

Puttshack Brand Strategy

Michael J. Smith

Full Sail

Digital Storytelling & Branding

Diane Sadler Diaz

May 5th, 2024

Abstract

Puttshack, a rising star in the entertainment industry, has disrupted the traditional mini golf scene. With its innovative blend of technology, upscale ambiance, and memorable experiences, Puttshack invites players to step into a world where golf balls track their own scores, neon lights set the stage, and laughter echoes through each hole. In this article, we explore how Puttshack's brand strategy, unique differentiators, and market positioning have made it a go-to destination for those seeking more than just a game of mini golf.

Introduction

“Fore!” The familiar cry rings out, but this isn’t your typical golf course. Welcome to Puttshack, where mini golf meets modernity. Gone are the days of paper scorecards and windmill obstacles. Puttshack has reimagined the game, infusing it with tech-savvy flair and a dash of magic.

Picture this: neon-lit courses that beckon players into a world of playful challenges. Here, golf balls track their own scores, and each hole surprises with unexpected twists. But Puttshack isn’t just about golf; it’s about creating memories. As the sun sets, players step off the course and into a mixologist-obsessed bar, where globally-inspired flavors blend with handcrafted drinks.

In this article, we delve into the heart of Puttshack’s brand strategy, explore what sets it apart from the competition, and reveal how it has become the ultimate destination for those seeking an elevated mini golf adventure.

Brand Components

Puttshack’s name boasts several strengths that contribute to its overall brand identity. First, it is **memorable**—short, easy to pronounce, and likely to stick in the mind. When customers think of mini golf, they will recall the playful vibe associated with the name. Second, the name is **descriptive**. “Puttshack” directly conveys the core activity: putt-putt golf. It sets expectations for a casual, fun-filled experience. Lastly, the combination of “putt” and “shack” suggests a laid-back, enjoyable outing, appealing to a wide audience, including families, friends, and corporate groups. Importantly, the name is unique and unlikely to be confused with other brands. Therefore, my recommendation is to keep the name “Puttshack” unless further research reveals significant drawbacks. It is essential to consider trademark availability and domain availability for long-term viability.

Here is how the brand name “Puttshack” fares against the SMILE and SCRATCH test (Watkins, 2024):

- **Suggestive:** “Puttshack” suggests a place related to putting or golf, aligning with the brand’s offering.
- **Meaningful:** The name carries meaning for the target audience, indicating a fun and casual golfing experience.
- **Imagery:** The name evokes images of a miniature golf course or a shack where golf is played.
- **Legs:** “Puttshack” has the potential for brand extension and wordplay, such as “Puttshack Party” or “Puttshack Pro.”
- **Emotional:** The name can elicit positive emotions associated with leisure and entertainment.

Brand Identity

The Puttshack logo is a vibrant representation of the brand's identity, encapsulating its modern and playful essence. The logo features a stylized, sans-serif typeface that conveys a sense of fun and accessibility, aligning with the brand's mission to reinvent mini golf with a tech-infused twist. The color palette is bold and energetic, often using a bright green that mirrors the green of a golf course, which is both eye-catching and symbolic of the fresh, innovative experience Puttshack offers.

The shape of the logo is simple yet memorable, with a clear, rounded typography that ensures legibility across various mediums, from online platforms to physical signage. This simplicity in design makes it versatile for use in different contexts without losing its impact. The tagline, when used, complements the logo by reinforcing the brand's commitment to providing a unique entertainment experience, inviting customers to 'tee up' in a space where technology meets tradition.

The effective use of these elements in the Puttshack logo supports the brand by being instantly recognizable and reflecting the company's core values of fun, innovation, and inclusivity. It is a logo that promises an experience beyond the ordinary—a place where you can enjoy the time-honored game of mini golf enhanced by the latest technology. The logo’s vibrant colors, playful shapes, and whimsical elements evoke a sense of **fun**—whether it is a family outing or a night with friends. Additionally, its modern typeface and sleek design hint at **innovation**, promising an elevated experience beyond

traditional mini golf. The simplicity of the logo ensures **inclusivity**, welcoming everyone regardless of age or background. The tagline, "Experience Beyond the Ordinary," sets elevated expectations, emphasizing an extraordinary adventure. Finally, the unique style and bold color choices position Puttshack as a **leader in entertainment venues**, appealing to a diverse audience seeking an exciting social outing.

Puttshack's branding strategy extends beyond its dynamic logo, embracing a range of elements that highlight its innovative approach to mini golf. The brand has introduced a character named Ace Puttman, a quirky ambassador who embodies the fun and technologically advanced nature of Puttshack. This character leads an omnichannel marketing campaign, including a six-part video series that educates and entertains viewers about the brand's unique offerings.

Moreover, Puttshack leverages its patented Trackaball™ technology, which is central to its brand identity, emphasizing the tech-forward aspect of the experience. This technology allows for a seamless game without the need for pencils or scorecards, enhancing the modern feel of the brand. The company also hosts events like the Supertube Sweepstakes, engaging customers through interactive experiences that align with the brand's focus on technology and fun.

The brand's color scheme, which features prominently in its logo, is carried through its marketing materials and physical venues, creating a cohesive visual identity. This consistency ensures that the brand is easily recognizable and associated with a high-energy, contemporary mini golf experience. The use of these branding elements across various platforms, from social media to in-venue displays, solidifies Puttshack's position as a leader in entertainment venues, offering a unique blend of tradition and technology. These strategic branding components work together to create a distinctive and memorable brand experience for all Puttshack visitors.

Business Card



Puttshack's business card is a masterclass in branding, encapsulating the essence of the company's identity with every element. The gradient of purple to dark blue is not just a treat for the eyes but a strategic choice that communicates creativity and trustworthiness. Bold typography ensures the company name stands out, while the playful font reflects the fun and modernity of mini golf. The logo, a subtle golf ball icon, is a clever touch that reinforces the brand's connection to the sport, and the circular motif throughout the card symbolizes unity and wholeness.

On the flip side, the tagline "Upscale, Tech-Infused Mini Golf Experience" concisely highlights Puttshack's unique offerings, from the high-end atmosphere to the innovative technology that enhances the game. Imagery of a mini-golf scene filled with neon lights and excitement invites the cardholder to step into Puttshack's world, while the clean layout of the contact information ensures that the card is as functional as it is visually stunning. This business card does more than just provide details; it is an invitation to a premium, innovative mini golf experience.

Tagline

The exploration of Puttshack's tagline is a brilliant exercise in branding and marketing strategy. The original tagline, "Upscale, Tech-Infused Mini Golf Experience," does an excellent job of encapsulating the essence of Puttshack's offering. It speaks to a sophisticated audience looking for more than just a game—it's an experience. The analysis points out the strengths in alignment with brand components, memorability, and differentiation, which are crucial for standing out in a competitive market. The suggestion to modify the tagline to "Elevated Mini Golf Adventures" is a thoughtful evolution, maintaining the brand's upscale image while adding an element of excitement and

exploration. This new tagline could potentially attract a broader audience, promising not just a game of mini-golf but a whole adventure, making it an even more compelling choice for those seeking a unique and memorable outing. The strategic consideration given to each word in the tagline demonstrates a deep understanding of Puttshack's brand values and the experience it aims to deliver.

Brand Archetype

Puttshack embodies the “**Jester**” archetype (*Entertainer Brand Archetype | Psychology-Driven Brand Strategy*, 2024). Here’s why:

- **Jester Archetype:**
 - The Jester is playful, fun-loving, and seeks to entertain.
 - They thrive on humor, spontaneity, and creating memorable experiences.
 - Jesters break conventions and encourage laughter.
 - Puttshack’s mini golf experience, mixologist-obsessed bar, and tech-infused gameplay align with this archetype. It’s all about fun, entertainment, and breaking away from the ordinary.

Puttshack's adoption of the Jester archetype is a brilliant move in the realm of brand identity. This archetype, known for its playful spirit and desire to bring joy, perfectly complements the essence of Puttshack's mini-golf experience. By embracing this persona, Puttshack isn't just a place to play mini-golf; it becomes a haven for those seeking an escape from the mundane, a space where laughter and joy are par for the course. The Jester's inclination towards humor and spontaneity is mirrored in Puttshack's innovative approach to mini-golf, where technology meets entertainment, creating an experience that's not just a game, but a story worth sharing. This alignment with the Jester archetype promises customers not just a service, but an experience that's memorable, shareable, and above all, fun. It's a strategic

branding choice that sets Puttshack apart, making it not just a destination, but a journey filled with laughter and delight.

The Jester archetype is a popular branding strategy that infuses humor and playfulness into a company's identity. Brands like M&M's, Doritos, and Geico have embraced this archetype, using wit and comedy to create memorable campaigns that resonate with audiences. They stand out by not taking themselves too seriously and by bringing a sense of joy and light-heartedness to their customers, making every interaction with them an enjoyable experience. These brands remind us that at the heart of the Jester archetype is the power to spread happiness and laughter.

Mission Statement

“At Puttshack, we’re on a mission to redefine mini golf. Our upscale, tech-infused courses bring people together for unforgettable moments. We blend modern technology, globally-inspired food, and handcrafted drinks to create a cool vibe you won’t find elsewhere.”

Puttshack's mission statement conveys their brand as a leader in innovative mini golf with a high-tech, upscale environment. It emphasizes a social, memorable experience with diverse entertainment options, all wrapped in a trendy atmosphere. This aligns with their identity as a modern, quality-focused venue for more than just golf.

Brand Story

The brand story for Puttshack is a story about how hard it is to find one place that works for all the different kinds of friends you have: “In a world where finding a hangout spot that caters to the eclectic mix of your social circle feels like a quest for the Holy Grail, Puttshack emerges as the hero we didn't know we needed. Imagine a place where your foodie friend can critique artisanal nachos, while

your gamer buddy is on a mini-golf odyssey. Where the extroverts are belting out karaoke tunes, and the introverts are cozied up in a corner with Wi-Fi and a good view of the chaos. It's a utopia where the barista fashionistas serve up style with a side of espresso, and the tech nerds are live-streaming their hole-in-one. Even the sports fans are cheering, not for the game on TV, but for the social influencers capturing the perfect putt. And let's not forget the weird ones – they're the unofficial mascots here. Puttshack isn't just a place; it's a mini-golf melting pot where every friend feels like they've hit the jackpot, no matter how quirky or unique they are. It's the one-size-fits-all of social venues, and somehow, it fits perfectly. So gather up your motley crew and let the good times roll, or putt, in this case."

Promotion Plan

Puttshack's initial promotion plan focuses on:

1. Local Awareness:

- **Social Media:** Engage with local communities through Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. Share fun moments, behind-the-scenes glimpses, and user-generated content.
- **Local Events:** Sponsor or host mini golf tournaments, themed nights, and charity events. Collaborate with influencers and local businesses.

2. Partnerships:

- **Hotels and Tourist Attractions:** Partner with nearby hotels and tourist spots. Offer package deals for visitors.
- **Corporate Events:** Target team-building events, corporate outings, and conferences. Highlight Puttshack as a unique venue.

3. Digital Marketing:

- **Geo-Targeted Ads:** Run online ads targeting local audiences. Highlight promotions, unique events, and discounts.
- **Email Campaigns:** Regularly update subscribers about new courses, menu items, and exclusive offers.

4. **In-Venue Promotions:**

- **Loyalty Program:** Launch a loyalty program (Puttshack Perks) to reward repeat customers.
- **Happy Hours:** Promote happy hours, flatbread specials, and discounted mini golf during off-peak hours.

5. **Community Engagement:**

- **Local Influencers:** Collaborate with local influencers to create buzz.
- **Schools and Families:** Offer group discounts for school outings and family gatherings.

Puttshack's promotion plan is a dynamic blueprint for building brand awareness and creating a lasting impression in the community. The strategy smartly integrates digital and physical marketing channels to maximize reach and engagement. Social media campaigns will leverage the power of visual storytelling and user interaction to foster a sense of community. Local events and partnerships with hotels and tourist attractions will not only drive immediate foot traffic but also establish Puttshack as a must-visit destination.

Digital marketing efforts, including geo-targeted ads and email campaigns, will ensure that Puttshack stays top-of-mind for potential visitors. The introduction of a loyalty program and in-venue promotions like happy hours are excellent tactics for encouraging repeat visits and enhancing customer loyalty. Lastly, community engagement through collaborations with local influencers and special offers for schools and families will solidify Puttshack's reputation as a community-centric brand that values

creating memorable experiences. This comprehensive approach is designed to resonate with a wide audience, ensuring that Puttshack isn't just seen as a place to play mini-golf but as a venue where fun memories are made.

Measuring the success of marketing initiatives is a strategic endeavor that involves tracking a variety of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs). For Puttshack's promotion plan, metrics such as increased foot traffic, social media engagement, and conversion rates from digital ads can be insightful. Additionally, the growth in loyalty program sign-ups and repeat customer rates would indicate the effectiveness of in-venue promotions. By analyzing these KPIs, Puttshack can gain valuable insights into customer behavior, adjust strategies as needed, and ensure that the brand continues to resonate with its audience.

Market Research

Target Market

Puttshack's main target audience comprises both demographics and psychographics:

6. Demographics:

- **Age:** Primarily young adults (ages 21–35) seeking social experiences.
- **Location:** Urban areas with high foot traffic and entertainment hubs.
- **Income:** Middle to upper-middle income.
- **Education:** Varied, but often college-educated.
- **Occupation:** Professionals, students, and tourists.

7. Psychographics:

- **Values and Interests:**
 - Fun-loving: People who enjoy leisure activities and socializing.

- Tech-savvy: Individuals comfortable with modern technology.
- Adventurous: Those seeking unique experiences beyond traditional mini golf.
- **Lifestyle:**
 - Social butterflies: People who thrive in group settings.
 - Foodies and cocktail enthusiasts: Interested in diverse culinary experiences.
 - Experience seekers: Value memorable moments over material possessions.

Puttshack appeals to a wide range of people, mainly young adults in cities who like to have fun and try new things. They're often working professionals or students who enjoy spending time with friends, using the latest tech, and having unique experiences. This group is drawn to Puttshack because it offers more than just mini-golf; it's a place where they can eat, play, and make lasting memories.

Product Description

Puttshack offers an **upscale, tech-infused mini golf experience** that stands out in the entertainment industry:

8. Upscale Mini Golf:

- Puttshack redefines mini golf by combining cutting-edge technology with creative course design.
- Patented **Trackaball™ technology** replaces traditional scorecards, enhancing gameplay.

9. Food and Beverage Services:

- Pre-game or post-game, Puttshack caters to all tastes:
 - **Vegans** to omnivores.
 - **Cocktail connoisseurs** to casual drinkers.
- The menu complements the vibrant environment.

10. **Vibe and Atmosphere:**

- Puttshack is all about the **vibe**:
 - Dimmed lights, upbeat tunes, and a lively ambiance.
 - It's not just golf; it's an **experience**.

Puttshack elevates the classic mini golf outing into a dynamic social event with its innovative Trackaball™ technology and imaginative course designs. Whether you're a vegan or an omnivore, a cocktail aficionado or someone who enjoys a casual drink, the diverse menu caters to every palate. The ambiance is carefully curated to create an immersive experience, complete with mood lighting and energetic music, making every visit to Puttshack not just a game, but a memorable occasion.

Competitive differentiators

Topgolf:

- Offers a **technology-enabled golf entertainment** experience.
- Known for its **Toptracer technology**, which tracks the flight of golf balls.
- Provides a variety of games and a full-service restaurant¹.
- Hosts events and offers promotions like half-off golf on Tuesdays².

Dave & Buster's:

- Combines a restaurant and arcade gaming experience.
- Features an extensive menu with items like pastas, burgers, steaks, and desserts.
- Offers a variety of interactive entertainment options, including the latest arcade games and virtual reality experiences³.
- Has special events and happy hour deals⁴.

Bowlero:

- Operates as a **modern bowling alley** with a focus on providing a nightlife experience.
- Offers blacklight bowling, arcade games, and an outrageous menu of oversized shareables.
- Known for its **upscale bowling** and events, catering to both casual and league bowlers⁵.

Now, for ***Puttshack's differentiators:***

- a. ****Trackaball Technology****: Puttshack's mini-golf experience is enhanced by a patented ball-tracking technology that keeps score, making the game fair and more enjoyable as players don't need to mark scores manually⁶.
- b. ****High-Tech Game Play****: The brand is positioned as a "scratch player" in the social entertainment world, offering a tech-savvy version of mini-golf that appeals to digital natives⁶.

Puttshack stands out in the vibrant landscape of social entertainment with its tech-infused mini-golf experience. Unlike its competitors, Topgolf offers a high-tech driving range with a variety of games and events, Dave and Buster's combine a restaurant and arcade gaming with a wide selection of food and drinks, and Bowlero provides a classic bowling experience with a twist of oversized shareables and signature drinks. Puttshack's unique Trackaball technology elevates the traditional mini-golf game by enabling automatic scoring and custom updateable exclusive and inclusive experiences for all types of its customers enhancing the overall player experience, making it a standout choice for a tech-savvy generation seeking a modern twist on classic entertainment.

These differentiators position Puttshack uniquely in the market, focusing on a high-tech, seamless mini-golf experience that stands out from traditional entertainment options. The brand's

emphasis on technology, inclusiveness, and modern gameplay experience is a key message in its branding strategy.

References

Come Play around | Golf, party venue, sports bar & restaurant | TopGolf. (n.d.). Topgolf.

<https://topgolf.com/us/>

Entertainer Brand Archetype | Psychology-Driven Brand Strategy. (2024a, January 24). Kaye

Putnam | Psychology Driven Brand Strategist. <https://www.kayeputnam.com/brand-archetype-entertainer/>

Entertainer Brand Archetype | Psychology-Driven Brand Strategy. (2024b, January 24). Kaye

Putnam | Psychology Driven Brand Strategist. <https://www.kayeputnam.com/brand-archetype-entertainer/>

Home. (n.d.). <https://www.bowlero.com/>

Kingsley, M. (2023). *Universal principles of branding: 100 Key Concepts for Defining, Building, and Delivering Brands.* Rockport Universal.

Puttshack | High tech mini golf in London, Essex & USA | Crazy Golf. (n.d.). Puttshack.

<https://www.puttshack.com/>

Soechtig, S. G. (2022). *Make your brand matter: Experience-Driven Solutions to Capture Customers and Keep Them Loyal.* John Wiley & Sons.

Top puttshack Alternatives, competitors. (n.d.).

<https://www.cbinsights.com/company/puttshack/alternatives-competitors>