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New Mexico Open boosts tourism, brings attention to Sierra County

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Image: Turtleback Mountain Golf & Resort

An overhead image of the New Mexico Open.

COURTESY OF TURTLEBACK MOUNTAIN GOLF & RESORT



By [Cooper Metts](#) – Real Estate Reporter , Albuquerque Business First
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Story Highlights



- New Mexico Open boosted local economy and tourism in Sierra County.
- Tournament garnered \$770,280 in earned media value across platforms.
- PreReal Investments renovated resort to attract PGA tournament to area.

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The New Mexico Open recently released its economic impact and visibility numbers for its record-setting tournament.

Held between Sept. 15 and Sept. 17 at [Turtleback Mountain Golf & Resort](#) in Elephant Butte, the tournament helped boost occupancy at local hospitality venues and activity at local businesses.

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It also generated a large chunk of earned media value, garnering attention for the tournament and the southern New Mexico county.

The resort's ownership, [New York-based PreReal Investments](#), owns several hospitality venues in the area.

The only two motels that it owns and that are currently open, and 12 short-term rental properties it owns, were all at 100% occupancy during the tournament, Executive Director of Corporate Communications and Public Relations for PreReal Investments Patrick Pharris said.

In addition, the Holiday Inn Express & Suites, Comfort Inn & Suites and the casitas at Dam Site Marina & Historic District experienced some of their highest occupancy rates of the year, a Turtleback Mountain Golf & Resort press release shows.

"We've never seen demand like this at this time of year," General Manager of the Truth or Consequences Comfort Inn & Suites Isabella Shetter said in the release. "(It was) full occupancy and a real shot in the arm for our team and community."

Nate Stephens, co-owner of Tranquil Springs Suites in Truth or Consequences, echoed Shetter's sentiments.

"We could not have asked for a better way to kick off our first year," Stephens said in the release. "Being 100% sold out during the New Mexico Open proves that events like this are catalysts for tourism and real economic growth in Sierra County."

Restaurants experienced similar surges in demand during the tournament.

Los Arcos Steak & Lobster House, a Sierra County mainstay for nearly half a century, stayed open all week, including its usual day off. The restaurant saw near-capacity crowds of 223 guests on multiple nights during the tournament, the release shows.

"This was one of the busiest weeks in recent memory," Los Arcos Owner Bobby Middleton said in the release.

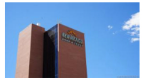
In addition to the increased occupancy and demand at local hospitality venues and businesses, the golf tournament brought significant attention to the Elephant Butte and Truth or Consequences area.

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The tournament garnered a total earned media value of \$770,280 across a variety of media platforms, a Turtleback Mountain Golf & Resort press release shows.

The tournament’s primary media platform was a four-day, six-hour-per-day Facebook Live broadcast, the first time in PGA of America sectional history, the release shows.

The broadcast generated 3.5 million views, 4.4 million impressions and an average watch time of more than 23 minutes, the release shows.



Former New Mexico State golfer and current professional golfer Aidan Thomas won the New Mexico Open.

COURTESY OF TURTLEBACK MOUNTAIN GOLF & RESORT

It was simulcast across 14 partner pages, producing 138,000 engagement actions and 648 total hours of watch time, the release shows.

PreReal Investments acquired the resort two years ago with the intent of [creating a thriving Sierra County economy centered around the resort](#).

After pouring millions into renovating the resort, its course and clubhouse, PreReal Investments convinced the Sun Country Golf House – the PGA section that oversees the NM Open – [to relocate the tournament](#) to the Elephant Butte-based resort.

In addition to the renovated clubhouse and course, PreReal Investments CEO James Prendamano offered the [largest purse in the tournament’s history](#), making a strong case to host the tournament.

The CEO made such a strong move for the tournament because he felt it would play an important role in attracting tourists and garnering attention for the county and resort.

“We set out to tell a story about golf, community and New Mexico’s spirit,” Prendamano said in the release. “The world was captivated, setting a new standard for what regional sports can achieve.”

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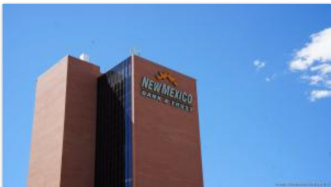
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