$4,745.1**

Note: The sale of existing homes is considered a transfer of assets rather than new economic output, so the golf premium that is realized in the sale of an existing home is not included in the economic impact analysis.

Hospitality/Tourism

Across the country, many people play golf while on a trip, whether golf is the primary motivation for a trip or is connected to other recreational time spent with friends, family, or business colleagues. Golf resorts attract business meetings and vacationers, and golf is often a secondary activity for those visiting friends and family. Core golf enthusiasts follow professional golfers and

[10] National Association of Home Builders (2012), "Annual Housing Starts" data.

[11] U.S. Census Bureau (2012), "Single Family and Multi-Family Home Construction Spending" data.

thousands of fans attend major tournaments. They also travel to play golf at famous golf courses (e.g., Pebble Beach Golf Links in Pebble Beach, CA; TPC Sawgrass in Ponte Vedra Beach, FL; Bethpage in Farmingdale, NY; etc) or to play at courses outside of their immediate community.

SRI estimates that golf travelers made approximately 115.9 million golf-related visits (referred to as "person-stays"[12] in the travel industry) and spent an average of $177 per person per stay. In total, golf-related travel expenditures amounted to an estimated $20.6 billion in 2011, compared to $18.0 billion in 2005 (or $20.4 billion in 2011 dollars when adjusted for inflation). In real terms, this reflects a 0.7 percent increase from 2005 to 2011, consistent with the overall growth in the volume of total domestic person trips from 2005 to 2011 (which grew by 0.6 percent from 1,992.4 million person trips in 2005 to 2,004.9 million in 2011, according to the U.S. Travel Association).

U.S. Golf-Related Travel Expenditures in 2011	
# Golf person stays (million)	115.9
Average travel $ per person per stay	$177
TOTAL ($ millions)	**$20,555.0**

[12] According to D.K. Shifflet & Associates, a "person-stay" is the number of unique people who are on a stay. A stay is counted for each unique destination on a trip. A trip from Boston, MA to Durham, NC that included stops in New York, NY and Philadelphia, PA would be counted as three stays—one for each destination city (New York, Philadelphia, and Durham). If there were two people on this trip, this would equate to two person-stays per destination, or a total of six person-stays.

CONCLUSIONS

- The game of golf is an industry in its own right, and contributes significantly to the U.S. economy.
- The 2005-11 decline in U.S. golf economy revenue was driven primarily by weaknesses in golf real estate (-68.3 percent) and golf course capital investment (-42.1 percent), including new course construction. New golf residential construction was severely impacted by the housing market crash and the economic recession of 2007-09. New course construction slowed considerably during this period, and golf facility operators made significantly lower average capital investments in response to the weakened economic landscape. In addition, spending on golfer supplies (-8.3 percent) declined due to weakened overall retail spending.
- Relative strengths were in core golf facility operations, tournaments and associations, and golf-related travel, which increased by 6.4 percent, 21.6 percent, and 14.2 percent respectively during this six-year period.
- As a $68.8 billion industry, the continued health and growth of the golf industry has a direct bearing on future jobs, commerce, economic development, and tax revenues for a large number of U.S. communities and industries.
- The total economic impact of golf on the economy of the United States in 2011 was $176.8 billion, a decline from $195.1 billion in 2005.
- The U.S. golf economy supported 1.98 million jobs with total wage income of $55.6 billion in 2011, compared to 2.07 million jobs with total wage income of $61.2 billion in 2005.