



The logo features the letters 'AGM' in a bold, dark blue font. The letter 'A' is the largest, with a small orange square positioned below its right side. To the right of 'AGM' is the year '2027' in a large, light grey, sans-serif font. Below '2027' is the text 'Platinum Awards' in a smaller, dark grey, serif font. At the bottom of the logo is the text 'Top 100 Golf Shops' in a dark grey, serif font.

AGM Application Guide and Entry Instructions

2027 AGM Platinum Awards: Top 100 Golf Shops and AGM International Merchandiser of the Year

The **Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM) Platinum Awards: Top 100 Golf Shops** and the **AGM International Merchandiser of the Year Award** recognize and celebrate the most innovative and successful golf retailers from around the world. These prestigious honors celebrate excellence in golf retail and position winning facilities and individuals among the most innovative and successful golf retailers in the world.

We invite creative, thoughtful submissions from **Public, Private, Resort, and Off-Course golf shops**. Facilities with multiple golf shops are welcome to submit separate entries for each location if they would like them to be evaluated independently.

Why Enter the AGM Platinum Awards?

Facilities and merchandisers selected for recognition receive:

- Recognition as one of the Top 100 Golf Shops in the world
- National and international exposure through AGM publications, marketing campaigns, and industry promotions
- Opportunities to showcase your shop's creativity, strategy, and retail success to the golf industry
- Industry prestige among golf professionals, retail leaders, and brand partners

First-Time Entrants Encouraged

Many of our Top 100 Golf Shops are first-time applicants. We strongly encourage facilities entering for the first time to apply and share their story.

Even if you are unsure how your shop compares, the Platinum Awards provide an opportunity to showcase your creativity, innovation, and retail success.

This guide outlines all questions and materials required to complete your entry. We recommend using it to prepare your responses and supporting materials before submitting your application online.

Non-AGM members are welcome to participate; however, AGM members may have access to exclusive resources that can support and enhance their submissions. All entries are evaluated solely on merit and are not influenced by AGM membership status.

How Applications Are Evaluated

Entries for the **AGM Platinum Awards: Top 100 Golf Shops** are evaluated through a structured scoring process designed to recognize excellence in golf retail operations, creativity in merchandising, and measurable business results.

Applications are reviewed by a panel of experienced golf industry professionals using the following scoring framework:

Section	Points
Retail Operation Snapshot	35
Visual Merchandising	25
Essays	40

Total Possible Score: 100 Points

Judges evaluate submissions based on several key factors, including:

- Retail performance and operational metrics
- Creativity and execution in visual merchandising
- Strategic thinking and innovation in marketing and retail planning
- Measurable results and overall impact on the retail operation

Applicants are encouraged to provide clear data, detailed explanations, and supporting materials that help illustrate the success and effectiveness of their retail strategies.

Submission Deadline

Deadline: All entries must be received by Friday August 7, 2026, at 11:59pm PST.

Late entries will not be accepted. We strongly recommend submitting early to avoid any last-minute technical issues. This document is for preparation purposes only. Please scan the QR code or visit the provided URL to complete and submit your application online.

<https://agmplatinumawards.smapply.us/>



Applications are hosted on a third-party website (Survey Monkey Apply). Applicants must create login credentials with that platform when beginning a submission. These credentials are separate from any existing AGM account or past Platinum Award entries – **each applicant MUST create a unique Survey Monkey Apply credential.**

Please note that AI-enhanced, AI-generated, or digitally manipulated photos are not permitted within Platinum Award submissions. All images submitted should be authentic, original, and unaltered.

Tip: You do not need to finish your submission in one session. Your progress will be saved, and you may log back in at any time before the deadline to continue working on your application.

All documents must be uploaded directly within the online form; the AGM office cannot add external materials on behalf of applicants.

You will receive a confirmation email after submitting your entry. If you do not receive this confirmation, please check your junk or spam folders and contact **Justine Cook** at justine@agmgolf.org or 602-604-8251 for assistance.

Your application is not considered complete until you receive this confirmation. The AGM cannot be held responsible for incomplete entries submitted after the deadline, so we strongly encourage verifying your confirmation promptly. **Winners will be notified on or after December 1, 2026.**

We are here to support you every step of the way and look forward to reviewing your creative and strategic submissions!

SECTION 1: Contact Information and Facility Profile

Please provide the following general information to help us understand the context and background of your facility and staff involved in the operations:

- Official Name of Golf Facility
- Address:

- Street Address
 - City
 - State/Province
 - Country
 - Zip/Postal Code
 - Phone Number (Include country/area code)
 - Primary contact person for this entry:
 - First Name
 - Last Name
 - Title
 - Email Address
 - Type of Facility: (Private / Public / Resort / Off-Course / Other)
 - Are you currently an AGM member? (Yes/No)
 - List key golf shop staff including titles and their email addresses (e.g. Director of Golf, Head Golf Professional, Assistant Merchandiser, Shop Manager, etc.)
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SECTION 2: Retail Operation Snapshot

Please provide detailed statistics from the calendar year **2025**. This section is designed to gather key quantitative data to help our judges understand the scope of your operations, financial performance, and use of technology. *For any questions that you are unable to answer, please write "NA" in the response field.*

Facility Snapshot:

- Number of holes
- Annual number of 18-hole rounds played
- Months open per year
- Ownership of shop (club/facility owned, pro-owned, management company, third-party, etc.)

Team Snapshot:

- Your number of years at this facility
- Your number of years of experience in retail merchandising
- List any awards received by the facility or merchandiser (including AGM, PGA, CMAA, or other industry organizations) and the year(s) awarded
- Is the merchandiser an AGM Certified Retail Manager (CRM) graduate or current student? (Yes/No)
- How many current AGM members are at your facility?
- Staff count in retail operation
- Annual retail staff training hours (approximate)

Retail Metrics Snapshot: *For any metrics that are unable to be calculated, please write "NA" in the response field.*

- Number of shops that operate at your facility

- Gross golf shop merchandise sales for the year of **2025**
- 2025 dollar per round (*Total Retail Sales / Total 18-hole Rounds*)
- What was your cost of goods sold (COGS) % for 2025? (*Cost of sales dollars / total retail sales*)
- What was your 2025 gross profit margin %? (*Gross profit \$ / Total Retail Sales*)
- What was your average inventory in 2025? (*(Sum of BOM Inventory Months 1-12 + EOM Inventory Month 12) / 13*)
- What was your turnover rate for 2025? (*COGS / Average Inventory*)
- What was your shrinkage rate for 2025?
- What is the square footage of your shop?
- What were your dollars per square foot in 2025? (*Gross retail sales / sales floor area in square feet*)
- Does your facility provide club-fitting?
- Does your facility have a launch monitor?
- Do you participate in member pricing programs such as Mill River, member price guarantees, or similar initiatives?
- What percentage of total sales was generated through eCommerce (*including temporary microsities*) in 2025?
- What percentage of your total retail sales was generated through temporary online microsities in 2025? (*Examples include tournament stores, member events, charity shops, or other temporary online stores.*)
- What percentage of total sales was generated through special orders in 2025?
- Approximately, what percent did these 5 departments make up of your total retail sales in 2025?
 - Men's
 - Women's
 - Hardgoods (golf balls, bags, accessories, etc.)
 - Equipment (golf clubs)
 - Shoes
- Did your shop's total sales increase, decrease, or remain stable in 2025 compared to 2024? Quantify the change in percentage in the following checkboxes:
 - Significantly higher 11% or greater
 - Moderately higher 6-10%
 - Higher 2-5%
 - No change +/- 1%
 - Lower 2-5%
 - Moderately lower 6-10%
 - Significantly lower 11% or greater
- What factors contributed to your shop sales in 2025 compared to 2024? Please share what internal and external factors influenced your sales increase, decrease, or stability.

SECTION 3: Visual Merchandising

Please upload **exactly five photos** for your Platinum Awards entry demonstrating your shop's visual merchandising. All photos must showcase visual displays created between January 1, 2025, and August 7, 2026, and must not have been submitted in previous years. Entries that include more or fewer than

five photos, or reuse previously submitted images, will receive point deductions. Judges will evaluate the quality and effectiveness of your merchandising based on the criteria outlined below:

- Creativity: Originality and innovation in design and layout. Judges are looking for displays that go beyond standard industry presentations.
- Visual Appeal: Overall attractiveness of the display, including color coordination, lighting, and balanced composition.
- Demonstrating Merchandising Excellence: How effectively the display highlights the product and elevates the shopping experience through clear merchandising strategies.
- Brand Alignment & Storytelling: How well the display reflects the shop or facility's brand identity while supporting a specific season, event, or marketing initiative. Judges will consider whether the display tells a cohesive story that engages customers, reinforces a clear message, and encourages interaction or purchase.
- Execution & Attention to Detail: The level of craftsmanship and polish in the display, including tidiness, product organization, signage, and finishing touches that enhance the overall presentation and professionalism.

Labeling Your Photos: Please use the following naming conventions for each image submitted:

[FACILITY_NAME]-[IMAGE_TITLE]

Example: ACME_GOLF_CLUB-MASTERS_DISPLAY

There is no file size limit for these uploads.

Accepted file formats: .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .tiff

Permission to Use Photos:

By submitting these photos, I confirm that I have the authority to grant permission and hereby grant the Association of Golf Merchandisers (AGM) the right to use these images in their promotional materials, including but not limited to the AGM Annual Merchandising Calendar, marketing campaigns, and online content. I confirm that these images may be shared publicly and understand that no compensation will be provided for their use. All photos submitted must have the necessary rights cleared for this usage.

Check the box yes/no to the above terms.

SECTION 4: Essays

Entrants are required to answer two essay questions as part of their Platinum Awards submission. Each essay should provide a detailed and thoughtful response with a clear focus on **quantifiable results and measurable impact** on your golf retail operation.

We strongly encourage you to include supplementary materials with each essay to enhance your entry. These materials may include photos, flyers, brochures, spreadsheets or other visuals and documents that help tell your story. Supporting materials are optional but strongly encouraged.

Judges will evaluate essays based on **clarity of strategy, innovation, measurable results, and overall impact on retail performance.**

Please limit your essay responses to a maximum of 1,000 words each.

Labeling Your Files:

Please label each uploaded file with your facility name and the essay it supports.

Example: ACME_GOLF_CLUB-Marketing_Promotions_Essay.pdf

This helps judges match your visuals and documents to the corresponding essay content.

There is no file size limit for these uploads.

Accepted file formats: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .gif, .tiff, .xls, .xlsx, .csv, .mp4, .mp3, .mov

Essay 1: Marketing & Promotional Innovation & Measurable Impact

Describe one unique promotional or marketing initiative executed at your club within the past year that significantly drove engagement, sales, or member participation. This could be a seasonal campaign, member event, vendor activation, or local collaboration.

In your response:

- Describe the concept and what made the initiative distinctive or innovative.
- Explain how it was executed, including the marketing channels used (email, social media, in-store experience, CRM segmentation, vendor partnerships, events, etc.).
- Outline your planning process, including coordination with staff, vendors, or other departments.
- Share measurable results, such as revenue generated, traffic increase, engagement metrics, sell-through improvement, or new customer acquisition.
- Reflect on what you learned and how the initiative influenced future planning.

Essay 2: Creating a Retail Roadmap

Describe how you plan for the long-term success of your retail operation. How do you set retail goals, align your team, and ensure your shop remains profitable and relevant over time? Include examples of planning strategies, budgeting practices, and measurable outcomes that demonstrate the effectiveness of your approach.

In your response:

- Describe how you establish annual or seasonal retail goals, including how you use historical data, trends, or member preferences to inform planning.
 - Explain how you build and manage your retail budget, including inventory planning, open-to-buy strategies, or financial benchmarks you monitor throughout the year.
 - Share how you involve and align your team in achieving these goals through communication, training, accountability, or delegation of responsibilities.
 - Highlight systems or processes you use to evaluate performance, such as key retail metrics (sell-through, margin, inventory turns, average transaction value, etc.).
 - Reflect on how this planning process has improved operational efficiency, profitability, or the overall retail experience at your facility.
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OPTIONAL SECTION 5: 2027 AGM International Merchandiser of the Year

The AGM International Merchandiser of the Year award recognizes outstanding individuals who go above and beyond in the field of golf retail—exemplifying creativity, leadership, and excellence. We’re excited to spotlight the stories and strategies behind our most inspiring merchandisers.

Please note: You must be an active AGM member to be eligible for consideration for the AGM Merchandiser of the Year award.



Applicants may choose to participate in one or both awards. The Platinum Awards: Top 100 Golf Shops recognize golf facilities, while the International Merchandiser of the Year honors individuals. Participation in the Platinum Awards is not required to be considered for Merchandiser of the Year, and multiple individuals from the same facility are welcome to apply.

If you would like to be considered for this recognition, we invite you to share your personal reflections as a merchandiser and complete the section below.

- **Your Name**
- **Your Email**
- **Your Facility and role there**
- **How long have you been in the retail industry?**
- **How long have you been in the golf industry?**
- **Are you an AGM CRM graduate or current student? (Yes/No)**

Essay Question:

Transforming Retail Results

Describe a significant challenge your retail operation faced such as issues related to inventory management, sales performance, member engagement, staffing, or operations, and explain how you addressed it through leadership, strategy, and collaboration. Share the process behind your solution and the measurable results achieved.

- What was the core challenge or obstacle, and what factors contributed to it?
- What leadership decisions, strategic adjustments, or innovations did you implement to overcome it?
- How did you engage and align your team, cross-department partners, or vendors throughout the process?
- What measurable outcomes resulted (sales growth, improved efficiencies, member satisfaction, staff development)?
- What key lessons did you learn, and how have they influenced your ongoing retail strategy?

We strongly encourage you to include supplementary materials with the essay to enhance your entry. These materials may include photos, flyers, brochures, spreadsheets or other visuals and documents that help tell your story. Supporting materials are optional but strongly encouraged. *There is no file size limit for these uploads.*

Accepted file formats: .doc, .docx, .pdf, .jpg, .jpeg, .png, .gif, .tiff, .xls, .xlsx, .csv, .mp4, .mp3, .mov

Judging Hints to Keep in Mind:

- **Please limit your essay response to a maximum of 1,000 words.**
- **Define the Challenge Clearly:** Explain the core problem your retail operation faced and the factors that contributed to it, quantify it where applicable.
- **Show Your Leadership & Strategy:** Highlight the decisions, innovations, or adjustments you made to address the challenge.
- **Demonstrate Team & Partner Collaboration:** Describe how you engaged staff, cross-department teams, or vendors to achieve success.
- **Quantify the Impact:** Include measurable outcomes—sales growth, efficiency gains, member satisfaction, staff development, or other tangible results.
- **Reflect & Learn:** Share lessons learned and how they influence ongoing retail strategy.

SUBMISSION NOTES & TIPS

- **Label Files Clearly:** Use clear and consistent naming conventions so judges can easily identify your materials.
- **Use Current, Original Content:** Ensure all photos were created between January 1, 2025, and August 7, 2026, and have not been submitted in prior years. Entries that reuse images or submit more or fewer than five photos will receive point deductions.
- **Focus on Measurable Impact:** In your essays, go beyond describing what you did—explain **why it mattered** and **how it made a difference**. Judges look for quantifiable results that demonstrate thoughtful strategy and execution.
- **Present a Cohesive Story:** Use visuals, essays, and supporting materials to present a clear, connected narrative of your retail success. Entries that feel cohesive and well-organized stand out to judges.
- **Double-Check Eligibility:** Non-members may enter the Platinum Awards; however, only active AGM members are eligible for the International Merchandiser of the Year distinction.
- **Proofread Before Submitting:** Review for accuracy, clarity, and consistency in all uploaded materials. Ensure file names, metrics, and photo labels match across sections.
- **Submit Early:** Technical issues can occur, submitting early ensures time for review and correction if needed.
- **Save Your Progress:** Save your Survey Monkey Apply application, and you may log in anytime before the deadline to complete your submission.
- **Need Help?** If you have questions or encounter technical difficulties, contact **Justine Cook** at justine@agmgolf.org or 602-604-8251. The AGM team is happy to assist you throughout the process.

TROUBLESHOOTING TIPS

- If you encounter an error message when accessing the application, please try using this direct link: <https://agmplatinumawards.smapply.us/>
- We also recommend trying an incognito/private browser window or clearing your browser's cache and cookies before attempting to log in again.
- Some clubs and facilities have strict firewall or email filtering settings that may interfere with access to the application platform. If you continue to experience issues, your IT or email administrator may be able to assist.
- Applicants are welcome to create an account using either a club email address or a personal email address. In some cases, using a personal email can help avoid firewall or filtering restrictions associated with club servers. Please note that the email address used has no impact on the application review process.