

# THE BOARDROOM

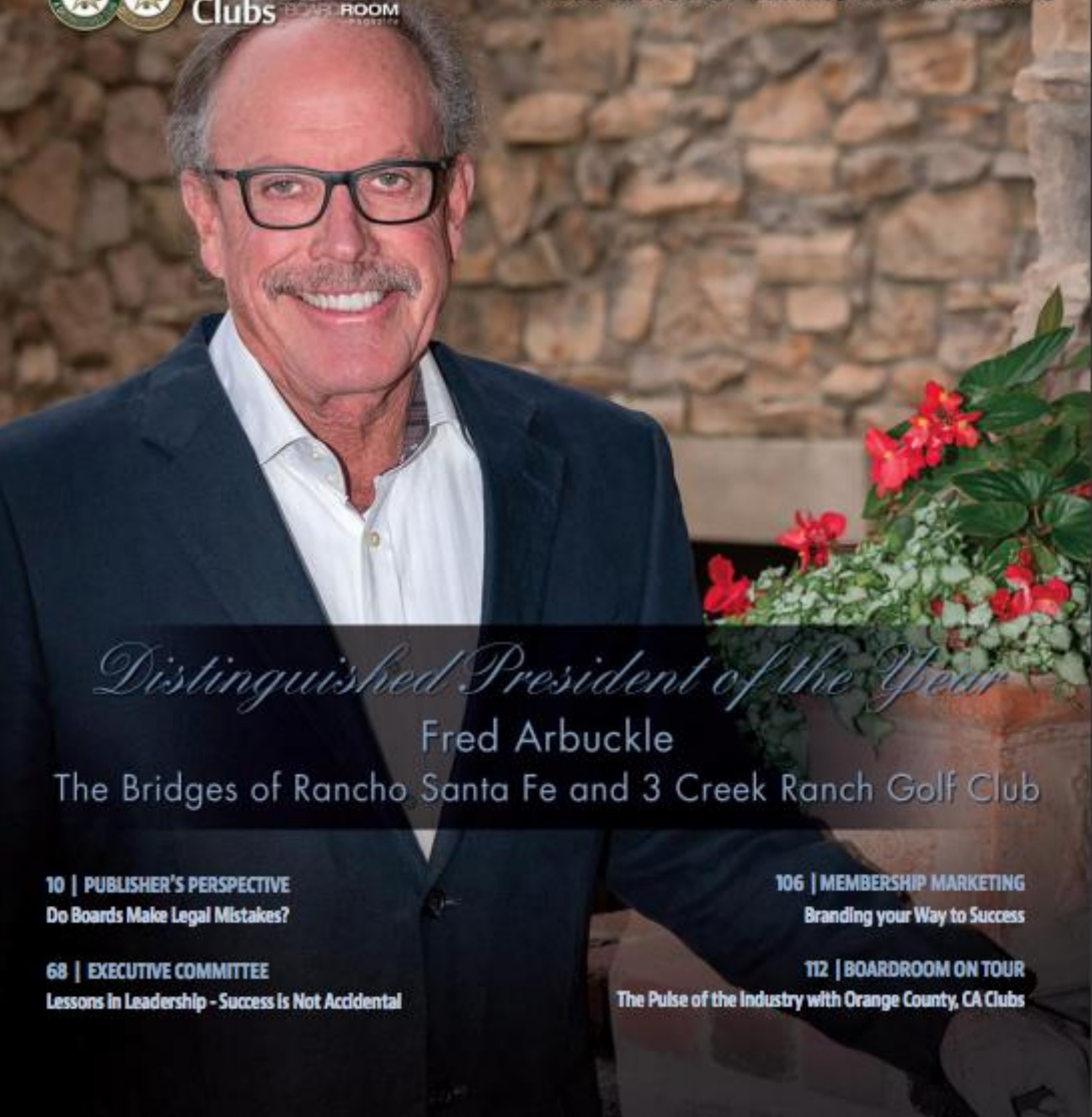
CELEBRATING 21 YEARS OF EDUCATING THE PRIVATE CLUB INDUSTRY

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Distinguished Clubs from BOARDROOM

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*Distinguished President of the Year*

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The Pulse of the Industry with Orange County, CA Clubs



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## Branding Your Way to Success

**Do you ever wonder if you're doing everything possible to attract Millennials, 83 million of them, and outshine competitors? Do you sometimes wonder how important a brand really is?**

I'm a Millennial and based on my experience, the answer is clear: In today's fierce market, a distinctive brand is crucial.

I've been fortunate to work at a top club in Scotland and top clubs in the United States, and have visited others around the world. Each has its own unique brand built on exceptional moments of truth – those encounters where customers meet to exchange information and do business, and each provides up-close confirmation that outstanding brands help them stand out.

**How much do you know about your Millennial members and guests? Millennials like to be part of a process to identify solutions to challenges. Involve them in identifying ways to create a brand that will attract Millennials. Think about hosting an event to introduce Millennials to golf, and along the way ask them what changes they would like to see at the club.**

And there's one thing in common – all are trying to attract the next generation of golfers, yet some clubs still haven't been deliberate about creating a brand that will attract the next generation. So, what *is* branding and why is it central to success?

The concept – branding – surfaced when marketers began realizing that just making the name of a product or group well known wasn't enough. To be successful, the perception had to have more... what famed ad man David Ogilvy called "the intangible sum of a product's attributes."

By that, he meant creating all the specific attributes of a product or service in customers' minds, what people think of when they hear the brand name, a perception that's both factual and emotional.

How can you know if your brand creates the right perception? Ask yourself some questions and be brutally honest with your answers. For example, if you're asked what your club is doing to promote golf as a fun, social activity, what would you say?

How much do you know about your Millennial members and guests? Millennials like to be part of a process to identify solutions to challenges. Involve them in identifying ways to create a brand that will attract Millennials. Think about hosting an event to introduce Millennials to golf, and along the way ask them what changes they would like to see at the club.

The fact is, Millennials represent a market that shouldn't be ignored, because according to the National Golf Foundation, Millennials spend approximately \$5 billion annually on golf.

Millennials live on social media, and that's one of the best ways to interact with your Millennial audience. Does your club's brand have a strong presence on social media? Do you have a mobile friendly website? If you are looking

for the best return on investment, 95.8 percent of social media marketers worldwide say Facebook produces the best ROI. But don't forget to make sure your online brand is consistent and attracts the next generation of golfer!

As a golf professional, I believe in modeling the brand in every possible way. Basically, all your employees, from the golf professional staff to the food and beverage staff, should be clear about the image they reflect. They're the ones on the front lines, interacting with members and guests of all ages every day. Remember, actions speak louder than words.

All this underlines the importance of being deliberate in creating and protecting the club brand. You want to stand out, and going the extra mile to build a stronger brand is a crucial to success, especially if you want to attract the next generation of club members – Millennials. ■■