

Norm Cates'

CLUB INSIDER

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST

Steve Strickland and John Quattrocchi *Celebrating 25 Years at Workout Anytime!*



John Quattrocchi and Steve Strickland, Co-Founders of Workout Anytime



MAY 2024

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CLUB INSIDER

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST

Steve Strickland and John Quattrocchi Celebrating 25 Years at Workout Anytime!

By: Norm Cates

Long-time friends of mine, **Steve Strickland** and **John Quattrocchi**, Co-Founders of *Workout Anytime*, are two of the most experienced and talented people in the health and fitness club industry.

On the night of April 26th, Steve and John celebrated *Workout Anytime's 25th Anniversary*, hosting what turned out to be a truly spectacular celebration at the beautiful *Renaissance Atlanta Waverly Hotel & Convention Center* in the North Atlanta suburb of Alpharetta.

This was a very special and extremely well-done event, one of the finest I've ever attended in my 50 years of involvement in the health and fitness club industry. But, I would expect nothing less from these two industry veterans and their great company.

In their honor, you will find

this cover story to be both a *FUN* read and a very *INFORMATIVE* story, following up on a previous cover story we did on them in 2018 (you can view that in the *Club Insider Archives* at www.clubinsideronline.com/archives). I invite you to read on.

An Interview With Steve Strickland and John Quattrocchi, Co-Founders of Workout Anytime

Club Insider (C.I.) - Gentlemen, since we published our first cover story about *Workout Anytime* back in 2018, let's update some information with these questions: How many different individuals now own Workout Anytime Franchises? How many total Workout Anytime locations do those Franchisees currently own? How many, and in what States, are there Workout Anytime locations located?

(See *Workout Anytime* Page 12)



Steve Strickland, Norm Cates and John Quattrocchi

Crunch Fitness Appoints John Kersh as Managing Director of International Development

NEW YORK, N.Y. - Crunch Fitness, a leading high-value, low-price gym, announces the appointment of **John Kersh** as the company's *Managing Director of International Development*. The addition comes as Crunch Fitness emphasizes global expansion, and Kersh will be integral to opening more Crunch gyms across the globe.

Kersh brings over 25 years of experience in the fitness and franchising business and has previously held the *Chief International Development Officer* role at

Xponential Fitness. In this role, he was responsible for the global expansion of all Xponential Fitness brands like *Pure Barre*, *Club Pilates*, *CycleBar*, *StretchLab*, *Row House* and *Rumble*. Before Xponential, John held executive development roles for *Self-Esteem Brands*, franchisor of *Anytime Fitness*, and the *Health & Fitness Association* (formerly *IHRSA*), the health and fitness industry's trade association. At Crunch, Kersh will be responsible for the brand's international expansion strategy, identifying global growth franchise

partners, and ultimately, bringing Crunch's legendary brand experience to new markets worldwide.

"With John's exceptional background in the fitness industry, his addition to Crunch opens the door for even more opportunity when it comes to growing our brand on a global scale, which is something we are highly focused on," says **Jim Rowley**, *CEO of Crunch Worldwide*. "With a proven track record of great success, we're looking forward to seeing John set

(See *Crunch Fitness* Page 8)



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Norm's Notes

■Hello Everybody! This is your **Club Insider Founder and Tribal Leader Since 1993** checking in with our **365th** monthly edition of this **31+ year** running club business publication I refer to as: **A Labor of Love!** I'm very thankful that you've tuned in again for this iteration of **Norm's Notes**, as I proceed on my keyboard with my longtime habit of "Telling-It-Like-It-Is!" I'm really happy that you're reading this edition, and I want to **THANK YOU ALL** for sticking with us every month! As usual, we have a bunch of health and fitness club business news, so please read on!

■Is **AMERICA** a **GREAT COUNTRY**, or **WHAT!**? Hmm... hmm... hmm! And, as usual, let me start these **Norm's Notes** with my normal monthly salutation to you all: **GOD BLESS AMERICA** and **GOD BLESS YOU, YOUR FAMILY** and **YOUR BUSINESS!!!**

■On Saturday night, April 27th, my wife, **ILENA**, and I had the *pleasure* of attending *Workout Anytime's 25th Anniversary Banquet and Celebration!* Folks, in my 50+ years in our great industry I've been to a lot of special club business events, but I must say the *Workout Anytime*



Norm Cates

event that Saturday night was what I told my friends, **STEVE STRICKLAND** and **JOHN QUATTROCCHI**, *Workout Anytime's Founders*, 'in the **Top 5** of events I've ever had the **pleasure of attending!**'

Folks, in 1999, Steve and John co-founded *Workout Anytime, Inc.*, which opened its first facility in the Atlanta market. In 2004, they co-founded *Workout Anytime Franchising Systems, LLC.* and have been growing ever since! I want to say this now:



John Quattrocchi, Norm and Ilena Cates, and Steve Strickland

Good on you STEVE and JOHN! And, to you, my highly esteemed readers, I say, 'Folks, don't miss reading this month's cover story, honoring *Workout Anytime's 25th Anniversary*,' starting on **Page #3**.

■**Breaking News! ANTHONY GEISLER Resigns As CEO!** *Xponential Fitness, Inc.* (NYSE: XPOF) announces that **Anthony Geisler** has resigned as *Chief Executive* (See **Norm's Notes Page 7**)

About Club Insider

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST

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Thanks and Appreciation

At *Club Insider*, we are excited to be in our **31st Year** of this home-based health and fitness club trade publication! The thought that this publication was *founded to serve an industry I truly love*, and so that *I could become a Mister Mom for my son, Justin*, is still *intriguing and amazing* to us. So, I wish to extend my most sincere **Thanks and Appreciation** to everyone who has made this amazing 30+ year run possible.

Very sincere *Thanks and Appreciation* go to **Rick Caro**, the late **Dr. Gerry Faust** and the **Faust Executive Roundtable #1** for helping me decide in 1993 what my home-based business would be. *Thanks and Appreciation* to my long-time friends, **Ron Hudspeth** and **Cathy Miller**, formerly of **Atlanta's Hudspeth Report** for the tremendous assistance they provided. *Thanks and Appreciation* to all of the folks at **Walton Press** in Monroe, Georgia. They did an absolutely excellent job for us all these years and printed every one of our monthly printed editions! And, of course, *Thanks and Appreciation* to the **United States Postal Service** for sending those editions to our readers!

Now, as we have gone all digital, *Thanks and Appreciation* to all of our **READERS**. Sincere *Thanks and Appreciation* to our **Club Insider Advertisers**, past and present, for their kind and dedicated support of this publication. *Thanks and Appreciation* to all of our **Club Insider Contributing Authors**, past and present. *Thanks and Appreciation* to the **Health & Fitness Association** for all it does for all of us. And, sincere *Thanks and Appreciation* to my son, **Justin**, our *Publisher*, who is a truly great business partner. You name it and Justin does it each and every month!

Last, but surely not least, this writer who refused to fear failure when many told him he didn't have a chance of surviving the publishing business for even a year did survive. And, he would like to give his sincere *Thanks and Appreciation* to the power that made that survival happen: **God**.

Very sincerely, with love in my heart for you all,

Norm Cates, Jr.



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“Insider Speaks”

Bad Health Club Signs

By: Mike Manning

Recently, this sign (See **Photo on This Page**) caught my eye at a club and struck me as a combination of arrogant, paternalistic and lazy. Signing up and retaining members is the lifeblood of the business. Why would an operator be so cavalier about potentially running off members? Business must be very good indeed. Below are examples of how I imagine the club responding to member questions about this change.

Member: What if I don't have a mobile phone?

Club: You simply lose your membership.

Member: What happens if I still have a flip phone and cannot get the app?

Club: You simply lose your membership.

Member: What happens if my battery is dead?

Club: You simply lose your membership... until you can recharge.

Member: What happens if my phone breaks?

Club: You simply lose your membership... until you get a new phone.

Member: Why can't I check in with my phone number?

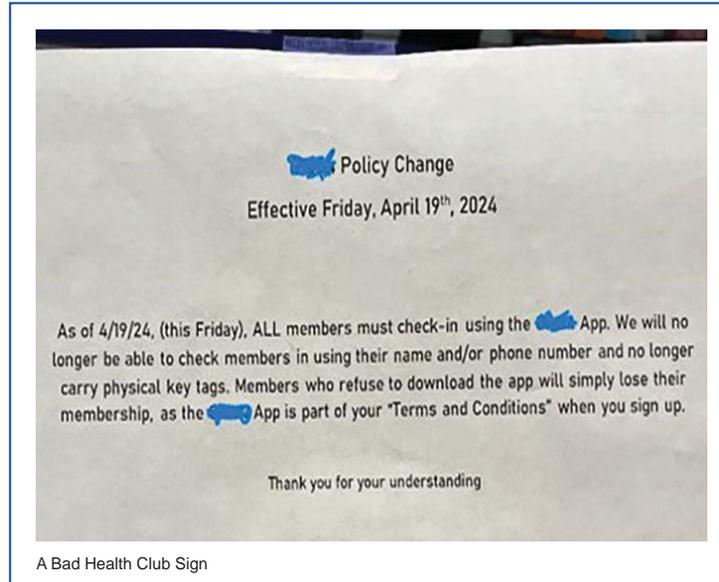
Club: The two or three people we usually have at the front desk are too busy to deal with the likes of you members.

Member: Why can't I use a key tag?

Club: Those things cost us 50 cents each. Come on, man.

As a practical matter, I dislike bringing my phone into the gym. I'm afraid I'll break it if it is in my pocket, and taking it in the sauna quickly drains the battery. For 35 years, I managed to walk into a club with nothing but my car keys and a towel. Checking in with my phone forces me to bring a bag and a lock for a locker, which is a hassle, but I can do it. If there is a comparable club within a mile that lets me use a key tag to check in instead of my phone, I'm choosing the other club over a club that makes me check in with my phone.

Whatever you think of the new technology, there was probably a better way to get the message across than the wording used in the sign above. My mental response to that sign was two words, the first word starting with “F” and the second word ending with “U.” Even if the change only impacts ten members who use the club, the sign basically invites them to go work out elsewhere. This isn't the worst sign I've seen in a club, but it's bottom 25th



percentile, and how we say things matters as much as what we say.

My suggested rewording of the sign above is, “We continually try to become more efficient, which allows us to keep prices reasonable while having nice things in the club. Beginning April 19, it would really help us if all members can check in to the club using our app on your phones. Nothing is more important to us than our members having a good experience in our club. If you cannot use our phone app, please ask one of our employees at the front desk about alternatives.”

As the club owner, I'd keep a small inventory of key tags and offer to sell them to members who won't use the phone app for **\$5 up front** or for **\$1 per month** added to their dues. As a member, I'd happily pay the \$5 for the key tag to avoid the hassle of having to bring my phone plus a bag and lock into the club. However, I do not recommend getting greedy and trying to charge me \$5 up front and \$1 per month for the key tag as that would get you back into the two-word response territory mentioned above. Take the easy win, make some extra money and keep the members happy.

■ ■ ■

I would love to see the worst health club signs you have seen! Feel free to email me at the address in my bio.

(Mike Manning has been involved in the fitness industry as a CFO, consultant or board member since 2006, and had the advantage of being brought into the industry

by two owners with 70 combined years of experience (as of 2006) with both large club chains and equipment businesses.

Active Wellness Celebrates 10th Anniversary of Building Healthier Communities

SAN FRANCISCO, CA - *Active Wellness*, a leading fitness design and management services company, also known as *The Healthy Life Company*, proudly announces its 10th anniversary milestone. For the past decade, Active Wellness has been dedicated to transforming lives, building healthier communities and inspiring healthy lifestyle change, alongside its partners and with the support of a dedicated team.

Founded in March 2014 by industry entrepreneurs **Jill Kinney, Bill McBride** and **Carey White**, it emerged with a mission to revolutionize how communities approach health and fitness. What began as a humble endeavor has evolved into a powerhouse of innovation, impact and inspiration across the country. Active Wellness and its team are a force that is making a lasting impact on how fitness and wellness are essential to healthcare and healthspan.

Since its inception, Active Wellness has remained committed to its core values of authenticity, commitment, teamwork, innovation, versatility and excellence. The company has empowered individuals of all ages, backgrounds, conditions and fitness levels through a diverse range of fitness programs, wellness



Mike Manning

Manning works directly with club owners, has been on both sides of private equity transactions, helps private equity groups with due diligence on acquisitions and has served on three fitness-related boards. Manning has also provided services to a couple of operating and billing system providers. Mike can be reached at manning@strategicadvicellc.com.)

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initiatives and community engagements to embrace healthier lifestyles and optimal wellbeing.

Reflecting on a decade of achievements, *Co-Founder and Chair, Jill Kinney*, remarks, “Our journey over the past ten years has been nothing short of extraordinary. We set out with a vision to make a meaningful difference in people's lives with our partners, and today, as we celebrate our 10th anniversary, we are incredibly proud of the impact we've made in those communities and those to come.”

Over the last ten years, Active Wellness celebrates its success by reflecting on the most impactful initiatives that has led to this milestone, including:

- Acquired the valuable assets of *Club One, Inc.* from bankruptcy in March 2014, which included 68 sites and 2,099 employees.

(See Active Wellness Page 8)

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...Norm's Notes

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Officer of Xponential Fitness. **Brenda Morris** will serve as *Xponential's Interim Chief Executive Officer*. The Board has initiated a search for the company's next CEO with support from a leading executive search firm.

"With Brenda serving as Interim CEO, we are confident that Xponential is poised to continue to build on our successful track record," said **MARK GRABOWSKI**, *Chairman of Xponential*. "Xponential's brands continue to resonate with consumers as evidenced by our all-time high membership of 796,000 in April, up 1.7% sequentially from March. We remain focused on ensuring a smooth transition across our organization and continuing to serve our customers and franchisees as we execute our growth strategy."

Stay Tuned Folks!

■ It has been reported that *Planet Fitness* is raising its **\$10 "Classic" Membership** for the first time in 26 Years! The gym chain will raise the price of its "classic" membership from \$10 a month to **\$15 a month for new members** beginning in the summer. The "classic" membership gives people access to one location. Planet Fitness' \$25 monthly

"Black Club" Membership offers more locations access and perks, but the chain is not hiking this fee, although executives said they may begin testing higher prices for that plan as well. Executives did not give a reason for the price hike, but the change comes as construction and materials costs have skyrocketed in recent years. Planet Fitness executives said consumers have grown accustomed to price hikes, and the move will not hurt business. "We've seen in every industry people move in price, so it's not going to come as a shock to anybody that we're moving a price that's been in effect for a long, long time." said **CRAIG BENSON**, *Planet Fitness interim CEO*.

■ *Optimize by Equinox* could be a game-changer, using biomarker testing as a map for hyper-personalized training. **But, it will cost members around \$40,000 a year!** Equinox's entry into the longevity and healthspan space rolled out at the end of April in New York City and Highland Park, Texas with a groundbreaking new membership offering from the luxury lifestyle and fitness brand that comes with a **\$3,000 per month price tag!**

Equinox and Function Health announced their partnership last month, ushering in a "new era in hyper-personalized health and integrated personal training." The longevity membership begins with a

biomarker test from *Function Health*, which examines 100 biomarkers to reveal health information about major organs, metabolic and immune systems. Equinox also runs a series of tests that assess VO2 max, strength and movement range. An Equinox concierge then gathers the test results to develop a *personalized* program. Both tests are repeated twice a year.

Each program member is then assigned a personal team of health and wellness experts, including a fitness trainer, nutrition coach, sleep coach and massage therapist. The membership includes three one hour-long training sessions per week, bi-monthly half-hour sessions with a nutrition coach, two half-hour sessions per month with a sleep coach and one massage therapy session a month.

The program is set to expand into other states following its debut in New York City and Highland Park, Texas. While Equinox's new program is financially out of reach for many at the moment, health and fitness clubs may have an opportunity down the road to offer similar services, especially as over 70% of Americans feel the healthcare system is failing to meet their needs.

Stay Tuned Folks!

■ This last item is not about our club in-

dustry. But, since I went to college and played football at *N.C. State* in Raleigh, North Carolina, the same place where **ROMAN GABRIEL**, the subject of this **Norm's Note** attended and played, I feel compelled to share this with you all. So, here goes:

Roman Gabriel, *former NC State Super Star Quarterback* and *two-time ACC Player of the Year*, passed away at age 83 on April 18, reported **BRIAN MURPHY** of *WRAL TV* in Raleigh, N.C. on April 20th. Gabriel played 16 NFL seasons with the *Los Angeles Rams* and *Philadelphia Eagles*. This was after setting 22 N.C. State records and nine ACC records during his career. The first ACC quarterback to throw for 1,000 yards in a season, Gabriel was the ACC Player of the Year in 1960 and 1961.

"Extending our thoughts and prayers to the family, friends and everyone who was lucky enough to have their life impacted by Roman Gabriel," *N.C. State Athletics* said in a statement on social media. "Thank you for everything you did."

He was the Number 1 pick in the *American Football League* draft (*Oakland Raiders*) and the Number 2 pick in the *National Football League* draft (*Los Angeles Rams*) in 1961. A four-time NFL Pro Bowl selection, Gabriel was the NFL

(See *Norm's Notes* Page 8)

Augie's Quest Partners with ALTA Technology Group and The Fitness Technology Summit to End ALS

LAS VEGAS, NV - In recognition of *ALS Awareness Month*, *Augie's Quest*, *ALTA Technology Group* and *The Fitness Technology Summit* are announcing the *Augie's Quest BASH to Fight to End ALS* on October 22, 2024.

Amyotrophic lateral sclerosis, or ALS, is a progressive neurodegenerative disease that attacks cells in the brain and spinal cord that are needed to keep muscles moving. It slowly takes away the ability to walk, talk, eat, and eventually, breathe. There is no cure for ALS, but there is **hope**.

Augie's Quest BASH will be in concert with The 12th Annual Fitness Technology Summit at Caesars Palace in Las Vegas, Nevada on October 21 - 24, 2024.

Attendees will be invited to Augie's Quest BASH to Fight to End ALS as part of their conference ticket. Ticket and sponsorship donations will also be available to any supporters.

The fitness industry rallied behind Augie when he was diagnosed with ALS in 2005 because of the impact he had on the industry when he co-founded *Life Fitness*, and because ALS takes everything away that the industry stands for: strength, movement and health. The BASH represents an opportunity for the fitness industry to come together and celebrate advancements in ALS research made possible by their past support and change the future for people with this devastating disease.

At the BASH, **Mark Mastrov** will be honored with the first-ever *Augie Nieto Fitness Legacy Award*. Mark is the *Principal of New Evolution Fitness Company* and *Founder of 24 Hour Fitness Worldwide, Inc.* and *Crunch 2.0 Global*. "Mark Mastrov was integral in launching our engagement with the fitness industry," said **Shannon Shryne**, *Co-Founder and President of Augie's Quest*. "When Augie was first

diagnosed, Mark chaired our first BASH fundraiser, encouraged the global fitness industry to support our quest and paved the path for our critical work. No one is more deserving of this honor."

Al Noshirvani and **Tara Levitt** of *ALTA Technology Group* and the *Fitness Technology Summit* are happy to support Augie's Quest to Cure ALS and the BASH by co-hosting the event and buying tickets for conference attendees. Al Noshirvani, *Co-Founder and Managing Partner*, explains, "We are proud to support Augie Nieto's legacy and the important work to find a cure for ALS." *Managing Partner*, Tara Levitt, adds, "Every year, we align ourselves with initiatives that make a meaningful impact on the fitness community. Supporting Augie's Quest is a natural extension of our commitment to causes that touch and enhance the fitness industry."

In addition to meeting in Las Vegas and partnering with Augie's Quest,

The Fitness Technology Summit is also excited to launch two new education tracks for Business and Marketing & Technology, allowing executives in the fitness industry to spend time collaborating and sharing strategies in a deeper, more meaningful way.

Through the past support of the fitness industry, the *Augie's Quest Translational Research Center* was created to fund groundbreaking studies that are uncovering new insights and potential treatments. Augie's Quest was the lead funder of a novel therapeutic that showed strong Phase 2 results for ALS, as well as other disease indications including kidney and liver transplants.

You can learn more about the Fitness Technology Summit at thefitnesstechsummit.com. You can learn more about the BASH by going to bit.ly/2024-augies-bash.

...Norm's Notes

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MVP in 1969 and led the league in passing yards and touchdowns in 1973. He ended his career as the Rams' all-time leader in passing yardage.

Gabriel was born in Wilmington, North Carolina and attended *New Hanover High School* where he was an all-state selection in football, basketball and baseball. He played first base for the N.C. State baseball team and led the team in

home runs in 1961. He was inducted into the *College Football Hall of Fame* in 1989 and into the *North Carolina Sports Hall of Fame* in 1971. His #18 jersey was retired by then *North Carolina Governor*, **TERRY SANFORD**, in 1962.

Garbiel was known for his post-career charity work, and he raised more than \$7 million for various organizations, according to N.C. State. He also went onto a notable acting career. Gabriel was the head coach of the *Raleigh Skyhawks* of the *World League of American Football*.

MAY ROMAN GABRIEL REST IN PEACE.

■ **JUSTIN** and I want to **THANK YOU** for reading *Club Insider*! We appreciate you being with us. And, in particular, **WE VERY SINCERELY APPRECIATE ANY and ALL SUPPORT OF OUR ESTEEMED Club Insider ADVERTISERS! PLEASE DO BUSINESS WITH THEM and WHEN YOU DO, PLEASE TELL 'EM Club Insider SENT YOU! THANK YOU ALL!**

■ **God bless our troops, airmen and**

sailors worldwide and keep them safe. Thank you, Congratulations and Welcome Home to all of our troops who have served around the world. God bless America's Policemen and women and Firemen and women; keep them safe. Finally, God bless you, your family, your club(s) and your members. God Bless America! Laus Deo!

(*Norm Cates, Jr. is the Founder and Tribal Leader of Club Insider. He can be reached by phone at 770-635-7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com.*)

...Crunch Fitness

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new standards for growth and drive Crunch forward globally in his new role."

"In terms of expansion, Crunch has been crushing it over the past 12 months, with the company set up for even more success and growth through 2024," said **Chequan Lewis**, *President of Crunch*. "Having John join our team is another step in the right direction. We're keeping a foot on the gas pedal as we look to drive new openings, both domestically and internationally. John is highly qualified to direct Crunch's international expansion and grow our global reach."

Crunch has long been a global brand, with gyms in Canada, Spain, Portugal, Australia and more. Uniquely positioned to experience significant growth in the industry and now led by Kersh's deep knowledge of global markets, Crunch will expand into new markets around the world.

Crunch is experiencing a milestone year in 2024, ranking first in fitness and #29 overall in *Entrepreneur's Franchise 500*, celebrating its 35th anniversary, and



John Kersh

pushing towards 3 million members and over 500 club locations in 2024.

Crunch is currently evaluating several franchisee partners globally. If you are interested in learning more, please reach out to realestate@crunch.com.

Check out the **Crunch Ad** on the **Inside Front Page**.

...Active Wellness

continued from page 6

■ Served more than 380,000 members across North America and delivered more than 5.8 million workouts over the decade.

■ Attracted the sixth largest healthcare system in the United States as a strategic investor. Active was one of the first fitness companies in the country to have a healthcare system investor.

■ Successfully navigated COVID-19 closures and varied local mandates in 19 states.

■ Launched virtual programming to keep people active anytime and anywhere through web-based platforms and mobile apps.

■ Launched the first national wellness center brand for medical fitness centers in the United States, *Active Wellness Centers* with 5 locations.

■ Designed the first-ever personalized

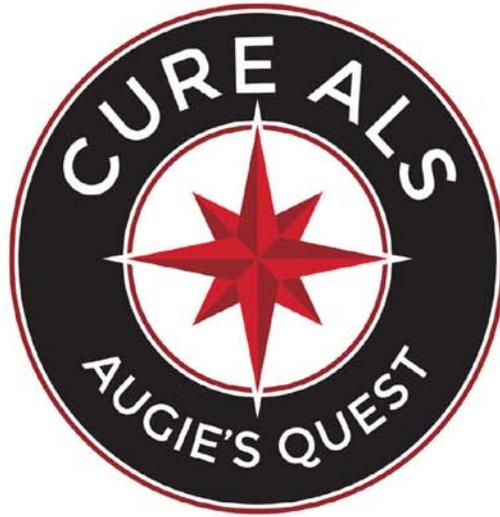
wellness studio brand, *Activate Wellness Studio*, and have launched two sites with two more opening soon.

■ Employs more than 375 dedicated fitness and wellness professionals across 35 locations in North America.

■ Embraced its position to positively affect the healthcare system by bridging preventative care with sickcare.

As *Active Wellness* enters its next stage, it remains steadfast in its commitment to building healthier communities by continuing to design and operate supportive social spaces for people to connect with each other, stay active and learn about how positive lifestyle change can impact chronic disease. Now, more than ever, it believes that the country is on the forefront of pivotal change in the healthcare system and is poised to lead the way.

For more information about *Active Wellness* and its services, visit www.ActiveWellness.com.



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Health & Fitness Association Fly-In and Advocacy Summit Yields 130 Congressional Meetings

WASHINGTON, D.C. - One hundred twenty industry leaders participated in this year's *Health & Fitness Association Fly-In and Advocacy Summit*, May 7 - 8 in Washington, D.C., doubling last year's attendance, according to the *Health & Fitness Association* (formerly *IHRSA*), a global community of industry leaders.

Operators from health clubs, studios and industry suppliers met with 130 Congress members or their staff on May 8, asking for co-sponsorship of the *Personal Health Investment Today (PHIT) Act*. The PHIT Act currently has 76 co-sponsors in the House of Representatives and 18 in the Senate. It would allow Americans with flexible spending accounts (FSAs) and health savings accounts (HSAs) to use up to \$1,000 for single people and \$2,000 for couples to pay for fitness facility memberships, fitness equipment and youth sports leagues.

"The majority of people we met with on Capitol Hill said the PHIT Act seems like common sense, indicating they saw little reason to oppose it, so we hope to see additional sponsors signing onto the bill in the coming weeks," said **Mike Goscinski**, *HFA Vice President of Government Affairs*.

In addition to the PHIT Act, fly-in participants advocated to promote *National Guard* soldier readiness through community-based fitness initiatives by adding *AFFIRM* to the *National Defense Authorization Act*. They also urged federal protection for those who use AEDs, which are mandated in fitness facilities in many states.

Prior to the meetings, participants gathered on May 7 for a day of preparation and education. As part of the education, the Association released data quantifying the economic impact of the health and

fitness industry and results of polling about Americans' preference for expansion of HSAs and FSAs to include gym memberships, fitness equipment and children's sports league fees, as well as a presentation on childhood obesity and the impacts of inactivity on their physical and mental health.

Participants also attended a reception at *Nationals Park*, sponsored by *ABC Fitness*, *Studio Grow* and *Technogym*, and then stayed for the game between the *Washington Nationals* and the *Baltimore Orioles* with tickets sponsored by *ABC Fitness*.

The next morning before meetings with legislators, about 30 industry leaders joined with **Rep. William Timmons** (R-SC) for a workout near the capitol building. The workout was led by **Michaela Brown**, *General Manager of VIDA Fitness & Aura Spa - Logan Circle*, and was sponsored by *Myzone*, *VIDA Fitness* and the *Physical Activity Alliance*. It was part of the *Congressional Physical Activity Challenge* organized by *Myzone* and the *Physical Activity Alliance* to raise awareness about the importance of physical activity.

Participants in the fly-in included executives from 40 club and studio brands plus leaders from sponsoring suppliers:

■ **Premier Sponsors:** ABC Fitness, Studio Grow and Technogym;

■ **Industry Leader Sponsor:** Matrix;

■ **Advocate Sponsors:** Daxko, Myzone and ROR Partners;

■ **Supporters:** Alta Technology Group, ClubConnect, DX Factor, EGym, Fit On Health, Junk Headbands, NASM/AFAA,

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May 7-8, 2024 · Washington D.C.

Precor, Tivity Health, Wellhub (formerly Gympass), WellnessSpace Brands (formerly Hydromassage) and Wexer.

"With three fly-ins now under our belt, we have increased our visibility on Capitol Hill, and that is due to the busy industry leaders who are stepping out of their comfort zones and away from their businesses for two days to participate,"

said **Liz Clark**, *HFA President & CEO*. "We appreciate that such a large group of leaders understand that building relationships with legislators and advocating for important legislation will make a difference for their businesses and the industry overall."

The next HFA Fly-In and Advocacy Summit is scheduled for May 6 - 7, 2025.

Zeamo Partners with Healthy Contributions to Offer Anytime Fitness Clubs in the United States

NEW YORK, N.Y. - *Zeamo*, a corporate wellness technology platform for HR managers and business owners to manage employee fitness benefits, and *Healthy Contributions*, a provider of wellness programs for small-to-mid-sized businesses, health insurance providers, benefit networks and more, have teamed up to offer *Anytime Fitness* memberships at participating U.S. locations to Zeamo's growing corporate client base.

Contributions is providing Zeamo with a turnkey solution, offering *Anytime Fitness* memberships at a bulk/discounted rate for its employer clients while seamlessly handling all membership administration on behalf of Zeamo, its employer clients and *Anytime Fitness* clubs.

Beginning May 1, Zeamo clients were able to offer *Anytime Fitness* memberships to their employees via the Zeamo website, including a club locator that lists participating locations. Those who opt in for an *Anytime Fitness* membership will receive membership access via a key fob sent directly from *Healthy Contributions*. Employees additionally may visit *Healthy Contributions* to nominate an AF club location to participate in the Zeamo program.

The world's largest fitness club brand, the *Anytime Fitness* membership offers members, including those who join through the Zeamo-*Healthy Contributions* program, access to more than 5,200 *Anytime Fitness* club locations worldwide,

across 42 countries and territories on all seven continents. The membership includes a supportive network of *Anytime Fitness* coaches who design personalized plans focused on training, nutrition, and recovery, all accessed and managed via the *Anytime Fitness* App, to help people reach their fitness and wellness goals.

A wellness benefit for today's hybrid workforce, Zeamo delivers a flexible and inclusive fitness and wellness benefit that is affordable, easy-to-implement and makes it easy to offer and subsidize exclusive memberships to a growing network of gyms and studios. Zeamo is the only corporate fitness and activity benefit that rewards employees for committing to joining a gym, for hitting daily steps and

completing on-demand workouts.

Unlike other wellness offerings, Zeamo is aligned with its partners by making it easy to join clubs and studios such as *Anytime Fitness*.

Paul O'Reilly-Hyland, *CEO of Zeamo*, said, "We are delighted to announce our partnership with *Healthy Contributions* to launch approximately 2,000 *Anytime Fitness* clubs, on our platform reaching employees across the nation. *Anytime Fitness* is the largest chain of clubs in the world and gives employees the opportunity to work out 24 hours a day at a price which are affordable to most."

IHRSA is now the HEALTH & FITNESS ASSOCIATION

After two years of discussion and planning, IHRSA has made the next move in our evolution—we've rebranded as the Health & Fitness Association!

Our new name more readily reflects the amazing community of health and fitness leaders that we represent worldwide.

We will be transitioning to the new name during the next several months, so watch our website as we transition our url, social media platforms, newsletters, and more.

healthandfitness.org



...Workout Anytime

continued from page 3

Steve Strickland and John Quattrocchi (S&J) - Norm, we have 102 individual Franchisees, and they own 194 locations with six in pre-sales. We will open 22 new locations this year. We have three clubs in central America: two are in Honduras and one is in Costa Rica. We have zero corporate-owned stores.

C.I. - How many total club members does Workout Anytime now have overall?
S&J - We have over 300,000 members.

C.I. - Please tell us the names and titles of your key Workout Anytime Team Members?
S&J - Absolutely, they are:

- **Randy Trotter** - EVP of Real Estate;
- **Terri Harof** - Director of Franchise Development;
- **Michael Anderson** - Chief Financial Officer;
- **Dennis Holcom** - SVP of Field Support;
- **Wanda Johnson** - SVP of Franchise Operations/Construction;
- **Greg Maurer** - VP of Education & Fitness;
- **John Carsillo** - VP of Equipment;
- **Sarah Troutman** - Digital Media Director;
- **Lynsay Flynt** - Marketing Director;
- **Brandon Daniels** - Director of Personal Training;
- **Crystal Decheine** - Director of Personal Training;
- **Jody Womble** - Field Support Manager.

C.I. - Now let's move on to the subject at hand, your fabulous *Workout Anytime 25th Anniversary Reception and Banquet* that you guys produced and hosted on Saturday Night, April 26th. First, let me say here what I said to you guys in person before my wife, *Ilena*, and I left the event. I said, 'Over my 50+ years of involvement in this wonderful industry, I've been to a lot of special events, BUT your 25th Anniversary Reception and Banquet, to me, clearly *ranks in the Top 5* of the events that I've ever had the pleasure of attending anytime or anywhere! **CONGRATULATIONS!**'

S&J - Thank you, Norm. That means a lot. You know, we did something different this year, our *Workout Anytime TOP GUN Awards*, a special award that went to our key people within the network who were the *Top Performers*. Norm, though you were an *Air Force Man*, I'm sure you remember the following quote from *TOP GUN*: 'YOU are the ELITE! YOU are the BEST of the BEST!' Well, that quote also applies to our team and all of our WOA Franchisees! We wanted to recognize all the key people who are in the trenches. We want to teach our ground teams, then motivate them to produce great results! To me, *that's the key to success in this business!* So, **Sarah Troutman**, our *Digital Media Director*, produced the following link to honor all of our 2024 Award Winners: bit.ly/woa-2024-awards. I'd also like for

Sarah to comment.

Sarah Troutman - As we close the book on another successful year and our *25th Anniversary Franchise Conference*, we want to thank everyone who made it all happen. Our internal team, led by our leader for *all things conference*, **Wanda Johnson**, *Senior Vice President of Franchise Operations*. Wanda, along with **Sally Dixon**, *Sofia Aguirre* and the entire **Franchise Support Team** all worked tirelessly to make it happen! *Design Coup*, our exceptional design team, is led by **Michael Higgins** and **George Farkas**. Their expert design skills and live direction of our educational presentations resulted in the flawless execution of all our content. Thanks to **Angelica** at *Utopia Events* for our beautiful décor. Also, thanks to our fabulous band, **Dana Kamide**, and his wife, **Sharon**, for their musical amazement! A huge thank you to our wonderful photographers, **Jim and Tammy Lyle**, whose skill and warmth shines through in each photo. Of course, thanks to our valued sponsors who bring fresh ideas and expertise every year.



Lastly, and most importantly, we want to especially thank our **Franchise Owners** and the fantastic group of professionals (See *Workout Anytime Page 14*)

FRANCHISEES of the YEAR

Jerry Pugh & EJ Williams

FRANCHISE of the YEAR New Clubs

Mount Airy North Carolina

FRANCHISE of the YEAR Seasoned Clubs

Titusville Florida

MEMBERSHIP CHAMPION

Titusville Florida

TOP GUN AWARD Elite Performers & Top Producers

The Best of the Best

FRANCHISE of the YEAR Legacy Clubs

Boiling Springs South Carolina

PRESALES CHAMPION

Lanham Maryland

25th SILVER ANNIVERSARY

John & Gina Heifner

TOTAL REVENUE CHAMPION

Titusville Florida

**BEST OVERALL
SOCIAL MEDIA**



Leeds Alabama



DRIVEN TO EXCELLENCE



**Kevin Davis
Brave Williams**

**BEST LEGACY CLUB
SOCIAL MEDIA**



Cookeville Tennessee



**MOST ENGAGING & FUN
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SOCIAL MEDIA**



Ooltewah Tennessee



**BEST CROSS PLATFORM
SOCIAL MEDIA**



Dayton Tennessee



**HEART & SOUL
AWARD**



**Kris Wilkens
Wake Forest - Rolesville**

BEST STARTER SOCIAL



Lanham Maryland



**HEART & SOUL
AWARD**



**Melissa and Jason Lobaugh
Beaverton Oregon**

**OUTSTANDING
LEADERSHIP**



Chris Grove

**HEART & SOUL
AWARD**



**Danny Ramirez
Fort Pierce**

**OUTSTANDING
LEADERSHIP**



Aaron Davis

...Workout Anytime

continued from page 12

they all employ. Without each and every one of them, the last 25 years would not have been possible. As a *Support Team*, we never forget our collective **WHY... all of them and their success.** It is an absolute honor to serve them all daily.

C.I. - Gentlemen, after 25 years in business with Workout Anytime, and even more in the industry before you both started Workout Anytime, what key pieces of advice and lessons do you have to share with our readers, whether they're new to the industry or industry veterans like y'all?

S&J - YOU'RE ONLY AS GOOD AS THE PEOPLE YOU SURROUND YOURSELF WITH! Your ability to attract people who are right for the job, help them develop and then let them realize their dreams and goals. When you do that, they will work even harder. Then, you **TRUST them to do their jobs and GROW TOGETHER!** It's also essential that the club owner understands that they will have to market effectively. They have to let the consumer know they are there. They must remember the consumer has options to do business with *them or somebody else!* So, it's imperative that, when our owners bring in new members, the team creates the best member experience possible, experiences that will keep them with the club. And, if we do that, they will *never* leave our clubs. All gyms have dumbbells, bikes, treadmills, weight machines, locker rooms, etc. But, the retention of members always boils down to **people. Every time!**

C.I. - Let me close this very special cover story interview by asking you one final, but

important question. Please reflect back over your first 25 years that you spent creating and building Workout Anytime and tell us what you would say were the most important considerations for you guys? Let's call them *The Top 5 Workout Anytime Success Factors...*

S&J - Our *Top 5 Workout Anytime Success Factors* would be:

- 1. Our Mission, Vision & Values** - These statements were created, collectively, by every member of our support team, and they represent who we are and what we strive to be every day (See **Graphic on This Page**).
- 2. The expertise and dedication of our Executive Leadership Team:**
- 3. The expertise and dedication of our entire Franchise Support Team.**
- 4. Our Education and Training Process.**
- 5. Outstanding Franchisees that care about their members and that have a positive impact on their community.**

Importantly, we are proud of our success during and after the COVID Pandemic. We did not have any permanent closures due to this pandemic, and that is a testimony to our outstanding Support Team and Franchisees.

Folks, *Club Insider* is very pleased and honored to have had *Workout Anytime* as our **Outside Back Cover Advertiser** every month for the past seven years. We're very **THANKFUL** for their support of *Club Insider*, and it has been our honor to share the story of their *25th Anniversary!* That is a milestone in business no matter who you are or what industry you are in. **Congratulations Steve, John and the WOA Team!**

If you are considering a franchise, let me suggest Workout Anytime! All the information you need to properly consider them is available at: workoutanytimefranchise.com. And, of course, check out the **Workout Anytime Ad** on the **Outside Back Page**.

Thank you to **Steve Strickland**

and **John Quattrocchi** for their time interviewing for this story. Thank you also to **Wanda Johnson, Sarah Troutman and Terri Harof** for their kind assistance during the production of this special cover story.

Finally, thank you all for reading!

(Norm Cates, Jr. is a 50-year veteran of the health, racquet and sportsclub industry. He is the Founder and Tribal Leader Since 1993 of Club Insider, now in its 31st year of monthly publication. In 1981, he was IHRSA's First President, and a Co-Founder of the Association with Rick Caro and five others. In 2001, he was honored by IHRSA with its DALE DIBBLE Distinguished Service Award, one of its highest honors. And, in 2017, he was honored with Club Industry's Lifetime Achievement Award. You can reach Norm by phone at 770-635-7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com.)

The Origins of Workout Anytime

Norm Cates (NLC) - In preparation for this special cover story in honor of *Workout Anytime's 25th Anniversary*, I went back to the cover story we did on you in February of 2018. There, I came across what I view as some very special comments made by you, Steve. To me, these comments are truly **PRICELESS** because they describe, in very clear terms, how you got into business and how you started Workout Anytime. So, Steve these next few paragraphs contains the comments you made. So here goes:

My question was: *"How did Workout Anytime come about?"*
Steve Strickland answered with a truly great summary of their wonderful story:

"In 1998, I teamed up with John Quattrocchi, and we started Workout Anytime in 1999. We had a blast. I was living in Columbia, South Carolina, and John came to visit me one day. I told him I had to make a couple of sales calls and asked him to come and ride with me on those. So, he did, and we really just made a good team. There was no recruiting. We just hit it off and made a great team. Here's how Workout Anytime started:

We helped a lady that used to work for John open a ladies' club in Douglasville, Georgia. John had helped her negotiate the lease, and we helped her get it up and running. After about three months, she decided it was a bad location. She backed a truck up to the club, took the equipment and left in the middle of the night, leaving it empty. The landlord, George, called John the next day and said she (I won't mention her name) had left him high and dry. He knew we were thinking about getting back into the business, and the space was available. We felt this would be a good opportunity to have a working showroom for the fitness products and flooring that we sold, and we already had our new club concept and name: *Workout Anytime*.

Prior to our meeting with the landlord, on a cocktail napkin, John had written the terms we would need to take the space. We asked for the moon: several months of free rent, a sizeable tenant buildout allowance and other considerations. We then met with George and presented the napkin with our terms. I remember it like it was yesterday. George looked at us and said, 'Do either one of you guys own a house?' We said, 'Yes.' We shook hands and just like that, we were in business. We had kind of an 'Oh shoot!' moment wondering that, maybe, we had left money on the table. But, there was no turning back. That napkin represented the first official real estate document for the company, and the deal was done when we shook his hand. That's the way John and I worked back then; we didn't need to sign anything at that time.

So, we took that 3,100 square-foot club and converted the group exercise room into a free weight area and the child care room into a men's locker room with showers. We knew what we wanted our Workout Anytime model to be. We had a total of 25 pieces of cardio, a line of circuit strength equipment, a limited free weight area and 24-hour key card access. Our first membership offering was \$24 a month for 24 months, 24 hours a day. We had aspirations of having a successful club, but our first intention was to have a great showroom for us to bring in potential clients to view the fitness products and services that we sold. That said, our Workout Anytime Club just really took off! It exceeded expectations beyond our wildest dreams, and we had them set high. After just ten months, we had over \$800,000 in receivables! We were on our way!"

NLC - Well, Steve, that's really a great story! Congratulations to you, John Q and the WOA Team!

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--	--	--

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Play by the Rules, But Be Ferocious: *How to Conquer the Gym Industry*

By: **Jim Thomas**

The gym industry is a competitive jungle. There are established chains, boutique studios and a sea of independent gyms fighting for the same turf. Survival, let alone dominance, requires a winning mentality. Here's the secret: *Embrace the paradoxical approach of playing by the rules while being ferocious.*

Playing by the Rules:

■ **Ethical Operations:** Run a clean business. Respect contracts, comply with regulations and prioritize member safety. A reputation for ethical practices is gold in the fitness industry.

■ **Transparency is Paramount:** Be upfront about pricing, memberships and class schedules. Avoid hidden fees and misleading advertising. Building trust paves the way for long-term member loyalty.

■ **Invest in Your Team:** Hire qualified trainers, provide ongoing education and cultivate a positive work environment. A

happy, well-trained team is the backbone of any successful gym.

Ferocious Fitness:

■ **Unique Selling Proposition:** What makes your gym stand out? Do you offer cutting-edge equipment, a vibrant community or specialized programs? Identify your USP and shout it from the rooftops (or social media feeds).

■ **Innovation is Key:** Don't be afraid to break the mold. Offer unique classes, host innovative events or embrace emerging fitness trends. Be the gym that sets the pace, not the one following it.

■ **Relentless Marketing:** Get your name out there. Utilize social media, partner with local businesses and run targeted marketing campaigns to reach your ideal audience. Be visible, be memorable and be relentless in your pursuit of new members.

Remember, playing by the rules doesn't have to equal playing it safe. You can be fiercely competitive while

maintaining ethical practices.

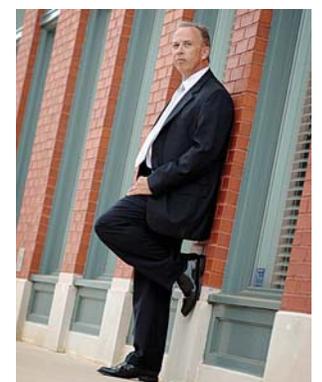
Here's how to strike the balance:

■ **Focus on providing exceptional value:** Offer high-quality services at a fair price, and deliver results that exceed member expectations.

■ **Become an industry leader:** Be an active voice in the fitness community. Share your expertise, host workshops and position yourself as a trusted authority.

■ **Embrace calculated risks:** Don't be afraid to experiment with new ideas but do so with a plan and a clear understanding of the potential risks and rewards.

Playing by the rules but being ferocious isn't easy. It requires dedication, strategy and a relentless drive to succeed. But, for those who embrace this duality, the rewards are immense. You'll build a gym that not only survives but thrives, leaving the competition in the dust. So, step into the gym with a roar, not a whimper. Play by the rules, but be ferocious. The fitness



Jim Thomas

industry awaits your conquest!

(An Outsourced CEO, Turnaround Expert and Author, Jim Thomas is the Founder and President of FMC USA Inc. Learn more by going to www.fmconsulting.net or www.youtube.com/gymconsultant.)

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Why Boosting Club Membership is About Medical, not Marketing

By: **Cosmo Wollan**

Approximately 73 million adults in the U.S. have a gym membership. It sounds like a lot, but the sad reality is that's only 24% of the population. Baby boomers alone make up over 21% of the population. According to ACSM's *Worldwide Surveys of Fitness Trends for 2024*, the #3 top trend is: "Fitness Programs for Older Adults." It's no secret that people are living longer, working longer, and most importantly, wanting to stay active longer.

The fitness industry challenge is one of perception. At present, most people go to the gym to address their *FITNESS Goals* (fitter, stronger, thinner, faster, etc.) Yet, 80% of the population either have, and wish to manage, or wish to proactively avoid getting obesity, hypertension, diabetes or weak core strength, leading to slip and fall risks. These people are not typically engaged with a gym because most gyms offer little, if anything, to specifically address these goals. The truly obese are often intimidated by the gym environment; the hypertensive are often warned by their doctors not to do anything too "strenuous;" and many diabetics are not even aware that exercise can have profound positive effects on the manifestations of the disease. This is mostly because their physicians never told them. As a whole, people in these groups have very different goals, such as being able to play with their grandchildren, being able to walk the park with their friends or being able to garden in their yards. These are lifestyle goals, *WELLNESS Goals*, not fitness goals.

The people who have never been health club members frequently think of the gym as a place to "get in shape" and view themselves as "high risk" in that environment. All they really want (or need) to do is engage in some physical activity, begin to think about nutrition and health education and/or manage or prevent a chronic medical condition. And, once gyms start to offer programming that truly and legitimately addresses these goals, there is a huge, target-rich environment of new members that need these services.

But, how do we change the conversation? How do we safely yet effectively address these Wellness Goals? The answer to this perception challenge is medically-directed fitness. True medical fitness is offered at medical fitness facilities, typically the health centers connected to, or directly affiliated with, hospitals. They have physicians on staff, extensive medical equipment and are often certified through the *Medical Fitness Association* as medical fitness Facilities. And, they offer a level of medical service simply not possible at commercial fitness clubs.

The bridge between medical fitness and commercial clubs is medically-

directed fitness, typically implemented in commercial clubs as medically-directed programming. Properly designed and implemented, these programs can attract a more mature, deconditioned, higher risk member. Often these members have never been a health club member, yet most have the specific wellness and lifestyle goals previously mentioned. What they want is to manage (or avoid) hypertension, diabetes, obesity, slip and fall risks, even some cancers. What they are looking for is a safe, effective, non-intimidating, non-judgmental environment. Medically-directed programs that address these specific issues can offer exactly what they need, including a staff that understands both the conditions and the goals, and the comfort of working out with others in similar situations facing similar challenges. It's the soft landing in an otherwise harsh world. Think of it as the foam pit used by the novice gymnast to ensure soft, injury-free landings in the early stages of learning.

This market segment represents the largest portion of most markets and creates an opportunity to significantly expand acquisition rates and business growth while mitigating traditional club competition. In other words, medical fitness programming allows you to tap into the 75% of non-gym-member Americans who feel traditional commercial clubs don't meet their needs.

The marketing benefits are also significant. By adding medically-directed fitness, you'll automatically differentiate yourself from your local competition by offering something of great health benefit that they are not. Properly implemented, medically-directed fitness programming will also create, cultivate and leverage relationships with local healthcare professionals. When one primary care physician can have over 2,000 patients, developing strong and mutually beneficial relationships with local PCPs can potentially drive tremendous growth in both membership and program revenue. It is critical to remember, however, that physicians are not going to refer their patients to most gyms. They will, however, refer them to a medically-directed wellness program, especially one they may have helped to design!

So, how would a fitness facility get started down the path of offering medical fitness? Always start at the top with leadership philosophy. You absolutely need buy-in from upper-level leadership that you're committed to serving a different market in at least one segment of the business. Medically-directed fitness is a commitment, and everyone needs to be in lockstep on that commitment if you're going to do it right. Keep in mind that you're not getting the fit fitter with medically-directed fitness; you're working with people who

have, or wish to avoid, chronic diseases.

From there, the good news is some effective playbooks have already been written by groups like the Medical Fitness Association. They have a vast array of resources for members and offer many guidelines for implementing medical fitness at the highest levels. Always remember to hire highly qualified fitness professionals to work with populations who have a variety of comorbid conditions. The *United States Registry of Exercise Professionals* is a great place to start. Your staff must be trained, preferably certified, in the care of individuals with these conditions. These certifications will also boost confidence of any physicians participating in the program design and potentially offering referrals.

From an operational perspective, don't think memberships with the medical fitness population; think small group training programs (i.e., a 12-week hypertension or weight management program for 4 - 6 participants per group). Cultivate relationships with local physicians or healthcare organizations. The commercial gym can serve as a wellness program access point, something that is a strategic priority for most health systems and physicians. And, do not forget metrics. Every participant in every program must be measured on relevant markers at the start of the program, at least once during the program and at the conclusion. Remember, the goal is not to "cure" these individuals with one program. The goal is to *improve* their status so that, eventually, they may see a reduction or remission of the symptoms of their condition, and most importantly, the increased ability to enjoy their lifestyle goals.

If you truly want your gym to attract new members, stop spending marketing dollars promoting the same programs and outcomes as everyone else. Address the untapped 75% of the population by adding



Cosmo Wollan

medically-directed fitness programming and make your facility the place where this vast target audience can address their *WELLNESS Goals*. The investment to really do it right is minimal, and the benefits to the fiscal health of your facility and the overall health of your community are limitless.

(Cosmo Wollan has more than 30 years of experience in the health, fitness, wellness and medical fitness fields. He is Senior Executive at Synergy Cubed, a fitness industry consulting firm specializing in medical fitness integration and business model optimization; and co-Founder of the soon-to-launch Parks & Rec RX Connect, a 501(c)(3), bringing medically directed fitness services and population health benefits to municipal fitness centers and the Parks & Rec Community. He served six years as Chair of the Medical Fitness Association Education Advisory Panel and is an active member of the MedFit Network Education Advisory Board. In 2023, he was recognized as a Fellow in the Medical Fitness Association.)

Club Insider Seeks Contributing Authors

Contact Justin Cates

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“O Say Can You See” Here is What is Going on in America...

By: **Pete Moore**

Our firm, *Integrity Square*, is a leading advisory firm focused on mergers and acquisitions in North America. Here are the current trends and Top Five list from our perspective:

1. CAPITAL: The recent *IHRSA* (now *HFA*) Trade Show in Los Angeles was well attended with a lot of entrepreneurial enthusiasm. A key underlying fact was that there were more private equity firms snooping around for investment opportunities than ever before, which is a forward indicator that institutional capital is keen to invest billions in our HALO (Health, Active Lifestyle, Outdoors) Sector.

2. WEIGHT LOSS: There is consensus that the proliferation of weight loss drug usage in the U.S. will be a *net benefit* to the health club and studio operators as patients on these GLP-1 drugs must exercise or their muscles will deteriorate quickly.

3. ANCILLARY REVENUE: There is a \$150 billion windfall of Health Savings Accounts that are now able to be used for memberships as the IRS has modified their definitions of use, and a “Letter of Medical Necessity” can be granted to members with widespread acceptance and services in the HALO Sector qualify for pre-tax dollar usage.

4. ARTIFICIAL INTELLIGENCE: We are encouraging operators to go deep on member surveys to fill in as much info on their members as possible in order to have a more robust database that can then be powered by AI tools. We are firm believers that, “*You cannot have Artificial Intelligence until you have Intelligence.*”

5. IRRATIONAL GROWTH: Our one concern on the HALO Sector is that there are several franchisors who are selling franchisees on concepts that are NOT good AUV business models. A franchisee should be able to generate \$60,000 per month in top-line revenue to be an attractive franchisee for an owner/operator. Littering the market with underperforming business models is a black eye on our industry, and we hope prospective franchisees DO NOT sign up for these poor franchising opportunities.



The future is bright for those with strong unit economics. Optimize your playbook and you will WIN.



Pete Moore

(Pete is the Founder, Managing Partner and Chief Dream Architect at Integrity Square (“ISQ”), a leading boutique financial advisory firm focused on the \$4.7T Health, Active Lifestyle, Outdoor (“HALO”) sector.)



From Sweat to Serenity: The Fusion of Fitness and Recovery Was Trending at ISPA 2024

By: **Nancy Trent**

The convergence of fitness and recovery has become a cornerstone of wellness culture, and the *International Spa Association (ISPA) 2024* convention in Phoenix showcased the latest innovations driving this evolution. The fitness and recovery category has undergone a profound transformation, propelled by technological advancements and evolving consumer preferences. Within this dynamic ecosystem, these brands play a pivotal role in the future of gyms, not only in offering products and services but also in driving trends and shaping cultural perceptions of health, fitness and recovery.

In this trade show, we find an eclectic mix of established giants and disruptive newcomers vying for attention and market share. These brands leverage cutting-edge technologies, sustainable practices and innovative marketing strategies to resonate with the increasingly discerning and health-conscious consumer base, from homes to gyms and other facilities. From hydrotherapy tubs to wearable fitness trackers, the arsenal of tools available to fitness and gym enthusiasts continues to expand, catering to diverse needs and preferences.

Let's uncover the trends creating a positive shift in fitness and recovery culture.

Fitness Benefits From More Automated Recovery

Hydrotherapy tubs are making a big splash in the wellness sector, reflecting a growing trend toward automated recovery at home. One of the pioneers in this trend is *BainUltra* with their *Libra* tub collection. These tubs combine the therapeutic benefits of water with innovative design, offering a spa-like experience that promotes relaxation, pain relief and overall wellbeing.

Hydrotherapy is also incorporated into completely touchless massage tables. A

brand developing hydrotherapy massages is *WellnessJK*, with their *WellSystem Wave*. Hydrotherapy massages are a great method in recovery without any hands-on contact from a therapist. The combination of hydro-jets, light, sound and aromatherapy take individuals on a journey that relieves tension, supports muscle recovery and improves relaxation. And, the gym doesn't have to have a therapist on-site.

Another fusion of science and technology is seen in devices that track and monitor your health like *NOWATCH*, a smart watch that helps track and improve daily habits to feel calm, strong and present. Designed in Amsterdam and produced in Finland, *NOWATCH* changes your relationship with stress, educates you on healthy choices and encourages you to check in on your mental and physical wellness.

Pain relief technology continues to be on the rise due to its numerous benefits as discovered with *Super Patch*, a drug-free, fast-acting, easy-to-use and on-the-go solution to help manage pain in a simple and safe way. Their vibrotactile technology triggers a response in the brain's neural networks that helps you tackle your daily problems, head-on, improving sleep, reducing pain and more.

Red Light Wellness Flood Recovery Rooms at Gyms

Red light therapy is a cutting-edge approach to rejuvenating the body. Specific wavelengths of red light penetrate deep into the skin, stimulating cellular regeneration and promoting a myriad of health benefits. *WellnessJK's* *Sol Energy Infrared Sauna* offers ultimate detoxification and relaxation and their red light infrared LED loungers with the *Revive Series* harness red light technology to promote healing and reduce inflammation in just one 20-minute session. *Prism Light Pod's* whole-body red light therapy system claims to speed recovery

up to 10 times faster than your body's natural processes while *Energy Lounger* layers different therapies, such as red light and infrared light, and is clinically proven to rejuvenate skin, aid in muscle recovery, relaxation, sleep, as well as provide mental clarity, enhance athletic performance and relieve joint pain.

Quick Hits

Vibrational Therapy: There has been an increase in vibrational therapy, which aids in muscle relaxation and relief. *Rapid Release Tech* is one of those companies producing high energy vibration therapy products. Their 5-in-1 treatment head provides the most intense vibration, penetrates deep into trouble spots and targets large and small areas with either a soft or hard tip.

Handmade Yoga Mats: There has been a resurgence in yoga due to its positive impact on fitness and recovery. *Hugger Mugger* is a brand that has been around since 1986 and continues to make high-quality, handmade yoga bolsters and meditation cushions, top-rated yoga mats, yoga props and more.

Support for Your Feet: Preparing our bodies before exercise is essential as it reduces injury and support for your feet is needed for most fitness activities. A great product for arch support is the *Zensole* collection from *FeelGoodz*. They craft artisan-tapped natural rubber footwear with yoga mat cushioning and soft vegan leather.



The fitness landscape in ISPA 2024 is marked by a confluence of trends that reflect broader societal shifts towards wellness, self-care and gym culture. What was once a niche concept is now becoming a mainstream staple and certain recovery



Nancy Trent

practices have witnessed a resurgence, driven by a growing awareness of the importance of mental well-being alongside physical fitness. We look ahead to ISPA 2025 in Colorado Springs where a melting pot of new ideas will emerge, and new insights will be exchanged to shape the future of fitness and recovery.

(Nancy Trent is a writer and speaker, a lifelong wellness activist, a globe-trotting trend watcher and the Founder and President of Trent & Company, a leading wellness PR firm. Trent & Company, which launched many health and beauty brands, grew out of Nancy's personal and passionate commitment to helping people live longer and healthier lives. A former journalist for New York Magazine, Nancy has written seven books on healthy lifestyles, serves on the editorial boards of several magazines and travels around the world speaking at conferences and trade shows on trends in the marketplace. She is a recognized expert in PR with more than 30 years of experience creating and managing highly successful campaigns. Learn more at www.trentandcompany.com or contact Nancy at nancy@trentandcompany.com.)

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Member Onboarding: *Welcoming or Overwhelming?*

By: **Jeffrey Pinkerton**

Imagine you walk into a clothing store. You are greeted “Hi. Welcome in. Is there anything we can help you find?” Your reflex response, “No, just looking, thanks.” Most people have this same response, even if they do, in fact, need help. But, what if, when you walk in, instead of simply being greeted, you are invited (required, actually) to sit down and discuss your wardrobe and fashion goals? Whisked off on a full store tour then to a special desk and asked questions about your past clothes-buying experiences, your current wardrobe situation and your personal style preferences. They weigh you, take measurements and do a full body scan to customize their recommendations and give you the “most important” stats. It’s an overwhelming thought and one that might just keep you from ever walking into the store at all.

What Brings You In Today?

You walked into that store knowing you desperately needed new clothes. You’ve put it off for a few years. Your current clothes are old and dated and don’t fit quite right. It’s so bad, in fact, your significant other has told you that you really need to do something about it.

Likewise, a prospective member walks into your club. They know they desperately need to start exercising. They’ve put it off for a few years. They are feeling sluggish and tired and unmotivated, and nothing feels quite right. Their doctor has told them they really need to do something about it.

Insert your energetic, fit salesperson. “What brings you in today?” followed by a lengthy tour and (required, actually) sit-down discussion, open-ended questions, goal setting and body scanning. Is it all necessary? Just to try on a workout? We know why people are there and can

predict their answers – they want to “tone up,” get in shape, lose weight, feel better.

Maybe you’re still following the old trial attorney advice to, “never ask a question unless you know the answer.” But, the questions (interrogation) probably create more tension than trust.

There Are No Bad Questions, Only Bad Websites

Of course, people visit your website during their investigation process, asking, “what can this place do for me?” If they are like me, they’ll check out your website, your social media channels and your Google reviews. Maybe they don’t know exactly what they are looking for; they just know they need to exercise.

But, too many health club websites tell people *what the club has*, not *what the member can expect*. It’s all about the facility and not about the member experience. As an experiment, I Googled “health clubs



Jeffrey Pinkerton

near me,” clicked around on the first page of results and found the common culprits – a list of equipment (treadmills, ellipticals, squat racks), a \$1 joining fee, a \$0 joining fee, a list of amenities, one offer to schedule

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a phone call (no thanks) and a few offers for a free day pass (phone number required, so again, no thanks).

But, does an equipment list really answer anyone's questions? I know some of these things may be on your website for SEO purposes, but they aren't the things that help people make the leap from curious-website-surfer to walk-in-the-door prospect.

Back to the clothing store, what if its website boasted, "We have clothes! And fitting rooms!" Of course they do. That won't get you in the door or set them apart from competitors. But, "feel great, find something for every occasion, you'll love high-fashion favorites, discover new trends at easy prices" messages tell you what you can expect if you go in.

Onboarding Online - Let Your Website Do the Work

Primer, a digital marketing agency with a great blog, introduced me to the idea

of Buyer Decision Questions (BDQs) – the questions that people need to know the answers to before making the decision to purchase your product, fill out your form, etc. One of their keys to high-converting landing pages is anticipating the questions from your visitors and answering those questions early – the three most critical being price, how the product works and when users can expect positive results.

Does your website show prospective members how the "product" works? What they are actually going to do when they visit? What the member experience is like? Why your facility is better than the competition? And, why they should come in and give it a try? Shockingly, of all the websites that I visited after my Google search, only one had videos showing what they offered. When people visit your site, can they imagine themselves participating in what you are selling?

What Are You Actually Selling?

If you are selling the experience, you should reduce the hurdles, the time and the friction so prospective members can

get to the experience as soon as possible.

I know the counter argument: we want to get to know people; we want them to connect with our staff; we want to introduce them to other members; we want to check in with them before their first workout and follow up after; we want to make sure they feel welcome, are greeted by name, experience a workout that is catered to their fitness level; and that they feel as successful as possible as soon as possible.

I don't disagree. And, I know the single step solution: send them to a group fitness workout, one that is inclusive (all fitness levels, various musical tastes), high quality (well-designed and tested), taught by an engaging, energetic, empathetic instructor (frankly, the only kind you should employ).

In clothing, in fitness, in any service business, the best service we can provide is letting someone know before they visit what they can expect – what they'll experience and how they'll feel. And, when they visit, delivering it in a simple and satisfying (not stressful) way. Let them walk in, welcome them, answer their questions

and let them try on some great group fitness workouts to see what fits.



To learn how MOSSA can help your club deliver amazing group fitness experiences – the kind that can turn your group fitness department into an engaging community of longtime, loyal movers – visit our website (mossa.net). And, before you talk to a MOSSA salesperson, who is probably going to ask you some questions, check out a 5-minute video all about why clubs choose to partner with us. To watch the video, visit mossa.net/clubs-facilities/why-mossa/#video.

(Jeffrey Pinkerton is the Business Development Manager for MOSSA. Jeffrey can be reached by phone at 770-989-4737 or email at jeffreypinkerton@mossa.net.)



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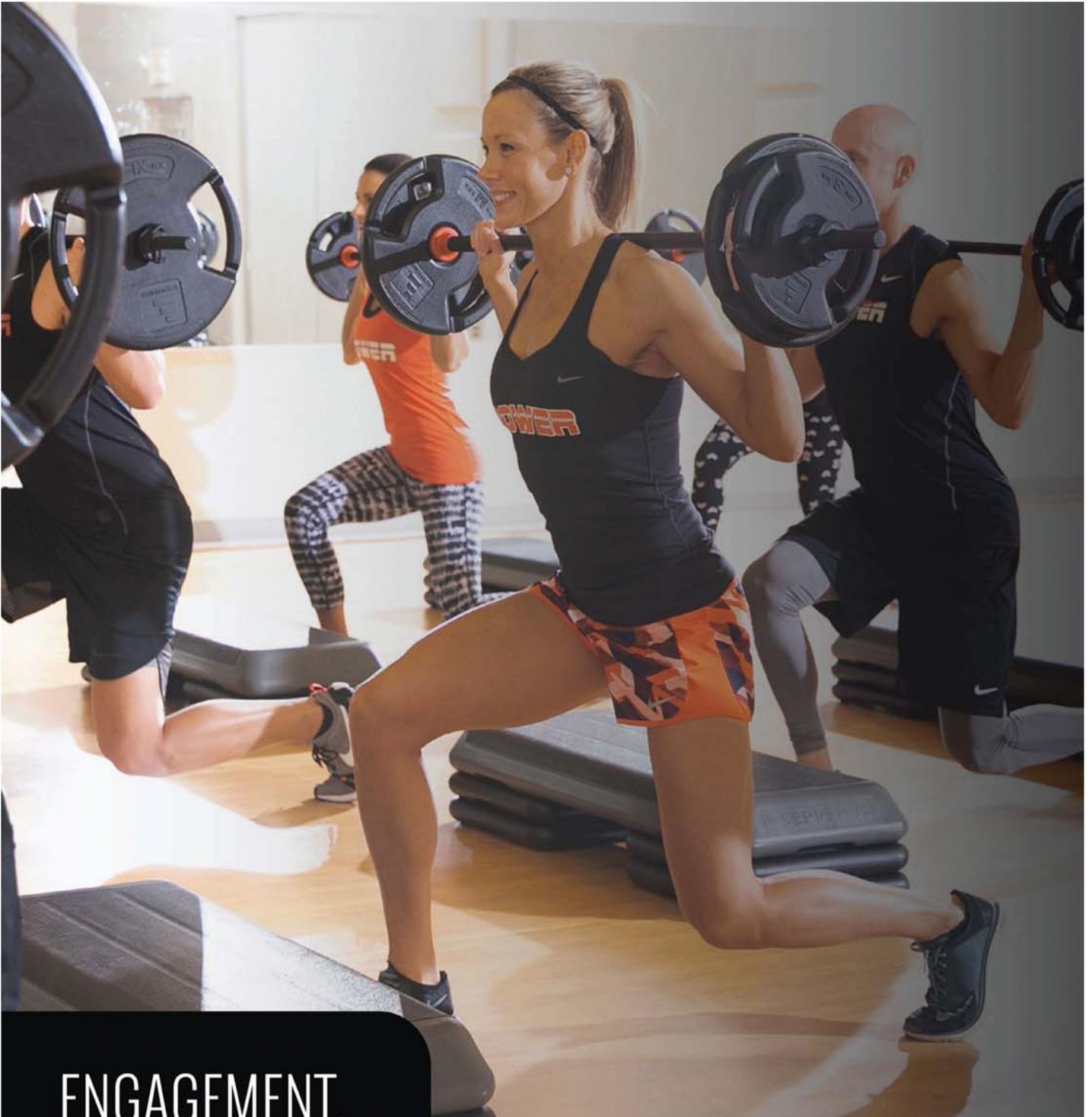
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