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(Technology)

Efficient technology

Advances in technology — whether in the form of mowing equipment, irrigation or smartphones — have forever changed the golf course superintendent's job. That's why I am pleased to be writing this column for *GCM* about technology and the ways superintendents can use it.

Our job has been and always will be out on the golf course, looking at the turf, soil and water. Yet, more and more of the job is becoming administrative, and this aspect is taking more time away from being on the golf course and providing a great product to our members, guests or the general public.

I will say up front I am a tech geek. Ten years ago this would have been an insult; now I look at it as a compliment. In my opinion, however, technology is only useful if it is easy for us to use, saves us time and makes us more effi-

cient. Any form of technology is only useful if the time it takes to set it up results in saving us time, making us more productive or providing us more information to make better decisions.

My definition of technology is twofold: First, "the application of scientific knowledge for practical purposes" and, second, "machinery and equipment developed from the application of scientific knowledge." This is a simple and practical way to think about technology. Technology is a tool just as your mowers or soil moisture probes or any of the hundred other things you use in your daily work and personal life are tools. Once we become familiar with how to use them, these tools don't intimidate us, and neither should technology.

If setting something up takes eight hours and saves us five over the course of a year, it isn't worth using. But some technologies are well worth the time they take to learn. For example, spreadsheets can perform multiple math problems instantaneously and save a tremendous amount of time. The same can be said for word processing. Not only do these technologies save us time, but they also provide useful information to ourselves and our clubs. Most of us have already mastered these technologies; all the technologies I will be discussing in this column can also be learned and will have similar advantages.

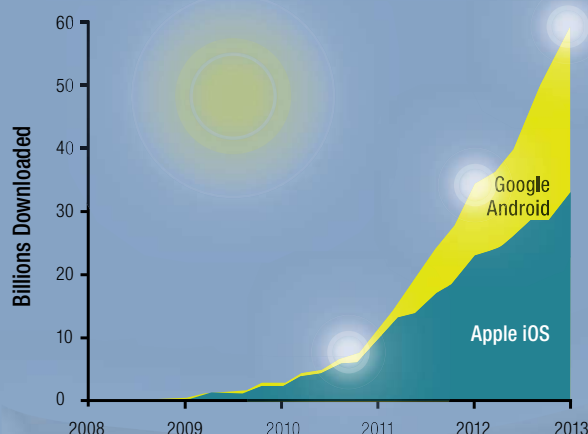
In the coming months, I will use the limited space of this column to describe some of the

useful technologies available to us and provide links to videos or screen shots on the GCSAA website to show how to implement them. If you read something in this column that may be of use, please log in to our website to learn how to utilize it or visit this winter when things slow down on your course to evaluate their application. We will be covering some very useful forms of technology in the coming months to better help you communicate with your members, prepare budgets and track all sorts of aspects of your operation. We'll also tell you about some of the fun tools and toys available to you.

By my own estimate, I have spent roughly 50 hours of my time setting up things that have allowed me to spend little to no time in my office week to week. This time is now spent on the golf course, with members or staff. Almost everything I do now I do from my iPhone, with my office simply serving as an information hub. I hope you will find this column useful, and please email me with questions or suggestions for topics you may want me to cover in the future.

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Rise of the Machines



"From 2005 to 2020, the digital universe will grow by a factor of 300 . . . the digital universe will about double every two years."

The Digital Universe in 2010, IDC, December 2012

"Mobile apps. Has the world known a faster, broader, deeper diffusion of a major technology? . . . In just four years . . . the number of . . . mobile app downloads grew from essentially zero to 60 billion."

Soft Power: Zero to 60 Billion in Four Years, Entropy Economics, December 2012

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Number of mobile apps specifically for golf course management introduced in the pages of *GCM*'s "Product News," Jan. 2012-June 2013

Diamond Zoysia Is Spreading Across The South.

"We tried ultradwarf test greens and weren't comfortable with them. Then we installed a Diamond Zoysia test green. After thorough testing we converted all 22 greens at our course to Diamond Zoysia. It's the best decision we've ever made."

Fred King

Lakeview Golf Club - Piedmont SC

SHIPYARD GOLF CLUB

Hilton Head Island SC

PALMETTO DUNES

Hilton Head Island SC

THE CREEK GOLF CLUB

Spartanburg SC

LAKE VIEW GOLF CLUB

Piedmont SC

RIVER FALLS PLANTATION

Duncan SC

PILOT KNOB PARK

Pilot Knob NC

REYNOLDS PARK GOLF CLUB

Winston-Salem NC

OCONEE COUNTRY CLUB

Seneca SC

CHARLOTTE GOLF LINKS

Charlotte NC

HEATHER HILLS GOLF CLUB

Winston-Salem NC

TGC AT PLEASANT POINT

Beaufort SC

PAR 3 WEST

Greenwood SC

EAGLES CHASE GOLF CLUB

Marshville NC

SAPONA RIDGE COUNTRY CLUB

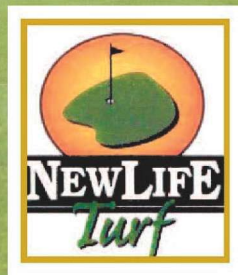
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