

PGA Tour Case Study

TRIBAL⁷
SCALE

The PGA Tour leverages new technology to engage and connect with their fans with one of the first voice applications in professional sports.

Virtually everywhere golf can be played, the PGA Tour name is synonymous with the highest level of the game. In keeping with this first-class reputation, the PGA Tour partnered with TribalScale in 2016, when voice was still new, to develop engaging and highly-rated voice applications for the Google Assistant and the Amazon Alexa.

Challenge

To keep up with the rapid pace of digital technology as well as the changing modes of engagement of their fan-base, the PGA Tour wanted to take advantage of emerging voice platforms. They partnered with TribalScale to develop both voice applications. Together we needed to:

- + Determine limitations in developing a voice skill for live sports
- + Integrate live data feeds designed for mobile and web with a screen less experience using the cloud
- + Design systems flexible enough to cover over 10 different types of gameplay
- + Build two tournament-based voice applications that can handle live events on a weekly basis

“We approached TribalScale as they have extensive experience working with VUIs. They follow an iterative process that enabled full transparency throughout the duration of our partnership.”

- SCOTT GUTTERMAN, VP of Digital Operations, PGA Tour

Solution

The PGA tour chose to partner with TribalScale for our reputation of being a lead practitioner in designing and building voice user interfaces (VUIs).

Through close collaboration with their team, and with Amazon, our team designed a VUI document without the benefit of standardized VUI formats available today. We engaged in extensive testing with users to ensure all interactions fit and flowed conversationally and with that knowledge developed the applications to include a leaderboard, tournament standings, and live player updates, for both Amazon and Google voice platforms. The cloud-based voice applications were entirely designed and built by TribalScale and both were quickly certified by Amazon and Google. The engagement involved:

- + **DISCOVERY:** We conducted initial research, ran workshops, and held interviews with users and key internal stakeholders to identify pain points and must-haves for the conversational flow.
- + **DESIGN:** With the principles of conversational design in mind, our team created the VUI based on known and built-in utterances, and user research into the behaviours of golf fans. All possible inputs and outputs were sketched and tested by reading and working through the wireframes and scripts.
- + **DEVELOPMENT:** Through Agile and extreme programming methodologies, we released builds of the two voice applications on a weekly basis. Further, we leveraged many features of Amazon Web Services (AWS) and continue to host the code on AWS.
- + **QUALITY ASSURANCE:** We continuously conducted user and internal testing to tweak errors in flow and in utterances. The PGA Tour had the opportunity to review builds on a weekly basis to ensure their objectives were being met.
- + **TECHNOLOGIES:** Amazon Web Services (AWS), Dialogflow, and Adobe Analytics

Outcome

The PGA Tour's mission is to entertain and inspire fans, and by creating these two innovative and engaging voice applications, among the first of their kind, we helped them deliver on that mission. Since the initial engagement in 2016, our team has continued to partner with the PGA Tour on further versions and improvements to both Google and Amazon voice applications. We've also added new features including a podcast and livestream capabilities.

Further, through our voice application development, TribalScale has been named an expert and preferred builder by both Amazon and Google. We are also now a Premier Consulting Partner in the Google Cloud Partner network as well as a Select Consulting Partner with AWS Services.



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TribalScale is a global innovation firm that helps enterprises adapt and thrive in the digital era. We have years of experience in digital strategy, design, and multi-platform engineering and through agile practices, we transform teams, build best-in-class digital products, and create disruptive startups.

Whether we're righting the ship for another company or creating a fresh end-to-end solution, we innovate for a better tomorrow.

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