

# THE BOARDROOM

CELEBRATING 30 YEARS OF EDUCATING THE PRIVATE CLUB INDUSTRY

ISSUE 323 | VOLUME XXX JANUARY/FEBRUARY



Distinguished Clubs  
from BOARDROOM magazine

IN PARTNERSHIP WITH  
Forbes TRAVEL GUIDE

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION FOR THE  
ASSOCIATION OF PRIVATE CLUB DIRECTORS



## BoardRoom Celebrates 30 Years!

Thank you for being part of our story.



10 | PUBLISHER'S PERSPECTIVE  
HOW AND WHY DOES A PERSON DECIDE  
TO BECOME A MEMBER?

40 | CULTURE PLAYBOOK  
LIVING THE PROMISE: HOW WE ACTIVATE  
OUR VALUES ACROSS THE CLUB

94 | DISTINGUISHED CLUBS  
MONTAMMY GOLF CLUB

98-99 | DISTINGUISHED GOLF DESTINATIONS  
STREAMSONG  
TROON NORTH GOLF CLUB



**CJ AMETRANO**

CJ Ametrano is vice president of design development for RF DesignStudio at RealFood Hospitality, Strategy & Design – a Troon company. RF creates industry-leading experiences for the modern hospitality world. CJ can be reached via email: [cjamestrano@rfhsd.com](mailto:cjamestrano@rfhsd.com)

# Design Starts with a Conversation: *Let's Talk*

Design is a story.

If we're curious enough, every building, every club has its own story to tell; the challenge of designers is to unravel the sequence of events that lead to this sentiment: "It's time to renovate."

**DEEP LISTENING**

Strip away the critical path, the drawings and the value-engineering, even the final visual product, and you're left with a narrative. The president of the board might express an unmet desire, a general manager shares operational challenges, a committee member tells the story of what a club once was and yearns for something like it, and a member reveals the nuances of what a space means to her family.

As professional interior designers, we draw out the stories of a club through interactions, surveys, focus groups, and even the building itself, with its walls adorned with historic plaques, the landscape and the setting.

We listen, learn and interpret those stories and conversations in all their forms, meld them together and retell them in a physical experience of a space. It's a process of disassembly and reassembly; that's the beautiful challenge and outcome of great design.

**INTENTIONAL PRACTICE**

This process of interpretation culminates in a critical step in the renovation and design process: defining the desired experience. And the core of that experience is the club's *raison d'être*, or reason for being.

Whichever phrase you choose to call it—mission, vision, brand promise—it is the very reason that your club exists in the first place. It's the way the building, the offerings, the spaces within interact regularly with connected humans, including members, their guests, staff and the surrounding community.

The intentional practice of design ensures that every design-based decision is purposefully directed to strengthening the club's core reason for existing in the first place.

**CLARITY OF IDENTITY**

In our complex world of private clubs, the list of stakeholders is often long. As we embark on construction proj-

ects, whether renovation, refresh or new build, the approval process for capital improvements to a clubhouse or facility building is often intricate and presents hurdles to overcome.

So before specifying furniture, fixtures, finishes and lighting, the conversation begins with establishing a clear identity that is shared among the spectrum of stakeholders:

- Who is your club's current audience? Future audience?
- Their requirements, desires and unmet needs?
- What is your club's personality? (Think fun and family-friendly versus traditionally competitive and player-focused.)
- How about your club's style of hospitality and service?
- What unique factors define your club?
- How do those compare to others in your market?

Clarity of identity is a precursor to any successful design work. Design choices amplify identity in a way that allows the story to remain clear and consumable. When there's alignment on identity, finding alignment on the design path is always easier ... and the outcome always more compelling.

**DESIGN STYLE**

Design choices aren't personal; they're grounded in the story. With the information gathered and the conversations had, a designer will ultimately identify a singular design path that illuminates the essence of the club's story. Interior design is a practice of visualization: A chair defines who will sit in it, a bar top encourages pleasure, the colors in the space tap emotions and signal ambiance.

As professionals in the private club industry, we are students of the human experience. The challenge is to study our own story so deeply that we become proficient, even expert, in telling it over and over again in various forms. Design is a synthesis of collected conversations expressed in a physical world of fine details that convey your story. It all starts with a simple conversation. **BR**