

# Chapter 11

## Tennis Industry Careers

As a high school student just starting the process of selecting the college you will attend upon graduation—a college that marries your specific academic and social requirements with your strong desire to play tennis—your post-college career may be the furthest thing from your mind. As hard as it may be for you to imagine, those years are fleeting, so it's not too soon to at least become aware of the fact that you can prolong your love affair with tennis long after you leave the college campus through an interesting and rewarding career on- or off-court.

### What Are Your Tennis Industry Career Options?

The opportunities for a career in the tennis industry are endless. And they don't all involve winning a Grand Slam! Some of you no doubt will pursue professional careers, but the large majority of you won't. Whether on-court or off-court, tennis industry jobs are available literally all over the world—jobs that are fulfilling, lucrative, and rewarding. Chapter 11 gives you a brief glimpse at some of these jobs.

### On-Court Careers

For many, becoming a professional tennis player is the ultimate on-court tennis career. And there's no better place than college to find out if you have the skills and personal attributes to succeed in this demanding arena. Playing at the varsity level in college will give you the opportunity to play regularly in competitive matches, to travel extensively, and to function as a team member, all essential elements of the professional tennis player's career.

Only a small percentage of college graduates will become professional tennis players, but for those who love tennis and want to stay close to the tennis court, there are many other career options.

- Teaching professionals or coaches—You can become a certified teaching professional, tennis director, or high school, college, or private tennis coach. Two organizations provide professional-level teaching certification: the Professional Tennis Registry (go to [www.ptrtennis.org](http://www.ptrtennis.org)) and the United States Professional Tennis Association (go to [www.uspta.org](http://www.uspta.org)).
- Athletic trainers are integral members of the tennis player's support team and necessary for maintaining the player's health and well-being on the tour (see the National Athletic Trainers Association at [www.nata.org](http://www.nata.org)).
- Sports science consultants and other health professionals are increasingly sought by the pro tours and individual players as well.

- **Sports journalists**—This career will get you as close to the tennis court as possible without actually being on it. If you love tennis and writing, there are many opportunities to write for a newspaper, magazine, or television.
- **Sports photographers**—The same opportunities exist for sports photographers as for journalists. What could be cooler than capturing the quintessential shot of the game-winning stroke or the exciting aftermath at a tournament final?
- **Managers or owners of tennis entities**, for example, as a tennis club or facility manager, tennis camp director, pro shop manager, or builder of tennis courts.

## Off-Court Careers

If none of the on-court career options appeals to you, there is probably no better way to be involved in the tennis industry than to work for one of the nation's many tennis organizations. These organizations live and breathe tennis. And they all require bright people who are passionate about tennis to manage and administer their programs and other activities. For example, the United States Tennis Association, the national governing body for the sport of tennis in the United States, is the largest tennis organization in the world, with 17 geographical sections, nearly 730,000 individual and 8,400 organizational members, and thousands of volunteers. Its Community Tennis Division strives to grow the game of tennis at every level with a goal of making the game accessible to everyone; its Professional Tennis Division manages all aspects of the USTA's involvement in the professional sport, including the US Open and 94 Pro Circuit events, among others; its Player Development Division provides American junior, collegiate, and young professional players with opportunities to reach their maximum potential. To accomplish its mission and goals, the USTA needs talented professionals and executives in marketing, sales, sponsorship, public relations, membership, program management, publishing, business operations, finance and accounting, legal, human resources, and many other disciplines. The same applies to the other tennis industry organizations—ITA, WTT, PTR, USPTA, NIRSA, NCAA, NAIA, NJCAA, etc—where thousands of career opportunities are waiting for you.

In addition to a career with one of the tennis organizations, there are many other off-court careers in the tennis industry. Just a few examples include working as a sales representative for manufacturers of tennis racquets, balls, and other equipment as well as tennis clothing, writing books on tennis, and working for companies that specialize in delivering tennis services where you would find opportunities in TV, travel, sales, writing, meeting and event planning, and many other areas.

Why not choose a lifelong career that captivates your interests, affords opportunities to travel and meet interesting people, and offers multiple avenues for growth? For more information on tennis industry careers, go to [www.careersintennis.com](http://www.careersintennis.com), click on Types of Jobs, then on Career Center, and then on Current Listings. Other tennis-related job sites can also be found at that Web site by clicking on Additional Resources after you get to Career Center.

## Preparing for a Career in the Tennis Industry

The best way to prepare for a career in the tennis industry is the same as you would prepare for any career, that is, by getting a quality education. Although most people working in the industry today have gone through traditional educational programs, several colleges and universities now offer programs specifically geared to prepare you for positions in the tennis industry. These programs usually offer a four-year degree in recreation, business administration, marketing, or another discipline with a concentration in Professional Tennis Management (PTM). PTM programs allow students to combine their interest in tennis with academic preparation. Internships are often an important component of PTM programs. These internships give students valuable hands-on experience working at country clubs, resorts, public tennis facilities, tennis camps, and in tennis organizations. Graduates of these programs receive both their academic degrees and certification as tennis professionals, which together give them a definite advantage as they enter the marketplace. In fact, these schools have a high success rate in placing their graduates. The following schools currently have certified Professional Tennis Management programs:

Ferris State University  
Professional Tennis Management  
14342 Northland Drive  
Big Rapids, MI 49307  
Derek Ameal, PTM Director  
Telephone: 231-591-2219  
cadwelc@ferris.edu

Hampton University  
School of Business  
Hampton, VA 23668  
Telephone: 757-727-5361  
www.hamptonu.edu

Methodist University  
Professional Tennis Management  
5400 Ramsey Street  
Fayetteville, NC 28311  
Pete Peterson, PTM Director  
Telephone: 800-488-7110, ext. 7147  
ppetersen@methodist.edu

Tyler Junior College  
P.O. Box 9020  
Tyler, TX 75711  
Kimm Ketelsen, PTM Director  
Telephone: 800-687-5680  
kket@tjc.edu