

# IR UPDATE

## WEEKLY

**April 10, 2018**

### **Pinks and Greens**

I am burdened by my love of golf. It is an unrequited relationship: I love it more than it loves me, at least as measured by my ability to play. I shouldn't be surprised – no one has ever called me an athlete. But, alas, golf calls to me. A poor but enthusiastic golfer, I have come to accept this one-way relationship.

The Masters Golf Tournament, played last Thursday to Sunday and won by Patrick Reed, is the epitome of the sport. I have been privileged to attend this amazing tournament twice. Some say it is a rather stuffy affair, even by the standards of staid golf culture. But even non-fans of golf appreciate the Masters for its atmosphere. Patrons attending the tournament are on their best, most hushed, genteel behavior. They know that any break with decorum could mean a life-time ban. Best manners are fully on display throughout. (For an antidote, attend a Ryder Cup tournament, which is a hoot and a half and boosts a rowdy, boisterous crowd. It is a blast!).

The Masters Tournament takes place on arguably the most beautiful golf course in the world. Hillier than it appears on television, Augusta National Golf Club is resplendent in pinks and greens during the April event. The lush green of the Augusta, Georgia, course is the perfect background for the shocking pinks of the blooming azaleas, shown to full advantage on TV. But that TV coverage is carefully circumscribed, controlled by Augusta National down to every camera angle and the draping – in matching green – of the TV towers. Broadcast times are precisely prescribed and limited.

That is the point. The Masters Tournament is stage-managed to create a particular experience, to generate a desired emotional result. The Masters is not only the epitome of golf; it is a perfect exemplar of a designed experience. Genteel calmness and reverent awe help players and patrons support each other to put the focus on the game of golf being played. The Masters is designed to create appreciation for the game of golf and its setting. Attendees view it as a privilege to be a Masters guest.

This “designed experience” is explored and celebrated in *The Experience Economy*:

*Work is Theater and Every Business a Stage* by Joseph Pine and James Gilmore (Harvard Business School Press, Boston, 1999). When this book came out in 1999, I was the executive in charge of producing the ASAE Annual Meeting – the “Super Bowl” of the convention industry. This high-visibility event, which drew 6,000 attendees, is a stage for exploring and demonstrating innovation and excellence in the meetings business. *The Experience Economy* inspired me and my team to focus on designing experiences that not only educated and informed, but also elicited a positive emotional response.

I share all this to suggest some questions for your consideration: How can you create better experiences during road shows and other meetings with investors? What can you do to design experiences to achieve your IR goals? How do you want your investors to think – and feel – about your message?

All the best,  
Gary



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P.S.: The [NIRI Annual Conference](#) will offer unique experiences, unlike anything ever done before. Please join us in Las Vegas on June 10-13.