"Auditing our club's software showed us we were working around our technology—and gave us the clarity and confidence to evolve."

How Kilmarnock Barassie Golf Club Used the Golf Club Software Framework to Evolve Their Operation

Software development in golf has been a 'slow burn' for many years. A combination of incremental upgrades and operational workarounds have created the necessary environments for systems to "function" without needing to be fully optimised for any given club. At the same time, evolving club and service operations have created huge gaps in what clubs need versus what their technology currently provides.

In a national survey conducted by Golf Genius and Players 1st last year, **66% of golf clubs in UK&I said they wanted to explore alternatives to their existing solutions.**

Yet, in a landscape full of choice and complexity, clubs also expressed the need for a structured way to properly evaluate their technology, instead of relying on incomplete information, sales demos, or legacy assumptions. Up to now, software decisions have typically been reactive rather than strategic.

A new software framework and self-assessment tool is beginning to change that. Designed to give clubs a holistic, objective view of their systems, it provides a

structured way to assess performance, identify inefficiencies, and benchmark against what is now possible.

General Manager at Kilmarnock (Barassie) Golf Club, David Addison, was among the first to complete an audit of his club's software using these tools. David shared his experiences of the process and how it has driven the club to rethink their approach to software—one focused on enhancing their existing ecosystem, rather than making wholesale changes.

David, to start at the beginning—what prompted you to undertake the audit?

"We had been with our existing supplier for over 15 years. On the surface, it was doing what we needed, but there was a growing sense internally that we were adapting too much around it."

"The audit gave us a structured way to step back and properly assess that. Rather than relying on instinct or incremental frustrations, it forced us to look at everything objectively—from operations through to member experience."

Located on the Ayrshire coast, Kilmarnock Barassie is a Member's Club with regular guest and visitor play throughout the year.

How did you approach the audit process itself?

"The process took around an hour to complete…but my advice would be to take that time and be ready to be honest about appraising your systems from both a club point of view and a member point of view."

"That honesty is important, because without it you don't get a true picture. The value of the framework is that it removes assumptions. You're working through a defined set of criteria rather than relying on what you think is or isn't working."

"It's not a quick exercise but I wouldn't expect something as important as this to be a quick job to be honest. You have to be prepared to invest the time and be honest but the fact we now have tools to do this ourselves is a huge win for our industry."

What did the audit reveal about your existing setup?

"The biggest takeaway was that we were working around our old system too much to make it work for the club."

"That's quite a fundamental shift in perspective. You go from thinking the system is broadly fine, to realising it's actually shaping inefficiencies across multiple areas—membership, tee sheet, competition management, even payments."

"The audit also highlighted integration gaps. Systems weren't communicating effectively, which meant duplication of work and a less seamless experience for both staff and members."
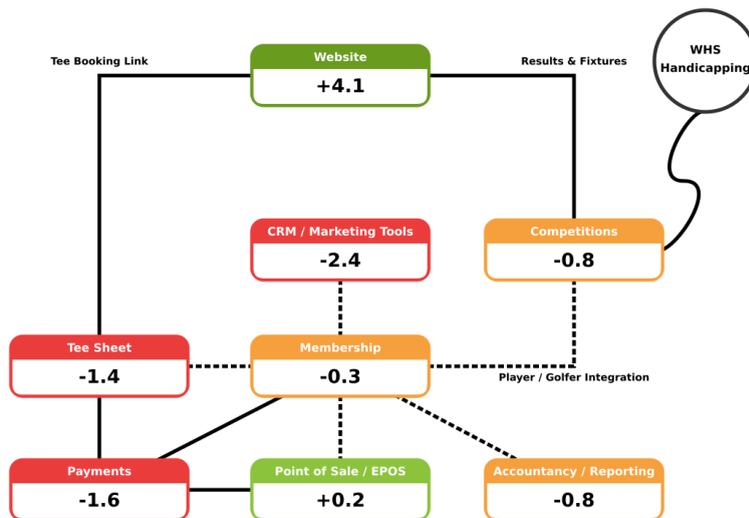
The results from the Audit Tool highlighted numerous system improvements that could be made, including the club's Tee Sheet (-1.4) and Payments (-1.6) modules.

At what point did that translate into a decision to change?

"The framework doesn't tell you what to do—it gives you clarity. In our case, it showed us what system improvements we needed to make, and that gave us the confidence to explore alternatives properly."

"In our case, we only needed to make a couple of optimisations to our existing ecosystem, so knew from the outset that integrations would be a key factor in the decision-making process."

"We opened it up to the market and invited other providers in. That process was important, because it allowed us to benchmark what was actually available rather than relying on assumptions or legacy relationships."

**What role did the audit play in evaluating alternative providers?**

"The audit tool is one part of a wider step-by-step guide that has been put together to help clubs such as ourselves. The framework also supports how we assess providers against the needs we had already defined through the audit. That changes the dynamic completely as we are no longer being sold to, we are evaluating through our own lens."

"We have now moved to a completely new system which has better integration with other systems that we already use. That alone has had a significant operational impact as we have removed numerous manual workarounds that we were having to deal with before."

Were there commercial implications as well?

"Yes, particularly around payments. Our previous provider restricted who we could use for card processing… whilst the functionality was of a decent standard, it led to significant processing fees that were costing the club more than we felt it should have been."

"By going through that audit and tender process, we were able to reassess that part entirely and achieve a more favourable outcome. That's a tangible financial benefit, not just an operational one."
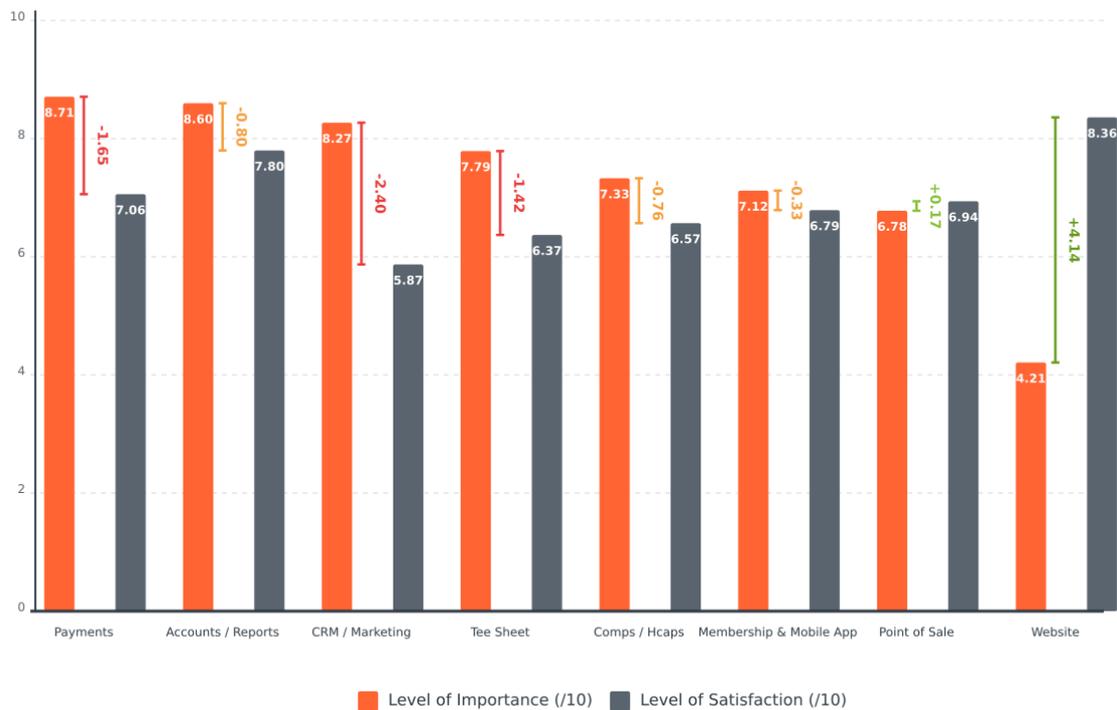
The L-R order of the chart is determined by the importance rating (orange bars) from highest to lowest.

David used the results from the Audit Tool to focus his efforts on the systems that were most crucial to him and his operation. This was the club's Payments (-1.6) and Tee Sheet (-1.4) modules.

Looking back, what would you say is the real value of completing the audit and following the framework?

"Clarity and confidence. The rewards you get from the results are well worth it. It will either give you confidence in your current systems, or it will allow you to review them for the betterment of the club as a whole."

"In our case, it led to change but importantly, it was informed change. Every decision was grounded in a structured assessment rather than guesswork."

What advice would you give to other club managers considering this approach?

"Take the time to do it properly, and don't limit your view of the market. Review as many providers as you can—even the ones outside of your budget. It gives you a well-rounded view of what's in the market."

"Ensure to ask about integrations and what the software suppliers can do with other providers, as it can be surprising what each system can integrate with. In our case this question delivered the most improvement gains."

Finally, how do you see this changing how clubs approach technology decisions going forward?

"I think it introduces a more objective, evidence-based approach. Golf clubs will be more flexible to move between providers…and that means collaboration and integration between systems will be key."

"What this process does is give clubs a framework to support that shift. It takes what can feel like a subjective or risky decision and turns it into something structured and measurable. It ultimately provides club managers with confidence."

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