

Spring 2015

# NATIONAL FITNESS TRADE JOURNAL

The Industry Guide for Fitness Facility Management

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Technology Revolutionizes  
Strength Training. *See page 6*

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# PRIME Fitness USA: Poised for Success

PRIME Fitness USA is a company ready to prove itself. The PRIME brand may seem like a newcomer in commercial and home gym equipment, having just hit the market in October 2014. In reality, though, it is part of a proud legacy of innovative and well-known fitness technology.

## The PRIME story

PRIME was launched in 2014 by Specialty Fitness Systems (SFS). SFS was a company created by Specialty Fabrication and Powder Coating (SFPC), who since 2009 was the sole manufacturer for

STRIVE, a leader in the strength training industry.

STRIVE is best known for their innovative cam technology, which allow users a variety of resistance selections at different points within an individual exercise motion. With the resistance set at any of nine options on the cam, users can pinpoint a workout onto a specific stretch of their muscle – helping greatly with spot muscle training, rehabilitation or just getting a total body workout faster.

In early 2014, SFPC acquired STRIVE's cam technology and other patents and created SFS. Armed with the cam technology and a philosophy rooted in innovation, SFS launched PRIME. The new PRIME brand combines STRIVE's cam technology with SFS's innovation and manufacturing prowess to create three lines of selectorized machines: Evolution, Hybrid, and Legacy. Each machine boasts the aptly named SmartCam™ technology, and each Evolution and Hybrid selectorized machine includes easy weight

changing with a push-and-pull adjustment bar offering five-pound increments. PRIME also boasts a unique aesthetic, with modern features like perforated metal weight shields, metal frames and eye-catching green details.

## Three great lines for fitness enthusiasts

The Evolution line by PRIME offers classic machines such as the Arm Curl and Chest Press, and includes up to 20 different machine options. The Evolution line also features a newly designed SmartCam, offering a more compact design with an increased strength curve. Perhaps the most unique feature of the Evolution line is its fully metal frame that provides a stark contrast to the tubular frames seen on most units on the market today. The design provides the stability and durability customers expect from PRIME, with a smaller vertical footprint and sleek visual appeal.

The Hybrid line by PRIME is a refreshing blend of innovation and



PRIME Evolution Leg Extension



PRIME Legacy Chest Press

performance. Hybrid units feature the original SmartCam, offering users from five to nine resistance options within each exercise motion – which offers an incredibly customizable workout in less time than traditional selectorized machines. With a sturdy all-metal construction, this line is as durable as it is unique. The PRIME Hybrid also features the easy-to-use add-on weight system, allowing users to add more weight with just the turn of a knob.

Finally, the Legacy line by PRIME is familiar to any STRIVE enthusiast. Like Hybrid, Legacy machines come equipped with the original SmartCam technology and feature a sturdy tubular design. Legacy units also offer customers an open or enclosed weight shield option. Currently, Legacy units are available in both selectorized and plate-loaded options.

#### **PRIME partners with the Pittsburgh Steelers**

“The acquisition of STRIVE’s cam technology is really what propelled the development of PRIME,” said Rod Griffin, President of SFS. “It provided us the opportunity to enhance the design and efficiency of the STRIVE cam that ultimately became our SmartCam technology, featured on the [PRIME]

machines.” As an official provider of strength training equipment for the Pittsburgh Steelers, Melissa Griffin, CEO of SFS, has a long-term vision for expansion. “PRIME is positioned for vast growth opportunity. Our partnership with the Pittsburgh Steelers gives us invaluable real-time feedback and insight from professional athletes and strength coaches. That connection allows us to keep our finger on the pulse of trends and has already helped us develop new strength training equipment we plan to unveil at IHRSA in 2015.”

#### **Excellence that’s made in the USA**

PRIME’s unique, modern and industrial design underpins the stability, durability and quality that separate the equipment from its contemporaries. “With the design of the new PRIME lines, we wanted to create something that reflected the high quality and unique nature of the PRIME product,” said Melissa Griffin. When SFS designed PRIME equipment, usability was the critical goal. An example is the handle-adjusted add-on weight system that makes adjusting incremental weight effortless for users.

Along with the Evolution, Hybrid, and Legacy lines, PRIME also offers a variety

of home and commercial gym products. PRIME’s state-of-the-art functional trainer features a duel weight stack system and adjustable arms that provide users with a nearly limitless number of exercise and workout options. Their racks and rigs, arguably the most sturdy and durable units on the market today, are tested to the extreme by world-class athletes everyday – most notably in the weight room at the Pittsburgh Steelers training facility.

The team at SFS is proud that PRIME is one of the very few fitness equipment products made and manufactured solely in the United States. SFS manufactures all PRIME equipment at their newly renovated plant in Rouseville, PA. “Just like SFPC, it’s extremely important to us to keep all facets of the manufacturing and assembly of PRIME equipment here in the United States,” said Rod Griffin. “We are currently one of the very few fitness equipment companies who can say that. “Made in the USA” is important to us and we aim to do business in the communities in which we live and work.”

*For more information about SFS and PRIME, visit [www.PRIMEfitnessUSA.com](http://www.PRIMEfitnessUSA.com) or call 855-369-4375 to request a quote today.*



**PRIME Hybrid Arm Curl**



**PRIME Evolution Arm Curl**

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# Exergame Fitness – Fixing Sales and Retention at the Kids Level



“I don’t wanna go to the club! It’s boring and there’s nothing for me to do there!” Parents with kids under the age of fifteen hear that protest countless times when trying to get the family to the gym. Most facilities have policies severely limiting those under the age of fifteen from using the fitness center. And while most places have a daycare for toddlers and young children, those who are seven to fourteen are in no-man’s-land telling parents and club owners “I don’t want to be with the babies”.

And what is it that these kids want? According to Hayden, age 10 from Wilmington, Delaware “We just want a place to play, have fun with our friends, and get some energy out.” Playing games is every kid’s passion, whether through sports, video games, or impromptu running around. The problem is most clubs don’t have a place for kids to do that; and that’s a serious issue for two reasons. First, kids don’t like going to the gym, making it difficult for their parents to get the most of their membership (thus leading to cancellations). And second,

because of this disconnect to the club, those kids won’t want to join themselves once they turn the appropriate age. From very early on, they develop a dislike for going to the club, which can be catastrophic for your business.

Creating that space and bridging that gap between kids and the health club is Exergame Fitness’ expertise. Exergame Fitness is the worldwide leader in providing facilities like YMCAs and Health Clubs with the best interactive fitness equipment and turnkey room solutions designed to engage seven to fourteen year olds in physical activity by merging technology with gaming and adding a dose of fitness. This concept isn’t exactly new, but it has finally been perfected.

Ed Kasanders, founder and CEO of Exergame Fitness, recalls the early years within the industry, “At the time, there were only a few products to choose from so we had to be creative with our programming and product placement to create that engaging space and make the program sustainable.” In fact, the interactive gaming industry was riddled with poorly made products in its infancy, and Exergame Fitness made a commitment to only sell the top of the line products trusted to hold up in a club environment. “We’ve had our share of trial and error too,” says Kasanders, “but the industry and technology have improved immensely, and our commitment to excellence has not changed. There are now dozens of products to choose from. Our specialty is partnering with our customers



and designing a space that fits with their needs, goals, and budget while supporting them with the best products and programming so they can create that interactive fitness space for their members and families.”

Since the initial idea of exergaming in 2003, the company has developed what they call the **Exergame Youth X Room** for kids ages 7 – 14. The idea behind the turnkey room package is that it’s a stepping stone area for kids where they can immerse themselves in interactive fitness, acclimating to the club environment and developing the healthy routine of coming to the club because they WANT to - not because they have to.

The Youth X-Room is a complete system that comes with all the interactive fitness equipment, scoreboards, data tracking, room graphics, reward system and more. The equipment is heavy duty commercial grade and incorporates a major component of fitness such as working on speed, agility, quickness, reaction time, sensory perception, strength, cardio, balance, cognitive capability and more. The variety and game-play make it so engaging that often kids don’t even realize they are getting a working out. After playing a nine inning baseball game on the Exerbike – a commercial grade recumbent bike connected to an Xbox where one has to pedal for the controller to work – one kid realized he had biked seven miles and hadn’t known! His mother said: “I can’t even get him to ride his brand new bike down the driveway!”



As technology has grown in its capabilities, so have the types of products available for interactive fitness as well as the number of clubs installing Exergame rooms. Each year between fifteen and twenty thousand students come to the Chicago Bulls Sox Academy with their school to spend the day in the Exergame room. And Exergame Fitness products and rooms can be found at hundreds of locations throughout the

U.S. and internationally in JCCs, health clubs, and other institutions.

Adds Kasanders, “We’ve worked with some fantastic leaders in the fitness industry who are always on the cutting edge and looking to improve their member experiences including Midtown Athletic Club, UFC Gym, California Family Fitness, and Sport and Health..”

Because of Exergame Fitness’ longstanding history in the interactive fitness industry, they know which products are worth the investment and which are not. They get to see firsthand at the Chicago Bulls Sox Academy which products will stand up to the wear and tear and rough use of thousands of kids yearly. And they know how to create the perfect solution for your facility.

To learn more about Exergame Fitness and how they can help your facility build membership and retention now and for the future, contact them at: 1-877-668-4664, [info@exergamefitness.com](mailto:info@exergamefitness.com), or visit [www.exergamefitness.com](http://www.exergamefitness.com).



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# Rope Training With **ROPEFLEX**

The key to weight loss, coupled with a proper diet, is exercise. However apart from boredom there is an increased chance of a plateau effect if you stick to the same routine and the same old mundane machinery. Fortunately adding non-conventional functional training to your daily fitness routine can seriously shock most of your muscle groups and make you feel more alive than ever.

Rope trainers like ROPEFLEX engage all muscles in your body while providing the benefits of aerobic and isokinetic exercises. This activates your entire powerhouse and offers a potent cardio + resistance workout duo. Rope training equipment such as ROPEFLEX is based on simple and functional principles, using the laws of physics to allow you to get the same advantage and feel of rope climbing while virtually eliminating all injury risk.

ROPEFLEX, a California based company, offers a full line of rope trainers all made in the USA and built to the highest quality, commercial grade standards. From basic single station units to dual-position horizontal/vertical pullers and sophisticated trainers with our patented "HiperVision" computerized trainer programs we've got the products you need for today's fast-paced fitness environment.

Since 2008 ROPEFLEX, a HIPEQ company, has been designing and manufacturing high quality, innovative full commercial fitness equipment which is effective, reliable and user friendly. Let's face it, rope training is a grueling and challenging workout. It's going to be hard work and if it isn't you just have to increase the number of reps and/or resistance level. Rope pulling essentially

works even the smallest muscles in your body allowing new muscle fibers to be generated while reducing your fat percentage. Rope pulling is also an aerobic workout so you'll be burning more calories.

## **Powerful Resistance-Training**

Only ROPEFLEX machines add progressive resistance to your routines which not only allows you to conserve muscle mass but build more muscle and strength while burning body fat. The faster you pull the harder the resistance. No expensive mechanical or electrical parts which, can break down... just add muscle!

## **High Intensity Interval-Training**

Rope training is challenging, effective, and mimics natural body motion. Therefore, you can easily combine it with other intense exercises or just mix up a variety of rope training workouts with short breaks in between to create a power-packed HIIT workout or the new HIRT (High Intensity Resistance Training).

The ROPEFLEX RX2100 OX2 easily attaches to existing crossfit rig/power rack framing and adds yet another versatile workout station with minimal

cost. The rack-mountable design can turn any tired old power-rack into a cutting edge, brand new piece of equipment. The OX2 is also compatible with Power and Bag racks. Soft-braided rope for easy and comfortable grip and with our Progressive Resistance users will constantly be challenged. The RX2100 is also available in a water-resistant outdoor version (OX20).



## **Functional Strength Training**

Functional strength is the ability to run your load-joints (shoulders, hips, knees, and ankles) through a full range of motion without pain, stiffness, or restriction. This is also known as load-joint articulation. Every movement you make originates from the core. Therefore, working your core is critical for not only that 6-pack, but also for adequate core stability. Rope training works your entire core, which includes your abs, your transverse abdominis and your lower back. Rope training is an effective and practical workout which means you gain the strength required to perform real-life functions such as lifting, pulling, pushing and grasping.

With the ROPEFLEX RX2300 IBEX



**The ROPEFLEX  
RX2300 IBEX**



**RX2500 shown with optional  
HiperVision system**

trainer you get the best of both worlds. Its unique dual position horizontal and vertical rope trainer is not only compact but with two extended cushioned seats and back supports the user can work different muscle groups adding additional variety to the workout. Progressive resistance challenges the user at any fitness level and its smooth operation and maintenance-free engineering allows you to focus on your training goals! With a digital LCD display (time, distance and speed readouts) you can monitor and record your progress. Unparalleled workout variety – in one compact and versatile machine!

The ROPEFLEX RX2500 ORYX is our flagship model and is a full size commercial vertical rope climber complete with secondary pulleys for additional horizontal and bottom pulls. The cushioned seat can be used for sitting or removed for standing rope pulls and if desired can also be removed to accommodate wheelchairs

(ADA compliant). Safe and effective rope pulling is now available to athletes, students, fitness enthusiasts and even for injury/rehabilitation purposes at an affordable cost! Perfect for CrossFit gyms, health clubs, schools/universities and police/fire centers. And, with continuously adjusting progressive resistance, your workouts will continue to challenge you for years to come.

Upgrade with our optional HiperVision virtual training technology and put excitement back into your workouts. Real-time interactive visual display for training and motivation, goal setting for time or distance and the ability to interact with other racers in our HiperConnect Competition network mode.

### **The Safer Alternative**

Rope pulling is a challenging, effective and safe way to enhance the daily workout routine. In rope training with a pulling machine like the ROPEFLEX all force is applied to your muscular system, which means minimal stress is applied to the joints. This makes rope training not only effective but also safer. When you can't go on for much longer, all you need it to do is just drop the ropes. You won't

overwork your muscles and won't suffer from any severe pain.

For club operators rope trainers can become additional workout station as either a standalone unit or as a simple addition to existing weight training apparatus such as power cages. For the individual exerciser rope pulling helps in adding variety to their workouts. ROPEFLEX rope trainers with progressive resistance will not only strengthen the core but will build muscle and burn calories. Rope pulling should be a part of every workout!

*For more information about Rope Pulling and ROPEFLEX full commercial rope training equipment please check us out at [www.ropeflex.com](http://www.ropeflex.com), email us at [info@hipeq.com](mailto:info@hipeq.com) or call us at 1-650-549-5888 ext. 1.*

A woman with blonde hair, wearing a white collared shirt, a grey blazer, and a grey tie, is lifting a dumbbell. She is surrounded by splatters of brown and white paint. The background is dark with a faint grid pattern.

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# New Innovations From StairMaster And Schwinn

“New Innovation, More Perspiration” is a fitting description for what’s going on at StairMaster, home of iconic fitness brands StairMaster®, Schwinn’s indoor cycling bikes and – since July of last year – Nautilus® commercial strength equipment.

## STAIRMASTER CARDIO AND TECHNOLOGY-RICH DISPLAYS MAKE THEIR DEBUT



StairMaster debuted the first of their new cardio products at IHRSA 2015. The new line will replace the cardio line marketed previously under the Nautilus brand. In addition to a treadmill, elliptical, upright and recumbent bike, StairMaster showcased the latest updates to Gauntlet® and enhancements to Black Beauty, the TreadClimber® 5.

Each of these products is mated to a new generation of consoles. Three lines of consoles – a 15” touchscreen version with embedded television, a 10” touchscreen, and a large, user-friendly LCD display will be available. The entire line carries the signature hammertone black finish that was introduced with Black Beauty, the TreadClimber®5 from StairMaster last year.

Dustin Grosz, President of Core Health & Fitness, the parent to StairMaster said, “Our guiding design principle with these consoles is to create a technology platform that is open and lets clubs choose the mix of features and functionality from the leading technology developers and innovators.” “Asset management, entertainment options like streaming from personal devices and IPTV, member data capture for workout feedback, progress tracking and motivation are evolving and advancing rapidly. Our open and modular approach lets clubs add in these management capabilities and member experiences at their own pace”, Grosz added.

## THE WORLD’S TOUGHEST OBSTACLE RACE MEETS THE TOUGHEST WORKOUT IN THE GYM

StairMaster is bringing more news to the cardio market through its partnership with Spartan Race®, the global leader in obstacle racing. The two companies have developed an integrated Spartan Race Training Program for StairMaster’s Gauntlet™ StepMill®. The Spartan training programs are integrated with the machine’s console and provide users with custom training programs designed to test their determination, grit and stamina required for Spartan Races. Users will tackle similar elevation, distance and heart rate levels experienced during an actual Spartan Race.

“Linking these two brands is a natural fit – creating a new workout experience and providing health clubs with an exciting training tool that is connected to one of the fastest-growing lifestyle sports in the world. The Spartan Training Edition Gauntlet will let clubs position their services in a whole new way”, said Merrill Richmond, Vice President of Marketing.



**Over 1 million people participate in Spartan Races**

## MORE THAN A GREAT BIKE FROM SCHWINN: EXPERTISE.

Schwinn's indoor cycling bikes are at the center of a growing universe of products, experiences and instructor education that is keeping this brand at the forefront of the hottest trends in the segment.

Schwinn indoor cycling broke new ground with the introduction of its Carbon Blue drive system in 2014. For a brand founded in 1895 that incorporated a chain drive since its beginning, the shift to Carbon Blue was radical but the club and boutique studio market has embraced it.

Unlike a traditional bike chain, Carbon Blue is an engineered belt with a profile shaped like teeth. The shape gives the rider a real road sensation. The belt is also incredibly durable and low maintenance. Carbon Blue is available now on Schwinn's Authentic Cycling lines of bikes – the AC Performance Plus and the AC Sport.

In addition to this unique drive train, both of these bikes incorporate maintenance free magnetic brakes and feature the authentic bike fit and feel that Schwinn is known for.

Enhancements to Schwinn's Echelon line of console's power measurement system are another example of Schwinn leading the category. "Measurement is motivation" says Travis Vaughan, Director of Product Management. "We added power measurement (Watts) to the time-tested metrics of distance, heart rate and calories on our first console in 2009. With this new generation of Echelon, our fourth, we've made the console display easier to read, easier to track the metrics you care about and easier to teach with" Vaughan added.

In years past, riders used metrics to track their own performance and improvement. Now, through an ANT+ communications link, Schwinn is working with the top group display product developers around the world to take the class experience in new directions. "From "leaderboards" to encourage individual achievement to team-oriented, videogame-like experiences that build community and interaction in the group cycling studio, we're seeing an entirely new level of enthusiasm and business building going on in the indoor cycling space", Vaughan added. "It's more

than New York, London, and Hong Kong...Operators from São Paulo, Brazil to Salt Lake City, Utah are linking our bikes and consoles with these group display systems and creating amazing customer experiences."

Schwinn's commitment to continually improving the instructor experience will advance in 2015 building on the foundation set in 2014. One example is Schwinn's mobile app, the Class Tamer™, which helps instructors organize and energize their class. "Class Tamer gives instructors an easy to read app that shows what to do, what to say and what to play", Richmond said. The app won an Outstanding Achievement Award at the Interactive Media Awards™ in December 2014.

Class Tamer is available for download at the iTunes store.



**Schwinn's Class Tamer® is a music player designed to excel in the indoor cycling environment. Large swipe controls replace small buttons and instructors also can take advantage of unique features like integrated cueing notes, pitch control, and sound effects.**

For more information about these products and other developments from StairMaster, Nautilus, Schwinn, Star Trac® or Spinning®, call us at 888.678.2476, e-mail [sales@stairmaster.com](mailto:sales@stairmaster.com), or visit [www.stairmaster.com](http://www.stairmaster.com).

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# Get Pumped with Pete: How to Get Members to Use Your Facility's Full Range of Strength Training Equipment

By Pete Borchert, Senior Product Manager at Precor

Watching the activities of a strength room over the course of a day, it might look like certain pieces of equipment were surrounded by an invisible force field that keeps most exercisers out. Premium fitness equipment provider Precor is changing that by creating strength equipment that attracts exercisers of all fitness levels and keeps them coming back for more.

A common question we get at Precor goes something like this: "We offer a full range of strength training equipment, but how can I get more members to use it regularly?" Fortunately there's a simple answer that's been proven by experience. Just eliminate the common barriers preventing your exercisers from using the equipment.

Start by educating members about the tremendous value that strength training holds for every type of exerciser; young, old, new, experienced, male or female. It's a common misconception that strength equipment is just for men or the body-

building crowd. But strength should be part of nearly every exerciser's routine. Improved muscle strength helps protect joints from injury, increases metabolic function to keep weight off, protects bone mass and much more.

Simply seeing other people like themselves using a particular piece of equipment can often motivate exercisers to check it out. So regular orientation sessions, contests and group classes can increase strength training equipment usage across all groups. As the number and mix of people seen using a strength room rises, operators can build demand for the equipment organically.



From extensive interviews with exercisers over the years, we know that strength equipment can look scary to the uninitiated. The sheer size of the equipment – not to mention the associated heavy plates – often make exercisers think they need to be really strong before they can use it. But that's just not the case. While beginners might want to start with selectorized strength equipment, as they gain better control and their strength increases, plate-loaded equipment provides an important path to reaching new goals in their fitness journey.

Even when exercisers decide to try plate-loaded equipment, it can be frustrating for them to figure out how to get started. They often have the most basic of questions. Which way do I face? Is this the correct range of motion? How much weight should I load? This unfamiliarity can lead exercisers to worry about looking silly – or worse, getting hurt. That's why orientations and group classes are so important.

From an equipment perspective, Precor is working to make strength training more approachable to everyone who walks into a club. Everything from basic form, to color schemes, to usage cues are designed to be more welcoming and intuitive. Their natural feel and ability to grow with the exerciser's increasing strength and proficiency encourage regular use. By pairing education with user-friendly equipment from Precor, operators can encourage exercisers of all kinds to make strength a part of their regular routine.

The Discovery™ Series Plate Loaded Line combines all of the functional performance elements demanded from a strength line with the design and attention to detail that is the hallmark of Precor premium quality. The result is an exceptional experience for everyone from the first-time user to the seasoned athlete.

One prime example is the just-launched Precor Smith Machine. Its form is

more welcoming without compromising performance. The large and inviting instructional placards and simple, sleek design all speak to the intentional approachability of the Discovery Series. Greater head clearance provides the optimal walk through design.

The ergonomically precise 11-degree angle ensures the Smith bar glide path optimizes the natural movement of the human body. Safety stops are easy for exercisers to find and adjust.

The innovative system is engineered to provide the high-end capacity of conventional machines at a much lower starting weight. At 25 pounds, the Smith bar assembly is one of the lightest in the industry. The incredibly smooth, solid bar feels natural, providing a comfortable starting point for any exerciser. The larger bar diameter disperses weight more evenly across the bar while providing the weight capacity demanded by heavy lifters.

For operators concerned about durability, the new Precor Smith Machine is engineered to withstand the toughest commercial fitness environments, with 20 percent fewer high-wear parts.

Operators that choose Precor can further promote strength training, educate their members and drive usage of strength equipment through the Precor Coaching Center found at [Precor.com](http://Precor.com). With training tips and workouts for exercisers and personal trainers, the Precor Coaching Center is the perfect complement to the Discovery Series.



For more information call  
1 (800) 786-8404 or visit  
[www.precor.com](http://www.precor.com).

*Pete Borchert, known for his extensive knowledge of all things strength at Precor, would love to hear from you. Operators are invited to send strength related questions to [mediarelations@precor.com](mailto:mediarelations@precor.com). Your question may be selected for an upcoming Get Pumped with Pete column.*

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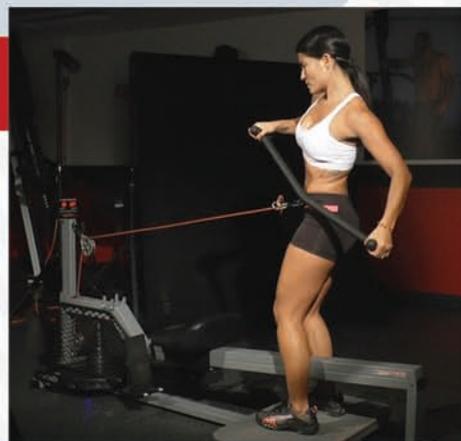


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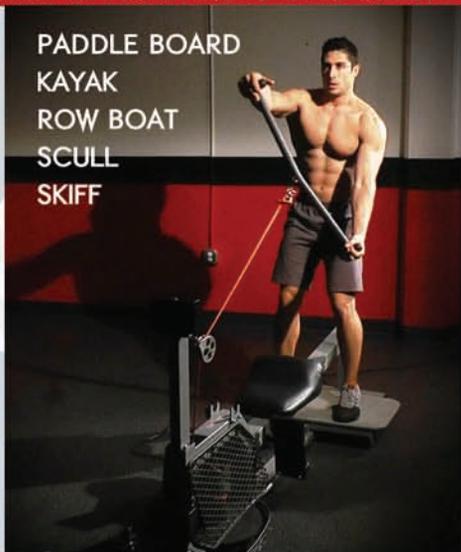
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# What Your Health Club May be Missing

Your health club probably has a Cardio area for treadmills and elliptical machines, and a resistance training area with free weights and Strength training equipment. Your club might also have areas for group classes, and yoga and functional training.

These areas are the common backbone to any successful health club, but there is another area that club members and prospects would like to see: a dedicated core training area.

Every person - members and future members - want to improve their midsection, and they all desire a lean, defined waistline. So it only makes sense to provide a separate area of your club that is focused on the core. Several successful Club chains have already figured this out and are now dedicating space specifically for core training. It is proving to be smart business because members love to work their abs.

## Still not convinced? Here are the Top 10 Reasons Why Your Club Needs a Dedicated Core Training Area:

**1** Everyone Wants Great-Looking Abs  
Men want to get rid of the love handles and beer belly and to develop a lean six-pack. Women want a flat tummy and a slender waistline. Installing a dedicated Core training area in your Club will instantly appeal to your members' desire to have great-looking abs.

**2** Surveys Show that Health Club Members Love Ab Machines  
Recent IHRSA surveys rank Ab machines as a top activity that your members value the most in their Health Club, right up there with treadmills, elliptical machines and free weights. The American College of Sports Medicine also released its top trends for 2015, and once again Core training is on the list.

**3** Abs Sell  
The next time you are in the supermarket, check out the headlines on the covers of popular magazines. Many of them feature articles about getting a trimmer waistline, such as:

- How to Get Flat Abs Fast
- Blast Belly Fat
- Two Weeks to a Tighter Tummy
- Six Pack Secrets

The magazines use Abs and belly headlines because they help sell Millions of copies. People want great-looking abs, so marketers use abs to sell. With a dedicated ab training area, your Club can do the same thing.

**4** Dedicated Ab Training Areas are Becoming Popular at Successful Clubs  
Ab training areas are becoming mainstream in several club chains across the country. Both Planet Fitness and Retro Fitness offer a special area or circuit dedicated solely to ab training, and the trend continues to grow. More clubs are jumping on board everyday because members love having a dedicated zone for core training.

**5** Training Variety is Key  
There are many ways to train the abs and, like any muscle group, the key to improvement is Variety in Training. Installing a dedicated ab circuit area provides your members with a place to work their abs many different ways with different types of machines.

**6** Members Want to see Results  
Before you hire another salesperson or run more generic ads with price discounts in the hope of increasing sales, you should first consider this: People care about seeing results, and they love to work on their abs. Appeal directly to the needs and desires of your members by installing a dedicated ab training area and showing how to get great-looking abs.

**7** You can offer Short-term Ab-focused training programs  
Increase your membership and generate more revenue from existing members by offering short-term ab-focused programs in conjunction with a dedicated core training area. This will enable you to deliver to people what they really want: great-looking abs and a slender waistline. By offering short-term ab-focused programs to prospects without the long-term membership commitment, you will attract people who probably never would have stopped by your club. These programs also work for your members who need a little challenge to get them back on track. Just make sure your member price is less than the nonmember price.

**8** Ab Machines are “Silent Salesmen” that help Close Deals  
A dedicated Ab training area with innovative Ab machines can become your “silent salesmen” to help new prospects get excited about joining your Club. Think about the key decision moment for new prospects – the Club Tour. People understand the Cardio area is for your heart, the Strength area is for your muscles, and there are rooms for fitness classes such as Spinning, Zumba or Yoga. Most clubs have all of these things. Now, imagine showing them an area in your Club dedicated to core training. What better way to complete your Club Tour right before you begin reviewing various membership options.

**9** A Thin Waistline Means a Healthy Heart  
A slim, strong waistline is not just about looking sexy. Many studies show that a healthy waistline also is an indication of heart health. In other words, where fat is located on your body matters when it comes to health risks. Researchers have found that people who have high amounts of fat in their abdomens compared to other parts of the body have higher risks of cancer and heart disease. The bottom line: You are not just selling vanity when you are selling abs—you also are selling good heart health.

**10** Ab-Focused Marketing Works  
When you focus your marketing message on what people want, you can dramatically increase the number of sales you make. That means, focusing your Health Club marketing on showing your members how they can achieve a lean, sexy waistline with a dedicated ab training area in your Club.

---

### Add a Core Strength Zone to your Club – Give Your Members a 4 Pack, 6 Pack or 8 Pack

The Abs Company recognized this growing trend in Core Strength Training and has designed several turnkey packages of Core Training equipment. The Abs Company assists Health Clubs in laying out special dedicated “core strength zones” to fit into the existing environment of your Club. The Abs Company manufactures 8 different machines that work your Abs at every angle, so you can now provide your members with a complete Core Strength Zone filled with effective ab training equipment. The Abs Company offers several packages for every budget, including 4 pack, 6 pack or 8 pack.



Target Abs

The Ab Coaster FT

In addition to the well-known Ab Coaster, Ab Solo and Abs Bench brands, The Abs Company is launching several new Ab products in 2015, such as Target Abs and The Ab Coaster FT.

For more information about planning a Core Strength Zone for your Club and for all of our product information, please visit [www.TheAbsCompany.com](http://www.TheAbsCompany.com) or contact us toll free at 866-219-5335 or via email at [info@TheAbsCompany.com](mailto:info@TheAbsCompany.com).

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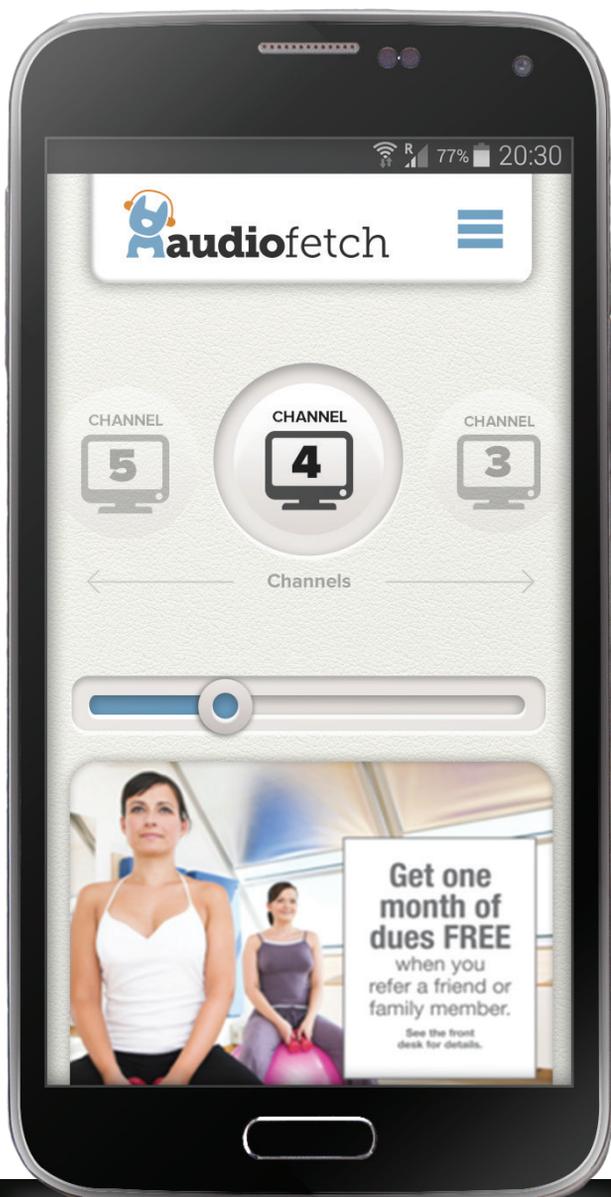
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# Staying Fit and Connected

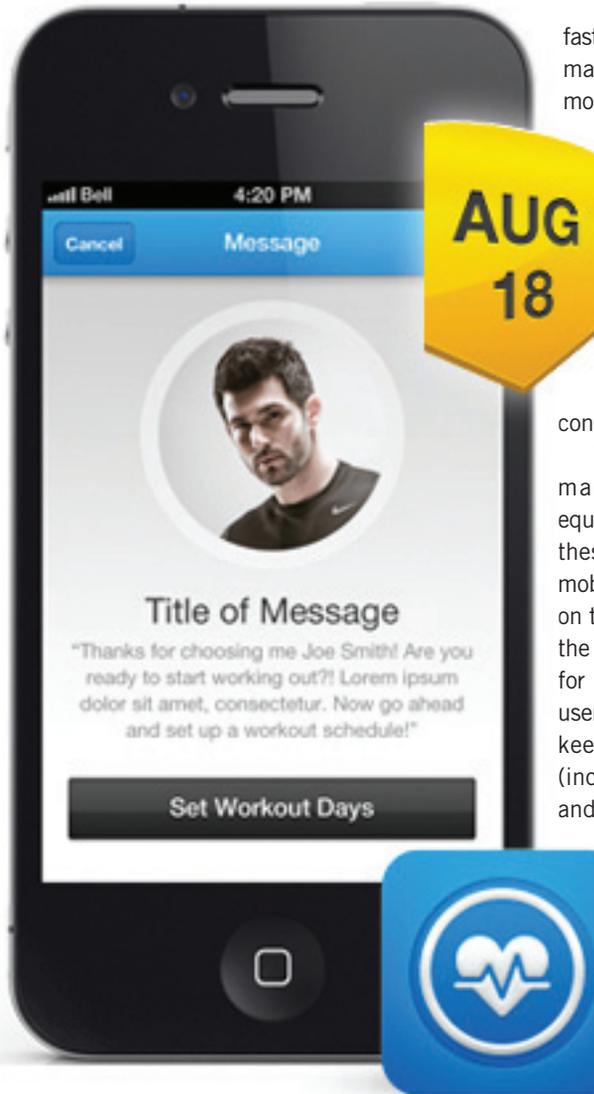
**According to studies and statistics on the usage of smartphones in the United States, it is estimated that there will be more than 196 million smartphone users in the U.S. by the year 2016. This is not surprising since you can look around anywhere and see people on their phone at any given time.**

In fact, what was once considered a “secondary device,” is quickly becoming a primary source for information and entertainment. According to digital analytics firm Flurry, people with access to a smartphone or tablet now spend an average of 2 hours and 57 minutes on them each day, putting phones ahead of televisions. Television, on average, gets about 2 hours and 48 minutes of attention each day, according to the Bureau of Labor Statistics.

With these statistics in mind, it is clear that smartphones are being used everywhere we go, even the health club. The smartphone has quickly become a personal trainer, a coach and an entertainment portal for those working out.

Smartphones are used to keep people's lives organized, and keep them connected socially to those around them. When it comes to our health and fitness, one of the biggest obstacles is often finding and keeping the necessary motivation to stick to a workout schedule. Many have turned to utilizing online and mobile fitness logs to increase their motivation and to keep them on track.

According to another report from Flurry Analytics, health and fitness apps grew at a



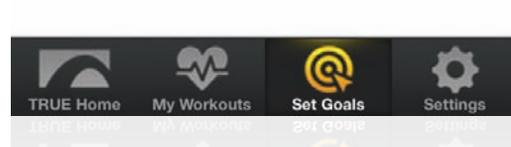
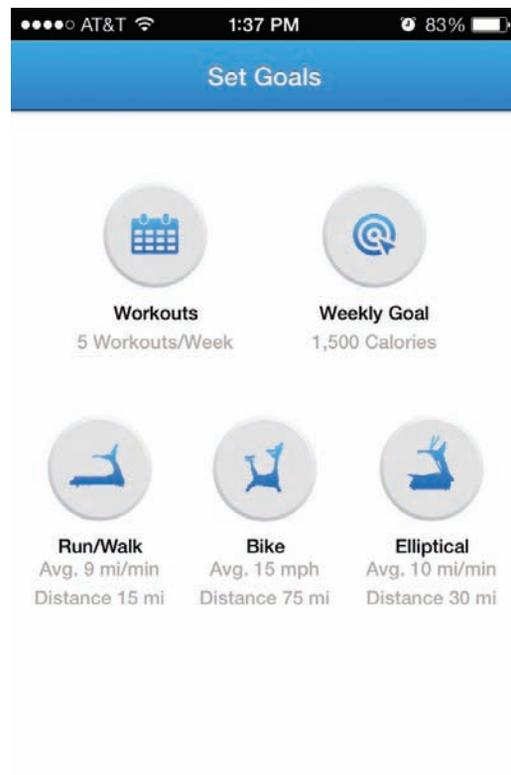
faster rate in 2014 than the overall app market. Flurry Analytics looked at more than 6,800 apps in the category and found that usage was up over sixty percent in the health and fitness app world, compared to just thirty-three percent for the entire app market.

This data really shouldn't come as a surprise if you look at the fitness wearables on the market that are designed to connect with a mobile app.

TRUE Fitness, a leading manufacturer of cardio fitness equipment since 1981, has recognized these trends and is offering users a mobile experience to help keep them on track with their fitness goals. With the TRUE Fitness app, available free for both Apple and Android devices, users can set fitness goals each week, keep track of all of their workouts (including statistics: distance, time, and calories), and receive that extra little bit of encouragement from a motivational coach. The TRUE Fitness app offers a visual representation of the user's progress, as well as an overall total of how much you have accomplished toward each of your fitness goals.

And, the app makes it easy to make sure you are keeping track of all of this information. With TRUE Fitness equipment, users can sync their mobile app via Bluetooth on many of TRUE's consoles, and the workout summary data is automatically downloaded into the user's mobile app. If the user is on a piece of equipment that does not have Bluetooth capability, they can download their workout summary onto a USB stick from the machine, and then load it in on their computer when they get home, through the online portal available through TRUE Fitness' website. Or, the user can also manually enter the data into





their phone from the information displayed on the workout summary screen. This option gives users the ability to track all activity, even those workouts they complete outdoors, to give them a full picture of their fitness activity.

In addition to this app accurately logging each workout effortlessly, it provides weekly status updates of your workouts/progress, daily message reminders, and missed workout reminders. This encourages you to stay right on track with all of your fitness goals.

The TRUE Fitness app isn't the only way that TRUE Fitness is taking advantage of the benefits that Bluetooth technology has to offer. Bluetooth offers a way for people to easily connect various devices on the go. Being on a piece of TRUE cardio equipment is no different.

With TRUE's Transcend and Escalate console series, in addition to being able to save your workout data via Bluetooth, users can connect Bluetooth headphones, as well

as Bluetooth heart rate monitors, to make their workout more effective and wire-free.

TRUE was a pioneer in the fitness industry by putting focus on manufacturing treadmills that offer integrated Heart Rate Monitoring and custom Heart Rate Control programs. TRUE Heart Rate Control programs keep the user within two to three beats of their target heart rate the entire workout. The TRUE HRC programs adjust both speed and grade to keep the user at their desired target heart rate. This provides an optimal workout whether the user wants to walk, jog or run, or no matter what their fitness level is. They will be able to achieve an accurate, consistent heart rate workout.

TRUE's Heart Rate Control workouts also let the user customize their workout, by deciding what their maximum speed and maximum elevation will be and how long they want their work out to be. This is all made easier with Bluetooth technology.

So, get connected to your fitness routine and stay on track with TRUE.

#### About TRUE Fitness

This year marks thirty-four years in the industry for TRUE Fitness, a leading manufacturer of premium cardio fitness products, including treadmills, elliptical cross-trainers and bikes. Dedicated to outstanding quality and superior design, the company and its fitness equipment are consistently ranked among the top in the industry. TRUE Fitness is based in St. Louis, Missouri and has a network of dealers throughout the country and around the globe. Additional information about the company's products and services can be found at [www.truefitness.com](http://www.truefitness.com). For more information on the TRUE Fitness mobile app mentioned in this article, visit <http://myfitness.truefitness.com/> or call 1-800-426-6570.

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*HEX beds can be customized*

# Your Next Great Cardio Product

Quick! Name the hot new (as in ALL NEW) cardio fitness modality, and company, that in a few short years has found its way into over a thousand facilities, including the training facilities of a VERY recent Super Bowl champion, 2 World Series champions, top echelon universities such as Penn State, and been named a Preferred Vendor for both the largest health club chain in the US as well as the JCC Association of North America.

Tick, tock ... Give up yet?

The company is Helix and the modality is Lateral Training – Helix Lateral Trainers to be exact, the world's first lateral trainer.

Of course, if one of the behemoths of the fitness industry had created the concept of Lateral Trainers, everyone would know about it by now. Instead, Helix, a scrappy independent supplier from Boston, has created the industry's first truly "better mousetrap" since the advent of the elliptical 2 decades ago.

And, when you think about it, to go in a few short years from start up to being in facilities as diverse as world champion sports teams, elite universities, and the nation's largest club chain, all with no pre-existing connections to them and with minimal marketing budgets, truly is a testament to just how good the product is.

So, why is Helix Lateral Training a "better mousetrap" and why should you care?

Ah, so many ways to answer and so little space in which to do so!

Let's start with the technical aspect of Helix Lateral Training, and then see how those benefits, along with several others, work to make Helix so popular in multiple applications.

Technically, all traditional cardio products are single plane (sagittal) movements. Doesn't matter if you're talking treads, ellipticals, bikes, etc., they are all sagittal plane movements.

The patented, 360 degree movement of Helix is a multi-plane movement. Which means several things. First, Helix training creates radically more muscle activation, up to 44% more, in several diverse muscle groups including core, glutes, and inner/outer thigh (yes, you can engage and activate your core while Helix training!). So this is the first "macro" benefit – dramatically greater muscle activation in a multi-plane movement.

When you create this much more muscle activation in that many muscle groups you get REAL results, FAST, which is something that users in just about ANY facility will appreciate.



**The patented, 360 degree lateral motion of the Helix is all-new to cardio fitness and creates a multi-plane exercise and much greater muscle activation.**

When you drill down further and look at specific facility types, Helix has something for everyone.

Health clubs and universities appreciate the small footprint (smaller than an upright bike). They appreciate that it is intuitive and easy to use. It's fun (look at all the smiles on the faces of members in the EB Fitness photo). It's no-impact and easy on joints, so it can be enjoyed by a wide range of ages. It's self-generating (green). And, because the workout is intense, members/users cycle on and off much faster than they do on treadmills and ellipticals. And, Helix costs a fraction on what a commercial treadmill or elliptical does. Finally, Helix products are very simple mechanically, with very little in the way of maintenance and potential repair costs, so the long term cost of ownership is very low.

Athletic trainers and strength/conditioning coaches love the Helix for different reasons. First, it trains muscle groups you literally can not train with other cardio products (core, glutes, inner/outer thighs). In these settings, Helix training can do things as diverse as a) mobilize and strengthen the low back, b) strengthen the core, glutes, and pelvic girdle, which can help generate more power for multiple sports applications, and c) stabilize the knee and reduce the chance of groin pulls (a HUGE issue in most sports).



**“Their smiling faces say it all – members at EB Fitness love Helix training!”**



**Members at this Gold's Gym in Lakeland, FL have made Helix Lateral Trainers the most popular of the “new” style cardio products.**

Helix truly does have something for everyone. Here are a few comments from satisfied Helix customers across a broad spectrum of facility types:

**General Population Health Clubs**

“When we were sourcing equipment for my new club, I heard about Helix from a friend who has been in the fitness industry for decades. He indicated that the Helix was a very unique piece that has been very popular at every facility that has purchased them. On his advice I essentially took a leap of faith and brought in 5 Helixes to my new club. Thankfully, within days of receiving the Helixes, they became our most popular cardio piece, and they remain our most popular cardio product to this day! I think ANY club that is interested in having leading-edge products AND satisfied members should have Helix. Except my competitors, of course! We always showcase Helix on our sales tours and every prospect that tries it, loves it!”

- Dr. John Fortuna, President, EB Fitness, Cleveland, OH

**Women's Clubs**

“The Helix has been a great asset to our gym. Women especially love the challenge the Helix offers for the lower body, while still getting a great cardio workout!”

- Melissa Moorman, Owner, Women's Fitness Company, Medford, OR

**YMCA's**

“I'd say it's one of our top machines in terms of popularity with the members. The Helix is popular with all types of members – every age group and every level of athleticism. And, it's a machine that people aren't used to seeing in other gyms, so it has that exotic appeal that helps attract potential new members.”

- Austin Scisciani, Licking County YMCA, Newark, OH

**Universities**

**HELIX FITS IN WELL WITH US**

“Our experience has been that it's really popular. People like working the lower body muscles with the Helix side-to-side range of motion, and also folks interested in an overall-body workout really appreciate it. Plus I think people like the cardio intensity because they're not used to working those muscles.

We pride ourselves on having different equipment in here that members might not see in other places, so it fits in well with us. It's part of the total package that we offer that's unique, and it's the only thing we have that works that muscle group so it's definitely something we show people.”

- Lisa Schuetz, University of Wisconsin, Eau Claire

**Corporate Fitness**

“From my perspective, I really like the Helix because it's innovative and that's what we're always looking for – how do we stay ahead of the fitness center market and remain attractive to employees. I try to keep our clubs unique & creative and Helix helps us achieve that objective.”

- Darleen Keegan, eBay Corporate Health Clubs, California, Utah, Arizona

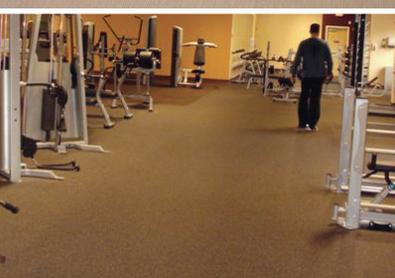
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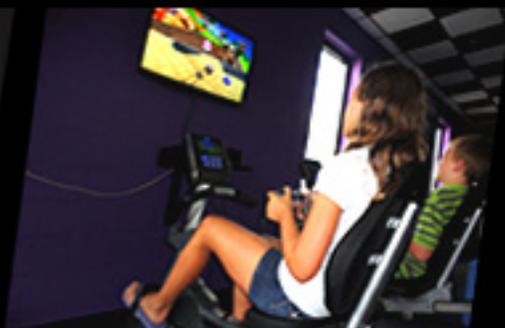
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# You Can't Train for a 5k and Expect to Run a Marathon

**When running a marathon, there is nothing worse than realizing that you are not actually prepared to run a marathon. Did I train enough? Do I even like running? For runners and businesses alike, it is important to understand who you are, what you would like to accomplish, and what it will take to get you there.**



## Who am I?

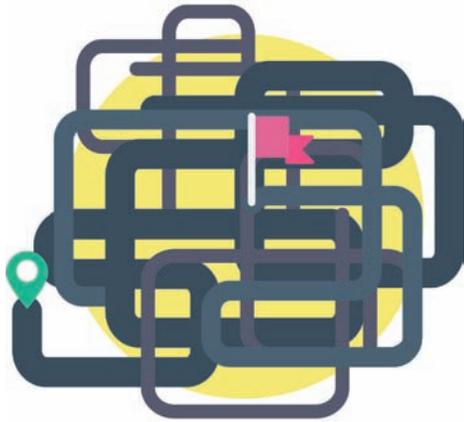
“Who am I” is a question that some people, as well as companies can spend a lifetime trying to figure out. When it comes down to it, every person’s answer to that age-old question is going to be inherently different. For example, a local businesswoman – who owns a personal training studio employing 5 trainers – may determine that her business is ready to expand to 3-4 locations within the next 6 months. Although not impossible, with the studio’s limited staff and resources this perception may prove to be a tad unrealistic. Also, let’s say a 6’5 325 lb. football player has determined that he is going to become a marathon runner, and after only 2 weeks of training he believes he is ready to run. Like the businesswoman, our football player – whose goal may

be technically possible – may have an unrealistic perception of himself. Having an honest conversation with oneself is a vital first step to determining and setting realistic expectations. After conducting an honest “self-audit”, our businesswoman may come to the realization that her business is ready to expand; but maybe to just one additional location over the next six months. While our football player may determine that he is a marathon runner, but realizes he won’t be ready to run for another 4 months.



## What do I want?

Knowing exactly what you or your company wants is rare. Knowing what you want and not having it change, is near impossible. So how do we avoid making it ten feet from the finish line only to find out we were meant for something else? Paying special attention to the “what do I want” question is vital in determining an end goal. As a business owner looking to expand – whether into different markets or locations – you may come to realize that you’re actually not ready to expand or venture into different markets. After starting to train, a marathon runner may come to the realization that they never wanted to run marathons; they wanted to just look like they ran marathons. Truly knowing your goals prior to any significant time investment will avoid the hassle of such setbacks. With a starting point determined and an end goal in mind, there is a lot of room in the middle – but how do we connect the dots?



### What will it take to meet my goal?

People are naturally prone to thinking all they need is financial backing and enough hours in the day to achieve a goal. These factors, although important, are not the be-all end-all to achieving success. Arguably, another important aspect is the sweat, tears, and total effort that goes into reaching a goal. A company looking to expand will have its best results with the right people in the right

places, and a clear vision and objective. The worst results will occur when people and companies begin to make assumptions. Assuming that missing one long training run won't effect overall preparedness for the main event; or assuming that expanding a business into a particular market is definitely what clients want – these types of assumptions can lead to marathoners only being able to run 5k's, and businesses not even being able to open their doors. Clearly defining what it will take to accomplish a goal will drastically increase the chance of success in your venture.

To some a new pair of running shoes is nothing more than a fashion statement. To others, a new set of sneakers defines who they are, who they want to be, and it serves as a gentle reminder of what it will take to get there.

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# Risk Management Challenges for the Changing Fitness Landscape

When I first started insuring health clubs in 1979, the fitness “model” of that time period was somewhat different than the typical health club that we see today. The footprint of a traditional club back then consisted of very little cardio, a lot of free weights, and wide variety of racquet sports. IHRSA used to be simply IRSA (International Racquet Sports Association). Squash, handball, racquetball and tennis were the main focus and the workout area was more of an afterthought.

Although there still are several “racquet” based clubs in the U.S., the real growth in our industry is now the low price point box gyms and functional fitness studios. From a claims

perspective the changing fitness model has had both a positive and negative effect on types of injuries we now see. In the old days, the serious injuries came from malfunctioning equipment and poor surfaces in wet areas. Swimming pool incidents were also a major source of liability issues. It's hard to find a new club today that would even consider putting in swimming pool, thank God. Today, fitness equipment is safer, easier to operate and easier to maintain. There are fewer exposed cams, belts, chains, and cables and so called “strength” equipment is slowly being replaced by functional training apparatus. All this translates into lower liability exposure from premises and equipment related injuries. That is the good news. As a result of these changes, most club owners have seen very little increase, if any, in the cost of their liability insurance over the past several years...but I think that is about to change.

With the advent and popularity of the “high intensity training” model, we are now seeing a spike from injuries sustained from exhaustion, dehydration and over training (pulled muscles, knee and ankle failure, etc). Just in the past year, nearly 50% of all



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incidents reported to our agency resulted from members who passed out, lost their balance, or simply lost control of their apparatus (kettlebell, Olympic bar, sledge hammer or tire to name a few). Members or "clients" are being pushed harder and faster than ever before. They are performing techniques that, in some cases, border on absurd and are often dangerous. A middle aged de-conditioned housewife should probably not be attempting an Olympic clean and jerk without extensive training in proper lifting technique. Members are also not being told the importance of properly hydrating and feeding their bodies prior to working out.

The personal training and small group training business has never been better. Personally, I know from my own experience, that I get a much better workout when in a group training environment. I would never push my body that hard if left to work out on my own. That being said, there have been many occasions when I felt like dropping from exhaustion trying to keep up. I realize that I am one of those middle aged out of shape insurance guys but can definitely see how someone could pass out especially if they haven't eaten anything or drank any water. High intensity training is here to stay and, for the most part it produces amazing results...but remember, it's all good until somebody loses it. Although these cases of members hurting themselves from over training rarely turn into a claim, the fact remains that the increase in frequency of these incidents is eventually going to result in an increase of injury severity. We all know that the gym doesn't necessarily have to be negligent to be drug into a lawsuit. We have

already seen cases where members have passed out and then fallen into a piece of equipment or even into another member resulting in serious injury. Plaintiff attorneys have no problem taking on a case alleging that the trainer was incompetent and should have known that their client had reached their maximum level of exhaustion. As more and more people seek the services of a personal or group trainer, the assumed level of professionalism is increased significantly. When you raise the bar of professionalism, you also raise the expectation of care and service. So when a member hurts themselves from the direction of a trainer, the liability shifts significantly from the individual to the trainer and the club.

Just as health club owners and trainers know that proper nutrition and hydration are key to proper exercise, some members often don't know. It's up to the trainer and group exercise instructor to continually preach the benefits of nutrition and drinking water before every workout. This will ultimately translate into fewer incidents and a nice side benefit will be an increase in sales of bottled water and shakes.



Ken Reinig is President of Reinig Insurance Solutions aka theinsuranceguy.com. For more information, call 1 (800) 668-2340.

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# Good Things Come To Those Who Do It Right

By Gary Hood, Global Fitness Association, LLC

The month is over, and you're tallying up your thoughts. And you're starting to smile. All month long, the indicators and reports looked a bit stronger than usual -- now, as the sales and commissions add up, your smile becomes a laugh, then whoop! It's the best month you've ever had.



But why? How? What did you do differently? What did you do better? What did you do right? If you knew the formula, you'd bottle it and. . . on second thought, you'd probably keep it to yourself! I wish I could tell you that I've discovered that sure-fire, never-miss prescription for guaranteeing better results on a regular basis, but I can't. But, of course, some days will always outshine others; some customers will always be more generous and kind than others. If there really were such a formula, the only thing it would guarantee is that everyone would be knocking at your door and asking how you do it.

However, I can tell you that in the course of compiling this article, I've spoken to many outstanding owners and fitness professionals who indeed do use conscious and unconscious "tricks of the trade" to boost their production and membership base. And why not? But when it's all said and done, it's about relationships.

Every individual interviewed for this article was at the top of their game -- whether or not they were making the fitness industry their career. And the element that proved their professionalism appeared early in each conversation:

"Make the customer as happy as possible, no matter what, whatever it takes." That's the way it was phrased by one young man, a personal trainer for seven years now working his way through business school (and already wondering if business will give him the same kick -- and the same monetary reward! -- as being a trainer gives him). But his "formula" was echoed practically verbatim by each of the others as the Number-One Fundamental for getting ahead and being successful.

Along the way, other, more specific ideas were proposed -- so read on. But keep in mind that first rule. It is the basis for everything else.

"The Importance of Being Earnest" That's the title of a play by Oscar Wilde, but it should be your philosophy when interacting and servicing customers. It pays off.

"People can sense insincerity in a second," says the same personal trainer who framed the Number-One Fundamental. "If you're insincere, they, the member, feel like they're putting you out, inconveniencing you by asking for the service they paid for. And that makes them feel uncomfortable. Uncomfortable people don't come back to ask for help -- especially if you're the one who's made them uncomfortable." And on top of that, they spread the word to family and friends.

Of course, good fitness professionals and trainers all have a bit of "actor" in them, but the trait is based on a genuine caring about people. "It's a people business, pure and simple," says a long-time manager who works at a small, popular fitness chain. "I bend over backwards to give them my best because I really do want them to enjoy themselves - that's what being a member of a fitness facility is all about!" I couldn't agree more.

So, what does a fitness facility do to ensure they have the very best possible chance for success? Be better than the competition by doing things right and understanding the relationship they have with their customers. Believe Me - It's that simple.

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Special thanks to Cate Sundling, Linda Hood, and Gary Gresham for contributing to this article. For more information about Global Fitness Association, contact Gary Hood at 775-298-1616 or email [gary@globalfitnessassociation.com](mailto:gary@globalfitnessassociation.com).



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