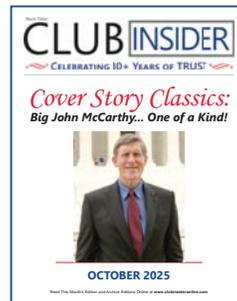
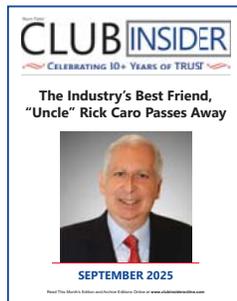
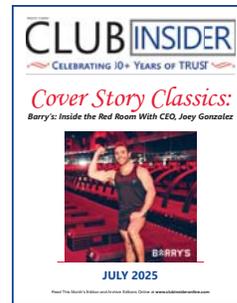
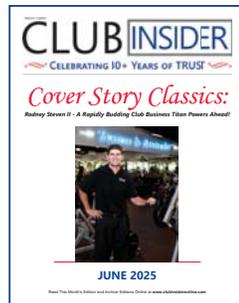
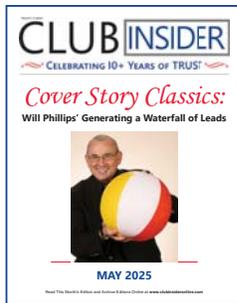
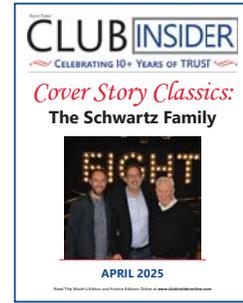
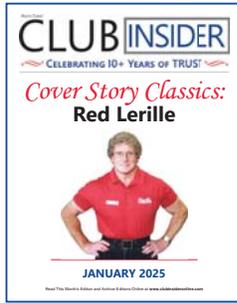


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CLUB INSIDER

CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST



2025 In Review

DECEMBER 2025

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CELEBRATING 30+ YEARS OF TRUST

2025 In Review

By: Justin Cates

In many ways, this year has been surreal and seemingly unreal. Some things remained the same, but in that "sameness," many things have changed and in very large ways. Personally, this year has been very difficult for me, accented by the highest of highs and lowest of lows. Prior to this year, knowing what was on the horizon for me, personally, and to relieve some pressure, professionally, I created the idea of our *Cover Story Classics* series. The goal of the series was for those new to or even veterans of this industry to experience the stories of the greats and learn from them. Little did I know what an emotional roller coaster that would be.

Not knowing what the near future would hold, I selected our first-ever cover

story subject (*February 1994*), **Red Lerille**, to spearhead this series. Sadly, he passed away shortly thereafter. That was very tough because his experience and knowledge was now lost, not to mention who he was as a person. And, here at *Club Insider*, it felt like the series was doomed from the start, but conversely, I am thankful to have been able to provide one final memorial to his greatness in this industry. His experience and knowledge lives on.

Then, on August 31, we lost our dear friend and someone we personally considered family, the *Industry's Best Friend*, the one we called "**Uncle Rick**" **Caro**. What he meant to us and the industry cannot be overstated, and I consider the gift of knowing him my entire life, as well as working with him on many things for many

years one of the truly great experiences of my life.

Along the way, throughout this series, we have covered others who are no longer with us, as well as those who still are and deserve their story to once again be known across the industry while we have their continued wisdom. In addition to the *Who's Who*, we also sprinkled in some of our special interest stories from years passed. Beyond this year's cover stories, as always, we also presented a great slate of articles from our *Contributing Author Team*, covered industry news and presented another volume of *Norm's Notes* by our *Founder and Tribal Leader Since 1993*, **Norm Cates**, who is turning 80 on January 17, 2026! Stay tuned for that upcoming cover story...

(See *2025 In Review Page 8*)



Justin Cates

Fitness Ventures Accelerates National Expansion with Acquisition of Three Crunch Locations

ORLANDO, FL - *Fitness Ventures LLC*, one of the largest and fastest-growing franchisees in the *Crunch Fitness* system, has announced the acquisition of Crunch Brownsville, Crunch North Brownsville and Crunch Edinburg, marking another major step in the company's aggressive national growth strategy.

With this acquisition, Fitness Ventures now operates 86 Crunch Fitness locations across 30 states, including 11 in Texas, solidifying the company's position as a leading multi-state operator with one of the most ambitious expansion pipelines in the Crunch network. With this acquisition, it clears the way for Fitness Ventures to

invest heavily in the Rio Grande Valley area. Fitness Ventures has begun to look for additional expansion sites and plans to open an additional 6 to 8 locations in the region.

"This acquisition represents another major milestone in our nationwide expansion," said **Brian Hibbard**, *CEO of Fitness Ventures*. "The Rio Grande Valley is a high-growth market with incredible potential, and integrating these three strong clubs into our portfolio accelerates our mission to deliver best-in-class fitness experiences in every community we serve."

Fitness Ventures' rise has been driven by a mix of strategic acquisitions,

new builds and ongoing investment in club upgrades, positioning the company as a key driver of Crunch's national footprint.

"We're executing one of the most aggressive growth plans in the Crunch system," Hibbard added. "Crossing 86 locations is only the beginning. Our pipeline of new clubs, renovations and future acquisitions keeps expanding, and members at all Fitness Ventures clubs will see that commitment immediately."

The company plans to bring its proven operating model, marketing expertise, enhanced member experiences standards and upgraded equipment strategy to the newly acquired clubs,



ensuring consistency across its growing national platform.

Fitness Ventures continues to target new markets and deepens its presence in existing ones, with additional developments already underway for 2026 and beyond.

See the **Crunch Ad** on **Page #2**.

Inside the Insider: Edition #384

- Fit for the Future: The Fitness Trends Defining 2026 - **By:** Nancy Trent
- Wellness Continues to Evolve - **By:** Frank Guengerich
- One of the Most Important Skills in Life: The Ability to Move On to the Next Point - **By:** Herb Lipsman
- AOM Fitness Programming: The Future of Inclusive, Revenue-Boosting Training - **By:** Sara Kooperman, JD
- Steak Done Well: Sell What Sells - **By:** Jeffrey Pinkerton
- World Gym Reports Robust November Revenue Growth and Unveils Ambitious 2026 Strategic Roadmap
- 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 **384th monthly edition of this 30+ 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!!!**

■ From our family to yours, we want to wish you a very **Merry Christmas** (or **Hanukah, Kwanzaa** or other) and a **Happy, Healthy New Year!**

■ Closing out this year's **Norm's Notes**, I can't help but to think of my friend of 50+

years that we lost: **"UNCLE RICK" CARO**. As I write this, today is December 15, 2025. Going back in time today, I recall my comments from 14 years ago on the occasion of Rick 65th birthday when I wrote: **All the Reasons We Love Rick...**

When, *Mrs. Rick Caro, SUE DENISON*, informed me that she was putting together a 65th Birthday Party for Rick, and she wanted us to write comments on all the reasons we love Rick, I immediately thought to myself... Geez Sue, I don't have a *whole year* to spare right now... Even though I do somehow make my living as a wordsmith, I find this writing assignment to be a truly big challenge. It's a big challenge because:

1. Words cannot express the caring and respect that I, and everybody I know of who knows Rick, have for the man.

2. Beyond words, the caring and respect that I, and everybody I know of who knows Rick, have for him, would be better expressed in person with lots of pats on the back and hugs. However, I'm on deadline right now for our *202nd monthly edition of Club Insider*, and unfortunately, I cannot physically be with Uncle Rick (as my son,

Justin, and I call him) and his lovely wife, Sue, for this wonderful and special *65th Birthday Celebration*.

3. **"Mad Cow"** is slowly creeping into my noggin, and there's no way I can possibly remember all I should remember about the wonderful experience of 30+ years of friendship and working with the one and only Rick Caro. Not long ago, one day when I was looking at the current leadership in the United States of America, I came to a conclusion. I concluded that America could do much better. Then, after a little more thought, I concluded that our industry, the health, racquet and sportsclub industry, could come up with a much better candidate to be *President of the United States*. His name is Rick Caro. I'm sure Rick, and his lovely Wife, Sue, will pooh-pooh my idea... forthwith. However, this is my idea, and I'm sticking to it! *RICK CARO for President of The United States of America!*

Consider some of the man's many attributes. Here are ten for starters... *all reasons we love Rick and all reasons RICK CARO would make a great President of the United States:*

1. Rick is humble...!



Norm Cates

2. Rick is smart...!
3. Rick is a realist with clear vision...!
4. Rick is a leader...!
5. Rick is not a narcissist...!
6. Rick has friends who are *Republicans, Democrats and Independents...*!
7. Rick is a forward thinker...!
8. Rick is a gifted public speaker, even without a teleprompter...!
9. Rick can be trusted to tell the truth
(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 **32nd 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 the **late 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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Fit for the Future:

The Fitness Trends Defining 2026

By: Nancy Trent

As we look ahead to 2026, fitness is evolving faster than ever, shifting from a purely physical pursuit to a holistic, convenient and personalized lifestyle. Gyms, studios and home setups alike are embracing innovations that go beyond traditional workouts, from cutting-edge pelvic-floor training to micro-workouts that fit into any schedule. Social connection, wellness technology and sensory experiences are redefining what it means to be active. Whether you're chasing strength, speed or balance, these trends signal that the future of fitness is smarter, more inclusive and more fun than ever.

Gyms are Getting on Board the Pelvis:

The biggest shift in fitness isn't about heavier lifts or faster reps, it's about training the muscles that quietly power everything: the pelvic floor. Pelvis-focused core training is exploding, and leading the charge is the *PelviX Core Fitness System*, a science-backed, effortless technology now appearing in top-tier gyms nationwide. PelviX has recently arrived at select *UFC GYM* locations on the West Coast, including standout clubs like *Cowboy UFC GYM* and at *Cowboys Fit* locations across the Dallas metro area.

These elite, performance-driven environments are embracing pelvic-floor fitness as the next frontier in recovery, stability and athletic performance. The PelviX system delivers up to 25,000 pelvic-floor muscle contractions in just 22 minutes fully clothed, seated and with zero effort. Benefits include stronger pelvic floor muscles, faster recovery, greater core performance and stability, and support for athletes, new moms, or quite frankly, anyone sitting more than a few hours a day. As leading gyms recognize the link between the pelvic floor and total-body power, the PelviX chair is quickly becoming the secret weapon behind stronger cores, smarter recovery and more resilient bodies.

Removing Fitness Pain Points:

The biggest barrier to consistent exercise isn't motivation, it's logistics. Space, time and convenience often get in the way. The latest fitness trend is all about removing pain points, making it easier than ever to work out anywhere, anytime, without compromising effectiveness. From placing a *WalkingPad* treadmill in the bathroom for morning steps to setting up a *LifeSmart PowerTouch* treadmill in the kitchen while breakfast cooks, home wellness is

getting smarter, more compact and more accessible. These innovations bring gym-quality results straight to your living space. This trend proves that fitness is not only expanding beyond the gym but beyond the home gym. With smart, compact and multifunctional products, anyone can fit wellness into their lifestyle anywhere, anytime. The future of fitness is convenient, effective and pain-free.

Retro Workouts Are Back:

Weighted vests, jump ropes and other "classic" fitness tools are flying off shelves, and it's more than a trend. This resurgence of retro equipment shows that fitness enthusiasts are returning to simple, effective tools that have stood the test of time. *GoFit*, a leader in home and studio fitness since 1999, is a prime indicator of this movement. Their range of retro-inspired equipment, from resistance gear to core trainers, reflects the growing demand for workouts that are both nostalgic and results-driven. By combining these tried-and-true tools with modern recovery solutions, *GoFit* makes it easy for anyone to train, recover and repeat, at home or in the gym. The takeaway: retro is the new modern. As brands like *GoFit* highlight, the classics aren't just back; they're essential.

Fitness in Minutes:

Brief sessions ranging from 5 to 15 minutes are gaining momentum as people seek flexible, efficient ways to stay active without disrupting their day. This micro-workouts trend is driven by the reality of modern life: packed schedules, remote work and the desire to integrate wellness seamlessly into daily routines. With micro-workouts, individuals can fit in strength, cardio or mobility exercises between meetings, during lunch breaks or even at home while dinner cooks.

The Rise of the Third Place Gym:

Fitness spaces are evolving beyond just workouts. More gyms are becoming "third places," destinations outside home and work where people can connect, socialize and build community. From group classes that spark friendships to lounges and coffee bars that encourage lingering, these gyms offer members a sense of belonging and a welcome break from daily routines. It's fitness with a social twist, making the gym as much about connection as cardio.

Sweat, Chill, Repeat:

Wellness enthusiasts are embracing extreme temperatures in their fitness routines. From hot yoga sessions that promote flexibility and detoxification to cryotherapy and cold plunges that aid recovery, heat and cold are becoming essential tools for both physical and mental rejuvenation. Gyms and studios are integrating these practices to enhance performance, boost circulation and elevate the post-workout experience.

Boundaries and Consent in Fitness Spaces:

Gyms have become one of the most intimate social environments in modern life. Working out together brings people closer. Everyone starts class in their own heads, but by the end, the group is unified, single-minded, and often, deeply connected. Some of my closest friendships were formed in gyms because the shared experience of pushing through something hard creates instant **Trust** and camaraderie.

This growing awareness of emotional connection is happening alongside a new emphasis on boundaries and consent. Teachers used to rely on hands-on assists as a sign that classes were small enough for personal attention and that instructors cared. Today, at *CorePower Yoga*, for example, they distribute laminated cards with one side saying, "It's OK to adjust me," and the other saying, "Thank you, please do not touch me," so students can communicate comfort levels without awkwardness. These small but powerful cues reflect an important industry shift: Fitness spaces are becoming places where community and closeness thrive but only with a renewed respect for personal autonomy.

Breathe In, Burn Out:

Scents are moving from spas to studios, with gyms leveraging aromatherapy to enhance workouts and recovery. Essential oils like eucalyptus, peppermint and lavender are used to invigorate, focus or relax members, turning exercise spaces into multisensory experiences that support both mental and physical wellness.

As **Dr. Liz Lehman**, *Founder of Aluminate Life*, explains:

"The future of fitness is multisensory, and scent plays a bigger role than most people realize. As a physician, I've long understood that essential oils have measurable effects on the nervous system: eucalyptus can energize, peppermint can sharpen focus, and lavender can calm the stress response. When gyms incorporate



Nancy Trent

intentional aromatherapy, they're not just creating atmosphere; they're enhancing performance, presence and recovery. That's why I founded *Aluminate Life*, to create science-backed aromatherapy and crystal-infused wellness products that help people align their mood, energy and physical wellbeing. When you pair movement with the right scent, you transform a workout from something you 'get through' into an experience that supports the mind and body equally."



Finally, here are some fitness trends we're already seeing that are here to stay:

- 1. Race Participation Will Keep Climbing:** Running events and obstacle courses continue to draw new participants, fueled by the thrill of community, achievement and social sharing. From 5Ks to marathons, races remain a motivating way to stay active and set tangible goals.
- 2. Strength Training is Here to Stay:** Lifting, resistance workouts and functional training aren't a fad, they're a foundation. Strength improves metabolism, bone density and overall health, making it an essential part of fitness routines for all ages.
- 3. Walking Takes the Crown:** Simple, accessible and low-impact, walking is on track to become the top fitness activity worldwide. With wearable trackers, community challenges and the rise of "walkable" lifestyle trends, walking offers wellness benefits with minimal barriers.
- 4. AI Coaching Enters the Gym:** Technology is reshaping workouts. AI
(See **Nancy Trent** Page 16)

Welcome to
the Team!

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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 4

when he speaks...!

10. Rick knows when to talk and when not to...!

I say: HEAR, HEAR! RICK CARO for President!

Folks, thank you for letting me to take a moment to reminisce about fun times like this with my dear friend Rick Caro. **May he always Rest In Peace.**

■ In case you missed them, here are some of the news items we covered in our *Club Insider Weekly Editions*:

■ **Planet Fitness**, one of the largest and fastest-growing franchisors and operators of fitness centers with more members than any other fitness brand, announces it will return for the eleventh consecutive year as the presenting sponsor of the Times Square's New Year's Eve celebration, in partnership with the Times Square Alliance and One Times Square.

■ **PureGym Limited** ("PureGym" or "The PureGym Group") is launching across

New York and New Jersey, most of which will open with true 24/7 access, with the remaining locations set to follow in the coming months. Formerly *Blink Fitness*, each gym has been upgraded and rebranded to reflect PureGym's fitness model: premium gym equipment at an affordable price.

■ **Equinox**, an authority in high-performance luxury lifestyle, is expanding its partnership with Function, the health platform offering access to 160+ advanced lab tests and imaging powered by FDA-cleared AI. This next phase brings comprehensive testing directly into the high-performance experience, empowering members to connect their workouts to their inner health like never before.

■ **Life Fitness / Hammer Strength** introduces SYNRGY, a training system designed to adapt to any fitness environment. With unmatched configurability and versatility, SYNRGY empowers facility operators to create dynamic, space-efficient training zones that meet the needs of every kind of exerciser.

■ **Mindbody**, a leading experience technology platform for the fitness, wellness

and beauty industries, announces a strategic commercial partnership with Attentive, the AI marketing platform for 1:1 personalization trusted by leading global brands.

■ The **USTA Foundation** announces it has received a **\$2.7 million grant** from the Chess Foundation that will help it expand its reach and impact in under-resourced communities nationwide.

■ On **December 18, 2025**, I had the distinct pleasure of attending a special reunion luncheon arranged by some of my former *U.S. Air Force Reserve friends*. The reunion turned out to be very enjoyable. I attended with **SCOTT MURRAY**, a long-time friend of mine who's also a retired *Delta Air Lines Captain*. Years ago, Scott and I served together as *Air Force Reserve Pilots at Dobbins Air Force Base* in Marietta, Georgia. **Thanks SCOTTIE BOY!**

■ **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 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 33rd year of monthly publication. In 1981, he was IHRSA's First President, and a Co-Founder of the Association with the late 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.)

...2025 In Review

continued from page 3

Thank You All!

Before moving on, we must take a moment to thank those who make it possible for us to publish *Club Insider* each and every month.

First, we **THANK YOU!!!** If you aren't reading, we would have no reason to do this. So, we thank you for helping us fulfill our purpose.

Next, we'd like to thank all of the *Club Insider Authors* this year, as they took time out of their busy schedules to share a great mix of informative articles across a vast array of topics. Beyond our monthly cover stories and news coverage with both press releases and **Norm's Notes**, we try to bring *Best Practices* to you from the trenches. Our authors this year included: **Anton Severin, Bruce Carter, Chris Stevenson, Eddie Tock, Frank Guengerich, Herb Lipsman, Jeffrey Pinkerton, Jim Thomas, Mike Manning, Nancy Trent, Sara Kooperman, JD, Steve Vucovich, Terry Browning and Thomas Plummer.** If you have a story to tell or expertise to share, we would love to hear from you! Email justin@clubinsideronline.com.

Finally, we'd also like to thank all of the *Club Insider Advertisers* this year, because we could not have come to you each month without their financial support. Our advertisers this year included: **Augie's Quest, Business Finance Depot, Crunch Franchising, Health & Fitness Association, HWLS, JLR Associates, LA Fitness, MOSSA, Sports and Fitness Insurance, Step Fitness and Recreation, TG - The Gym, Vending.com, World Gym and Workout Anytime.** If you would like to learn more about joining this great group of companies making a difference in our wonderful industry, go to www.clubinsideronline.com/advertise.

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January 2025

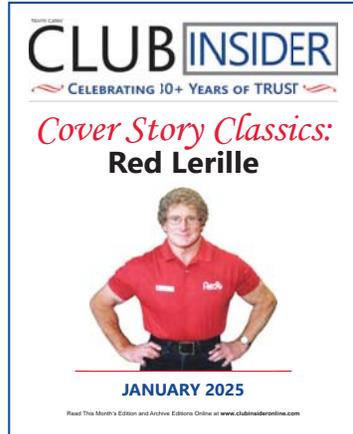
Cover Story Classics: Red Lerille - **By:** Norm Cates

Front Page Article Headlines:

■Crunch Fitness Celebrates the Three-Million-Member Mark and Launches Crunch 3.0

Inside the Insider:

■When Struggling Becomes Comfort: Breaking Free from Familiar Chaos in the Gym Business - **By:** Jim Thomas
 ■Use PIPs to Address Culture Fits Who are Falling Short - **By:** Chris Stevenson
 ■Beyond the Finish Line: The Evolution of Running from Niche Sport to Mainstream Movement - **By:** Nancy Trent
 ■A Strength Training Revolution - **By:** Terry



Browning ■ACE and the Mental Wellbeing Association Introduce a New Certification Focused on Mental Wellbeing ■Health, Exercise and Fitness Dominate Americans' New Year's Resolutions ■And, of Course, Norm's Notes

February 2025

Cover Story Classics: The late Dr. Gerry Faust - **By:** Justin Cates

Front Page Article Headlines:

■Crunch Fitness Takes #1 Fitness Spot in Entrepreneur's Franchise 500 Ranking
 ■HFA Announces Its First Class of Inductees into the HFA Hall of Fame

Inside the Insider:

■Integrating New Members into Your Fitness Facility - **By:** Sara Kooperman, JD
 ■Why Every Gym Owner Needs a "Think Day" - **By:** Jim Thomas
 ■CES 2025: AI Fitness Take Over - **By:** Nancy Trent
 ■Instructor Recruitment: Rules of the Road - **By:** Jeffrey Pinkerton
 ■"Insider Speaks" - New Research Highlights the Global Potential of Affordable Fitness ■And, of Course, Norm's Notes

March 2025

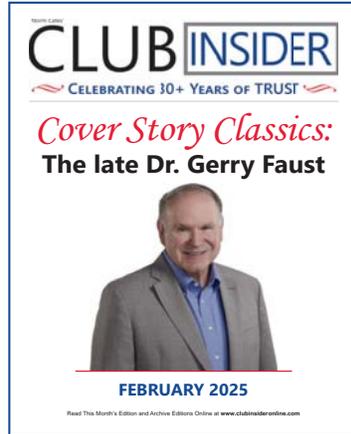
The Inaugural HFA Show and Hall of Fame Class

Front Page Article Headlines:

■Lloyd "Red" Lerille Passes Away Crunch Fitness Announces Major - **By:** Norm Cates
 ■Crunch Fitness Announces Major Franchise Expansion into India

Inside the Insider:

■"Insider Speaks" - One Club Owner's Opinion - HFA's Surveys Need More Scrutiny To Be of Value - **By:** Steve Vucovich
 ■Recap of HFA 2025 (formerly IHRSA) - **By:** Frank Guengerich
 ■Here Are Five Things You Must Do When You Return to Your Gym - **By:** Jim Thomas
 ■Fitness Forward: Wellness, Recovery and Tech



Innovations Lead the Charge at HFA 2025 - **By:** Nancy Trent
 ■Lessons Learned from Listening to Members - **By:** Herb Lipsman
 ■Group Fitness Instructors: Bartenders, Baristas or Bespoke? - **By:** Jeffrey Pinkerton
 ■After 40 Years of Wellness, Technogym Launches Healthness
 ■A Cambridge, Maryland Gym is Available for FREE to a Qualified Operator
 ■And, of Course, Norm's Notes

April 2025

Cover Story Classics: The Schwartz Family - 50 Years of Success at Midtown Athletic Club - **By:** Norm Cates & Justin Cates

Front Page Article Headlines:

■CR Fitness Holdings Opens 75th Location with State-of-the-Art Facility in Colleyville, Texas
 ■Workout Anytime Names Jerry Pugh as New CEO, Ushering in New Era of Growth and Innovation

Inside the Insider:

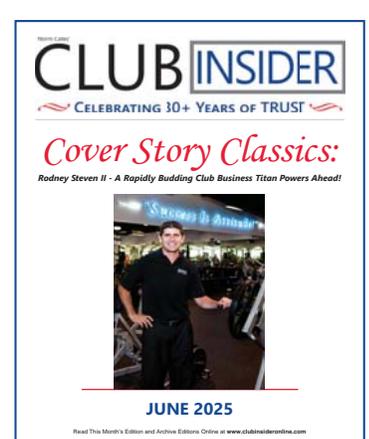
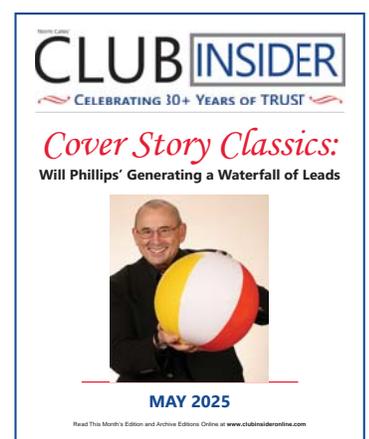
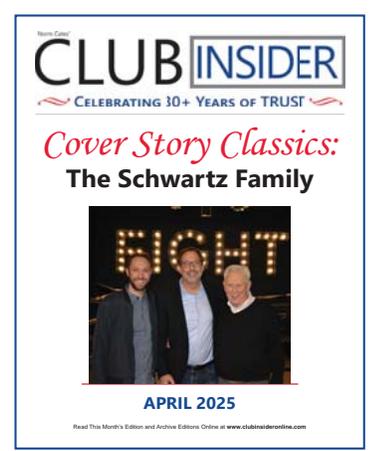
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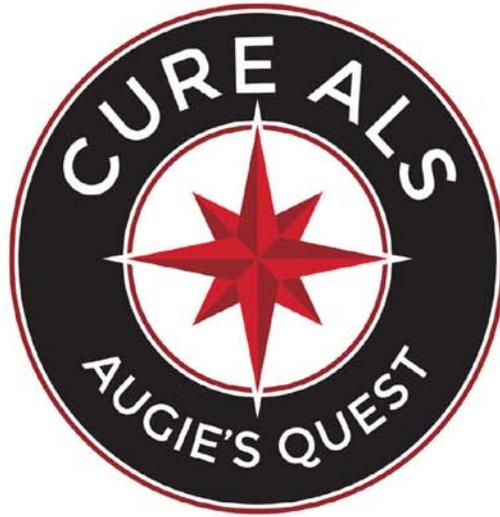
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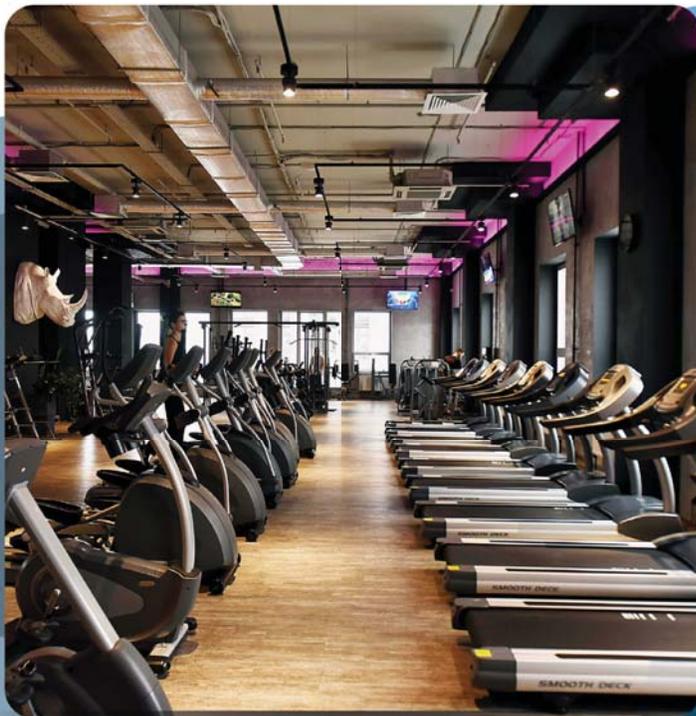
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Wellness Continues to Evolve

By: **Frank Guengerich**

I can recall the days not too long ago when, as an industry, we began to use the word “wellness.” The interesting thing is that, at that time, if you asked ten different club operators what that word meant to them, you’d get back ten different answers. Now, I think we’ve got a consensus of what wellness means and how it can be holistically approached.

With that said, wellness continues to evolve. I have the pleasure of working with several incredibly progressive wellness thought leaders, such as *Millennium Health and Fitness*, *Eterno Wellness Resort*, *SOZO Clubs* and the *Racquet Sports Professional Association (RSPA, formerly USPTA)*. All of these organizations are taking wellness to a new level.

Millennium Health and Fitness (MHF) has recently retained my company to assist in growth and operational excellence. MHF is a thriving company specializing in GovCon with an extraordinary team. It’s a company on the move as we transition into new business channels, such as corporate, commercial and all things to do

with wellness.

Together, we’ve created a groundbreaking wellness experience called **The WELL Culture**, designed to deliver impactful, transformative results for our clients and participants. The Well Culture takes a holistic approach to creating a culture of wellness across nine key dimensions:

- 1. Move WELL (Physical Activity)** - Incorporating movement and exercise to build strength, flexibility and cardiovascular health.
- 2. Eat WELL (Nutrition and Fuel)** - Nourishing the body with balanced, mindful eating to sustain energy and physical health.
- 3. Recover WELL (Sleep and Rejuvenation)** - Prioritizing quality sleep to combat fatigue and enhance cognitive function. Focus on restorative and rejuvenating practices and activities, such as stretching, massage, contrast therapy and red-light.

4. Think WELL (Mental and Cognitive Optimization) - Optimizing mindset for mental clarity, emotional stability and stress management. Address underlying thought patterns and gain reframing techniques to improve mental wellbeing.

5. Connect WELL (Social and Relational) - Building meaningful relationships and community to foster support and belonging.

6. Budget WELL (Financial Security) - Achieving financial stability to reduce anxiety and enable long-term planning.

7. Feel WELL (Emotional Resilience and Mind-Body Connection) - Understanding emotions role in decision making. Creating a supportive and sustainable path that nurtures (emotional) wellbeing and aligns with personal and professional life.

8. Lead WELL (Occupational and Leadership) - Excelling in professional roles through purpose-driven leadership and work satisfaction.

9. Thrive WELL (Spiritual and Purposeful) -



Frank Guengerich

Cultivating a sense of purpose, values and inner fulfillment for sustained motivation.

Another business that is capturing the essence of wellness is the *Eterno Wellness Resort*. Unique in every way, not just for Las Vegas, but globally, Eterno will offer an ultra-luxury wellness residential (See **Frank Guengerich** Page 13)

One of the Most Important Skills in Life: The Ability to Move On to the Next Point

By: **Herb Lipsman**

When I was a young, competitive tennis player, I had a terrible temper. A single bad loss could ruin my week. I would sulk for days, angry at myself, replaying every missed shot and wrong decision. I did not realize then that my real opponent was not across the net. It was my inability to move on from what had already happened. No one ever taught me that lesson. I didn’t have a coach or mentor to explain that success in tennis, and in life, depends less on avoiding mistakes and more on how quickly you recover from them. I wish someone had told me: *You can’t change the point you just lost, but you can change the outcome of the next point.*

That simple truth applies far beyond sports. In business, relationships and leadership, the people who thrive are not those who avoid failure. They are the ones who know how to let go, learn and refocus. Every person we celebrate for their greatness has faced setbacks that would break most people. **Thomas Edison** failed over a thousand times before inventing the lightbulb. **Albert Einstein** was rejected for his early teaching jobs. **Roger Federer** lost 275 matches, even while becoming one of the greatest champions in history. **Michael**

Jordan missed more than 9,000 shots and failed 26 game-winning attempts. **Tom Brady** and **Patrick Mahomes**, two of the greatest comeback quarterbacks, have had just as many drives that fell short as ones that ended in victory.

What they all shared in common was not perfection; it was perspective. They did not live in the last moment. They returned to the present. Brady and Mahomes did not force what wasn’t there. Instead, they took what the defense gave them, calmly adapting and finding opportunities others miss.

The same mindset fuels world-class leaders, scientists and entrepreneurs. They start with a plan but know it will never unfold perfectly. They assess reality as it is, not as they wish it were. They let go of what is gone and give their full attention to what is next.

It took me years to learn that success belongs to those who reset quickly and see clearly. Failure is temporary. Attention and focus are controllable. This mindset now shapes how I lead *SOZO Clubs*. Building something new and transformative is never a straight line. There are unexpected turns, missed shots and days when progress feels slow. I have learned that great companies, like great athletes,

are defined not by avoiding mistakes, but by how fast they recover, learn and move forward with clarity and conviction.

Where would our industry be today without industry-shaping innovations like personal training, group exercise, pickleball, etc., all of which went through many, many iterations (setbacks and failures) before reaching a level of acceptance that made them permanent fixtures in health clubs everywhere? At *SOZO Clubs*, we will encourage all team members to take educated risks, to try new things, and to always be ready to “play the next point.” To focus NOT on what went wrong, but on what we can learn on our way to doing better and getting it right. To never fear making mistakes but rather to learn from those mistakes in a culture of continuous improvement.

Many organizations unintentionally create an atmosphere of “fear of failure” or “fear of screwing up.” Hence, employees play it safe and avoid taking any risks or trying new ways of doing things. Those organizations are destined to fall behind the innovators. **Peter Drucker**, one of the greatest business thought leaders of all time, once said: *“Innovate or die.”*

Empower your people to take risks, to try new ways of doing things, new



Herb Lipsman

programs and services, and to learn from their mistakes, and you will watch your business flourish. Or, tie their hands with strict policies and procedures and punishment for making mistakes, and you will suffer the consequences. Every organization is perfectly aligned to get the results it gets!

(Herb Lipsman is the Co-Founder and CEO of *SOZO Clubs* and can be reached at **herb.lipsman@sozoclubs.com**. Learn more about *SOZO Clubs* at **sozoclubs.com**.)

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

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...Frank Guengerich

continued from page 12

and hospitality mecca with, a spacious fitness center, studios, spa, hydrotherapy, F&B and retail partners that are the best in the world. The longevity and medical wellness facilities and services will put this project over the top. The project will also feature a significant racquet sports complex with indoor pickleball and padel.

SOZO Clubs is a groundbreaking wellness brand. This venture is a collaboration between three industry veterans, bringing over 100 years of collective experience in designing,

developing and managing upscale health clubs, country clubs, spas and wellness centers. Focusing on adult members, social interaction and wellness, SOZO has a transformative vision for the health club industry, focusing on an unparalleled member experience.

The Racquet Sports Professional Association (RSPA), led by **Brian Dillman**, CEO, is launching in partnership with HWLS a comprehensive wellness course curriculum on "The Business of Wellness" to further educate its members. RSPA members will be able to accelerate their education in new ways so that they will continue to surpass all others and stay

on the cutting edge of racquet sports and wellness.



In summary, wellness continues to evolve and is impacting so many businesses. These are just a few examples of clubs and organizations that are elevating their offerings. Those businesses and organizations that continue to adapt and evolve as well will benefit from this opportunity.

See the **HWLS Ad on This Page.**

(Frank Guengerich is the President and Chief Executive Officer of Health, Wellness and Lifestyle Services - HWLS, a boutique club ownership and management consulting firm. HWLS has a limited number of high-value clients seeking individualized attention. HWLS specializes in assisting clubs to maximize revenue and profitability, with a focus on membership marketing and sales, fitness programming and wellness/medically supervised programs. For more information about HWLS, visit the website at www.hwlservices.com or email frank@hwlservices.com.)

GOT FUN?

AOM Fitness Programming: *The Future of Inclusive, Revenue-Boosting Training*

By: Sara Kooperman, JD

The fitness industry is buzzing with excitement over *Active Older Movement (AOM) Fitness Programming*, a revolutionary approach designed to enhance accessibility, engagement and profitability for fitness facilities. This innovative system, rooted in *Active Older Adult (AOA) fitness methodologies*, ensures that clubs cater to a broader demographic while unlocking new revenue opportunities.

AOM Fitness Programming is gaining traction because it seamlessly integrates science-backed training methods, community-building and financial sustainability. With an aging population seeking effective, low-impact training solutions, facilities must adapt to meet their needs while ensuring business growth.

Implementing AOM Fitness Programming provides a dual benefit, enhancing member retention and financial performance. Here's how clubs can capitalize:

Increased Membership - Attract and retain older adults, a rapidly growing fitness demographic;

Diverse Revenue Streams - Offer specialized classes, workshops and small group training;

Stronger Community Engagement - Build loyalty with a supportive, inclusive atmosphere;

Competitive Edge - Stand out by catering to an underserved market with cutting-edge, research-backed programming.

How AOM Fitness Drives Revenue Growth

AOM isn't just about movement; it's a strategic business tool. Clubs can boost earnings through:

Premium Membership Tiers - Offering AOM classes as part of an exclusive membership package.

Small Group Training - Providing intimate, high-value training sessions at a premium price.

Certifications and Continuing Education - Training staff to specialize in AOM, creating internal expertise.

Partnerships and Community Outreach - Working with senior centers, healthcare providers and local organizations to drive membership referrals.

Why Now is the Time for AOM

With aging populations prioritizing health and longevity, AOM Fitness fills a crucial gap in the market. Clubs that adopt this programming will not only increase revenue potential but also establish themselves as industry leaders in inclusive fitness.

The AOM manual provides the blueprint for success, detailing everything from class design to marketing strategies. Whether you're a boutique studio, large



Sara Kooperman, JD

gym or community center, now is the time to integrate AOM and tap into a thriving, loyal market.

Don't miss out on this game-changing opportunity. Start implementing AOM Fitness Programming today and (See *Sara Kooperman, JD* Page 16)

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Steak Done Well: *Sell What Sells*

By: **Jeffrey Pinkerton**

We were going out to dinner in New Orleans and decided to head to a neighborhood favorite, *Charlie's Steakhouse*. My brother and his wife live in New Orleans, so the waiter recognized them as soon as we walked in. If Charlie's even has menus, the waiter knew that we wouldn't be needing them. After a quick welcome and a confirmed order of old-fashioned for the table, he was ready to take our orders. Or rather, he was ready to confirm our orders. Everything was going great... until I ordered, because, as I learned, at Charlie's Steakhouse, there is a right way and a wrong way to enjoy a steak.

"Okay, we'll get some creamed spinach and steak fries for the table. The

old fashioned are on their way. Do we know what kind of steak we are having tonight?" It was my first time at Charlie's. It was a little disorienting but mostly refreshing. I loved the casual conversation-style ordering. No need to leave us alone to stare at a multi-page menu. The man was there to sell steak, and we were there to enjoy.

"How would you like your steak done, young man?" our waiter asked. "Ummm... well-done please?" I said with a bit of hesitation. Before I had even finished my sentence, our waiter dropped his hands, leaned towards me, and with a kind but cautionary finger pointed in my direction, said, "I'm gonna pretend I didn't hear that." I looked at my brother, who had ordered his steak medium-rare, and he just shrugged

and smiled. The waiter continued, "Here's what I'm gonna do. We'll have the kitchen cook it medium, and when it comes out, if it's not one of the finest steaks you've ever had in your life, I'll take it back to the kitchen myself and make sure they burn the hell out of it on both sides. Good? Good." And, with a quick head nod and a smile, off he went.

As promised, the steak was one of the best steaks that I've ever had in my life. In fact, that experience changed the way I order steak. It took some salesmanship and some confidence from the waiter, even creating a bit of tension in the moment, but he knew what was best and made it his mission to make sure I had a great experience and an incredible dinner that night. He knew my bad decision could
 (See **Jeffrey Pinkerton** Page 18)



Jeffrey Pinkerton

Make It Fun! and they will come...

...Nancy Trent

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powered coaching provides personalized guidance, real-time feedback and data-driven motivation, making expert training more accessible and adaptable to individual goals.



The common thread across these trends is flexibility of time, space and approach. From science-backed systems like PelviX to retro equipment making a comeback, from AI coaching to community-focused gyms, 2026 is about removing barriers and empowering people to move on their own terms. Fitness is no longer just about hitting goals; it's about creating sustainable, enjoyable routines that fit seamlessly into life. The future of wellness is accessible, efficient and holistic, and it's

here to stay.

(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.)

...Sara Kooperman, JD

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watch your membership, revenue and impact grow!

AOM Fitness Programming Certification Coming Soon!

I am excited to announce the upcoming AOM Fitness Programming Certification, designed to equip fitness professionals with the knowledge and skills to effectively train and support active older adults. This certification provides science-backed methodologies, practical techniques and business strategies to help you implement AOM programming successfully. Stay ahead of the industry by becoming an AOM-certified professional! For more information, please reach out to registration@scwfit.com.

(Sara Kooperman, JD, CEO of SCW Fitness Education, WATERinMOTION, and S.E.A.T. Fitness won the Most Innovative Fitness Pro by Fitness Industry Technology Council. 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 host for NONE OF YOUR BUSINESS Monthly Talk Show and sits on the ACSM Communication & Public Information Committee. Kooperman sits on the Gold's Gym Think Tank and the canfitpro Advisory Panel and was a founding board member for the Women In Fitness Association (WIFA). Plus, Sara was recently nominated for the IDEA Fitness Leader of the Year Award. Learn more at www.sarakooperman.com.)

World Gym Reports Robust November Revenue Growth and Unveils Ambitious 2026 Strategic Roadmap

TAIPEI - World Gym Corporation, owner and operator of the iconic World Gym brand, announces consolidated revenue of NT\$959,696 thousand for November 2025, representing a robust year-over-year increase of 14.24% compared to November 2024. YTD Revenue surpassed the NT\$10 billion mark to reach NT\$10.015 billion, an increase of 11.95% over the same period last year.

Growth was led by the Company's highest-margin revenue streams: membership revenue, which increased 17.4% year-over-year, and international franchising revenue, which surged 54.68% year-over-year.

Compared to the previous quarter, the first two months of the current quarter has seen growth of 2.9% (or NT\$53 million) versus the first two months of Q3 2025. Leveraging a largely fixed-cost operating structure, this sequential improvement underscores continued enhancement in operating margins and overall profitability.

"After posting year on year EPS growth of 82% in Q3, we are off to a great Q4 with revenue continuing to grow and our margins improving," said **John Caraccio**, President of World Gym Corporation.

2026 Strategic Outlook - Innovation and Global Expansion:

During its quarterly Investor Conference held on December 9, 2025, the Company shared an ambitious 2026 outlook centered on delivering high-value fitness and health services while accelerating global expansion.

Service Innovation and Digital Health Integration:

Recognizing Pilates as a key growth trend, World Gym intends to roll out specialized Pilates coaching programs across all 136 locations in Taiwan, offered in one-on-one or small-group training formats.

The company is also partnering with a leading medical group in Taichung to introduce a new Health Management portal. The digital platform enables clients to track more than 50 biomarkers, integrates a nutrition application and provides AI-generated personalized reports and coaching.

"Driving same-store sales growth at all 136 corporate-owned locations will be a core priority for 2026, supported by high-value, AI driven services which complement and enhance the member experience," continued Caraccio.

Expansion Targets - Taiwan and International Markets:

World Gym announced plans to open 10 - 15 new corporate-owned fitness centers in 2026, prioritizing locations that deliver immediate positive contributions to operating income. Systemwide, World Gym projects adding 40 - 50 units globally in 2026, following an estimated addition of 32 units in 2025.

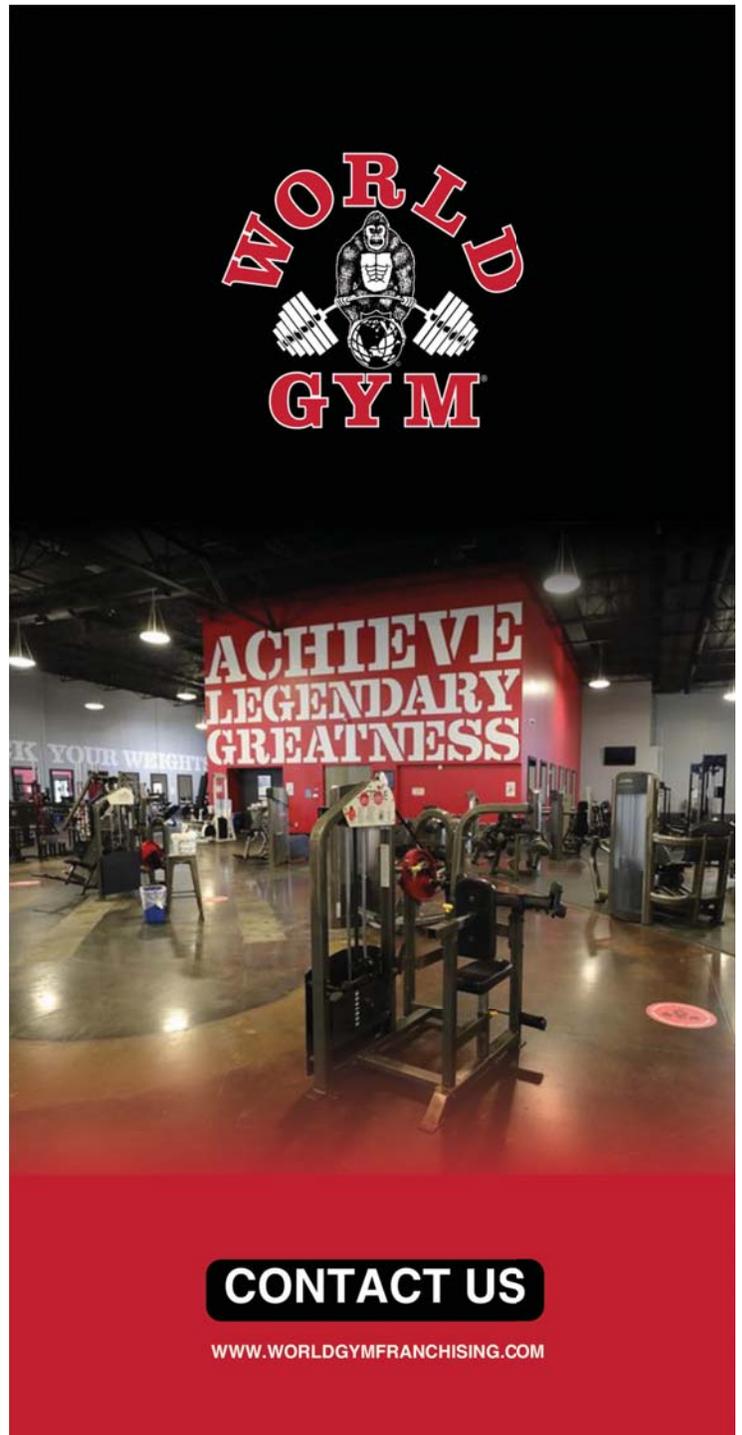
The Company further elaborated on its strategic decision to enter the Thailand fitness market with corporate-owned stores. Key drivers for this expansion include Thailand's low fitness penetration rate, rising consumer spending power, the affordability of the World Gym offering for the mass market and the growing popularity of fitness training and health-conscious culture in the region.

Consolidated Revenue:

Nov-25 | Oct -25 | MoM%
959,696 | 950,412 | 0.98 %

Nov-25 | Nov -24 | YoY%
959,696 | 840,101 | 14.24 %

Unit: Thousands of NTD



**Club Insider Seeks
Contributing Authors
for 2026!**

**Contact Justin Cates
justin@clubinsideronline.com**

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...Jeffrey Pinkerton

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reflect poorly on Charlie's Steakhouse's multi-generational reputation...

If you've read this far, I hope you see the connection – I think you should spend less time selling and more time telling. You know what's best for your members, and you should make it your mission to make sure they have a great experience and an incredible workout every time they show up. It may create some tension. It may force your members out of their comfort zone. It may not be what they expect, what they have done in the past or what they are used to. But, when you make a strong recommendation with confidence, you're helping them make a great decision, and preventing them from making a poor one, which could reflect poorly on your reputation...

If the steak wasn't amazing, I would have blamed the kitchen, not my bad ordering skills. Similarly, when someone leaves your club, doesn't get results, can't find something that sticks, my guess is they blame you, not their bad decisions.

If you're like most health clubs, you have a big menu of services. Your tour covers a lot of features, lots of different

choices – from treadmills to squat racks, to Smith machines and stair-climbers, there are group fitness classes and small group training classes and personal training, and on and on and on. You probably give people the menu (the tour), give them a little time to stare at it (think about it), then ask them what they'd like to try. But, they don't know what you're great at or what will be best for them. "Ummm... I guess I'll try the treadmill?"

What's your signature experience? What is your Charlie's Steakhouse steak? What is your most successful, most engaging, highest retaining, most wide-reaching experiences? If you want to attract the most people, and if you're serious about giving people what they need, it should be a strength training workout. And, with all of the benefits of moving in time to music, the motivation of a great instructor and the camaraderie of the shared group fitness experience, it should be a *group* strength training workout.

My recommendation: Be great at group fitness. Be great at strength training. Deliver an amazing experience. And, don't just try to sell it to your members and prospects. In Charlie's waitstaff's style, take charge of the conversation. Be confident in your recommendation. Tell people how

your club is going to deliver the results and relationships they need to start and stick with the life-changing habit of regular exercise and the benefits of working out while building community and connection.

Because, when the steaks sizzle and satisfy, the people return. And, your members will too, when they experience that rare taste of service done decisively, done directly, done... well.



Is your menu a mess? Do you need a proven strength training workout that can be your signature delivery dish? Let us

sell (tell) you: Your group fitness programs can be amazing and can ensure every prospect and member has a motivating, memorable workout every time. We'll help train your instructor team, and we'll teach your sales team how to make confident recommendations. Or, are you just going to do things the way you've always done things?? I'm gonna pretend I didn't hear that.

(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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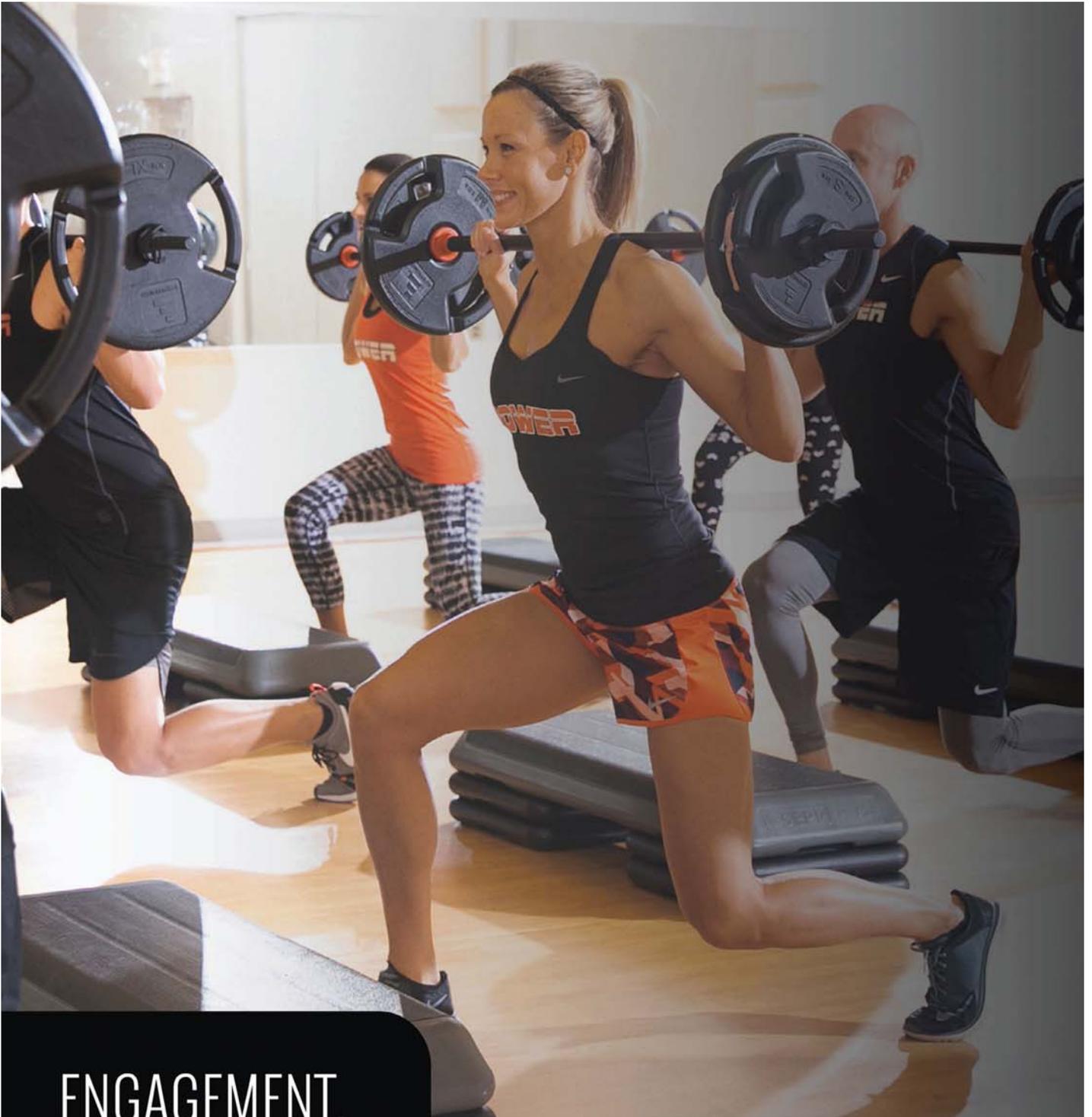
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