

## Not-So-Smart Media Strategy: PGA and LIV Golf

Why would you ever release earth-shattering news about the golf industry on a major news day? That's what inquiring minds want to know.

It appears that someone got ahead of their skis. Or did they?

Check out the [news story from USA Today](#) and you decide.

As a public relations consultant, I know that companies tend to release **BAD NEWS** when newsrooms are less staffed on the Friday afternoon or evening of a holiday weekend when even fewer newsroom employees are working.

This strategy is called "dumping" a news story. Some call this the "Friday news dump."

This action occurs when a company reports disappointing earnings, significant workforce reduction, a major product recall, or a scandal. The entity is required to release the information and **chooses the time least likely for experienced reporters to notice.**

Perhaps that will change with further development of AI because computers never sleep. Please see the next story for more details.

Of course, that timeline is challenged when the major golf stories occur during the Thursday-Sunday period when tournaments are being played. Golf enthusiasts are gobbling up every bit of news about their favorite sport.

So, why would this story break when so many details were not yet known? My bet: A reporter had caught wind that the negotiations were in the final stages and was about to break the story. Consider there was no announcement about any details of:

- what the tours will look like in 2024
- what the particular structures of LIV and PGA will be
- compensation plans for PGA golfers who turned down lucrative LIV golf contracts
- how the PGA tour suddenly "forgave" the LIV's backers and their violations of human rights that have previously been such a non-starter in all discussions

Sometimes, stories leak before they are ready to go to the media. One of my favorites occurred when I lived in Cleburne. **A stunning announcement was made by the CEO of Rubbermaid** as he was presiding over the ribbon-cutting ceremony of the new manufacturing plant, which would become one of the area's premier employers.

**"You can all thank the people of Wichita Falls for this location," he stated. "Wichita Falls had been our first choice and we told everyone involved to maintain confidentiality. Well, they didn't, so we're here in Cleburne instead of Wichita Falls."**

I believe that the PGA discovered a story was about to break, so they had no choice but to get ahead of the story and release the story even with imperfect information.

There is no easy way forward for the combined/merged platforms. Some call it a merger, others call it a combination of concepts.

**I call how this news story was released a mess.**

Players who openly disparaged the other side are suddenly expected to put all frustrations and disputes aside and join in a "kumbaya" moment of forgiveness and healing.

Much of this disruption caused by the premature announcement could have been avoided if all involved parties had kept the confidentiality they had originally committed to honoring. Without honor and trust among the involved parties, nothing ever works for long.

For now, none of the parties have any trust in the other. Interestingly, the PGA Tour Commissioner Jay Monahan announced this past week that he is taking a leave of absence to "address an undisclosed medical condition." These things happen when a major news story is managed poorly.

## Smart AI: Choice Hotels Has Used for Years

Choice Hotels was an early adopter of Artificial Intelligence and that experience could pay handsome dividends in the future. According to Choice Hotels Chief Information Officer Brian Kirkland, the company has implemented AI in the following ways:

- Being the first hotel chain to develop a cloud-based property management system
- Developing the first hotel app for IOS
- Being the first hotel company to offer instant booking on TripAdvisor

Choice Hotels includes such brands as Cambria, Radisson, Quality Inn, and Rodeway Inn. The company also relies on AI to predict booking patterns, peaks and cancellations; help owners and developers identify new locations to build; and provide franchisees tools to manage property operations and revenue.

**Is Choice ready to go “all-in” on AI?** Not yet, according to Kirkland. He sees GenAI as “a lightning rod” that has the power to change customer decision-making, but some of its issues include the fact that **AI’s answers can be inaccurate and there are risks associated with intellectual property.**

**Artificial Intelligence is the emerging future of commerce, but we still have so much to learn and consider before turning over the keys to the platform.**



# Smart News Story Burial: Holiday News

Depending on your political views, the news media “never” seems to report enough of the news that energizes you (translation: **that denigrates your opposing viewpoint**).

- If you're a conservative, you want more information about the alleged Biden bribery scandal
- If you're a progressive, you want more information about the Trump indictments
- **We all want MORE of what we agree with and LESS of whatever disparages our belief system**

This approaching five-day weekend (Friday, June 30, through Tuesday, July 4) is guaranteed to provide two compelling scenarios:

1. **The cyberterrorist hackers will be working overtime** because the five-day weekend provides five days of uninterrupted “A-team” protection for IT security teams nationwide. Think of this as Super Bowl weekend for cyberterrorism. The only major issue is that you, your company, and your money are the likely targets.
2. **Public relations professionals will be dumping news stories** of significance because those stories could do harm to the companies or individuals involved.

Let's concentrate on the second issue.

According to [politicaldictionary.com](http://politicaldictionary.com), “the Friday news dump is rooted in the understanding that news cycles tend to be slower over the weekend, with fewer journalists and news outlets actively covering breaking news stories.”

The longstanding Friday news dump practice is perceived by critics as a deliberate attempt to bury or downplay news that may have negative implications or public backlash.

The White House – no matter which party is in power – has often set the release of bad news and unflattering documents for late Friday afternoon. The Pentagon has also used this same practice for years.

Don't think this is something new. The highly-rated TV show, “**The West Wing**”, titled its January 26, 2000, episode, “[Take Out the Trash](#).”

Check out this dialogue from that show:

**Donna: What's “take out the trash day”?**

**Josh: Friday.**

**Donna: I mean, what is it?**

**Josh: Any stories we have to give the press that we're not wild about, we give all in a lump on Friday.**

**Donna: Why do you do it in a lump?**

**Josh: Instead of one at a time?**

**Donna: I'd think you'd want to spread them out.**

**Josh: They've got X column inches to fill, right? They're going to fill them no matter what.**

**Donna: Yes.**

**Josh: So, if we give them one story, that story's X column inches.**

**Donna: And if we give them five stories ...**

**Josh: They're a fifth the size.**

**Donna: Why do you do it on Friday?**

**Josh: Because no one reads the paper on Saturday.**

**Please mark your calendar for the next Friday news dumps – which also coincide with Cyberterrorist Super Bowl Weekend. Those dates will be:**

- **Labor Day Weekend: Friday, Sept. 1 – Monday, Sept. 4**
- **Thanksgiving Weekend: Wednesday, Nov. 22 – Sunday, Nov. 27**
- **Christmas Weekend: Friday, Dec. 22 – Tuesday, Dec. 26**
- **New Year's Weekend: Friday, Dec. 29 – Tuesday, Jan. 2**



# Tiebreaker: AI to Complete Final Beatles Song

[Interesting Engineering reports](#) that the long and winding road to the final Beatles tune is finally here thanks to Artificial Intelligence, but not quite to the extent originally announced.

In an interview with [BBC Radio 4's Today Programme](#), the 80-year-old maestro, **Paul McCartney**, revealed that a final Beatles song was made with AI's help and will be released this year.

Regarding the song, McCartney said, "It was a demo that John had worked on, and we just finished it up. We were able to take John's voice and get it pure through this AI. So, then we could mix the record as you would normally do."

Speculation is that the song is a John Lennon compensation, "**Now and Then**", from 1978.

Unlike potential AI that samples a voice and creates a performance, in this specific case, AI is cleaning up the original soundtrack and removing all extraneous noises.

**What are some of the unusual applications of AI you are seeing in action?**

