

Norm Cates'

CLUB INSIDER

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST

MOSSA *LET'S MOVE!*[®]



L to R - Terry W. Browning, President & CEO; Cathy Spencer Browning, VP Programming & Training; and Jeffrey Pinkerton, VP Business Development

NOVEMBER 2024

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MOSSA: *LET'S MOVE!*®

By: Justin Cates

Exercise is hard. And, hard is not fun.

I know what you're saying: But, Justin, *C.I.* always run these little ads that say, "Make It Fun!" We sure do, and it's to always remind our readers of the first line of this article: *Exercise is hard. And, hard is not fun.* But, it doesn't have to be that way.

There are ways around these two unmistakable truths of our business. One method is to trick the mind. The other is to share in the pain. And, if you can do both at the same time, now you're really onto something. Enter MOSSA.

Friends of ours and *C.I.* Advertisers for many years, MOSSA brings a unique combination to group

fitness. Their professionally-produced, pre-choreographed programs take group fitness to a whole new level, one that truly makes exercise fun and something to look forward to. And, of course, the core tenet of group fitness --the GROUP-- creates accountability to return.

This is important, because it has been proven to move the penetration and retention needles. And, those needles directly lead to increased revenue. That is a win-win-win. So, I invite you to read on to see how you can WIN with MOSSA. Alright, Let's Move!

An Interview With Terry Browning,
President and CEO of MOSSA

Club Insider (*C.I.*) - Terry, it is hard to

believe it has been 11 years (to the month) since *Body Training Systems* became MOSSA! Today, I am looking forward to discussing what has transpired since that time. Let's get started. First, take us back 11 years to the name change... What brought it about? And, how did you decide on MOSSA?

Terry Browning (TB) - Wow, 11 years ago, already! Time flies when you are having fun! The name MOSSA was the fantastic creative idea by **Derek Barton** of *Barton Productions*. We entered into a five-year partnership with *Microsoft* with the launch of *Xbox Fitness* on *Xbox One*, and we felt this was perfect timing to evolve our company with a new name, look and vibe.

Rich Boggs, our *Co-Founder*,
(See MOSSA Page 8)



Terry Browning

World Gym International Acquired

LOS ANGELES, CA - *World Gym International*, the iconic global fitness brand, has been acquired by *World Fitness Services, Ltd* ("WFS"), the parent company of *World Gym Taiwan*, a publicly listed company (Taiwan Stock Exchange) and the largest franchisee in the *World Gym* network. WFS owns and operates 130 *World Gym* fitness centers in Taiwan, demonstrating its deep understanding of the brand and commitment to fitness excellence.

This strategic move marks a significant milestone for *World Gym*, positioning it for accelerated global expansion and an enhanced member experience while preserving its legendary fitness legacy. WFS brings substantial



resources and expertise to the table, enabling *World Gym* to further solidify its position as a global leader in the fitness
(See *World Gym* Page 6)

Blink Fitness Announces Outcome of Auction

NEW YORK, N.Y. - *Blink Fitness* ("Blink" or the "Company"), the affordable fitness brand known for its commitment to an inclusive and inviting environment, announces that *PureGym* has been selected as a winning bidder for a substantial portion of the Company's assets following an auction pursuant to the Company's court-supervised sale process. *PureGym*, a leading global gym operator, will acquire Blink's corporate operations and a substantial portion of Blink's locations, with a focus on New York and New Jersey.

"We are pleased that *PureGym* was selected as a winning bidder in our sale process, and we are excited to be moving forward with new owners who believe in our business and will deliver on



our mission to democratize fitness for all," said **Guy Harkless**, President and Chief Executive Officer of *Blink Fitness*. "We are grateful for the dedication of our entire Blink Nation and their continued focus on delivering the best experience possible for our valued members. We appreciate the relationships with our partners and the tremendous loyalty of our members as we enter this new chapter."

(See *Blink Fitness* Page 6)

Inside the Insider: Edition #371

- The FTC Ruling on "Click to Cancel" in Fitness Memberships - **By:** Sara Kooperman, JD
- Lessons Learned from "Texas Skis" Teambuilding Exercise - **By:** Herb Lipsman
- Designing a Healthy Health Club: A Guide to Sustainable and Safe Wellness Spaces - **By:** Bruce Carter
- The Secrets of Visionary Thinkers: 10 Rules For Brainstorming Success - **By:** Susan Robertson
- Maximize Your Holiday Sales with Expert PR Strategies from Nancy Trent
- And, of Course, *Norm's Notes*

Norm's Notes

■Hello Everybody! This is your Club Insider Founder and Tribal Leader Since 1993 checking in with our **371st 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!!!**

■As I type this **Note**, today is **November 11, 2024: Veterans Day**. Before I begin my **Norm's Notes** about our industry, let me wish all of you who are Veterans OR have family who have served our country, a **Happy Veterans Day!** I want to **THANK** all of you who have served our country for your

service! On this special day, I also want to remember my **DAD, NORMAN L. CATES, SR.**, who served in the **U.S. Air Force** for 21 years before he retired. I remember his stories about when he was a **Top Gunner on a B-17 Bomber during World War II**. May my Dad, and any loved one's you all may have lost **REST IN PEACE**.

■Big **NEWS** out of L.A., as **World Gym** has been acquired. Check out the **Press Release on Page #3**.

■This news comes from my friend, **GEORGE JACKSON**, about his company, **TG The Gym**, a **C.I. Advertiser**.

EL CAJON, CA - TG The Gym announces the opening of its El Cajon location in December 2024. Presales have begun. El Cajon will serve its community of bodybuilders, powerlifters and serious fitness enthusiasts with over 20,000 square feet of indoor gym space, wellbeing training and recovery areas, red light therapy, saunas, compression therapy and first of its kind frost locker for cold therapy.

Plus, all the hard-core equipment TG is known for and **TG Supps**, a supplement line for the serious fitness

enthusiast, in addition to all the great TG apparel.

Soft opening begins December 2nd, 2024, with Grand opening date projected to be February 2025. TG Wellbeing and regular memberships were available at charter membership pricing starting November 11th, 2024.

TG is fortunate and excited to continue to serve its members every day, with the same passion and excitement the company has always had!

TG The Gym has been home to best fitness training 40 years, offering men and women across the community the opportunity to challenge their bodies and build strength every day. The company will be celebrating 40 years in 2025; its San Diego location opened in 1986.

The opening of El Cajon brings TG's locations to ten. And, location 11 will be announced soon!!!

TG will continue to promote the fact that a good immune system is essential to living a long healthy life. Daily vigorous exercise, a healthy well-balanced diet, proper amount of sleep, Vitamin D (get in sun and outdoors) and managing stress are the main ingredients to maintaining a good immune system.



Norm Cates

■**HealthFitness**, a Trustmark company and comprehensive provider of fitness, wellness and injury prevention programs, announces it has acquired **Corporate Fitness Works** (CFW), an industry leader in delivering custom onsite and virtual fitness management solutions. CFW manages 70 corporate fitness centers across 23 states, offering a wide variety of in-person and virtual services. Following the transaction, (See **Norm's Notes** Page 7)

About Club Insider

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST

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PUBLISHER
Justin Cates (p): (863) 999 - 2677
(e): Justin@clubinsideronline.com

FOUNDER & TRIBAL LEADER SINCE 1993
Norm Cates, Jr. (p): (770) 635 - 7578
(e): Norm@clubinsideronline.com

CONTRIBUTING AUTHORS - Bruce Carter, Cathy Spencer Browning, Chris Stevenson, Frank Guengerich, Gary Polic, Herb Lipsman, Jeffrey Pinkerton, Jim Thomas, Nancy Trent, Paul Bosley, Rick Caro, Sara Kooperman, JD, and Thomas Plummer

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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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Photos depict a typical LA Fitness facility; clubs and amenities may vary. ©2024 Fitness International, LLC. All rights reserved.

Maximize Your Holiday Sales with Expert PR Strategies from Nancy Trent: Join the Webinar Hosted by Peter Moore's Halo Talks!

The holiday season is just around the corner, and it's not just about gift-giving... It's a golden opportunity for gym owners and fitness businesses to boost revenue, increase membership and create memorable experiences for clients. If you're wondering how to take full advantage of this prime time of year, you won't want to miss the upcoming webinar from PR expert **Nancy Trent**, hosted by *Halo Talks*.

Nancy Trent, *Founder and President of Trent & Company Inc.*, has been at the forefront of wellness and fitness PR for decades. Her firm was the first to specialize in this niche, helping countless businesses not only grow but thrive in the competitive wellness space. Now, Nancy is sharing her knowledge with you in an exclusive webinar: *Boost Your Holiday Sales - PR Strategies for Gym Owners and Fitness Businesses*.

The holiday season offers an incredible opportunity to connect with your existing members while attracting new customers eager to jumpstart their fitness goals. However, it's not just about putting up festive decor and offering discounts; it's about strategic, publicizable promotions that will spread the word and keep your business top of mind.

In this power-packed session, Nancy will share tried-and-true methods to help you create buzz around your fitness brand and maximize sales during the holidays. In this exclusive webinar, Nancy will guide you through several key strategies that can make your fitness business the go-to destination during the holiday season, including:

■ **Gift Memberships and Packages:** Learn how to craft irresistible holiday gift memberships and packages, perfect for gifting to friends, family and coworkers.

■ **In-Gym Sales and Pop-Ups:** Get expert advice on hosting in-gym holiday sales events and pop-up shops that offer apparel, supplements and fitness accessories to boost your retail profits.

■ **Holiday Events Sponsored by Equipment Manufacturers:** Explore how partnerships with equipment manufacturers can help you host holiday-themed events that excite your clients and build brand loyalty.

■ **Sales and Promotions:** Discover creative ways to offer discounts on retail items like fitness gear and supplements while maintaining your brand's value.

■ **Special Classes and Workshops:** Keep your clients engaged and coming back

with limited-time, holiday-themed fitness classes and workshops that cater to the festive spirit.

■ **Cross-Promotions with Local Businesses:** Collaborate with local restaurants, retailers and other businesses for joint holiday promotions that will expand your customer reach.

As gym owners and fitness business leaders, it's crucial to not only capitalize on the increased spending habits of your customers during the holidays but also build relationships that will carry into the New Year. This webinar will give you the insights and tools to transform the holiday season into a powerful revenue-driving opportunity, ensuring your business hits the ground running in 2025.

Don't miss this chance to learn from one of the top minds in fitness PR. *Boost Your Holiday Sales - PR Strategies for Gym Owners and Fitness Businesses* is the webinar you need to turn holiday cheer into a successful marketing plan.

Date: Thursday, November 21, 2024

Time: 3:00 PM EST

How to Register: The *Halo Talks* webinar is open for registration now. Sign up today



Nancy Trent

to secure your spot and get ready to implement these powerful strategies in time for the holiday rush: bit.ly/clubinsider162.

Get ahead of the competition and make this holiday season your most profitable yet. Register now for Nancy Trent's expert webinar and boost your business with proven PR strategies that work!

...World Gym

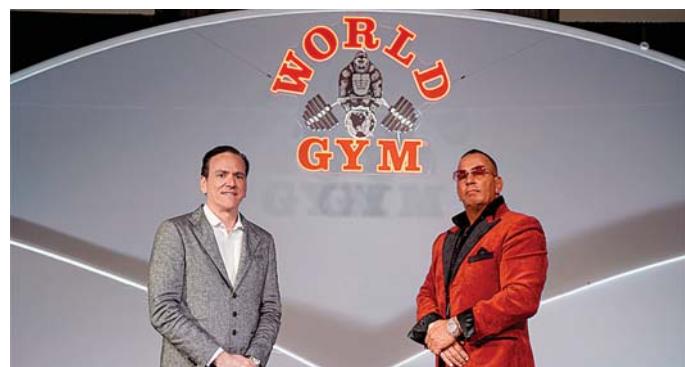
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industry. **John Caraccio**, *Chairman of WFS*, will serve as *interim CEO of World Gym International*, while **Michael Sanciprian**, *former CEO of WFS*, shall serve as *Executive Director*.

This acquisition by WFS, World Gym's largest and most successful franchisee, infuses the brand with new energy and resources to expand its global footprint and enhance the fitness experience for members worldwide. Under the leadership of Caraccio and Sanciprian, World Gym Taiwan grew from a single location in 2001 to 130 today, showcasing its operational excellence and deep

understanding of the fitness market. The company maintains best-in-class sales and marketing, personal training and IT systems, providing a blueprint for success that will be leveraged to benefit World Gym franchisees around the globe. WFS is committed to providing franchisees with enhanced systems and tools to drive their own growth and success.

"As long-time partners and passionate advocates for the World Gym brand, we are thrilled to lead this next phase of growth," said John Caraccio. "We are committed to upholding the values that have made World Gym an iconic name in fitness while driving innovation and expansion in international markets."



John Caraccio and Michael Sanciprian

...Blink Fitness

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"The acquisition of Blink Fitness is transformational for PureGym in the U.S., a market we have been operating in since 2021," said **Humphrey Cobbold**, *CEO of PureGym*. "It gives our Group a meaningful presence in the country and a strong foothold in the attractive New York and New Jersey area. U.S. expansion has been an important part of our growth plan, which is why we actively participated in the Chapter 11 process and entered into an APA with Blink Fitness. We have, over several months, spent a considerable amount of management time and resources getting to

know the business, and the management team and have developed an excellent understanding of both its prospects and the opportunity it represents."

He continued, "The American fitness market is the largest and most dynamic in the world. We are incredibly excited by the scale of opportunity and the chance to tailor and apply our proven model there. Through investment and upgrades, we plan to enhance the high-quality fitness experience Blink Fitness members currently enjoy. We are looking forward to working with the Blink Fitness team and can't wait to get going so we can give more people access to high quality, affordable fitness."

Agreement Details

Under the terms of the agreement, PureGym, whose investors include *Leonard Green & Partners* and *KKR*, will acquire Blink's corporate operations and a substantial portion of Blink's locations, with a focus on New York and New Jersey, for \$121 million in cash. PureGym also intends to assume certain liabilities. The transaction is expected to close later this year.

Blink continues to evaluate bids submitted for locations outside of New York and New Jersey.

Throughout the court-supervised process, and as the Company works to complete the transaction, Blink will

continue to provide members with the high-quality fitness experience they have come to expect.

Advisors and Additional Information

Blink Fitness is represented by *Young Conaway Stargatt & Taylor, LLP* as legal advisor, *Moelis & Company* as financial advisor, and *Portage Point Partners* as restructuring advisor, with **Steven Shenker** serving as *Chief Restructuring Officer*.

Additional information regarding the Company's court-supervised process is available at Blink's restructuring website, www.BlinkFitnessFuture.com.

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...Norm's Notes

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HealthFitness will serve over 200 clients at more than 360 sites nationwide.

■ **This Note** is about *Fitnessmith*, a company based in Boynton Beach, Florida. Fitnessmith, a leading provider of fitness equipment sales and service across 47 states, has announced the acquisition of *Gym Source USA*'s commercial equipment, preventive maintenance and service divisions. *Gym Source USA*, a well-established name in the fitness industry since 1936, has built a reputation as a trusted supplier of fitness equipment and services across 21 states. *Gym Source USA*'s clients include multi-family housing complexes, country clubs, municipal centers, schools, universities, and other commercial fitness facilities. **MICHAEL SCICHILONE**, CEO of *Fitnessmith*, expressed his enthusiasm for the acquisition: "We are thrilled to welcome *Gym Source USA*'s commercial sales and service divisions into the *Fitnessmith* family. This acquisition significantly enhances our reach and strengthens our position as a leading provider in the industry. We look forward to building upon *Gym Source USA*'s legacy of excellence and continuing to deliver high-touch service and top-quality fitness equipment to all clients."

Our commitment is to ensure a smooth transition and to uphold the high standards that both our customers and *Gym Source USA*'s customers have come to expect."

All existing *Gym Source USA* customers can expect a seamless transition to *Fitnessmith* with uninterrupted services and continued access to premium fitness equipment. As part of the agreement, *Fitnessmith* will offer employment to select *Gym Source USA* employees to ensure a smooth handover and maintain excellence in both sales and service.

DEBORAH MCKEEVER, President of *Gym Source USA*, commented: "We take great pride in our equipment sales and service divisions, and the quality of work and expertise provided by our skilled technicians and sales staff on the frontlines every day. They, along with our support teams, are dedicated to delivering excellence to our customers."

With *Fitnessmith* acquiring *Gym Source USA*'s sales and service divisions, they are now among the largest sales and service providers in the nation.

■ **This Note** is from our friend, **MIKE ALPERT**, and I quote him here:

"What separates good gyms from great gyms is the attention to detail in the member experience. Over my years in the industry,

I've gathered a set of best practices that consistently elevate gyms and health clubs to the next level.

Invest in Staff Training - Your staff is the face of your gym. Ongoing training in customer service, technology, and fitness trends ensures that they provide top-tier support to your members.

Utilize Member-Facing Technology - Member-facing software is a game-changer. Allow members to book classes, track progress and communicate with trainers through one seamless app. This level of convenience and engagement keeps members loyal.

Design a Welcoming Atmosphere - From the way your front desk greets members to the cleanliness of your locker rooms, every touchpoint matters. Create an atmosphere where members feel comfortable, motivated, and eager to return.

Your gym's future depends on how well you serve your members today.

What's one change you've made to improve your member experience? I'd love to hear about it. My email address is: mike@smarthealthclubs.com."

■ Here's some exciting news from Augie's

Quest: Thanks to the incredible support of the Tradition of Hope community, Augie's **Quest** raised over **\$1.1 million** at its Las Vegas Bash! Those donations empowered hope to the ALS community within the room and beyond.

Chairman, Lynne Nieto, presented **Juli Brown** with the **Augie Nieto Legacy Award**, honoring Juli's commitment to Augie's **Quest**. Lynne spoke about the importance of carrying on Augie's Legacy in the fight against ALS. **ALS Therapy Development Institute's CEO and Chief Scientific Officer, Fernando Vieira**, spoke about the progress being made in the lab thanks to funding from Augie's **Quest** and presented **Johnny Rodriguez, former Mater Dei Lacrosse Coach**, with the **Champion for ALS Award**. Johnny's comments about living with ALS received a well-deserved standing ovation spurring a flurry of donations to ALS research.

A special thank you to **Sheléa McDonald** for being an incredible host and to **David Foster, Katharine McPhee** and **Daniel Emmet** for an unforgettable show.

An additional special thank you to generous matching donor, **David Pyle** and the **OneRoot Foundation** for helping to make the **18th Annual Tradition of Hope Gala** a huge success!

Founded by **Augie Nieto**, Augie's
(See **Norm's Notes** Page 18)

...MOSSA

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knew Derek from our past work with *Gold's Gym* and felt Derek and his team would be perfect for the rebranding efforts. We told Derek the only thing we wouldn't part with from our Body Training Systems corporate branding is our tagline, *LET'S MOVE!*[®]

Derek came to us with an Italian word that means: **move, excite and stir**, which was **MOSSA**. It was love at first sight... and sound!

C.I. - What is MOSSA's Mission?

TB - Our Mission as a company has not changed since we launched the step fitness craze in 1989 with the introduction of *The Original Step*[®]. **It's to inspire people to move!** The problem isn't that people are NOT maximizing their workout or keeping their heart rate in just the right zone for the appropriate length. The problem is that *NOT enough people move*. We all know the horrific statistics of the population that is overweight, obese and sedentary. The solution for the majority is workouts that are enticing and enjoyable enough to return to and begin a healthy habit.

There have been two common themes for nearly 30 years: (1) Most people prefer to work out in groups rather than

alone, and (2) Music is the most powerful tool to help motivate and assist people in disassociating from the discomfort of exercise. The pandemic and technology have accelerated the epidemic of loneliness and isolation, so these themes are more important today than ever before.

We passionately believe the most effective way to get more people moving is through professionally developed group fitness programs, taught by engaging instructors, with rocking playlists, innovative but inclusive programming, and with the "power of together" – so they feel connected through social interaction.

Blue Zones longevity experts coined a term known as *Social Motion*, which is when people move together, to music. Their research shows that it not only enhances performance – literally making people work harder – but it also lifts their spirits and benefits everyone psychologically and emotionally. Social Motion reduces the feeling of fatigue and makes everyone enjoy the workout even more. This is the medicine that will inspire more people to move.

C.I. - What makes your group fitness programs unique?

TB - Much of the industry is focused on getting the fit, fitter. There is value

to this, but it will not help to increase the penetration rate. To increase the number of members joining health clubs, we need inclusive, broad-reaching programs that result in people moving better and feeling better.

To accomplish this, we have partnered with the *Institute of Motion (iOM)*, an Applied Human Health and Performance company. Their focus is on improving people's Movement Health, not just fitness. The foundation of MOSSA programs is *iOM's 4Q™ Training Model*, which ensures a programming approach that enables us to move well in all facets of life, from athletic feats to everyday essential movements. Ultimately, building an unbreakable body for life. Improving Movement Health is a key to increasing someone's active lifespan, commonly referred to as *healthspan*.

Further, setting apart our programs is our exclusive music partnership with *Saifam*, the industry's top music producer, with 13 music studios around the world. Playlists include the most popular songs from today, complemented by chart-topping hits from the past five decades, to ensure something for everyone. Our sound engineers customize each song to ensure movement and music are seamlessly connected, creating a one-of-a-kind experience.

C.I. - How do you ensure MOSSA programs will work for a health club in Georgia, Ohio, New Jersey, Oregon or anywhere?

TB - Our program development team is committed to creating programs with the broadest appeal for all health clubs we partner with. To accomplish this, we have created the most thorough and comprehensive field-testing process in the industry. Every quarter, we produce a new workout for each group fitness program, and before filming, we enlist 150 - 200 instructors from our customers worldwide to "test" the workouts for a two-week period to thousands of members. Surveys, feedback and a conference call with the testers help the development teams finalize each program. Our customers are integral in creating the programs as their involvement ensures we create effective programs for everyone.

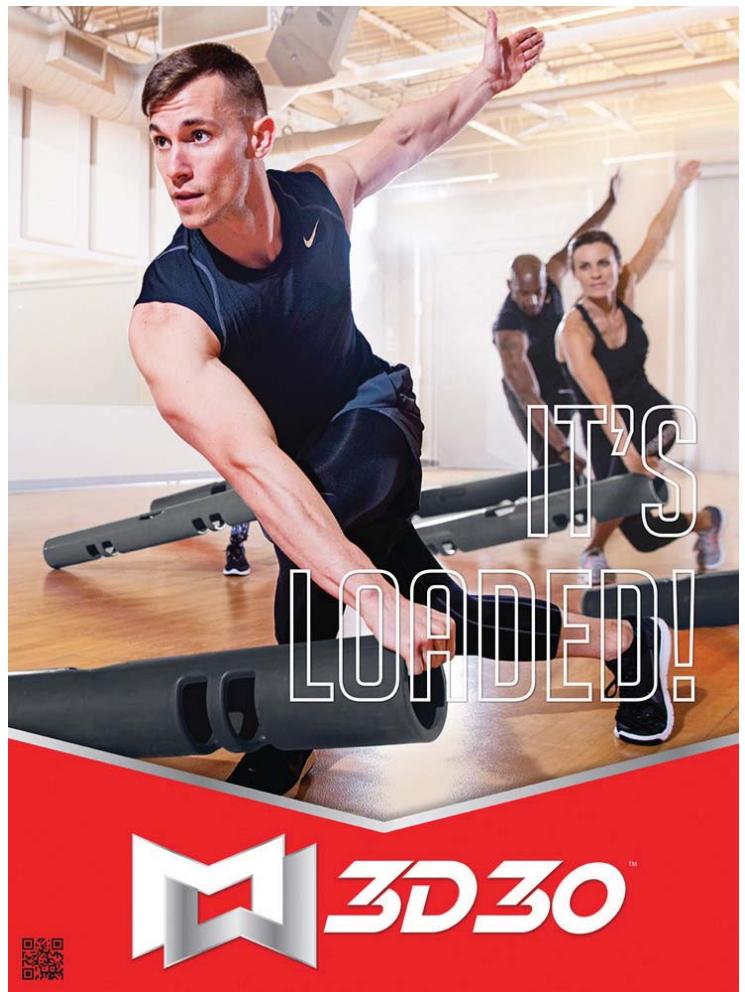
C.I. - What programs does MOSSA offer?

TB - We have always focused on major trends, not fads, which are typically short-lived. We currently offer 12 programs that cover categories from strength, to cardio, to mind-body (bit.ly/clubinsider155). We are extremely well positioned to assist health clubs in taking advantage of the growing popularity of strength training

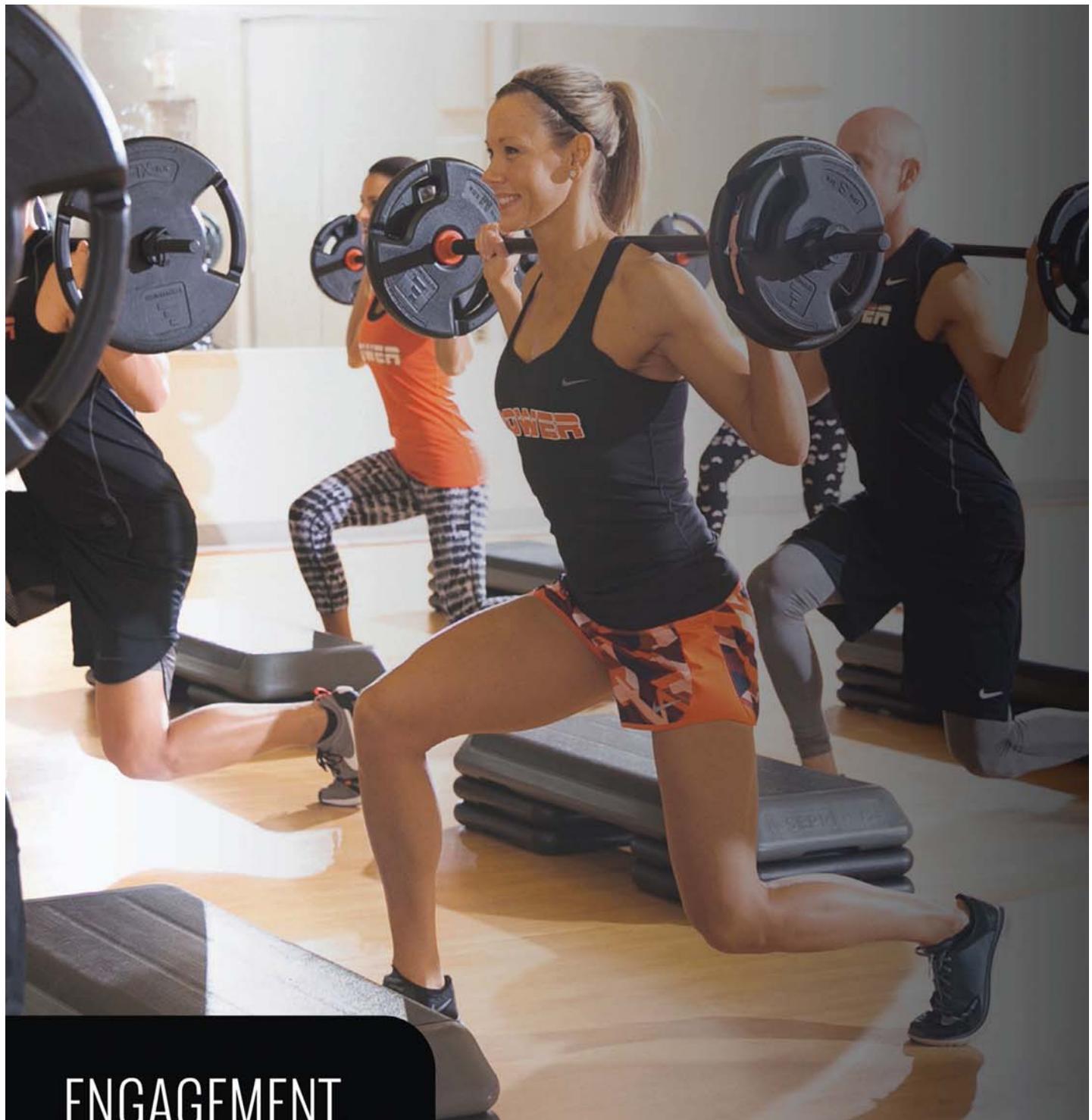
(See **MOSSA** Page 10)



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...MOSSA

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for all demographics, coupled with the growing interest in group fitness for all demographics.

Group Power is the premier strength training program in the group fitness room as it isn't simply a high repetition barbell class, but with IoM's 4Q Training Model, it's an innovative strength training programming that makes people muscle AND movement strong. *Group Power* uses the barbell, weight plates and body weight for traditional strength training exercises and full body integrated exercises for more functional, "real life" strength (bit.ly/clubinsider156). For our customers, because of *Group Power*, strength training has been the most popular format in the group fitness room for over 20 years.

A real evolution of MOSSA programs began when IoM introduced the cutting-edge training method of *Loaded Movement Training* with the ViPR PRO equipment. They have made tremendous inroads with collegiate and professional sports and conditioning coaches, and it's becoming a standard of training for many athletes (bit.ly/clubinsider157).

We have co-developed three programs with IoM to bring the tremendous

benefits of *Loaded Movement Training* to the masses. *3D30* is a three-dimensional, loaded movement training workout that includes phases of HIIT (bit.ly/clubinsider158). *MOVE30* is a revolutionary movement program for the actively aging population (bit.ly/clubinsider159). And our newest program, *ATHLETE30*, is an athlete-inspired, interval based, boot camp session (bit.ly/clubinsider160).

■ **C.I.** - What can a health club expect when partnering with MOSSA?

TB - The average club services between 10 - 15% of their visits in group fitness. Once we partner, in the first year, they will experience a 100% increase, doubling their group fitness participation. At this point, they are on track to service 40 - 50% of their visits in group fitness. This is possible because of our systematic approach to running group fitness and the resources we provide:

■ Programming ensures high quality and consistency, which enables a very strategic method of scheduling classes to enable increased participation.

■ Training enables clubs to build great instructor teams that are diverse (men and women of all ages) to appeal to a very broad

audience. With a great team and programs scheduled properly, the opportunity to market the programs are endless.

■ Every quarter, our club partners receive a new campaign to reach more people. Our campaigns are not just about the physical benefit of the programs, but also lifestyle benefits, wellness benefits and mental benefits that the programs bring.

■ Frequent webcasts, white papers, blogs and more help our partners maximize group fitness participation, increase retention efforts and sell memberships through group fitness.

■ **C.I.** - What has happened to health clubs and group fitness since the pandemic?

TB - Like the industry, we had a percentage of customers go out of business, which is very difficult to see. Fortunately, the vast majority have navigated their way through the last four years, adjusting along the way. Loss of instructors and less member traffic caused many to cut back on group fitness offerings.

This last year has been a relaunch, or *Group Fitness 2.0*, for many. We support them with a 10-week reboot program to help them refocus, prioritize and execute a game plan to once again make group

fitness their unique selling position.

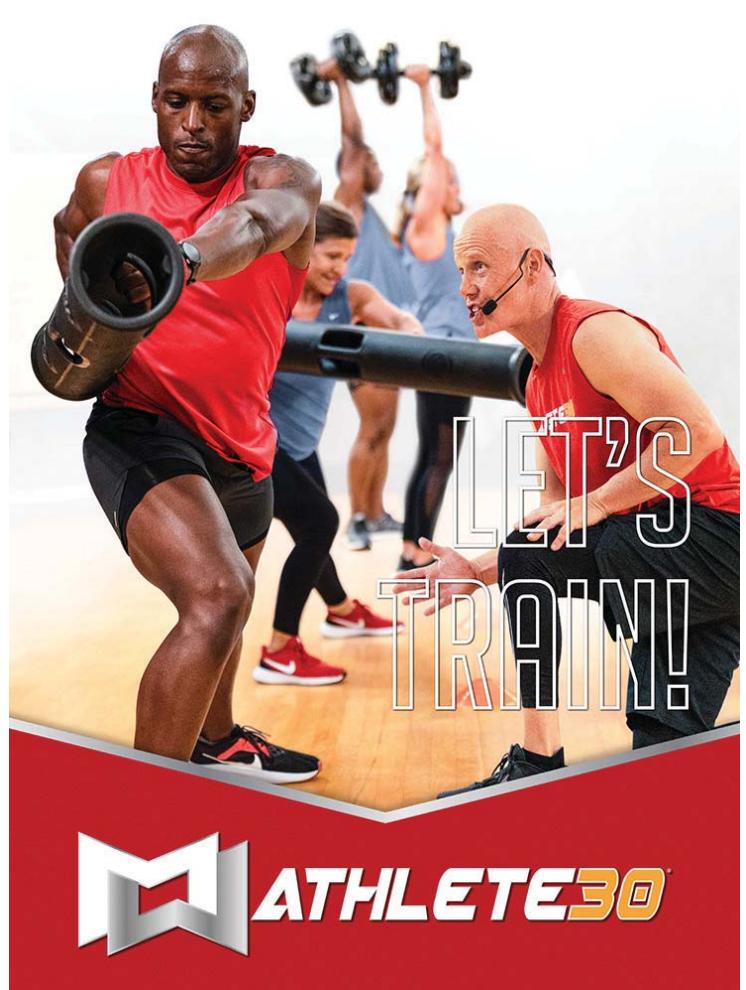
The instructor team is key, and we support our customers in building an exclusive team. Many find them under their roof by getting more staff (front desk, sales, PT) involved or their raving fan members. The bottom line is people are their most valuable asset, so we encourage them to invest in their instructor team, support them with great systems and don't share them!

■ **C.I.** - Please tell us about your key management team members.

TB - These last four years have really brought considerable change for our team as well. In July 2020, our CFO, *Co-Founder and Inventor of The Original Step*, **Ray Irwin**, passed away unexpectedly from lung cancer. Shortly after, **Rich Boggs**, our optimistic entrepreneur (known as *Chief Cheerleader*), retired. Fortunately, we had a strong and experienced leadership team that has been in place for many years to adjust to the departures and continue to navigate the company, and team, through to today:

■ **Cathy Spencer-Browning**, who joined MOSSA in 1998, is our *VP of Programming and Training* and is responsible for the company's main products: programming,

(See **MOSSA** Page 11)







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"I highly recommend the HWLS team. They've provided us invaluable guidance regarding membership marketing and fitness programming."

- Mary Thomas | Owner and General Manager | Western Racquet & Fitness Club | Green Bay, WI

...MOSSA

continued from page 10

training and education.

Leann Spencer, with the company since 1999, is our *VP of Operations*, and she's responsible for making it all happen. Thanks to Leann, products are produced, and all events occur.

Jeffrey Pinkerton, having joined the team in 2010, is our *VP of Business Development*, responsible for growth in both of our B2B and B2C markets.

We are a gritty organization with another 60 full-time and part-time team members. They are very passionate about the products we create and the company we strive to be. Their dedication has allowed us to come out of the last four years a better company with better products.

C.I. - A big topic in our last cover story on MOSSA was about breaking through on penetration rates, and importantly, increasing retention rates. How does MOSSA help with both?

TB - These are definitely key indicators to determine if the industry is becoming more successful and having greater impact on the health of our society. I have been in the industry since 1992, and the penetration rate has been very slow to move over the last 33 years. But, people's interest in wellness, active aging and overall health seems to be gaining momentum.

We have to acknowledge that

it's difficult to sell 'fitness' to the average person. We – MOSSA and our partner health clubs – are actually selling a 'lifestyle change.' Building a health habit is not simple, especially when our product takes work!

The key, then, to reaching more people is creating great member experiences. We really are in the hospitality industry. Members want professional programs and highly trained, motivating instructors. Health clubs want industry-leading programming, inspiring marketing campaigns, management tools, trainings and more. MOSSA delivers all of the above... to create an *unparalleled* member experience.

Now, to retain those people... When presented well, group fitness is a critical strategy for building better members – members who are less price sensitive, more social and more connected. Industry research has shown that the group fitness member engagement and retention rates are much higher than members not participating in group fitness.

We help turn health clubs into a third place for members, a place where people feel connected and accountable, and a place where great member experiences positively affect retention rates. And, here's what that can do to the bottom line: A successful group fitness department, 30 - 50% group fitness participation, would be responsible for managing \$300,000 to \$1,000,000 in membership revenue... a million-dollar department!

C.I. - Let's look in the crystal ball for a moment. In the next 3 - 5 years, what do you see?

TB-For MOSSA: We feel we are positioned very well because our focus on content – group fitness programs. We make sure there's something to move every member, and we help our partners by providing a premium product at a fantastic value. We also know our consumer product, *MOSSA On Demand*, will continue to grow and expose new people to our programs, which creates more demand for our health club partners.

For the industry: As always, it's an interesting time. Health, wellness and mindfulness are all gaining consumer awareness. Technology, health insurance, medical-pharma and government will play a role. A key with these variables is understanding consumer behavior. As an industry we must understand better why someone does or doesn't create a healthy habit. I understand many would like the solution to be technology and efficiency, but this may only work for some... like the fitness fanatics. The others, the majority, will need the human touch. They'll need a great member experience.

For yourself, personally: I just want to keep playing on a team that is passionate every day, cares about their teammates and wants to create raving fans of our customers. I'm proud to lead a company whose mission can have a profound impact on so many people's lives.

C.I. - To close this interview, what advice and/or lessons do you have to share with your industry peers?

TB - We've been a vendor since 1989 as *The Step Company*, began distributing group fitness programs in 1998 under *Body Training Systems*, and then created our own group fitness system and programs in 2005. So, over 35 years, we've ridden some highs and some lows. What's really resonated is the importance of the relationships and connections that are created to help ride those highs and lows.

Simon Sinek's advice of finding people who believe in what you believe is key to those relationships. And, this applies to your team, customers and vendors. It builds a foundation of trust and respect, which makes the relationship valuable and rewarding for everyone.

• • •

Thank you to **Terry Browning** for his time interviewing for and assistance with this cover story, sharing the updated story of MOSSA. We also thank MOSSA for being a dedicated *C.I. Advertiser* for many years! Now that you know their story, be sure to check out their **Ad on Page #9** and contact them today!

(Justin Cates is the Publisher of Club Insider and can be reached by phone at 863-999-2677 or email at Justin@clubinsideronline.com.)

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The FTC Ruling on “Click to Cancel” in Fitness Memberships

By: Sara Kooperman, JD

The Federal Trade Commission's (FTC) new "Click to Cancel" rule aims to protect consumers by making it easier to cancel subscriptions online, matching the simplicity of the sign-up process. This regulation, which affects businesses across industries, has particular implications for the fitness sector, where recurring memberships and subscriptions are core components.

Overview of the “Click to Cancel” Rule

The "Click to Cancel" rule mandates that businesses provide simple, online cancellation options that are comparable to the way consumers originally signed up. Fitness businesses must now offer clear, straightforward cancellation methods that align with digital consumer expectations. This change is part of the FTC's broader effort to prevent "dark patterns" that make it difficult for consumers to unsubscribe.

The rule also requires prompt cancellation processing and prohibits barriers that could delay the process. However, it still allows retention efforts, like offering membership freezes or other benefits, if consumers consent to hearing such offers. Importantly, this rule does not require annual reminders for automatic renewals but emphasizes privacy protections throughout the cancellation process.

Key Considerations for Fitness Businesses

Fitness operators need to take several steps to comply with the rule,

which goes into effect within 180 days from October 16, 2024:

1. Simplified Online Cancellation

Fitness centers must ensure that members can cancel online using the same platform or website where they initially signed up. This might require website updates, mobile app improvements or adjustments to third-party management software. It's essential that cancellation options are as easy to access as subscription ones.

2. Clear Terms and Conditions

Businesses should revise their membership agreements to clearly outline the cancellation process. This includes emphasizing that cancellations can be completed digitally and ensuring that the terms are transparent and straightforward.

3. Training and Adaptation

Staff need to be trained to handle cancellations in compliance with the new rule. This includes understanding how to offer retention solutions respectfully, only if the consumer is open to hearing them, and avoiding aggressive tactics that could violate FTC guidelines.

4. Retention Strategies

While fitness businesses can still make retention offers, they must do so only if the consumer opts to hear them. Operators should refine their retention scripts and focus on presenting valuable options like membership pauses, discounts or alternative class formats, ensuring they are communicated efficiently.

5. Improved Customer Experience

Though this rule may initially seem challenging for member retention, it presents an opportunity to enhance customer trust

and satisfaction. Offering clear and hassle-free cancellations can encourage potential members to try services without feeling trapped, potentially boosting initial sign-ups and long-term loyalty.

6. Compliance Timeline and Penalties

Fitness businesses must comply within 180 days of the rule's effective date (October 16, 2024). Failure to comply could lead to FTC investigations and penalties, making timely implementation critical.

Long-Term Impact on the Fitness Industry

While the "Click to Cancel" rule might increase short-term churn rates, it has the potential to improve overall brand perception and trust. By focusing on transparency, member satisfaction and offering valuable services, fitness businesses can turn compliance into an opportunity for growth.

To prepare, fitness operators should prioritize updating their digital systems, revising contracts and training staff. Treating this rule as a chance to enhance the overall customer experience can lead to stronger long-term relationships and a more positive industry reputation.

Conclusion

The FTC's "Click to Cancel" rule is a significant regulatory shift that demands immediate attention from fitness businesses. By streamlining the cancellation process, improving communication and focusing on customer-centric solutions, fitness operators can stay compliant while strengthening their brand. Ultimately, the rule encourages a more



Sara Kooperman, JD

transparent, consumer-friendly approach, which can drive both trust and engagement.

(Sara Kooperman, JD, CEO of SCW Fitness Education, WATERinMOTION, and S.E.A.T. Fitness, Founder of the MANIA, Convention, sits on the canfitpro Advisory Panel and the Gold's Gym Think Tank and was a Founding Board Member for the Women In Fitness Association - WIFA. Recently nominated for the IDEA Fitness Leader of the Year Award, Kooperman won the Most Innovating Fitness Pro by Fitness Industry Technology Council - FIT-C. Sara is the best-selling author of FIT FOR BUSINESS, an inductee into the National Fitness Hall of Fame, an Illinois State Businesswoman of the Year, esteemed panelist for multiple Webinars & Podcasts and sits on the ACSM Communication & Public Information Committee.)

Lessons Learned from “Texas Skis” Teambuilding Exercise

By: Herb Lipsman

Years ago, while serving as General Manager for The Houstonian Club, I participated with the leadership team of The Houstonian Hotel, Club and Spa in a teambuilding day where we engaged in several teamwork exercises designed to strengthen bonds, mutual understanding, respect for one another and improve cooperation and collaboration.

It was a great day together, and it accomplished most of our objectives. One exercise, in particular, made an impression on me and my teammates, and it has stayed with me throughout my career.

The exercise was called, "The Texas Skis." Allow me to paint the picture:

All team members (20) must assemble themselves straddling two long wooden planks that have rope loops attached so that each participant can grab a rope loop to help them balance themselves during the exercise. The objective is to move all team members on the Texas Skis from the starting line to a finish line, 50 - 60 feet ahead. We could all climb on and move in unison slowly together, but it was a very tight squeeze. We could have smaller groups make the trek, then some return to pick up the others, thereby taking more trips.

There were two primary rules:

1. If anyone stepped off the planks by accident, the team had to go back to the

starting line and start over.

2. There was a time limit to complete the exercise... 20 or 30 minutes as I recall.

Guess what happens when you put 20 high-performance (mostly Type A) leaders together trying to plan out how to successfully complete this exercise... Yep, we all tried to impose our ideas on the group on how best to accomplish the goal while ignoring other team members. By now, you may have guessed the result: We analyzed and debated for nearly the full 20- to 30-minute time limit without ever taking the first step! Hence, we failed.

(See **Herb Lipsman** Page 15)



Herb Lipsman

FITNESS FACILITIES

**...Herb Lipsman**

continued from page 14

"Paralysis by Analysis."

This lesson made a lasting impression on me, and I'm sure most of my teammates. In our data-driven world of business, how often do we over-analyze what should be simple decisions where the results of inaction are far greater than making a mistake by acting before having 100% certainty?

Here are a couple examples of foolishness by owners and managers in the health club or private club industries:

First, we need to recognize that, for most health clubs, membership dues and fees represent 60% - 70% of total revenue. Food & Beverage (F&B) sales make up another chunk of the revenue pie, while ancillary services like Personal Training, golf or racquet sports lessons, aquatic programs, spa services and retail sales make up the balance. Note that these non-membership revenue streams all come with high cost of sales attached, meaning they contribute far less in terms of margin.

This means that every minute of management/leadership time spent over-analyzing how to squeeze more dollars out of these smaller revenue streams with even smaller margins, comes at the expense of

time and energy focused on the bullseye, membership growth and retention.

Here is one example. Most clubs with F&B operations spend endless hours digging into every minute detail of food costs, labor costs, waste, menu pricing, etc. Yet, the entire industry has proven over and over again, for decades, that for most clubs with an a la carte F&B operation (meaning a simple snack bar or café rather than offering large banquet business), this part of the business is an amenity for attracting and retaining members... not a profit center. Yet, nearly all clubs and club companies waste a disproportionate amount of valuable time and energy trying in vain to slay this beast.

What if your managers and staff were instructed to use the F&B outlet(s) as a means of wowing members and guests, such that they bragged about their experiences to friends and acquaintances? What if the F&B staff were instructed to "wow" members and guests with surprise giveaways like a free cup of coffee or a discounted meal? How would one additional membership referral's financial value compare to the little or no profit provided by F&B sales?

Here's another example: One of your group exercise instructors introduces a great idea for a new class format. If you are like many of the more sophisticated

data-driven companies, instead of just letting this enthusiastic instructor test their new format on a few groups to see how they like it, you require the instructor to research the format as to how similar programs are being received in other clubs, as well as requiring the manager to analyze the cost of the class and how it will affect the "budget."

In other words, you throw obstacles in their way, so that they become discouraged and drop the idea. How many great new innovative classes and programs have you passed up because you were hesitant to *take the first step*? How many more members would these innovative programs have attracted to your club had you allowed them to be tested? How many of your more creative instructors would still be with you had you fed their creativity instead of stifling it?

"Paralysis by Analysis!" Just food for thought...

For more thought-provoking ideas on managing your club(s), check out my book: *Caring (The Sequel): Valuable Insights Into Effective Club and Hospitality Management*. You can send inquiries to herblipsman@gmail.com.

*clubs in the Houston, Texas market over the past 30 years, most notably The Houstonian Hotel, Club and Spa. Lipsman has served on the Board of Directors for IHRSA. He was appointed by Mayor Bill White to serve as Chairman of the Mayor's Wellness Council for the City of Houston. Lipsman has also been invited to speak at numerous industry conferences and conventions around the world, including the U.S., UK, Australia, New Zealand, Germany, Italy, Russia and Mexico. Most recently, Lipsman authored and published his book, *Caring (The Sequel): Valuable Insights into Effective Club and Hospitality Management*. Learn more about Herb and order his book at bit.ly/herb-lipsman-caring.)*

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(Herb Lipsman is a veteran of the club industry, having managed some of the most prestigious athletic clubs and golf/country

Designing a Healthy Health Club: A Guide to Sustainable and Safe Wellness Spaces

By: Bruce Carter

When designing a modern health club, creating a space that promotes both environmental sustainability and the health and wellbeing of its members is essential. This involves a dual approach: integrating energy-efficient, sustainable materials into the design and then making sure to effectively communicate these efforts to members.

Using energy-efficient design and sustainable materials not only lowers operational costs but also aligns with environmental responsibilities. Here's how you can design a healthy, sustainable health club that sets a new standard in wellness.

Energy efficiency choices are key. Make sure to choose energy-efficient HVAC systems to reduce the cost of heating, ventilation and air conditioning. High-quality insulation is also worth the

investment, helping maintain a comfortable temperature and significantly cutting down energy costs in the long term.

Efficient lighting, such as using LED lighting, which not only consumes less energy but also lasts longer than traditional bulbs is a must for all lighting choices. Installing motion sensors in lower-traffic areas is another way to cut back on unnecessary electricity use. The good news is there are wonderful newer types of LED lighting available, and many are low cost.

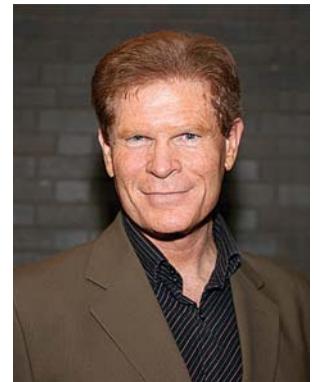
Whenever possible, maximize natural lighting options by designing the facility with large windows and skylights. This reduces reliance on artificial lighting, improves energy efficiency and creates a welcoming atmosphere.

If it is your own building, solar panels can be an excellent way to generate renewable energy on-site. Solar systems help reduce long-term energy

costs and strongly contribute to a facility's green image.

Water efficiency, such as implementing water-saving fixtures, including low-flow toilets and faucets, will reduce water consumption. Efficient water management is not only eco-friendly, it lowers water bills. But, keep in mind that most municipalities have building codes that require this.

When building a new or renovating an existing club, recycled and eco-friendly materials should be used. The good news is so many materials are available that are made with such materials. These include plastic laminates, rubber flooring, LVT (luxury vinyl tile) flooring, solid surface materials, metal, plastic, porcelain tile and vinyl (furniture and benches). Check with manufacturers as there are major brand choices that are durable, eco-friendly and don't cost any more than other options. These companies know it helps



Bruce Carter

their own green image by making these products available.

For example, Wilsonart laminates
(See **Bruce Carter** Page 17)

The Secrets of Visionary Thinkers: 10 Rules For Brainstorming Success

By: Susan Robertson

At various times, the popular press raises the idea that group brainstorming isn't effective at generating creative solutions. That assertion is erroneous for a variety of reasons. Groups can, and do, successfully brainstorm creative and useful solutions.

But, research does show that effective brainstorming requires adherence to some specific guidelines. If it's done casually, without guidelines, and the sessions are run by people with no knowledge of how to do it well, it will be significantly less effective than it could be.

It will either result in unrestrained chaos with no momentum to move the project forward, or it will just be plain boring (which also results in no momentum).

(And, for those of you who know that brainstorming is only one technique in a creative thinking toolbox, please excuse the shortcut. Most people think of brainstorming as any idea generation, and that's the way it's used here.)

So, how do you set up your brainstorming sessions for success? Follow the rules. They will see you safely through the necessary level of chaos, to the strategic momentum you're hoping for.

1. Free Them From the Fear. It's very difficult for people to share ideas if they're concerned about possible negative consequences. A process and a setting that help people get past the fear are critical for the brainstorming to be effective. One key principle in creating this setting is to prohibit any evaluation (even positive evaluation) during the idea generation.

2. Use the Power of the Group. Build, combine and create new ideas in the moment. Don't just collect ideas that people have already had. *The building and combining is where the magic happens.* Occasionally, break up into pairs or small groups. This will encourage even more sharing and combining of ideas.

3. Get Some Outside Stimulus. Duh. Asking the same group of people to sit in the same room and review the same information they've seen before is unlikely to result in exciting, new ideas. Talk to your customers, talk to other experts, explore how other industries are doing it. Have the meeting in the park or in a museum. Bring some toys into the room. There are countless ways to shake things up; try something new every time.

4. Encourage the Crazy. Everyone has

heard someone say at the beginning of a brainstorming, "every idea is a good idea." And, then, there's a collective eye roll because no one believes it. While it's not true that every idea is a practical idea, *it is true that every idea can offer useful stimulus for additional ideas.* Sometimes, those ideas that are tossed out as jokes can be the spark that leads to a new direction and a winning idea. So, allow, encourage and use every idea, even if only for creative fodder.

5. It's a numbers game. The more "at bats" you have, the more likely you are to hit a home-run. So, drive for quantity of ideas. Ensure the session is long enough to generate a lot. If you only spend ten minutes on brainstorming, don't expect great results.

6. Laugh a Lot. Humor stimulates creativity, so let it happen. One easy way to start off a session is to have everyone introduce themselves by answering a fun or silly question. One example you could use in the fall: "What's something you DON'T need more of for the holidays?" Some of the answers could even start sparking real ideas for the session!

7. Homework is Required. Both individual



Susan Robertson

and group efforts are critical for success. So, expect and insist on individual preparation in advance and follow-up afterward. Ensure everyone knows the goal in advance of the session, and ask them to do some homework before they arrive. When the session is over, create an action plan that allows ideas to continue to be shaped and added to as you move forward.

8. It's Not for Amateurs. Effective brainstorming requires knowledge and
(See **Susan Robertson** Page 18)



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...Bruce Carter

continued from page 16

are manufactured with recycled content and are free of air-damaging chemicals. Look for the *NALFA Certification Seal*, which assures the product's sustainability.

A key, and yet, a most often-overlooked aspect of designing a healthy health club is effectively communicating your environmental and safety efforts to members. Clear communication helps build trust, demonstrating that your facility prioritizes both the environment and member safety. Here's some suggestions to make this communication impactful.

Share information about the materials used in the club and the specific measures taken to ensure sustainability. Consider creating a visible, easy-to-understand display or digital information board explaining the club's use of sustainable materials, such as reclaimed wood, recycled rubber and eco-friendly laminates. This transparency reinforces your commitment to sustainability.

Highlight any certifications the facility has achieved, such as *WELL Certification* or *WELL Health-Safety Rating*. These ratings show that your club has met high standards for air and water quality, lighting and overall member health. According to a 2022 study published in

the Journal of Building and Environment, WELL Certification boosts occupant satisfaction, health and wellbeing, a benefit worth sharing with members. This will apply to those who own their own building and is worth investigating (bit.ly/clubinsider161).

Include this information in your mission statement. Add it to your website and any information systems in your club. Send email blasts and add video content of your club's commitment to a healthy health club.

Maintaining high standards for air and water quality is crucial in health-focused environments. Use air purification systems to keep the air fresh and free of allergens and ensure drinking water quality meets high health standards. Inform members about the air and water quality measures in place to enhance their workout experience and wellbeing.

In the wake of increased awareness about health and hygiene, effective sanitization practices should continue to be a top priority. Clearly communicate your cleaning protocols to reassure members about their safety. Signage in the locker rooms and workout areas detailing cleaning schedules and methods can provide peace of mind and contribute to a healthy, welcoming environment.

Encourage members to support the club's sustainability efforts by practicing

eco-friendly habits, like recycling water bottles and keeping equipment clean after use. Posting reminders throughout the facility promotes awareness and contributes to a culture of sustainability.

Let members know they belong to a special gym. Let them know about all your efforts and make this a key part of what you communicate and "sell" as a club.

Designing a healthy health club is about more than just going green. It's about

fostering a space that contributes to the overall wellbeing of members while being kind to the planet. By using energy-efficient designs, sustainable materials and clear communication strategies, you're creating a gym that stands out as both a health and sustainability leader.

(Bruce Carter is the owner of Optimal Design Systems, International. Bruce can be reached at bruce@optimaldsi.com.)

Club Insider Seeks Contributing Authors

Contact Justin Cates

**(863) 999 - 2677 or
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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 7

Quest to Cure ALS is the unwavering force driving breakthroughs in ALS research, defying limitations, and empowering hope for a future without this devastating disease.

This is GREAT News! And, may Augie Rest In Peace.

■ EoS Fitness proudly presented a check for \$110,000 to the *Challenged Athletes Foundation* (CAF) in a powerful show of support for inclusive and active lifestyles. The donation follows joint fundraising efforts to advance CAF's mission to provide individuals with physical disabilities resources to pursue active lifestyles and competitive sports. Eos recently celebrated a decade in business. **Congratulations!!!**

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■ **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 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.)

...Susan Robertson

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skill, both to participate, and especially to facilitate. It's a completely different set of techniques and expertise than running other meetings, so don't assume you can do it well just because you can run a great meeting. If you don't have a facilitator in your team who has the skill to train the group and run the session, hire an external one or get some training to develop the skills internally.

9. **If it looks like a duck but doesn't act like a duck, it's Not a Duck.** If you can't, or don't intend to, follow the guidelines for successful brainstorming, then don't call it brainstorming. For example, a meeting that just becomes a stage for one person to spout their ideas isn't useful or engaging. And, if a brainstorming is not organized and structured appropriately, everyone in the room will feel how ineffective it is, and they'll be sure to skip your next session. So, either set up for success, or don't bother.

10. **You're Not Done Until You Decide.** You've all been in this situation; it's the end of a brainstorming session, you've created a long list of ideas and someone

volunteers to type up and distribute the list. And... that's the end. There's no action, or at least none that anyone is aware of. It's fairly demotivating to spend time and energy generating ideas and then feel they went nowhere. So, plan time for, and require the group to do, some prioritizing of ideas during the session. Spend at least an equal amount of time on converging as you do on diverging. Yes, you read that right. *If you generate ideas for an hour, also spend an hour selecting, clarifying and refining ideas at the back end.* If you leave the meeting with a huge list of potential ideas, that's not success. You want to leave the meeting with a short list of clear ideas and a plan for action on each of them.

(Susan Robertson empowers individuals, teams and organizations to more nimbly adapt to change by transforming thinking from "why we can't" to "how might we?" She is a creative thinking expert with over 20 years of experience speaking and coaching in Fortune 500 companies. As an instructor on applied creativity at Harvard, Susan brings a scientific foundation to enhancing human creativity. To learn more, please go to: SusanRobertsonSpeaker.com.)

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Thank You to Our Contributing Authors

- **Bruce Carter** - President, Optimal Design Systems International - **(954) 888 - 5960**
- **Cathy Spencer Browning** - VP of Training & Programming, MOSSA - **(770) 989 - 4700**
- **Chris Stevenson** - Founder, The Empower Group - chris@stevensonempowers.com
- **Frank Guengerich** - President of Hospitality, Williams Group - frank@williamsgroup.com
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