

NATIONAL Fall 2014 FITNESS TRADE JOURNAL

The Industry Guide for Fitness Facility Management



UNDER ONE ROOF

The man behind the resurgence
of **Stairmaster** and **Schwinn**
sets his sights on **Nautilus**

see page 6

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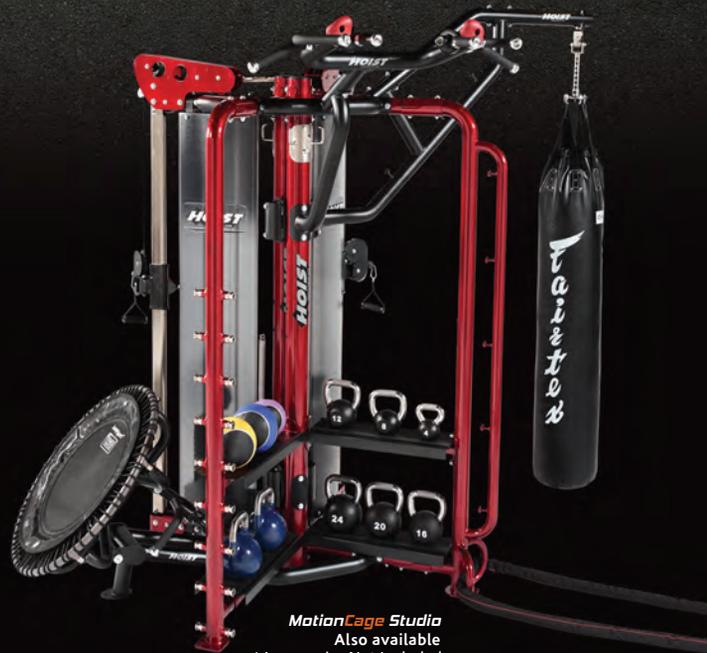


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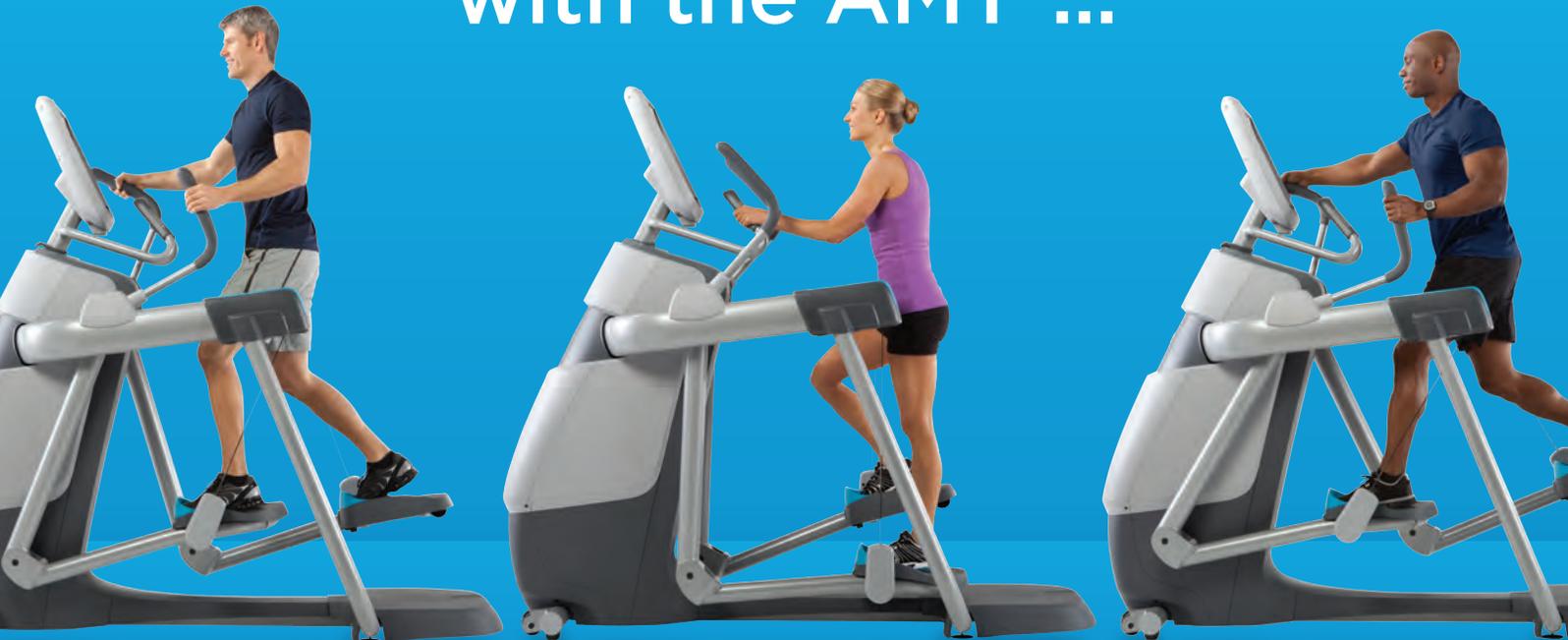
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The Man Responsible for the Resurgence of StairMaster and Schwinn Sets His Sights on Nautilus



Five years ago, Michael Bruno ran a successful consumer and retail fitness manufacturing business. His company, Xiamen, China-based Land America, was producing products for others.

Today, Bruno and his team have put together an unmatched collection of commercial fitness brands – StairMaster, Schwinn and Nautilus – at a second factory in Independence, Virginia.

The team bringing Nautilus back to the market: L–R: Dustin Grosz, President, StairMaster; Jon Thorsell, Vice President of U.S. Direct Sales; Michael Bruno, Core Owner; Merrill Richmond, Vice President of Sales and Marketing.

The story begins in 2009. Encouraged by then-Nautilus Inc. Vice President of Operations Dustin Grosz, Bruno acquired the StairMaster product portfolio and the licensing rights to Schwinn for indoor cycling from the publicly traded holding company Nautilus Inc. Bruno placed these assets into a new entity, Core Fitness, and Grosz joined as president and CEO.

“Being backed by a guy who had successfully built a manufacturing business gave StairMaster and Schwinn a real

boost,” Grosz said. “We shared a common viewpoint: get the product mix right, align production, and focus on quality and service. With that backbone in place, we could turn up the product development and sales engine.”

The turnaround needed to support the “under new management” StairMaster and Schwinn businesses took only 18 months. The strengths of the StairMaster and Schwinn brands - high-quality products with instant name recognition - helped the new businesses earn steady revenues that were reinvested for additional improvements. Bruno and Grosz also started work on the turnaround of Star Trac, a full-line player that Bruno acquired in 2011.

Within two years, the business was firing on all cylinders. Bruno, a product guy at heart, started reaching out to industry leaders for feedback on product ideas that could help grow their club membership and improve club operations.

By 2012, a new product pipeline was bursting with opportunities to refresh the Schwinn indoor cycling and StairMaster portfolios.

Work was also underway on what would become a new jewel in the StairMaster lineup – a re-engineered version of the TreadClimber that Nautilus Inc. launched and later removed from the market in 2006.

“‘Get the TreadClimber right’ was a constant theme,” Bruno recalled. “Club owners said that members loved the experience of walking on the TreadClimber and it was one of the most popular machines. I knew that if we could get the product right, we’d give the StairMaster brand a product to complement the StepMill and Stepper and create opportunities with our current customers.”

StairMaster’s TreadClimber 5™, nicknamed “Black Beauty” because of its hammertone black finish, sleek lines and purple accent colors, debuted at IHRSA 2013. Design feedback was positive.

“Veteran buyers and their service teams poked around the product at the show. I could tell from their reaction that we had it right,” Bruno said.

At IHRSA 2014, StairMaster premiered the jet-black Gauntlet™, an up-featured version of the StepMill™ and the sixth version of the product since its initial launch. The return to the Gauntlet name and color scheme was a nod to the “toughest workout in the gym” heritage and clubs’ interest in high-intensity and functional movement workouts.

Schwinn reached another milestone with the introduction of Carbon Blue™, the first belt drive on a Schwinn indoor cycle.

“We looked at a variety of belt options but none delivered the authentic road feel that is so important to Schwinn customers,”



Virginia Governor Terry McAuliffe (cutting ribbon) and Jon Little, Vice President of Operations (right side of McAuliffe), at the ribbon cutting event at the Independence Factory.

Grosz recalled. “Carbon Blue has a profile shaped like teeth that give the rider a road sensation just like the Schwinn chain. The belt is also incredibly tough. It won’t stretch – we pulled a 17 ton tractor trailer truck with one -- there’s no maintenance required.”

Shortly after IHRSA 2014, Bruno and Grosz discussed a new endeavor, adding Nautilus to the StairMaster and Schwinn brands.

Reports had circulated that Med-Fit Systems, which purchased the Nautilus factory in 2010 and licensed the patents and name from Nautilus Inc., was having difficulty turning the business around.

“I’ve produced goods in China for over 20 years,” said Bruno, “and the prospect of also having a manufacturing facility in the U.S. really appealed to me.”

“What’s unique about the team here is we know how to turn around businesses in this industry,” Grosz said. “We know customers care about parts and service, and we’ve built an infrastructure over the last four years that keeps parts in stock and lead times down.”

“With Nautilus, we felt like we could run the same playbook as StairMaster and Schwinn. Plus, many of the largest Nautilus distributors globally were doing business with StairMaster. As we completed our due diligence, we knew we had their support,” Grosz said.

“I told Dustin ‘If you have the heart for another turnaround, let’s do it,’” Bruno said.

Less than four months later, the deal closed and it was time to get the factory moving again. Over 100 people were hired in the first 60 days, relationships with key vendors were forged, parts backlogs were slashed and new orders started to come in.

“We’re on track with the operational items that make up phase one of the turnaround. Next, we’ll start work on product development,” said Grosz. “We’re a product-driven company and we won’t rest on the Nautilus legacy. Our plans include a new cardio line, new consoles and additional investments in the strength business.”

Additional investments are planned for sales and marketing. Recently, veteran sales executive Jon Thorsell joined the organization. “I started my career at Nautilus so it’s especially exciting to be part of this team at this time,” he said.

“Nautilus is open for business,” Bruno added, “and we’re here for the long run.”

For more information contact Sales@stairmaster.com, (888) 678-2476, www.StairMaster.com.



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VersaClimber Ultra HIIT Group Training Positioned to Energize Clubs

As health clubs capitalize on the popularity of group training, and meet the demand for creatively intense workouts, VersaClimber now offers an ideal, exciting solution with its new Ultra High Intensity Interval Training (HIIT) group classes, which are being implemented in clubs in the United States.

The “Hardest 30-Minute Indoor Cardio Program Today”

Members of Sirens and Titans Fitness (S&TF) in Westwood, in the heart of Los Angeles, are regularly pushing their limits and enjoying exhilaration in owner Jacque DeVore’s FUBAR classes using the VersaClimber.

“This is like a Tough Mudder in 30 minutes – not for the faint of heart, but doable,” noted DeVore. “So far, no body has passed out or thrown up.”

At S&TF, 15 VersaClimbers (in five High-Tri stations of three machines each) equip a 1,000-square-foot studio with adjustable



With exercisers embracing powerful challenges such as CrossFit and Spartan races, VersaClimber provides a unique way to train harder, more efficiently and more effectively in just 30 minutes – supported by a group and directed by an instructor in a class. VersaClimber Ultra HIIT classes spark new interest and enthusiasm among members, and become a valuable revenue stream for clubs.

lighting, a killer sound system and the “10 Commandments of FUBAR,” all of which end with “Do Not Quit.” Here, DeVore leads willing – and somewhat intimidated – participants in four classes daily.

Attendees range from novices to hard-core athletes, and to promote confidence, beginners are grouped together, with advanced students on different pods. The VersaClimber’s vertical



range of motion easily adapts to any fitness level, for a supremely versatile workout.

Classes consist of multiple intervals of work and rest, and DeVore, a CSCS, cycling coach and avid VersaClimber user, varies the length of each to challenge participants differently. He provides individual coaching throughout, based on each member's fitness level and goal. Heart rate training also can be implemented into classes for even greater personalization.

While everyone works at their own level, competition is fostered and celebrated as participants log their total feet climbed on a white board during breaks. Some classes also include team challenges among the pods.

Feedback on classes has been phenomenal, with 100 percent of ST&F's FUBAR participants indicating a sense of accomplishment and a willingness to return. DeVore attributes some success to the broad appeal of a 30-minute total-body workout to today's busy exercisers.

"Plus, intense intervals are very hard to do on your own, so having a coach's guidance and the camaraderie of a team makes this rigorous workout more manageable," DeVore said.

DeVore continues to promote the FUBAR classes, however. "Not everyone knows what the VersaClimber is – or they are scared to death of it and feel like it's too hard. The reality is that the workout is as hard as you make it. We want people to come back."

Interest keeps growing, as ST&F's FUBAR classes were recently featured in the Los Angeles Times and on ABC-TV in L.A., with more national media coverage to come.

At S&TF, VersaClimber classes are fee-based, by class or at a discounted package rate. DeVore is already realizing the revenue potential, particularly as new classes are added, noting a "tremendous impact" on the club.

Ultra HIIT Superiority

Since VersaClimbers debuted in the early 1980s, they have been known for their total-body workouts that engage all of the major muscles, have zero impact and burn four times the calories and fat in the least amount of time, compared to traditional cardiovascular equipment like ellipticals and stationary cycles. Unlike other cardio modalities, VersaClimber requires exercisers to train vertically (versus horizontally), which creates a greater cardiovascular challenge that can provide results faster.

Due to their effectiveness, VersaClimbers deliver workouts in 30 minutes (versus 60-minute typical group exercise classes), thereby enabling clubs to offer more classes and generate additional revenue. Furthermore, VersaClimber empowers clubs to determine how many units to floor and to design classes to meet the needs of their members, rather than requiring them to commit to a pre-planned format. Clubs can create beginner and multi-level classes, utilizing the adjustable resistance to accommodate fitness levels. The compact footprint of VersaClimbers saves floor space.

VersaClimber offers clubs co-op marketing, print advertising and social media support for Ultra HIIT classes. And the motivation generated by VersaClimber classes gives clubs a distinct competitive advantage in membership sales and retention.

"This could be the new Spinning," said DeVore. "VersaClimber is absolutely the best piece of cardio equipment, and exercisers get so much physiological value in these classes."

For more information call 800-237-2271 or visit VersaClimber.com or email at info@versaclimber.com



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Adaptive Motion Trainers Raise the Bar for In-Club Fitness

Versatile AMT gives personal trainers and operators the ability to create highly personalized fitness experiences

By Erica Tillinghast, Global Education Manager, Precor

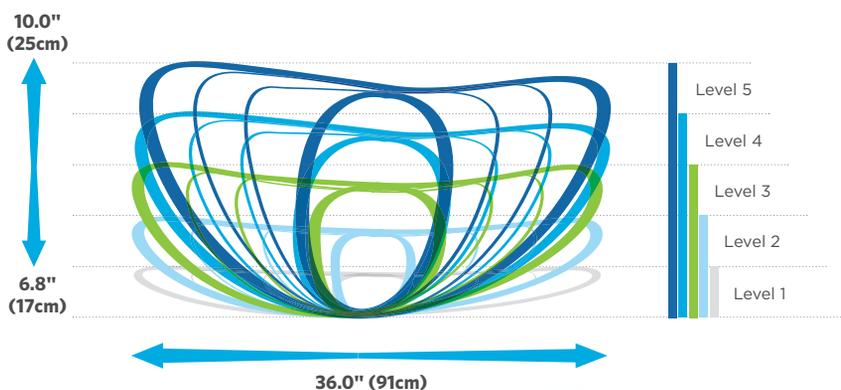
In today's quickly evolving fitness environment, club operators are constantly looking for gym equipment that will set their club experience apart from those of their competitors. The versatility of the Precor Adaptive Motion Trainer® (AMT) offers a variety of benefits to trainers, operators and exercisers. With the AMT, trainers can use one piece of equipment to create highly personalized fitness programs for clients. In turn, operators can highlight this unique fitness experience to differentiate themselves from their competitors.

In late September, Precor will roll out AMT education resources and coaching tips focused specifically on familiarizing personal trainers on AMT training concepts and key programming elements. The resources will include a new web-based education portal on Precor.com offering a range of tutorials for personal trainers, covering everything from getting clients started on the AMT to creating effective AMT workouts. In addition, the new site will provide resources for creating personalized AMT regimens, with downloadable videos and trainer tips.

The AMT was designed as "one stop shop" piece of equipment, offering trainers a variety of cardiovascular, strength and balance programming capabilities in a single machine. The AMT combines a variable stride length of zero to 36 inches with patented Precor Open Stride™ technology, which allows

exercisers to adjust stride height from 6.8 to ten inches in a matter of seconds. For example, an exerciser can go from a long, low running stride to a high-stepping stair climbing stride without breaking pace.

In addition to Open Stride, Precor is the only equipment provider to offer variable stride technology with incline



HIGH STEPPING STRIDES

adjustment. The ability to adjust resistance and stride length enables trainers to create targeted conditioning programs for beginners, elite athletes, and everyone in between. For example, trainers can coach high-intensity interval training (HIIT) workouts by leveraging rapid transitions, various stride styles and a range of resistance levels. And there is no button pushing involved—it's entirely automatic.

The AMT also incorporates easy to use features that benefit not only the user, but also personal trainers. Using the AMT's touchscreen console, trainers can consult the Workout Progress Panel to show clients which muscle groups are being used at any point during a workout. The AMT's wide range of motion and training capabilities allow trainers to develop workouts that accentuate different muscle groups while keeping the client engaged. For instance, trainers can use the AMT to target upper body muscles and activate the core by making small hand position adjustments. Trainers can



also cue movement styles by directing exercisers to the patented Stride Dial™ screen that graphically represents an exerciser's stride length in real time.

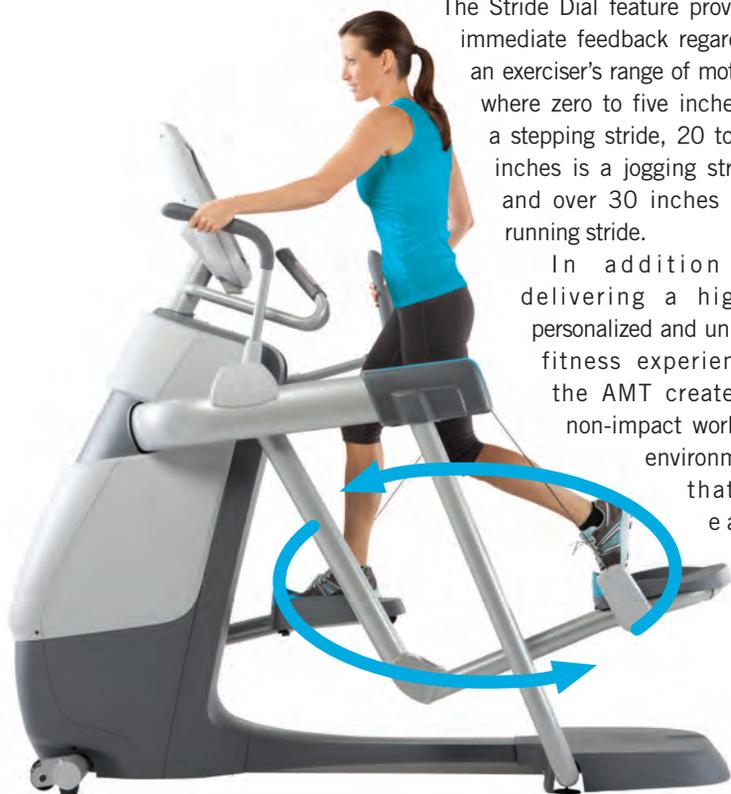
The Stride Dial feature provides immediate feedback regarding an exerciser's range of motion, where zero to five inches is a stepping stride, 20 to 28 inches is a jogging stride, and over 30 inches is a running stride.

In addition to delivering a highly personalized and unique fitness experience, the AMT creates a non-impact workout environment that is easy

on the joints; the foot pedals on the AMT are designed to intuitively mimic the movements of its users and perfectly match them step for step. These design details are important for providing a safe and adaptable workout environment to aging club members and those who are recovering from injuries or seeking joint-friendly exercise.

This accommodating design makes it an essential piece of equipment for any fitness club operator and a natural fit for personal trainers looking to integrate non-impact activities into their clients' fitness programs.

Considering the variety of club-differentiating benefits the AMT offers operators, exercisers and trainers, the launch of the Precor online education website will be yet another important step in further solidifying Precor as an industry-leading provider of state-of-the-art fitness equipment and exercise information resources.



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There's Nothing Like The XPT Trainer



"From age five, when my father first introduced me to resistance training at the rec center he still operates today, I have used almost every machine, power rack, guided barbell system and cable system known to man", says Brady Poppinga. "There has always been a dilemma in choosing which resistance training application to use too best strengthen and develop muscle mass. Either you use single station machines and cable systems, for their ease of use and high levels of safety, or, you risk possible injury and train alone at maximum intensity with free-weights. Unfortunately, training with machines and cable systems forces you to compromise the optimal muscle strengthening and development that the less predictable and cumbersome free weights provide. It was always a dream of mine to find a way to combine the safety features of single station machines and cable systems with the enhanced benefits of free weights" adds Poppinga, "The XPT Trainer has solved this dilemma. These pictures may speak a thousand words, but the results achieved while using the new XPT Trainer are priceless!"

TuffStuff Fitness International has officially entered into an agreement with NFL veteran linebacker, Brady Poppinga, a member of the 2010 Super Bowl Champion Green Bay Packers, to produce and distribute the new XPT Trainer.



The **XPT Trainer** combines the ease of use and safety of single station machines and cable systems, with the exact same feel and benefits of free weights. The revolutionary design of the **XPT Trainer** allows the everyday fitness enthusiast

to lift free weights safely and efficiently without the aid of a spotter.

In addition, the **XPT Trainer** was designed by a pro athlete with the training needs of elite athletes in mind. Athletes will benefit from the XPT's unique



Training explosively in all directions creates the optimal conditioning environment that best translates to the field or court of competition. With its efficient design, the XPT allows you to perform all conventional and Olympics lifts without the need of extra bumper plates and lifting platforms, freeing up training space for functional and sport specific movements that are usually performed in conjunction with power and explosive lifts.

safety features, which allows the bar to be moved explosively in any direction and still “catch” itself at any position! Training explosively in all directions creates the optimal conditioning environment that best translates to the field or court of competition. With its efficient design, the XPT allows you to perform all conventional and Olympics lifts without the need of extra bumper plates and lifting platforms, freeing up training space for functional and sport specific movements that are usually performed in conjunction with power and explosive lifts. The unique braking system on the XPT Trainer allows for safe and effective individual execution of true explosive lifts that most closely mimic competitive movements done on the field or court. The ultimate benefit is, the athlete can perform dynamic movements in the weight room that translates to immediate results on their respective field of competition. These results

include superior levels of strength, speed, power and explosiveness.

“Brady has created a significant training tool that delivers the ability to recreate dynamic, sport specific movements that enables athletes to gain dramatic results and we’re very excited to be a part of this groundbreaking project”, says Mike Ryser, TFI National Sales & Marketing Manager. *“With the XPT Trainer an athlete can train safely and effectively and see immediate results on their respective field of competition. The combination of the brake-safe carriage and free-flow Olympic bar, delivers a platform where movements like squats and bench presses, can be performed safely by the everyday fitness enthusiast without the necessity of a spotter or training partner”* adds Ryser.

Initial plans call for the **XPT Trainer** to be unveiled at the Mr. Olympia Expo in Las Vegas, September 18th—20th, where a test unit will be demonstrated

by Brady and the TFI sales team. 2015 will also see the introduction of a lower cost consumer and Light Commercial XPT unit designed for home applications. Full scale production of the commercial XPT Trainer is slated for the middle of the 4th quarter 2014.



TuffStuff Fitness International manufactures a complete line of Residential, Commercial and Youth Fitness Equipment. For additional information, please contact our Sales Department at 909-629-1600 or www.tuffstufffitness.com.

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– Daryl Coston, Anytime Fitness, Brandywine, MD

"It says a lot about the Helix that almost everyone has a smile on their face when they're using it."

– Dick Snyder, Lifesport Fitness, Philadelphia, PA

"The Helix has proven to be a good selling point with potential members."

– Amanda McFerren, Lancaster YMCA, Lancaster, PA



Helixes are the most popular new cardio product at the East Bank Club in Cleveland, OH

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New Functional Training AbCoaster Machine

Many people are familiar with the AbCoaster abdominal machine, which features a bottom-up abdominal movement similar to a hanging leg raise. The user kneels on a pad and pulls forward, contracting their abs and pulling their knees up toward the chest. The kneepad rotates around so that the user can also target their obliques. The movement is deceptively fun, but tricks you into a tough, effective ab workout.

The Abs Company is launching a new AbCoaster called the “FT model,” which stands for Functional Training. With the new AbCoaster FT model, all the basic motion is the same as the original AbCoaster, and a dramatically new feature has been added: rather than needing to move your knees together at all times on the AbCoaster, you can now move your legs independently while exercising. A user can still move their knees together while exercising, but now a user can also move them independently as well, which allows a person to obtain functional training benefits during core exercise.

Functional training has gained enormous popularity recently, as Professional trainers have known for years that the natural movement of our bodies is not fully reflected in traditional weight training equipment. Most activities of daily life do not involve bi-lateral movement, and functional training seeks to adapt or develop exercises that allow individuals to perform the activities of daily life more easily and without injuries. One of the hallmarks of functional training is the ability to move your limbs independently while you exercise, which is now possible with the new AbCoaster FT.

The AbCoaster FT is the latest evolution of the AbCoaster product line. The first AbCoaster, now known as the CS3000,

was launched in 2007 and was an immediate hit with professional trainers, athletes, and consumers alike. The Ab Coaster took abdominal training in a whole new direction. Unlike popular traditional crunches, which work your abs from the “top down,” the Ab Coaster works your abs from the “bottom up.” For decades, professional gymnasts and bodybuilders used the bottom-up abdominal movement – known as the “hanging leg lift” – as the most effective way to develop a strong,

lean core.

While the Hanging Left Lift is recognized as the most effective abdominal exercise, it is also the most difficult ab exercise to perform correctly. The exercise requires not only tremendous upper body strength to hang from a bar, but it also requires you to perform a lower abdominal contraction while lifting the entire weight of your lower body. This exercise sounds hard because it is hard. In fact, for the average person, this exercise is nearly impossible.



The Original AbCoaster CS3000

But the Ab Coaster made this difficult exercise possible for anyone to perform correctly. Its weight-bearing design eliminates the need to hang from a bar and places the user in a comfortable kneeling position off the floor. The Ab Coaster's curved track guides you thru a perfect lower abdominal lift while eliminating strain to your neck, back and shoulders.

The distinctive feature of the original AbCoaster CS3000 is the pair of curved steel tracks that the knee pad moves along while exercising, giving the product its "roller coaster"-type look and feel. A few years after launch, the AbCoaster design team built a new machine to perform the same exercise but without the use of the curved steel tracks. The AbCoaster CTL is completely "trackless" and allows the user to perform a bottom-up abdominal exercise in a similar manner to the AbCoaster 3000. Without the tracks, the CTL uses a frictionless resistance system to provide similar results. The motion is very easy to perform for any user, including rehab and de-conditioned patients. By eliminating the tracks, the CTL is also easier to maintain for Club owners.

Functional Training Gains Popularity and the AbCoaster FT is Born

With the rise in popularity of functional training in Health Clubs, the AbCoaster design team went to work on making a new product that would respond to the changing desires of trainers and club members. Starting with the basic CTL, the designers divided the unitary kneepad into two kneepads, making the AbCoaster FT the latest evolution in abdominal training from The Abs Company. Working your core in an alternating motion with either leg provides functional training benefits that are not possible with either the CS3000 or the CTL.



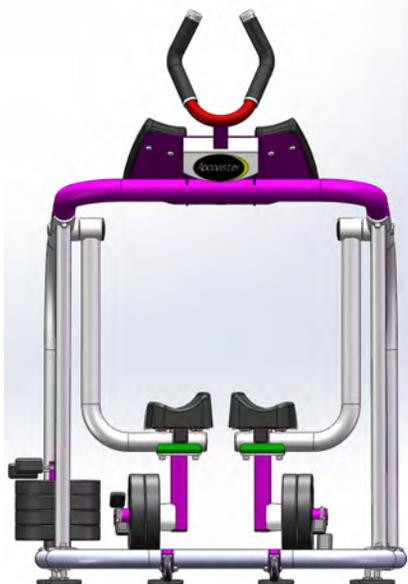
The Tracks Are Eliminated and the AbCoaster CTL is Born

The emergence and popularity of the entire AbCoaster product line underscores a basic truth about Health Clubs and why people join. Core training in Health Clubs is an important reason why members join their club in the first place. If you were to ask your members which body part they want to improve this year most

of them would say "My belly and waistline" or "My ABS." A recent IHRSA survey ranked AB MACHINES as a top activity that members value the most in their Health Club, right up there with treadmills, ellipticals and free weights.

Many successful Health Clubs recognize this trend and now several national chains, including Planet Fitness and Retro Fitness, offer a special area featuring a circuit of machines dedicated solely to training your abs. To support Health Clubs in their efforts to fulfill this need, The Abs Company has developed a concept called the "Core Strength Zone" that features innovative products such as the Ab Coaster, Ab Solo and Abs Bench. The FT will be a great addition to this area as well when it hits the market later this year. Now when your members and prospects tell you they want to work on their Abs you can bring

them to a dedicated Ab area in your facility that is branded, uniform and gives them exactly what THEY want - a great place to train their abs and work on their waistline!

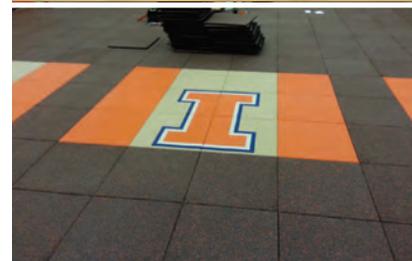


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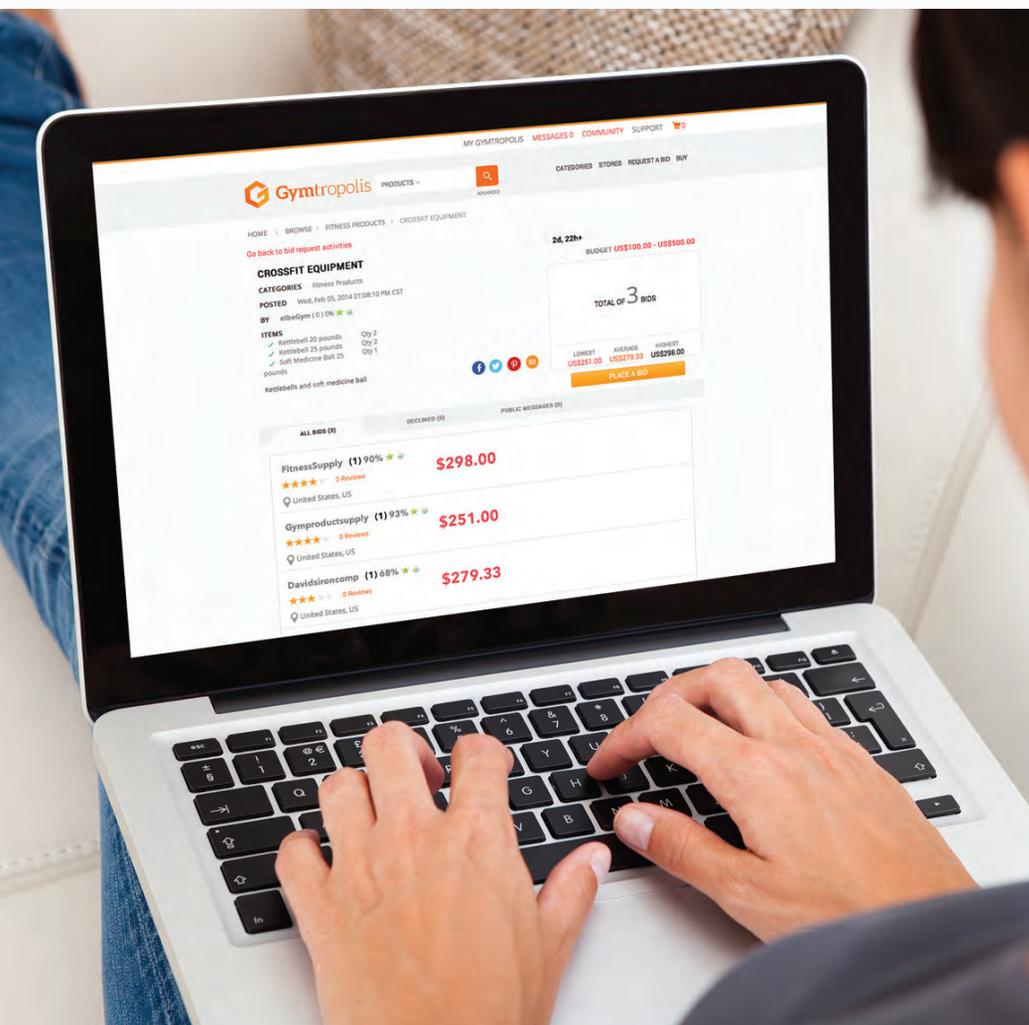
Brad Schupp knows a thing or two about the fitness industry. As a successful fitness professional for the last 30 years, his commitment to innovation and passion for problem-solving providing the stepping stones of his entrepreneurial journey. Building on Brad's experience working with StairMaster, gave him a solid foundation to build on as he launched the original parts and product support company out of his garage which has evolved over the years into Sportsmith. Schupp's decades of experience shed light on a new opportunity to add value and enhance the fitness industry. Together with his son Aaron, and his daughter Elise Hopper, Schupp launched out on his newest and perhaps boldest business venture to date: Gymtropolis.com.

"Our goal in creating Gymtropolis is to provide a marketplace and community that enhances the fitness industry by making fitness commerce faster, easier, and more efficient for fitness facilities and suppliers," Schupp explains.

We accomplish that goal with several key features, such as the reverse auction. Much like travel sites Expedia and Priceline revolutionized booking travel, the Gymtropolis free reverse auction accomplishes and revolutionizes purchasing exercise equipment, fitness products, supplies and services for fitness professionals. One post, multiple bids, one great offer. Everybody wins!

Schupp expects Gymtropolis to transform the way that health clubs, fitness facilities and trainers purchase their equipment, as well as the way that fitness service providers and suppliers sell their products and services. At the core of the Gymtropolis website is an innovative reverse-auction system (think EBAY, but reversed) which allows health clubs to enter a bid request for the products that they need. This request is then automatically pushed to relevant suppliers in the Gymtropolis network to allow them the opportunity to bid on the requested item(s). This allows health clubs to quickly and efficiently comparison shop without taking up too much time or effort. Gymtropolis will also provide fitness clubs owners with a traditional auction-style format, as well as individual store setups to allow health clubs to shop at their own convenience.

"We have crafted a better, faster and more efficient method to buy all of the best products, supplies, equipment and



services that any fitness facility will need to succeed. Utilizing Gymtropolis unlocks the door to high productivity for facility owners, managers, fitness directors, operations managers and personal trainers.”

“Our mission at Gymtropolis is to add value to fitness community. We’re committed to helping our fellow fitness professionals maintain their fitness facilities in the most efficient and cost-effective ways possible. Gymtropolis enables club owners to focus on the other aspects of developing better facilities and services for their community,” Schupp states.

Gymtropolis solves the problem club owners and operators face on an almost

daily basis – google search marathons to find exercise equipment, fitness products, supplies and service providers. This problem is resolved by consolidating the leading suppliers, brands and service providers in the fitness industry into the Gymtropolis Marketplace, a robust, one-stop resource.

Simply stated, Gymtropolis provides easy and efficient comparison shopping which enables fitness professionals to research and purchase similar fitness products from various suppliers, without having to navigate through an exhaustive list of websites. This method results in a purchasing process that’s faster, easier and more efficient than the antiquated

process of navigating multiple sites to find the best products.

“In addition to our Marketplace, we think the Gymtropolis social network may prove to be the greatest value to the fitness community. We’re currently developing a dynamic social community for fitness professionals to collaborate and exchange ideas and information...all geared towards the effort to build a better fitness industry,” exclaims Schupp.

“I really love the community aspect of the vision for Gymtropolis. It’s very appealing and makes you feel like you are not alone when it comes to the headaches of trying to find the right equipment at the right price. The site is easy to navigate and very self explanatory. I feel like the Gymtropolis team has a great feel on the pulse of the fitness industry.” Patrick, Hallock Owner, CrossFit Vital

Additional user-friendly features of Gymtropolis include product and vendor reviews by fitness facility colleagues and peers. Rewarding suppliers for a fair exchange in value on products based on quality, customer service, and not just the best price, is a winning combination for fitness facilities and suppliers alike.

Additionally, suppliers benefit from the Gymtropolis marketplace by receiving relevant product requests from highly qualified buyers.

“Gymtropolis helped me find a cardio, strength, and free weight gym package to get my new fitness center completed. The website is easy to use and features multiple resources for gym owners. I recommend Gymtropolis to anyone looking for a one stop fitness shop.”

- Steve Blackburn, Elite Fitness Training Studio



Elise Hopper, Brad Schupp & Aaron Schupp

For more information about Gymtropolis, please visit gymtropolis.com.

Elise Hopper - Director of Marketing and Sales
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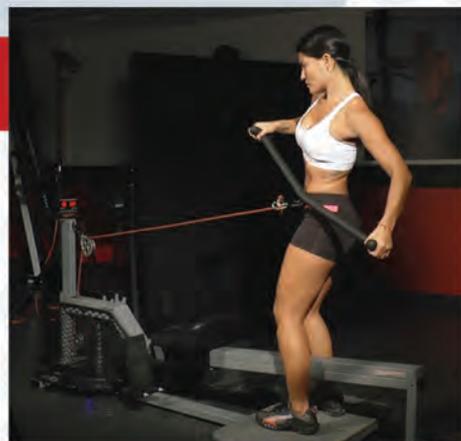


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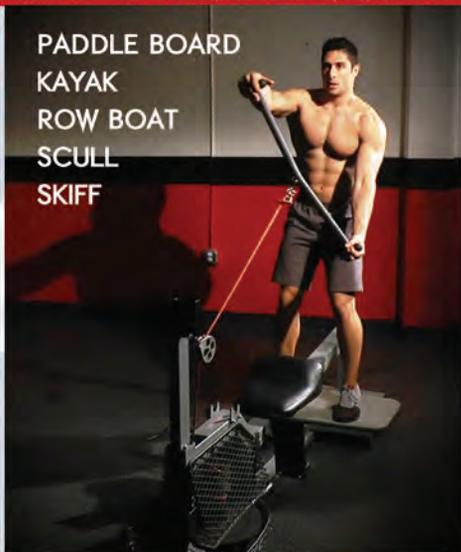
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Take Command Of Your Entertainment Controls

Introducing an easy-to-connect device that empowers cable and satellite set top boxes and eliminates battery operated remote requirements on cardio equipment.

Due to a FCC ruling early this decade allowing cable companies to encrypt signals to provide more HD content, many content providers now require a set top box and a battery operated hand-held remote control for each piece of cardio equipment.



“This set up is frustrating for club owners, managers, and exercisers as it creates a bunch of issues from a customer service standpoint,” says Mark Blake, COO of Broadcastvision. “It’s a frustration that the exerciser can no longer control the TV using the console controls. Also, the remote presents hygiene issues, logistics challenges like maintaining batteries, and also leaves members wondering where to point it to change their channel and not their neighbors,” says Blake.

The solution to these issues and more is the Broadcastvision CAB (Console Adapter Box) or an attached Broadcastvision Universal Controller. Both options are easy to install and provide great value. The CAB is specific to cardio with TV button controls. The Universal

Small device installed in between the cardio equipment console, the TV & the set top box.



Controls any cable, satellite or IPTV set top box.

BATTERY OPERATED REMOTE



Eliminates battery operated remote control.

CABLE, SATELLITE OR IPTV BOX

Set top box can be located at the cardio equipment or up to 200' away.



Broadcastvision CAB

Controller replaces attached legacy controllers from various companies. Both devices communicate directly with the set top box to eliminate the lowly battery operated remote control.

The CAB, about the size of a stack of business cards, fits between the cardio equipment console, the TV and the cable or satellite box to turn the console button commands into cable and satellite box

commands. With the control issue solved, club owners can rely exclusively on cable and satellite boxes to provide exercisers more channels, including more HD content.

For facilities that have cardio equipment with attached controllers the exclusive Universal Controller is the solution. The Universal Controller also eliminates the battery operated remote control and provides additional features including menu-navigation of the cable and satellite boxes.

Will the CAB and Universal Controller work with all set top boxes?

Yes, the CAB or the Universal Controller will work with all Cable, Satellite or IPTV set top boxes including, but not limited to,

models from AT&T, Cablevision, Charter, Comcast, Cox, DirecTV, Dish, Enseo, Haivision, TimeWarner, and Verizon VIOS among others, plus some overseas providers.

Will the CAB and the Universal Controller operate more than Broadcastvision TVs?

YES, they are used across all brands of fitness screens including those TVs integrated into the console. Call for details or visit www.broadcastvision.com.

How does the CAB enable more channels and more HD content?

Some facilities have expensive channel-limiting head-end modulation equipment. With the CAB and Universal Controller providing integration with cable

and satellite boxes, content providers can offer more channels and HD content at less cost.

Broadcastvision Entertainment is a pioneer and leading market innovator in the fitness entertainment industry and a complete source for fitness entertainment including FM / 900MHz Wireless, Smart-Phone-enabled local audio from AudioFetch, Large Screen TVs, Sound Systems, Digital Signage, Branded Music, Messaging and Personal Viewing Screens. To contact Broadcastvision Entertainment, visit www.broadcastvision.com or call 888.330.4BVE (4283).

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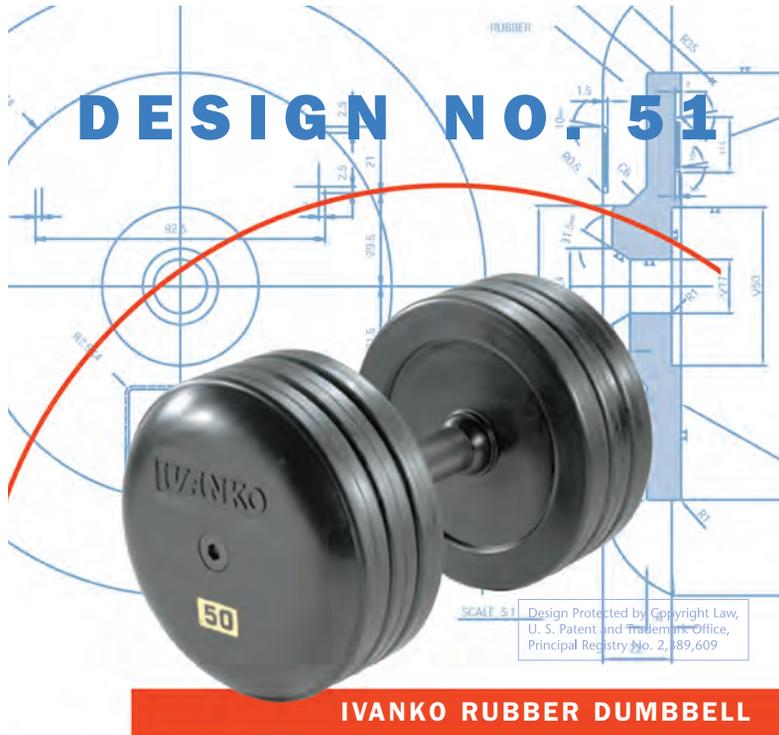


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DESIGN NO. 51



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You Don't Always Need a Ring to Get Engaged

Living in the ultra-competitive and hyper-connected world we do, it is essential that businesses form meaningful relationships with their clients. However, setting that as your business agenda and actually following through with it can be difficult. Here are three great client engagement tips to form and strengthen client relationships that we here at EZFacility have found to be immensely successful:



1. Engage Online. The greatest thing about the Internet is how expansive it is. Engage clients online by giving them a "WOW" moment. A "WOW" moment does not need to be anything complex; it just needs to be something that grabs the clients' attention. Having their attention opens the door for clients to connect with you using different platforms such as social media or even e-newsletters.

Keeping in touch and reaching out periodically keeps your business relevant and fresh on their minds. Enticing clients to connect with special offers, relevant industry information or exclusive facility opportunities can be helpful tactics. The final step, and possibly most important, is to create dynamic content that promotes interaction and sharing between clients. The end goal is to create a welcoming sense of community for clients who, if approached by new prospective clients, would provide a glowing review. Here at EZFacility, in an effort to bolster our online community, we began implementing a user group initiative. By interacting with a range of customers across multiple disciplines online, we were able to not only gain insight and perspective into the client experience, but also build and strengthen client relationships. As a result, the feedback we received is playing a direct role in future development plans, while our user group initiatives are setting the foundation for future online engagement opportunities.



2. Engage the Community. Whether it be participating in a local bake sale or running in a 5k/10k charity event, any opportunity to interact with and support your community is gold for a business. Finding an amicable cause that both you and your community support is a great place to start in terms of building a relationship. After finding a cause, the next step is to find an event or activity that would highlight the strengths of your business while also staying true to that cause. For example, if you are a personal trainer you could hold a pull-up challenge event in your local park having members of the community participate. For every person that is able to do a certain number of pull-ups your business can donate a certain amount of money or time to the cause. At EZFacility, we make it a point to engage our communities and speak with clients face-to-face at tradeshow each quarter. Most recently, we attended the 2014 Indoor Sports Association Facility Operators Conference and debuted new functionality to be released within our software. Having the opportunity to strengthen our relationship with clients in a face-to-face setting always reaffirms for us why we got into this business in the first place.



3. Engage In-House. When you think about it, the one constant in all of your businesses is the physical location where that business takes place. Common in-house engagement ideas could range anywhere from a member of the month program to in-house specials aimed at increasing client participation.

For example, perhaps you have been thinking about introducing a new group fitness class into the weekly mix. A good idea and great way to engage your clients would be to set up a pilot program. Select a varying sample of clients to try out the new type of class and offer incentives for not only their participation, but their feedback as well. Here at EZFacility, we have begun something very similar with our Early Access Program. The program puts new functionality in the hands of a select group of clients prior to its release to the general public, giving them an exclusive experience and the ability to have their voice heard.

A steady flow of communication with clients using a variety of channels and utilizing some or all of these tips will ensure your business is truly, engaged.

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Does Your Club Have a Special Area for Abs?



Adding “THE CORE STRENGTH ZONE” to Your Club Can Help You Sell More Memberships and Increase Member Retention — Here’s Why . . .

Did you know that one of the **top fitness goals** every year is a **flatter, trimmer waistline**? In fact according to the American College of Sports Medicine, **Core Training** remains one of the **top trends** for 2014 (ACSM 2013).

When members and prospects are in your club it's important to give them **what THEY want**. That's why they join, that's why they stay. On a typical tour of the club you might say... “Over here is our **Cardio Area** for improving your heart... this is our **Strength Area** to strengthen and tone muscles. We also have rooms for different **fitness classes**”. Now... what if the last part of your tour went like this... “Let me show you **THE CORE STRENGTH ZONE**, where we have equipment dedicated to training your core.” And then let your prospect try the **AbCoaster, Ab Solo, the Abs Bench** — all fun, easy, and very effective.

Your prospects and members get it... cardio means heart and calorie burn, strength means build and tone muscles, and **AB MACHINES mean a stronger core and trimmer waistline!**

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g'Eco is a quality playing surface. It minimizes needless stresses and strains on athletes, and helps reduce injuries that are common with other traditional hard surfaces. g'Eco has a natural absorbing effect that lessens the impacts of running, jumping and even falling. This allows for much less wear and tear on joints and tendons compared to other hard surfaces.

With each step on g'Eco, much less of the vibration that can lead to shin splints and stress fractures is experienced. The coefficient of friction provided with g'Eco assures just enough slide to avoid pivoting and twisting injuries, yet all the friction necessary to sprint, stop and turn without slipping.

The exclusive g'Eco underlayment creates a subtle spring like effect that returns more power to the player for more speed, agility, endurance, and less fatigue.

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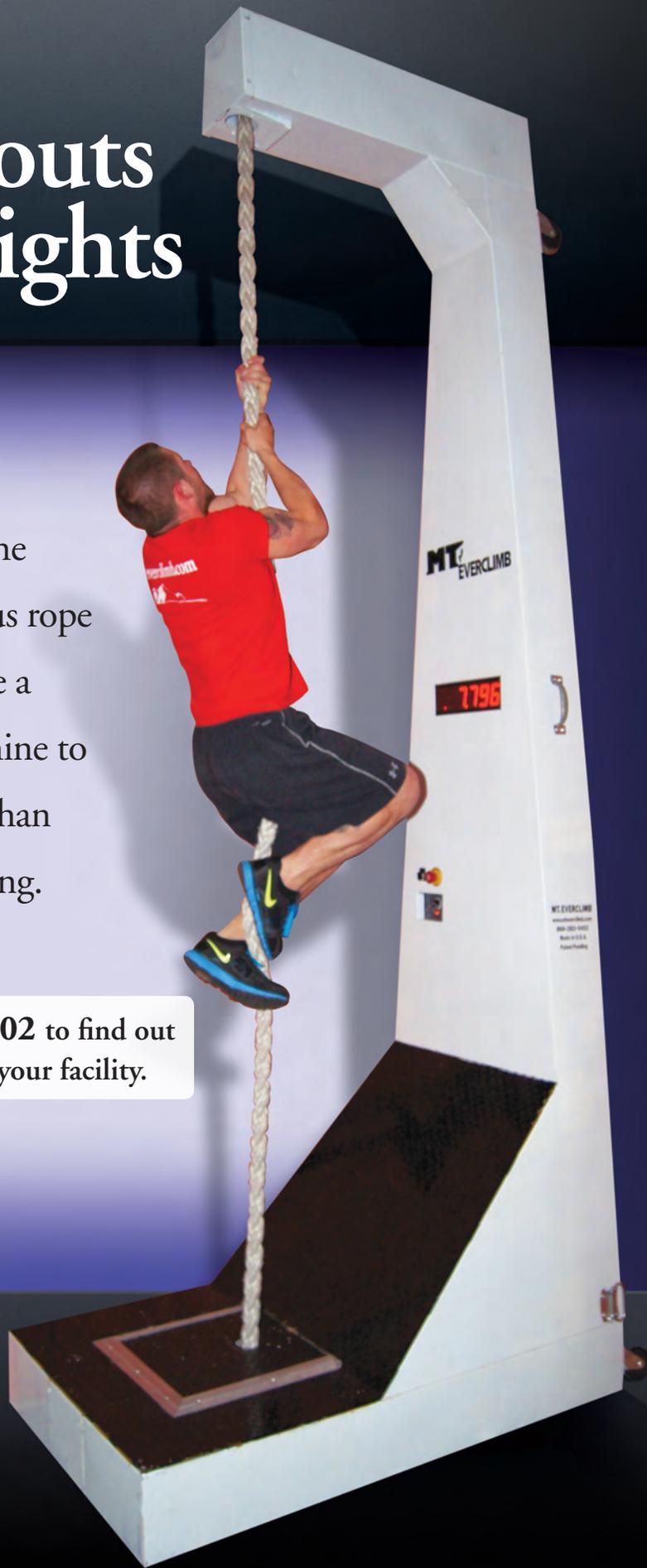
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Risk Management Tip: Fire Your Problem Member!

As business owners that serve the general public, we go out of our way to try and please all of our customers. We train our staffs to be pleasant, helpful, and accommodating to the needs of our members and, in general, try to go above and beyond their expectations of customer service. This is not only true of the fitness industry, but every business. Overall, this approach works well as we strive to build an exemplary reputation in our communities as a result of our members touting our world class professionalism to their friends.

I saw a sign in a bar last week, I know... shocker; that stated "We have the right to refuse service to anyone." It made me stop and think that although the bar was open to the public, this posted statement made me realize that the owner has the same right to choose whether or not they want to do business with me...just as I choose whether or not to do business with them. I think that club owners forget that they too have the right to choose who they want to serve. The fact is, some members are just too stupid to belong to your gym and you need to do something about it.

We all know that when you sign up a member to the club, it is impossible to know at that time how they will act as a paying guest of your establishment. Thank God, most members are generally pleasant, sociable, and kind toward your staff and others. On the other hand, there is bound to be one or two that you sign up that you quickly realize that you wish that person had joined your competitor's club down the street.

Here are few examples of the "problem member". Stinky Sam: This guy hasn't showered since the Bush Administration. Loudmouth Larry: Larry not only grunts louder than a constipated Greco-Roman wrestler, but he also screams at his workout buddy with shouts of "You can do it!" Stewart the Stalker: You know this guy. He is the one following your female members around the gym and may even be offering his "expert" workout advice to them even though they clearly want to be left alone. In a word, he is creepy. Miserable Mary: This is the woman who is never happy. She berates your front desk girl because she didn't make her protein shake correctly. She also wants you to freeze her membership because she is going to Cabo for two weeks. In general, she complains about EVERYTHING! Finally, and most importantly we have Careless Carl: He is the member who knows or should know proper exercise technique but insists on modifying HIS workout to show off how cool he is. He is a danger to himself and others around him.

Now that you have a visual of at least one or maybe all of the characters I described above in your gym, what do you do about it and what the heck does this have anything to do with risk management? One thing I have learned over the 25 years I have been insuring health clubs, is that a problem member is often an accident waiting to happen. Some of these problem members might be harmless enough, but they are creating an environment that makes your other members uncomfortable. Worse yet, your regular fantastic members will be pissed off at you because you allow these morons to work out in your gym. Whether you know it or not, these problem members are killing your business. From a risk management perspective, Loudmouth Larry will be the guy blowing out his back during a dead lift or dropping a weighted bar on his buddy's throat during a poor attempt at "spotting". Your best female member files a claim against you for sexual harassment because you allowed Stewart the Stalker to continue bother her even though she has formally complained about him to your staff before. If Miserable Mary breaks a finger nail, she will call her attorney, and finally, Careless Carl topples your cable cross-over machine while attempting some unique TRX flying bat routine. Somebody is going to hurt and you are going to be sued. As I mentioned earlier in this article, some members are just too stupid to be in your gym and you need to fire them.

So how do you do it? First of all you need to establish a WRITTEN set of Club Policies and Guidelines. This document is shared with all new members and you also have posters of these guidelines placed at various points throughout your gym. This is your "go to" document when you need to have a chat with the problem

member. For instance, if your Policies and Guidelines require all members to have clean workout apparel...to be courteous to other members and staff...to refrain from loud behavior...requires members to only use equipment for its intended purpose and to generally practice safe exercise technique, you now have a base document on which to point out any violations.

There is a general protocol on how to fire your member. It is known as three strikes and you are out. First Strike: When addressing a violation of your Club Policies and Guidelines with the member, always confront them on a one on one basis privately. There is no need to embarrass them in front of other members or staff. This usually clears up the problem. However, if the member does not correct their behavior, then the Second Strike involves a written warning with a copy to the member that

if the conduct does not change, they will be asked to leave the club. You should have a staff member (preferably your manager) present during this meeting as a witness. If the member still does not correct their behavior, simply refund any unearned membership or training fees and ask them not to return to the club. Again...at the end of the day, YOU have the RIGHT to refuse service to anyone with one MAJOR exception. You do not have the right to discriminate for race, color, creed, sexual orientation or ANY disability; so be careful.

By keeping the problem member out of your gym, you will create a safer environment and perhaps more importantly, you will find that your member retention and new sales will increase. It is widely known that if one member complains about the behavior of another member, there are 10 other members that feel the same way, but

are not saying anything. In other words, one problem member will put at least ten of your existing members at risk of leaving you. In summary, continue to take control of your business by controlling your members. Bottom line; you will have fewer incidents and make more money.

If you would like a free copy of our recommended Club Policies and Guidelines, drop me a quick email to ken@theinsuranceguy.com.



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Are You Playing Hard to Get?

By Gary Hood, Global Fitness Association, LLC

My question for you is simply this: How can we best help you? We're writing to you in this issue of the National Fitness Trade Journal because of your loyalty and readership over the years, and we need your help.

We have seen fitness facilities and fitness-related businesses come and go, many failing from the same struggles. We created Global Fitness Association to be the place facilities and businesses can turn to not only for help with problems, but to avoid those problems in the first place.

With over 40 years in the fitness industry, we are confident that we can provide you with the resources and tools you need to be successful in this challenging industry.

We need to hear from you as soon as possible so that we can better understand your views, goals, hopes, fears, and challenges. Having too much pride to ask for help is not the answer. Hoping things will get better tomorrow is not the answer. Hope is not a strategy. Remember, if you don't ask, you'll never know.

For all of us — and especially for the many readers we've heard from lately — the fitness industry suddenly feels like a very changing industry, one that just doesn't seem the same as years gone by.

For ourselves, our families, and our financial success, we have to be able to meet the fitness industry's new and constant challenges. And that's why you have to stop avoiding your individual business challenges and seek assistance from seasoned professionals. Don't play hard to get. Reach out and ask questions, ask for assistance, always be moving forward and learning. I had a college professor once tell me, "If you're not always learning, you're probably falling behind."

Everywhere we look, we see rising tensions between large chains, franchises, and individual locations. New competition ... new price wars ... and now, even the threat of government



intervention in the form of taxes and regulations.

The investment picture is no less unsettling. We're seeing more mergers and acquisitions than ever before. And now, more and more owners are throwing in the towel than at any other time in our industry's history. Why is this you ask — it's because many owners have no other choice but to surrender to the competition because they were playing hard to get by not seeking help.

It's an awful feeling knowing that your business is out of control and the other shoe may be about to drop, but not knowing when it will happen and who to turn to is the hardest part.

To give you an idea of what your competition has brought to our attention over the past couple of years, the following list outlines their top concerns:

#1. Challenging Business Environment. Not surprisingly, owners are primarily focused on the challenge of growing their businesses, including finding new customers, hiring and retaining the right staff, and dealing with the competition. Many were seeking help on ways to attract and retain customers because they generally didn't have large enough marketing budgets to compete with the advertising dollars that larger companies had at their disposal.

#2. Landlord Issues. This was more common than not, many owners were unaware of their rights based on the lease they signed. Many of their problems stemmed from paying too high of rent, not understanding the triple net costs, personally guaranteeing the lease, and how to deal with problems.

#3. Understanding Financials. Again surprisingly, owners didn't know their numbers, and didn't understand what their percentages should be. Many didn't understand the correlation between guests, telephone information calls, tours, and sales.

In conclusion, many of the owners spent most of their time working in their business and not on their business. Although it's important to ensure their customers are happy, it's equally important for them to develop a business plan, which includes guidelines, systems, and strategies.

My question for you is simply this: How can we best help you?

For the final quarter of 2014 I'm inviting you to contact us at your convenience with no obligation. Tell us how you feel about this challenging industry. What worries you most right now? What are your greatest challenges today? How can my team and I best help you?

I've made it easy for you — just select the contact method you feel most comfortable with.

Send me an email: Send an email to my personal inbox at gary@globalfitnessassociation.com.

Send a comment to our team: Type in www.gfatoday.com/cms.php and leave a comment.

Contact me directly: Simply pick up the phone and dial 775-298-1616 to reach me personally.

Whichever method you choose, please give us your personal thoughts now, while you're thinking about it. Hearing from you now will go a long way toward helping you in the most effective ways possible as you move forward.

More than half of the people who contact us always seem to wait until the last minute — when the smoke has turned to fire. Don't play hard to get. Contact one of our seasoned veterans today. You'll be glad you did.

A special "Thank you" to hundreds of fitness center owners, managers, and other fitness professionals for making Global Fitness Association their number one resource.

Can you really learn something from seasoned fitness industry veterans? We think so. Give us a call today.

Special thanks to Cate Sundling, Nick Zavadsky, Debbie Swigert, Gary Gresham, and Linda Hood for contributing to this article. More information about Global Fitness Association can be obtained through their website at www.globalfitnessassociation.com or by calling 775-298-1616. Your #1 Resource for Fitness Industry Success.

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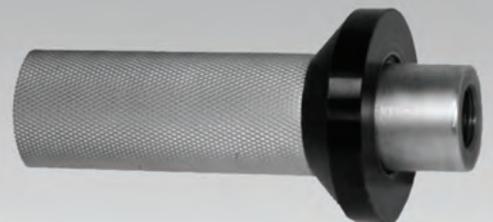
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