

Pickleball Expansion: Market Analysis & Strategic Recommendation

Prepared for: Golf Swag, LLC

Date: February 23, 2026

☑ Verification Summary

21 factual claims independently verified against primary sources. No claims rated LOW confidence. Look for inline icons H M ? throughout the report. Hover for details.

14 HIGH

4 MED

3 N/A

■ High (90%+): 14 ■ Medium (60-89%): 4 ■ Low (<60%): 0 ■ Unverifiable: 3

◆ Executive Summary

ACTIVE US PLAYERS (2024)

19.8M H

SFIA Verified

3-YEAR GROWTH

311% H

From 4.8M (2021)

MARKET CAGR

15.3% H

Through 2034



CONDITIONAL GO

Contingent on fulfillment confirmation

This report evaluates whether Golf Swag should expand into custom pickleball gear. We analyzed the market size, growth trajectory, player demographics, competitive landscape, advertising channels, and fulfillment risks to determine if this is a viable revenue opportunity aligned with Golf Swag's mission, tech stack, and \$3M annual revenue target.

Why This Makes Sense

- 19.8M players, growing 45%+ year-over-year
- Nearly identical customer profile to golf (income, age, education)
- No dominant D2C brand for personalized pickleball gear
- Our Customily + Shopify stack works for any product type
- Google search interest for "custom pickleball" is surging and about to overtake "custom golf balls"

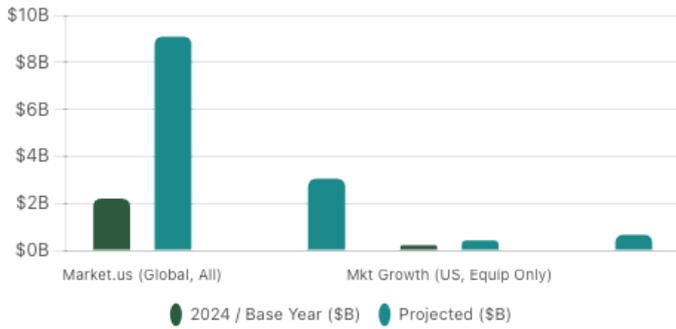
What Needs to Happen First

- Confirm our fulfillment partner can print on pickleball products
- Source 3-5 blank accessories for test printing
- Build Customily templates for pickleball products
- Run a small paid ad test (\$1-2K) to validate demand and CAC

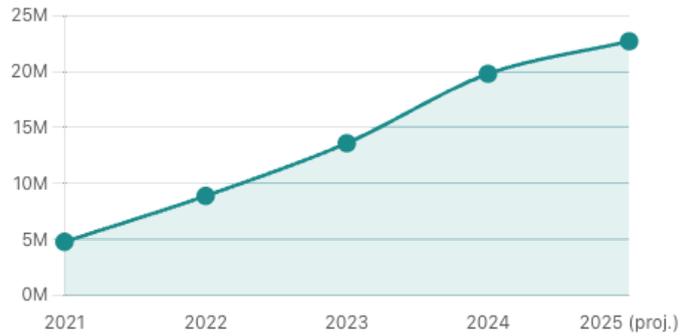
Bottom line: The market is real, growing fast, and underserved in exactly the way Golf Swag is built to serve. Custom pickleball gear is not a pivot, it is a natural extension. We recommend launching with low-risk accessories in Q2 2026 to test demand, then scaling into balls and paddles as we prove unit economics. The only hard blocker is fulfillment capability, which requires a direct conversation with our print partner this week.

▲ Market Size & Growth

Market Size Estimates by Research Firm



Player Growth Trajectory



Golf vs. Pickleball: Market Context

28.1M ^H

ON-COURSE GOLFERS

19.8M ^H

PICKLEBALL PLAYERS

~70K+ ^M

US PICKLEBALL COURTS

■ Demographics Comparison

Pickleball

Average Age	34.8 years ^H
Largest Age Group	25-34 (2.3M) ^H
HH Income	\$75K - \$86K ^M
HH Income \$100K+	~45% ^H
College Degree+	47% ^H

Golf

Average Age	Mid-40s
Largest Age Group	30-49
HH Income	\$80K - \$100K+
HH Income \$100K+	~50%+
College Degree+	Similar skew

Gender Split Comparison

PICKLEBALL

60.5% Male

39.5% Female

^H

GOLF

72% Male

28% Female

^H

Key insight: Pickleball is significantly more gender-balanced, expanding Golf Swag's addressable market among female buyers.

★ Product Opportunity

Customizable Pickleball Products

PRODUCT	CUSTOMIZATION TYPE	PRICE RANGE	MARGIN POTENTIAL
Paddles	Full-face graphic, name, logo	\$30 - \$280+	● Medium-High
Balls	Logo/design print	\$3 - \$10/set	● Low (volume play)
Bags / Backpacks	Embroidery, sublimation	\$30 - \$150	● Medium
Apparel	Sublimation, embroidery	\$20 - \$80	● Medium
Accessories (towels, bottles)	Print, embroidery	\$5 - \$40	● High
Paddle Covers	Sublimation print	\$15 - \$30	● High
Score Keepers / Clips	Engraving, print	\$10 - \$25	● High

Price Points: Golf vs. Pickleball

CATEGORY	GOLF	PICKLEBALL
Primary Equipment	Clubs: \$200 - \$3,000+	Paddles: \$30 - \$280
Custom Balls	\$30 - \$60/dozen	\$3 - \$10/3-pack
Bags	\$50 - \$400	\$30 - \$150
Small Accessories	Ball markers: \$5 - \$30	Overgrips: \$5 - \$15

Pickleball gear costs less per item, but the customization premium (percentage markup) can be similar or higher due to novelty.

⚙️ Competitive Landscape

BRAND / MANUFACTURER

Paddletek

Established brand offering color choices and name personalization on paddles. Limited design scope.

BRAND / CUSTOM

Salted City Sports

Full custom paddle design with colors, logos, names, and artwork. Performance-focused positioning.

RETAILER

JustPaddles

Offers personalization-eligible paddles with name and text. Retailer model, not manufacturer.

B2B / PROMOTIONAL

Identity Links / Logotech

Bulk and corporate custom pickleball gear. Logo printing with minimum order requirements.

B2B / PROMOTIONAL

Sports Marketing Plus

Bulk custom printed paddles and balls. Corporate and promotional focus, not consumer D2C.

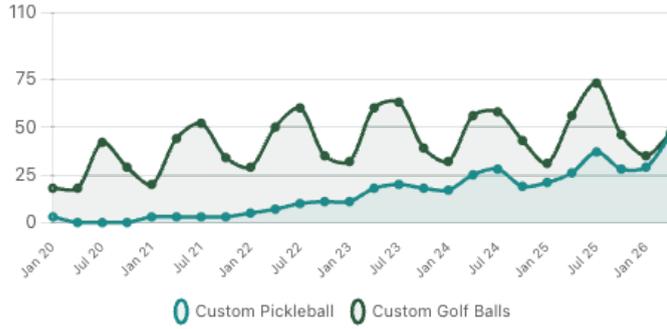
● Market Gap Identified

No dominant D2C brand exists for premium, consumer-facing personalized pickleball gear with live design preview, mobile-first UX, and individual order fulfillment. This is Golf Swag's exact strength.

▲ Google Trends: Search Interest

"Custom Pickleball" vs "Custom Golf Balls"

Google Trends relative search interest, US, 2020-2026. Scale: 0-100.



Key Takeaways

"Custom pickleball" is surging. From near-zero in 2020 to matching "custom golf balls" in Feb 2026 (46 vs 47). The gap is closing fast.

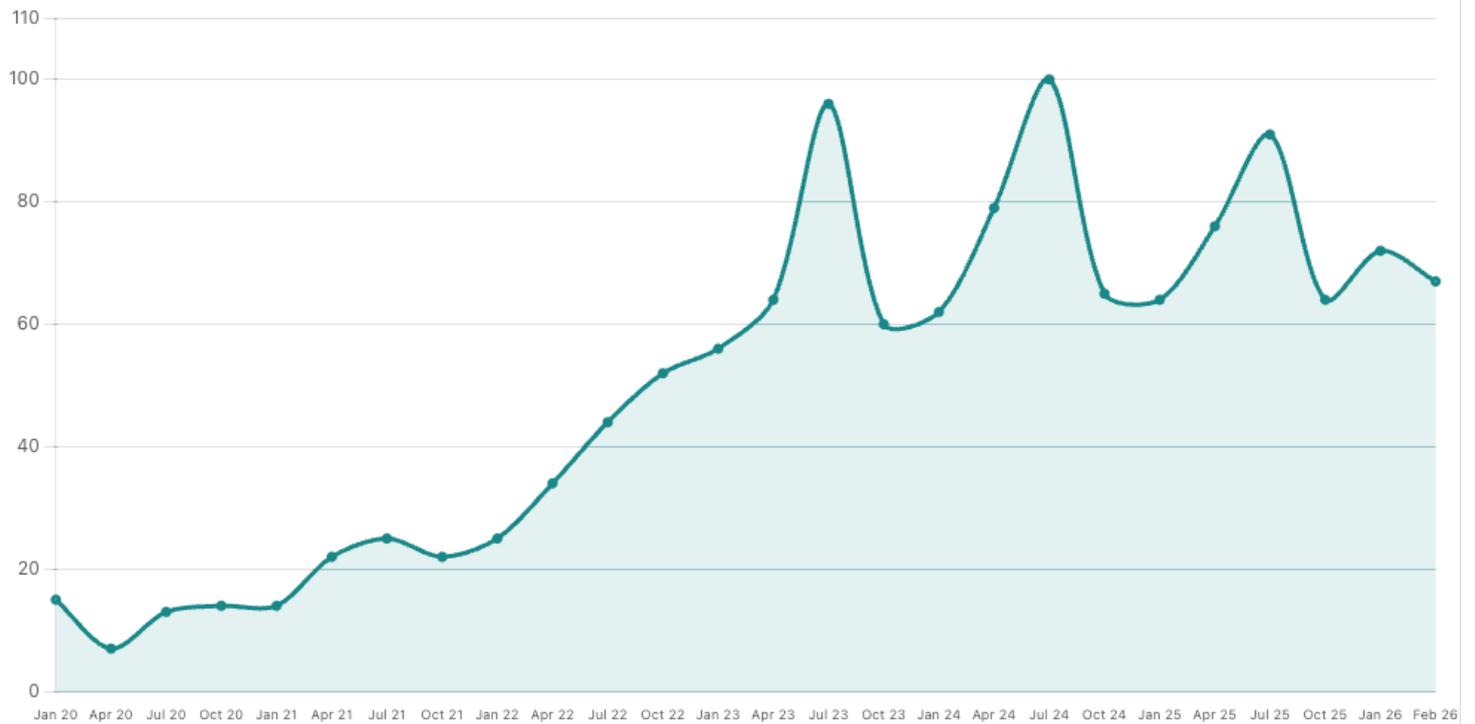
"Custom golf balls" is mature and seasonal. Peaks in summer (June) and holidays (Nov-Dec) every year. Stable but not growing.

"Custom pickleball" shows year-over-year growth. Each year's baseline is higher than the last, with no signs of plateau.

Feb 2026 is a milestone: First month where "custom pickleball" nearly equals "custom golf balls" in search volume. The crossover is imminent.

Overall "Pickleball" Search Interest

Google Trends, US, 2020-2026. The sport went from niche to mainstream in under 4 years.



▶ Advertising Strategy

Platform Comparison

PLATFORM	TARGETING	BEST FOR
M Meta (FB/IG)	Interest: pickleball, paddle sports. Lookalikes from golf list	Conversion campaigns, retargeting
T TikTok	Interest + hashtag targeting, creator partnerships	Awareness, viral content, younger demo
G Google / YouTube	"Custom pickleball" keywords, paddle review pre-rolls	High-intent search capture
P Pinterest	"Pickleball gifts," "personalized sports gear"	Gift-buying occasions

Estimated Customer Acquisition Cost



Pickleball is a less-saturated ad market, suggesting potentially lower CPMs and CPCs initially. ?

Seasonal Buying Patterns



▲ Growth & Sustainability

✓ Evidence: Sustainable Growth

- 311% growth over 3 years with continued acceleration **H**
- 70,000+ courts, 55% growth in dedicated facilities **M**
- Fastest-growing US sport for 4 consecutive years (SFIA) **H**
- Professional leagues established (MLP, PPA Tour, APP)
- Celebrity and institutional investment
- Average age dropping to 34.8, not just a retiree trend

⚠ Signals of Maturation

- Growth rate projected to slow from 45.8% to ~14.7% **M**
- Normal for transition from early adoption to mainstream
- Court demand still outpaces supply, potential bottleneck

Expansion Roadmap

- PHASE 1: Q2 2026**
Accessories Launch
 Custom paddle covers, bags, towels, hats, koozies. Lowest fulfillment risk, catches summer buying season. Investment: ~\$5K - \$10K.
- PHASE 2: Q3 2026**
Custom Balls
 Custom printed pickleball balls (outdoor and indoor). Closest analog to core product. Consumable = repeat purchases.
- PHASE 3: Q4 2026 - Q1 2027**
Custom Paddles
 Full-face custom designed paddles. Highest revenue per unit, strongest "wow factor," most complex fulfillment.
- PHASE 4: 2027**
Brand Evolution
 Evaluate rebranding or sister brand if pickleball hits 30%+ of revenue. Explore expansion into padel, tennis, and B2B/corporate event packages.

Risk Assessment

Fulfillment Partner

MEDIUM-HIGH (KEY BLOCKER)

Our current fulfillment partner has sublimation and full-color printing capabilities but no evidence of pickleball-specific products in their current catalog. Direct conversation required before launch. This is the single biggest go/no-go factor.

Supply Chain

MEDIUM

Paddle manufacturing concentrated in China and Taiwan. Custom printing requires either printing on blank paddles or working with a manufacturer. Accessories use standard sublimation - low complexity.

Brand Dilution

LOW-MEDIUM

"Golf Swag" has "golf" in the name. Options: sub-brand ("Pickle Swag"), gradual rebrand, or simple "Pickleball Collection" section. The tagline "Personal gear that's unmistakably yours" works for any sport.

Customily Integration

LOW

Customily is product-agnostic and works across Shopify, Etsy, WooCommerce, and Amazon. Setting up new pickleball templates requires design work but no new technology.

Market Saturation

LOW (CURRENTLY)

Custom pickleball is far less saturated than custom golf. Major brands focus on performance, not personalization. First-mover advantage exists for premium D2C custom experiences.

Unit Economics

LOW

Custom pickleball accessories should achieve 40-60% margins, similar to custom golf balls. Lower base product costs may yield even better margins on accessories.

✓ Recommendation & Next Steps

Rationale for Conditional GO

- Market is real and growing. 19.8M players, 15%+ annual growth, \$200M+ equipment market expanding rapidly.
- Demographics align perfectly. Same income, education, and lifestyle profile as Golf Swag's golf customers.
- Competitive gap exists. No one owns premium D2C custom pickleball gear. Golf Swag's tech and UX are directly transferable.
- Low incremental cost. Customily handles any product. Shopify is already set up. Main investment is sourcing, templates, and marketing.
- Revenue path to \$3M goal. Adding pickleball could add \$20K - \$40K/month within 6-12 months, accelerating the path to \$3M annual.
- Cross-sell synergy. Many customers play both sports. Gift market is strong for both. Seasonal complement.

Immediate Action Items

- ✓ **This week:** Contact our fulfillment partner. Ask specifically about pickleball product printing capabilities (paddle covers, balls, bags). Get samples and pricing.
- ✓ **This week:** Search Customily's template gallery for non-golf examples. Estimate design time for pickleball templates.
- ✓ **Within 2 weeks:** Source 3-5 blank pickleball accessory products (covers, bags) for test printing.
- ✓ **Within 4 weeks:** Build 3-5 pickleball product listings on Shopify with Customily live preview.
- ✓ **Within 6 weeks:** Launch paid ads (\$1K - \$2K test budget) targeting pickleball interests on Meta and TikTok.

What Would Change the Calculus to NO

- Current fulfillment partner cannot print on pickleball products AND no viable alternative fulfiller exists at acceptable margins
- Early ad tests show CAC above \$60 with AOV below \$40 (unit economics don't work)
- Pickleball participation declines for two consecutive quarters (no current evidence of this)

◆ Sources

- SFIA 2025 Topline Participation Report (Feb 2025)
- SFIA & Pickleheads 2024 State of Pickleball Report (Jan 2025)
- National Golf Foundation - Golf Participation 2025 Report
- Market.us - Pickleball Market Report (2025)
- Grand View Research - NA Pickleball Apparel & Equipment Market (2025)
- Market Growth Reports - Pickleball Equipment Market (2025)
- Verified Market Research - Pickleball Equipment Market (Oct 2025)
- Technavio - Pickleball Clothing and Apparel Market (2025)
- Coherent Market Insights - Pickleball Equipment Market (2026)
- Maximize Market Research - Golf Equipment Market (2025)
- Cognitive Market Research - Golf Clubs and Equipment Market (2024)
- The Dink Pickleball - Participation analysis (2025)
- Pickleheads - Pickleball Statistics (Feb 2025)
- APP (Association of Pickleball Professionals) - Research data
- ShelfTrend - Pickleball Equipment Sales analysis (May 2025)
- Forbes - Golf/Pickleball synergies (Dec 2021)
- First Page Sage - CAC by Channel benchmarks (Dec 2025)
- SGB Media - Pickleball participation study
- PBPRO Pickleball - Demographic analysis (Jul 2024)