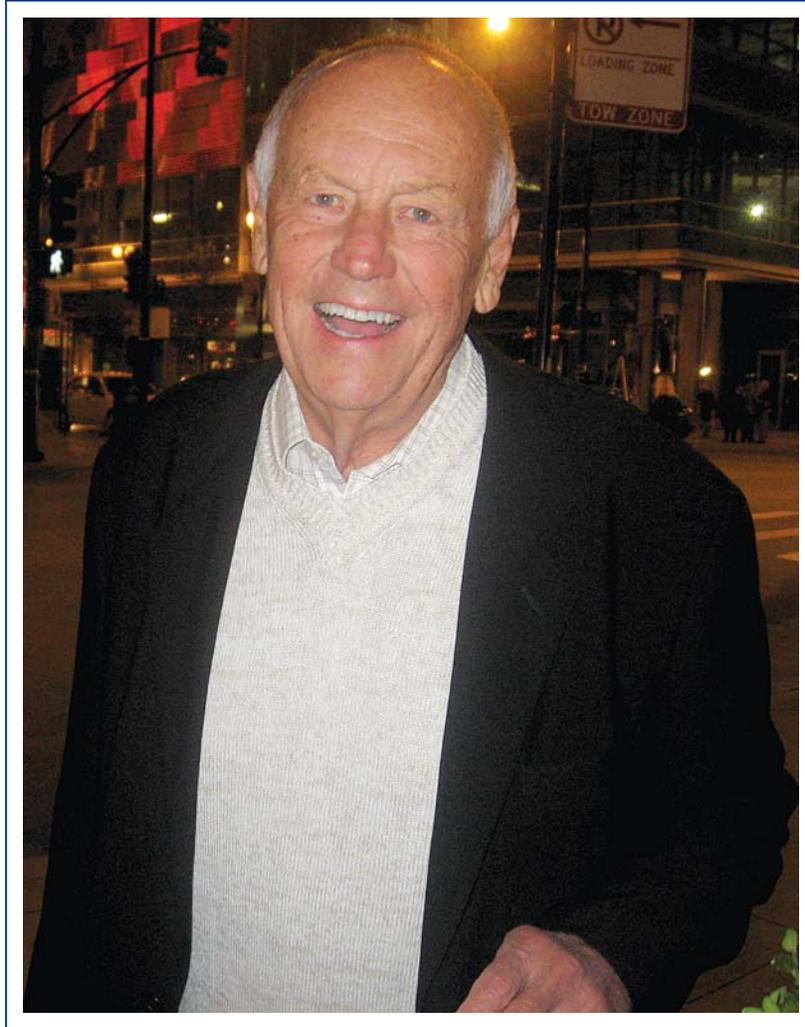


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The Pulse of the Health and Fitness Club Industry



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The Late, Great... Brother Curt Beusman 1931 - 2015

JUNE 2015

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The Pulse of the Health and Fitness Club Industry

The Late, Great... Brother Curt Beusman

1931 - 2015

By: Norm and Justin Cates

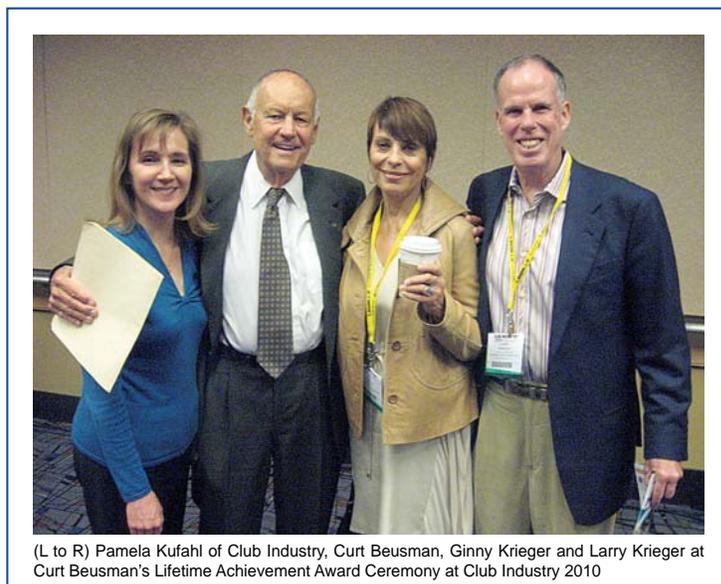
You could live a long, long time and never have the good fortune of getting to know a human being as wonderful and as talented as the late, great *Brother Curt Beusman!*

Curt Beusman passed away at age 84 on Tuesday, May 19, 2015. Jane, Curt's wife of 58 years, and Blair, their daughter, who passed from breast cancer, predeceased Curt. Curt and Jane also had two sons, Robert, a filmmaker, and Rick, who runs the family club businesses in Mt. Kisco, New York and Stamford, Connecticut.

Brother Beusman is what I, and many folks in our great industry, began to call Curt, the Founder and owner of The Saw Mill River Club in Mount Kisco, New York after he began to deliver his "10 Commandments for Health Club Operators" to industry audiences across the land (See *Curt's 10 Commandments*

on *Page #14*).

Brother Beusman was an amazingly talented and diverse man with many achievements in his lifetime, including a Big 10 Conference Singles Tennis Championship while he was at Northwestern University and earning a Master's in business at Columbia University and a Ph.D. in physical chemistry at the University of Cincinnati. He went on to co-found a company called Curtis Instruments with Edward Marwell in 1960. The company now has 15 offices, employs over 1,000 and produces \$100 million a year in revenue. Curt then founded the Saw Mill River Club in Mount Kisco, New York (**Note:** The word River was removed from the club name a few years back, rebranding the club to be *The Saw Mill Club*). Curt and his son, Rick, also created, owned and operated the Sportsplex/New Windsor Club, Mount Kisco Athletic Club and the Sportsplex/Stamford Club in (See *Curt Beusman Page 10*)



(L to R) Pamela Kufahl of Club Industry, Curt Beusman, Ginny Krieger and Larry Krieger at Curt Beusman's Lifetime Achievement Award Ceremony at Club Industry 2010

Planet Fitness Opens 1,000th Club

NEWINGTON, NH - Planet Fitness, one of the largest and fastest-growing franchisors and operators of fitness centers in the United States, announced the opening of its 1,000th club in Washington, DC. In honor of this significant milestone, Planet Fitness welcomed people nationwide to join the celebration, as all 1,000 Planet Fitness locations in the United States and Canada opened their doors on June 11 for a "Free Day of Fitness," allowing anyone to experience a free, non-intimidating workout with no commitment.

In honor of the 1,000th club milestone, Planet Fitness also hosted a

sweepstakes on Facebook and Twitter. On Facebook, fans commented on Planet Fitness' posts to be entered to win. On Twitter, anyone who retweeted a Planet Fitness post about the Free Day of Fitness with hashtag #PFcelebrates1000 was entered to win. The grand prize winner received \$1,000, and additional prizes included \$500 for two people, \$100 for ten people and Planet Fitness branded items. Planet Fitness also randomly surprised five members in clubs throughout the U.S. with \$1,000 as part of the week-long festivities.

"Opening our 1,000th club is an important and exciting milestone for

Planet Fitness. Our mission of a high-quality, affordable and non-intimidating fitness experience started in 1992 in Dover, NH, and we are thrilled to open our 1,000th club in the nation's capital," said Chris Rondeau, Planet Fitness' Chief Executive Officer. "We are excited to celebrate this company milestone with our amazing franchisees, without whose support this accomplishment would not be possible, to allow everyone to enjoy a free day of fitness and experience what makes our clubs so unique."

Planet Fitness prides itself on (See *Planet Fitness Page 6*)



Inside The Insider

- A Year of Achievement - **By:** Robert Brewster
- The #1 Barrier to Driving More Paid Group Training and What To Do About It Now! - **By:** Ron Alterio
- If You Have One Happy Member, You Can Build A Booming Business - **By:** Donna Krech
- The Fate and Fortune of the Health and Fitness Industry - Part III - **By:** Stephen Tharrett and Mark Williamson
- Digital Housekeeping For Your Business - **By:** Robin Schuette
- How to Design a Boutique Club Within a Club - **By:** Bruce Carter
- Human Talent - **By:** Bill McBride
- How to Close a Gym Membership Sale At Anytime, Under Any Circumstances - **By:** Jim Thomas
- It Really Is About The Frog and The Boiling Water... - **By:** Thomas Plummer
- Recruiting and Hiring Trainers For Small Group Training Management Success - **By:** Laurie Cingle
- Adam Zeitsiff, Jonas Fitness President, Honored With Outstanding CEO Award
- Matrix Fitness Expands Sales Team With Four New Hires

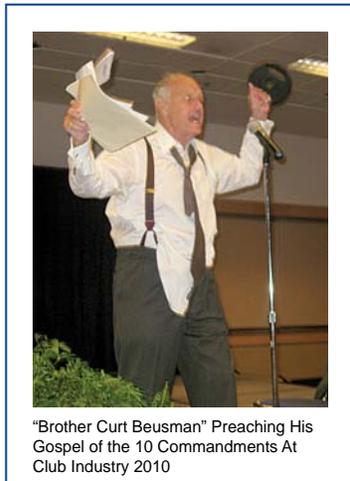
Norm's Notes

•**Hello Everybody!** This is your **CLUB INSIDER** Publisher and Tribal Leader Since 1993 checking in!

•**Is America a GREAT COUNTRY, or what?** Hmm... hmm... hmm! Here's a slightly early **Happy 4th of July** wish to you and your family. **Be Safe! God Bless America!**

•**Brother Beusman** is what many of us called the *genius*, the man also known as **CURT BEUSMAN**, when he dons his preacher's robe and then dives energetically into preaching the **Gospel of his 10 Commandments for Club Owners**. The man may have missed his calling because his talent as a preacher, and importantly, that of a great teacher, was only exceeded by his brilliance in the field of club business (See **Curt's Cover Story** on **Page #3**). Curt preached his form of the gospel for club owners on many occasions at club conferences during his club owner days. His last presentation ever was given at the **Club Industry Show in 2010** when he was honored with **Club Industry's Lifetime Achievement Award** (See **Photo on This Page**). Curt's son, Rick, has announced that a **Memorial Celebration for Curt** will be held on **Sunday, July 12th at 3PM** at their **Saw Mill Club in Mount Kisco, New York**. I will be there.

•I would like to say **THANKS** to **RICK BEUSMAN** and the following industry friends who took the time to write and



"Brother Curt Beusman" Preaching His Gospel of the 10 Commandments At Club Industry 2010

send comments about Curt for this month's **Cover Story**. So, in addition to Rick, I'd like to thank: **RICK CARO, JOHN MCCARTHY, JOE MOORE, RICHARD TRANT, ALAN SCHWARTZ, LARRY KRIEGER, CECIL SPEARMAN, JOHN and JAN DOYLE, DR. GERRY FAUST, JILL KINNEY, TIM RHODE, MARK and DEBBIE EISENZIMMER and PATRICIA LAUS**.

•I want to **CONGRATULATE AUGIE NIETO and his lovely and devoted wife, LYNNE**, as Augie will be honored with **Club Industry's Lifetime Achievement Award** at the **Club Industry Show in Chicago on Thursday morning,**

October 8th. What a GREAT CHOICE! Congratulations AUGIE and LYNNE! *You two have earned this honor together, that's for sure!* Thanks to **Club Industry's PAMELA KUFAHL**, who sent the news to me. I hope you'll make plans to be there for Augie. And, of course, do plan to be in Chicago for yourself and your business as this show appears to be loaded with great educational opportunities for those of you who earn your living in our wonderful industry. **Stay Tuned!**

•**Congratulations to CHRIS RONDEAU, CEO of Planet Fitness**, as the company announced on **June 8th**, that **Planet Fitness has hit the 1,000-location milestone** with the opening of a new Planet Fitness in Washington, D.C. Check out the **new Planet Fitness Ad on Page #2** and the **Planet Fitness Press Release** starting on **Page #3**.

•**Additional Congratulations to CHRIS RONDEAU**, as he was surprised to learn that a group of **members of the Planet Fitness family** had raised and donated **more than \$1 million in his name** for a new scholarship fund at **Philadelphia University**. **PRNewswire-USNewswire** quoted Chris as saying, "I've been involved with Planet Fitness for nearly half my life, and being honored with a scholarship program at Philadelphia University was by far one of the most rewarding moments of my career. It's hard to explain the feeling you get when people donate to such a special cause on your behalf. It's truly



Norm Cates

amazing." Beyond this scholarship report, *Club Industry* reported that Planet Fitness has filed a draft registration statement that's necessary for an IPO (Initial Public Offering). Also, Rondeau has made it clear to legislators in New Hampshire that Planet Fitness is considering relocation of their Headquarters out of the State of New Hampshire because of unfavorable State Tax laws. According to the *Club Industry* report written by **PAMELA KUFAHL**, "Planet Fitness CEO Chris Rondeau and former New Hampshire Governor Craig Benson supported an amendment before the state's Senate Finance Committee that passed on a 4-2 vote. The amendment would allow Planet Fitness to issue its IPO and not pay the state's business profits (See *Norm's Notes Page 7*)

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A Year of Achievement

By: Robert Brewster

The old adage, "Time flies when you're having fun," sums up my sentiments as I consider the past year, during which I served as the Chairperson of IHRSA's Board of Directors. My memories of that year are clear, vivid, and rewarding.

Now, as I prepare to pass the baton to incoming Chairperson Molly Kemmer, I'm pleased by the progress the industry has made and bullish about its prospects going forward. Kemmer, who with MediFit Corporate Services, Inc., serves as the General Manager of the Fitness Center at the Anschutz Health and Wellness Center (AHWC), on the University of Colorado's Anschutz Medical Campus, also appreciates both the industry's past achievements and its future promise.

The IHRSA baton will rest in

capable hands.

We work in a vibrant and worthwhile business, and even though I've been a member of the Association for more than 25 years, the past year has taught me just how central and critical it is to the industry's wellbeing and success. When it comes to informing, instructing, inspiring, and safeguarding the industry, IHRSA occupies a position all its own.

This year, I got a revealing, up-close look at the Association's educational efforts, as it hosted or partnered with others to stage meetings in Guangzhou, China; Amsterdam, The Netherlands; São Paulo, Brazil; Santa Fe, Mexico; and most recently, Los Angeles, as well as in many places in between.

One of the events that I thought represented a particularly big win for the industry was the relaunch of the IHRSA

Institute (See **Ad Below**), which will take place at the Rizzo Conference Center at the University of North Carolina, in Chapel Hill. The institute provides what I regard as a mini-MBA in the field of fitness.

IHRSA's impressive, demonstrated ability to protect the industry from harmful legislation and regulation has always been near and dear to my heart: a winning record of 83-3 is one to be proud of. So, it's been amazing to see the public policy team working hard to accomplish even more. Now, it's playing both offense and defense, a complete game! I encourage you to learn more about the industry's current public policy priorities by checking out *The 2015 IHRSA Legislative Opportunity Report* (hub.ihrsa.org/2015-opportunity-report).

It's been an honor and a privilege to have served IHRSA in the capacity of



Robert Brewster, IHRSA Chairman

Chairperson, and I'm extremely grateful to have had the opportunity.

...Planet Fitness

continued from page 3

providing a high-quality experience at an exceptional value and being home of the Judgement Free Zone, where members experience a hassle-free, non-intimidating environment. Each club also features the brand's iconic "Lunk Alarm," a purple and yellow siren on the wall used as a light-hearted, gentle reminder that grunting, dropping weights or judging others is not permitted.

Membership includes a variety of other benefits, including unlimited small group fitness instruction by a certified trainer through the pe @ pf ® program. As a member appreciation gesture, Planet Fitness also provides free pizza on the first Monday of every month and free bagels on the second Tuesday of every month while supplies last, as a reminder that it's okay to treat yourself every once in a while after a good workout.

The PF Black Card membership, which is \$19.99 a month, includes additional amenities such as the ability to bring a guest every day at no additional charge and access to all 1,000 Planet Fitness locations, as well as access to massage beds and chairs and tanning, among other benefits depending on location.

Additionally, Planet Fitness spotlights its members with "Planet of Triumphs," an online community that celebrates all accomplishments and inspirational stories of Planet Fitness members. Planet of Triumphs provides an online platform for members to recognize their triumphs (big or small), share their stories and encourage others, reinforcing our belief that everyone belongs.

The IHRSA Institute was an amazing experience! It gave me the opportunity to network and exchange ideas with other GMs from all over the world! The opportunity to interact with the speakers was invaluable.

~ George Dossas, General Manager, Commonwealth Sports Club, Boston, MA

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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 4

taxes on the company's increased value when shares are sold." Kufahl quoted Chris Rondeau as saying, "We want to stay here. This tax is just to the point where it's hard as the CEO of the company with my partners and shareholders to say it's a good idea to stay. The tax liability is too great. It'd be cheaper for us to pay everyone a raise to cover income tax and move it over the border." Rondeau also said Planet Fitness has nearly 200 employees at the headquarters making an average salary between \$80,000 and \$100,000. Lawmakers see a potential loss of 500 jobs, according to a report from **The Associated Press**. "This isn't an idle threat," Planet Fitness General Counsel Richard Moore told The AP. "We've had conversations with other states." **Stay tuned!**

• I'd also like to say **Thanks to Big JOHN McCARTHY** for his very kind words written in an email to **JUSTIN and I** on **June 4th**. In reply to one of our **CLUB INSIDER Weekly** email blasts, John wrote: "**Norm and Justin: Your 'CLUB INSIDER' just keeps getting better and better... Bravo to both of you! -John**" Then, in response to my Thank You email to John for his kind compliment, he responded: "**Norm, my comments about TCI (The CLUB INSIDER) are widely shared and well-deserved... -John**" I don't know of anyone who *doesn't appreciate receiving praise*, and since this praise for Justin and me came from a man I've grown to love, respect and honor over the past 35 years, Big John McCarthy, I thought it was worthy of sharing with you, thus this **Norm's Note**. Likewise, **I always want to praise YOU in CLUB INSIDER when I can!** So, if you and your club have done things worthy of praise and recognition, the only way I can provide that praise here in **CLUB INSIDER** is **IF you share your victories, your honors and your milestones with us** via an email to me at **Norm@clubinsideronline.com**. **Stay Tuned!**

• **Congratulations to ADAM ZEITSIFF, President of Jonas Fitness**, on his recent honor as the **Long Island Business News' Outstanding CEO** (See **Page #28**)!

• I want **DONNA KRECH**, long-time friend and Advertiser of **CLUB INSIDER** with **Thin&Healthy Total Solutions** and **Contributing Author**, and her husband, **JOHN**, to know that **my prayers are with John** because he's now *fighting cancer again for the fifth time, after having pushed cancer into remission four previous times*. **Please include John and Donna in your prayers!**

• Commenting on **SIMON MEREDITH** retiring, **IHRSA's 25-year Executive Director, now retired, Big JOHN McCARTHY**, said, "Simon Meredith, the great GM at The East Bank Club since it

opened over 35 years ago, is retiring at the end of this month. Simon has been a master of hospitality at that magnificent operation from the very beginning, and our dear friend, Dan Levin, could not possibly have picked a better GM for his extraordinary East Bank Club." **Amen, Big John! Best wishes growing those hops, Simon!**

• **Kudos to LA Fitness** as two lives were recently saved in LA Fitness Clubs in **East Brunswick, New Jersey**, and two weeks later in **Brampton, Ontario, Canada**. Both saves involved the use of **AEDs (Automated External Defibrillators)**. In New Jersey, several LA Fitness members and staff assisted in the AED save. In Canada, **RAKESH BAJWA** performed CPR and used an AED to save the member. **Way to go LA Fitness Teammates!**

• **The IHRSA Institute** is coming to the **University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill August 4 - 7th**, and if you've never been to this advanced club business learning opportunity, it's not too late to sign up! Check out the **IHRSA Institute Ad on The Opposite Page** and sign up today!

• **ROBERT BREWSTER** is Chairman of **IHRSA's Board of Directors until June 30th**. On **July 1st, MOLLY KEMMER** takes the helm. **Robert, you've done an outstanding job! Thank you!** Also, **Thanks and Appreciation** to the other outgoing **IHRSA Board Members, JASMIN KIRSTEIN and CHRISTIAN PIERAR**. Best of luck to Molly in her new role as **IHRSA Chairperson** and to her **Board of Directors**. I think now's a good time to say **Thanks to all who've served as IHRSA Board Members over the past 34 years**, because if it were not for you, our industry *would be very different now*. **Thank you all for many hours of unpaid Board service!**

• **BILL McBRIDE, President and CEO of Active Sports Clubs** and former **IHRSA Board Member and Chairman**, is one of those presenting at **Club Industry in Chicago October 7-9th**. Bill is chairing the **Fitness Leadership** series at Club Industry, and he's invited you to attend the six sessions, which will offer business, operations and programming insights to leaders in the fitness industry. Bill has assembled a strong group of speakers to share their expertise with you, including:

• **BRENT DARDEN**, former Owner of **Telos Fitness Center** in Dallas, Texas and **IHRSA Board Member and Ex-Officio Chairman**, who will speak on **Leadership and Management for Fitness Leaders** and "People Performance for Fitness Leaders";

• **FRANK ANCHARSKI**, who will guide you through customer service in his presentation entitled, **Unlocking the Service within Us**;

• **ALLISON FLATLEY**, who will share

her expertise in her session **Programming for Fitness Leaders**.

Also, Bill will speak on **Strategy and Financials for Fitness Leaders**. Bill explained that they will wrap up the series with a panel on Thursday morning and reward the attendees that have participated in four of the six sessions with a certificate of completion in the **Club Industry Fitness Leadership** series. Bill (and I), urge you to join him and these dynamic speakers at the **Club Industry Show in Chicago!** If you have any questions, Bill can be reached at by email at **BillMcBride@BMC3.com** or by calling **(415) 299 - 9482**.

• Here's *something* you won't see very often. **Walton High School**, which was recently **ranked #7 in the State of Georgia** in academics and sports overall, **won both the Georgia AAAAAA Division Boy and Girls Tennis State Championships! Congratulations to both State Championship teams** and to the **Boy's Team Coach, JOHN EVANS**, and the **Girl's Team Coach, CHRISTY LEWIS!** Remarkably, the **Walton Girls Teams** have won **13 out of the last 15 State 6A Championships!** Also remarkably, **Walton High School has a \$40+ million expansion and remodeling project** going

(See *Norm's Notes Page 8*)



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...Norm's Notes

continued from page 7

on with work happening 24/7, 7 days a week all Summer and a Fall Grand Reopening planned for late Summer. My son, JUSTIN, graduated from Walton in 2003 with a 3.75 GPA after playing football and running track there.

•This is not club related but it's sports related, so here goes! Congratulations to AMERICAN PHAROAH owner AHMED ZAYAT and his family; VICTOR ESPINOZA, jockey; and trainer, BOB BAFFERT as their

amazing horse won the Belmont Stakes in New York, completing the Triple Crown for the first time in 37 years!

•TOM RHIND, President of POWER WELLNESS, will be our July Cover Story subject. My son, JUSTIN CATES, is conducting the interview with Tom and will produce the article. The Power Wellness website says this about the company: "Power Wellness provides design, construction and operations management services customized for medically integrated centers, commercial fitness centers and university or community fitness facilities. We serve our clients

with integrity while generating revenue, contributing value to their organization and fulfilling the wellness and fitness needs of our patients, community members or employees." Power Wellness Management was founded in 1996 and operates 19 specialized fitness centers in the U.S. employing 2,200 associates and serving 82,000 members."

•We are very excited to announce the release of two CLUB INSIDER eBooks. These are part of the Best of CLUB INSIDER Series, which features curated content from our 22-year, 8,000-page archive. The first eBook features the best cover stories from the 1990s and includes the stories of: Red Lerille, Rick Caro, Ray Wilson, Bob DelMonteque, Joe Cirulli, Karen Woodard-Chavez, Jim Gerber, Robert Dedman, Sr., Ron and Sandy Franco, Geoffrey Dyer, Carl Porter, Todd and Faith Pulis, Judi Sheppard Missett, Jill Stevens Kinney, Bahram Akradi and Tony deLeede.

Julie Main, Greg Rowe, Laury Hammel, Casey Conrad, Brent Darden, Planet Fitness, Cliff Buchholz, John and Jan Doyle, Ruth Stricker, Brian Evans, Greg Lappin, Phil Wendel, Mark Mastrov and Gale Landers.

We also want to announce the upcoming release of our third and fourth eBooks in the series. The third eBook, will feature the best cover stories from the 2010s. It will be released on July 1 and will include the stories of: Lloyd and Roberta Gainsboro, Jim Worthington, Simon Meredith, Curt Beusman, Blair McHaney, Mike Minton, Rick Holder, Carol Nalevanko, Sandy Coffman (update), Planet Fitness (update), Rodney Steven, Rick Mayo, Mike Arteaga, Jeff Skeen, Red Lerille (update), Robert Brewster, Terry Dezzutti, Larry Connor, Doug Ribley, Leisure Sports, David von Storch, Greta Wagner, Michael Olander, Ben Midgley, Laurie Smith and John McCarthy (update). This eBook will be updated annually with the best of the previous year's club cover stories until the next decade change.

Finally, the fourth eBook in the series will feature our best special interest/topic cover stories. It will be released on October 1 and will include the stories of: Club Insider News Blasts Off!, Excercere Out! IHRSA In!, Augie Nieto - Success!!!, Ray Wilson On Monthly Dues, The History of the Health Club Industry (Part I, II and III), Visual Fitness Planner, Augie Nieto - Earn Your Eulogy Everyday, Clubs for the Cure, A 100-Year Perspective On the Health and Fitness Club Industry, TRUST, 12 Days of Fitness - Clubs for the Cure During the Holiday Season, IHRSA Turns 30!, MOSSA (formerly BTS) and Augie's Quest - Winning the War on ALS.

If you are a Paid Subscriber to CLUB INSIDER, all of these are included in your subscription! However, if the words PROMOTIONAL COPY appear above your name and address on the cover of this month's edition, you are not a Paid Subscriber, and you are not enjoying the full benefits of a Paid Subscription to CLUB INSIDER, which includes one year of new editions (print and online) and online access to all previous years of CLUB INSIDER's 258 archived monthly editions. So, don't delay! Subscribe today for just \$89 for one year or \$10 a month by going to www.clubinsideronline.com/subscribe.

•God bless all of our troops, airmen and sailors worldwide and keep them safe. Thank you, Congratulations and Welcome Home to all of our troops who have served in Iraq, Afghanistan and around the world. God bless you and your family, your club staff, your members and your club(s). God Bless America! (Norm Cates, Jr. is the Founder and Publisher of CLUB INSIDER, now in its 22nd year of publication. Cates can be reached by phone at 770-635-7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com)

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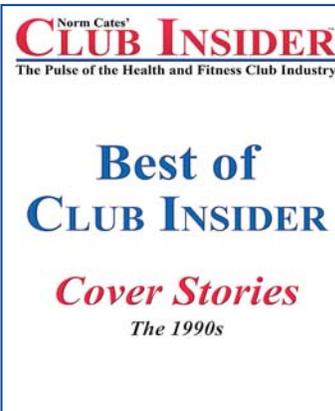
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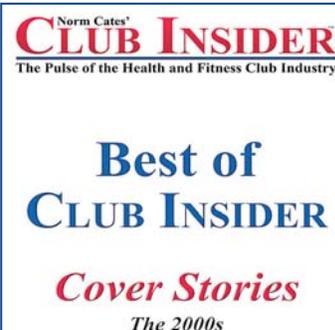
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The second eBook features the best cover stories from the 2000s and includes the stories of: Rich Boggs and Ray Irwin, Cecil Spearman, Jack LaLanne, David Patchell-Evans, Dale Dibble, Sandy Coffman, Joe Moore, John McCarthy, Tim and Liz Rhode, Steve Tharrett, Ed Williams and Art Curtis, Pat Laus, Rudy and Virginia Smith, Alan and Steven Schwartz, Thomas Plummer, Clive Caldwell, Bill Pearl, East Bank Club, Joe Gold and Mike Uretz, Gordon Johnson, Don Shula and Bill Higgs,



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...Curt Beusman

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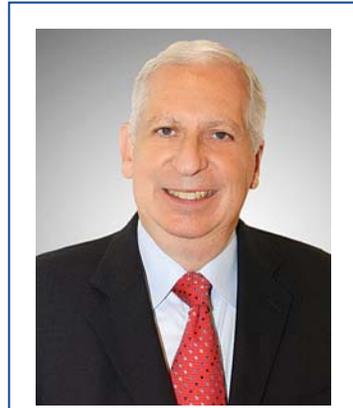
Connecticut. Curt served as past-President of the National Tennis Association (NTA) and co-founded IHRSA with Rick Caro, Dale Dibble, Jennifer Wayt Saslaw, Todd Pulis, Peter Donahue and myself. The man impressed and amazed most everybody in our industry.

Rick Beusman, President of Saw Mill Club and son of Curt Beusman, commented:

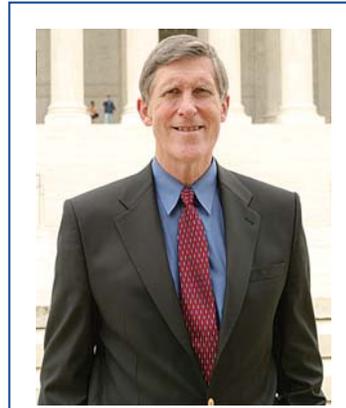
Here are some thoughts on my dad. Many people knew my dad through his time in the industry and as a founder of IHRSA. But, to me, what was really remarkable about him is all the things he did prior to his involvement in our industry.

Before starting and building Saw Mill Club, Dad had a very successful career doing the same at Curtis Instruments, an electronics firm that built and sold timing devices to the U.S. Government and other major manufacturers. Curtis Instruments actually has their timers in the lunar rover, which is sitting on the moon today.

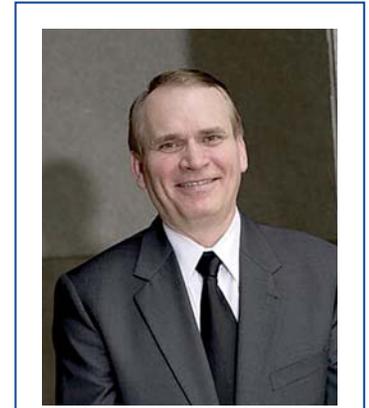
He sold that business so that he could get involved in indoor tennis. It's funny, because if you ever asked my dad who or what he was, he always said first and foremost, I'm a tennis player. This from a man who attended Northwestern University at age 16, graduated at 19, received a Doctorate in chemistry from the University of Cincinnati at 21 and then got a nuclear engineering degree and worked at the U.S. Government's secret nuclear facility at Oak Ridge Tennessee by the age of 24. By the age of 26, he was married with three kids and then founded Curtis Instruments in his late 20s. By the time he was 40, he had sold Curtis and started breaking ground on Saw Mill Club. During this same period, he opened a steakhouse, owned and operated two radio stations and was



Rick Caro



John McCarthy



Joe Moore

building a second indoor tennis club. Still, he found time to get a graduate business degree from Columbia University, volunteered as President of the Chappaqua school board, participated in the Chappaqua Drama Group as an actor and conductor of the orchestra, while also finding time to coach my friends on local town sports teams.

So, getting involved in indoor tennis (and then multisport facilities when he realized that you can't make much money on an indoor tennis court) didn't seem all that crazy when compared to his earlier iterations as an entrepreneur and parent.

Both my mom and dad were passionate and deeply involved with our industry. It's with great pride that we carry on their legacy at our clubs and at Saw Mill Sports Management, Inc. Without the vision and support of both of them, and many others as well, I can't imagine that IHRSA or the industry would be as healthy and successful as it is today.

Rick Caro, President of Management Vision, Inc. in New York City and 40+ year friend of Curt Beusman, commented:

Curt Beusman was an early force in the club industry. This was at a time when the industry was extremely entrepreneurial

with few dominant club companies. It was at a time of small fitness-only clubs (some with only one locker room and offering alternate day use to each sex), pure tennis clubs and racquetball-only facilities. He converted his club to multi-sport. Then, he shared the details with the industry and toured many club owners who wanted to learn from it. He was a risk-taker. If it worked, he was not afraid to educate others. He did so on a wide range of concepts and issues: EFT, raising prices annually, staff skill building, energy co-generation, analyzing membership retention and the role of departmental managers as key decision makers. He may be best remembered as the preacher who gave the club industry its 10 Commandments at a convention in full costume with gospel music in the background. He was theatrical.

He provided leadership, always in a consensus-building environment, starting as President of the old National Tennis Association. He was a Co-Founder of IHRSA. He helped create the concept of club executive roundtables for the industry. He was on IHRSA's Advisory Board for years. He lectured at Conventions and taught at the IHRSA Institute.

He could not have enjoyed his business success if he had not been blessed with his wife, Jane, who had all of the administrative strengths he lacked. They were a winning team.

Curt was a scientist, with quantitative and analytical strengths. But, he had equal parts creative and artistic in his persona. He was a storyteller, possessed with a ready joke, and was a Renaissance man of widely divergent interests and skills. He was an outstanding tennis player starting as a teenager, became an avid skier and enjoyed a variety of sports.

He was kind, generous, a great family man and a loyalist to a variety of non-profit institutions.

He brought wisdom to many, happiness to all he touched and loyalty to so many of us. He left us too young. But, we are blessed with many happy memories. I knew him for over 40 years and miss him already."

• • •

I also reached out to others across the industry to comment on Curt, and here is what they had to say:

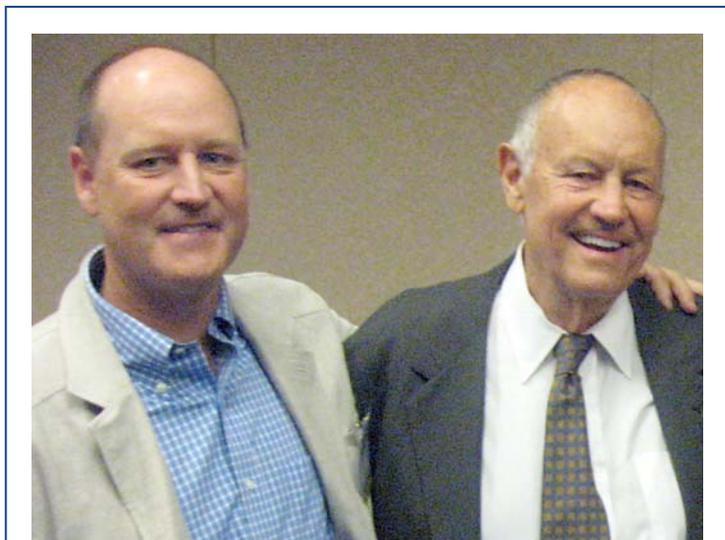
John McCarthy commented: Not many people know this, but it was Curt, and a few of his pals, who financed the beginning of IHRSA so that, without them, there may never have been an IHRSA... And, though, he himself was a star tennis player and was indeed a Big Ten Singles Champion at Northwestern (from which he graduated at the age of 20), he became one of the first in the entire industry to develop a multi-sport, multi-fitness indoor/outdoor family athletic club. The type of club that he developed is still, 40 years later, the 'gold standard' when it comes to both member attraction and member retention.

All of us who knew Curt knew that he was a bright guy, but he never told any of us that he had a Ph.D. in engineering in addition to an MBA in business. Nor did he ever tell any of us that, before he started the Saw Mill Club, he had started an engineering company, Curtis Instruments, that to this day generates over \$100 million in annual sales. And, long before IHRSA hired outside-the-industry professional speakers such as General Colin Powell and President William Clinton to be headliners for its conventions, Curt Beusman was our one and only headline speaker, gratis, of course. IHRSA still retains copies of his famous *10 Commandments for Success in the Club Business* talk, a talk that was 'standing room only' for all the years that he gave it and is as valid today as it was 35 years ago...

For all of us who were blessed to know Curt, he will live in our memories for many things: for his warmth, for his friendliness, for his sense of humor, for his love of life, for the confidence he had in the fledgling industry to which he was committed, and above all, for the joy and passion he brought to everyone he knew and to everything he did.

• • •

Joe Moore, IHRSA CEO and President, commented: Curt embodied *Success by Association*. At a time when most
 (See *Curt Beusman* Page 12)



Rick and Curt Beusman



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...Curt Beusman

continued from page 10

successful club owners thought they had THE secret formula and feared sharing their knowledge with others, Curt (who was extremely successful) shared everything. He did so in a unique and memorable way, leaving a lasting impression on everyone who saw him. He set the standard that others aspire to meet. The outpouring of sentiments from the entire industry is a testament to his achievements.

• • •

Richard Trant, Founder and Owner of the Weston Racquet Club commented:

It is with great sadness that I reflect on the passing of Curt, my dear friend and colleague of many years. We served together on the Board of the National Tennis Association, and we often did presentations together at our regional conferences. Curt was the ultimate innovator and mentor to all in our industry, and he was loved by all who knew him.

Curt, his wife, Jane, and I were members of the same executive roundtable for more than 20 years, meeting quarterly in various cities and resorts in the U.S., Canada, Hawaii and Mexico. We traveled together, playing some golf and adventuring, as time permitted before or after the meetings. I remember one classic adventure in Hawaii, with Curt in the front seat of our rented helicopter. We flew around and through the fire and smoke belching mouth of the active volcano, Mauna Kea, and then hovered 15 feet above the red hot molten lava flow as it incinerated all in its downhill path. Shortly thereafter, all such helicopter flights were canceled. In recent years, after Curt's retirement, we got together in less precarious venues, notably in New York City for Saturday afternoon Matinees at the Metropolitan Opera, and afterward, we'd drive back to Curt's for dinner. Entertained by himself, we enjoyed fun overnights before driving back to Boston on Sunday morning.

Curt was kind and generous, a wonderful host, a great raconteur and a dear friend that was my honor to have known

all these years. I will miss him greatly. All Hale and Farewell Curt!

• • •

Alan Schwartz commented as follows to Club Industry and provided CLUB INSIDER with permission to publish his comments in this cover story: In losing Curt, we have lost an industry icon. He cared about the health of our industry and the success of the industry's clubs. Curt was a visionary. His insights were brilliant as was his theatre delivery of those insights. Who can forget Preacher Beusman? He will be sorely missed and long remembered. On a personal note, Curt and I were friends and tennis competitors going back to the 1940s. He was an accomplished player, a fierce competitor and a great friend. Our industry would be years behind where we are today were it not for Curt and his willingness to share. My deepest sympathies to his sons, Rick and Robert, and the entire Beusman family.

• • •

Nick Cotsidas, Founder and Former Owner of Boston Athletic Club, commented:

Curt was a great guy who will be greatly missed. IHRSA back in the early days was a reflection of its small group of founders, including Curt, who guided it during its infancy. Many of us who joined IHRSA during those early days received a great deal of valuable one-on-one assistance from Curt and the other founders. All one had to do was ask and Curt would spend as much time as needed to help with a problem. Because of that sharing, our chances of success were greatly enhanced. I will always be indebted to him.

• • •

Larry Krieger, Bay Club Stonetree General Manager commented:

I had the pleasure of working with Curt for 14 years, and there was never a dull moment. The words that most describe Curt in my eyes are creative, innovative, smart, collaborative and a lot of fun.

I remember discussing the



Alan Schwartz and Curt Beusman Chatting at Club Industry 2010

beginnings of his *10 Commandments* speech one afternoon in this office. That afternoon, Curt put together the ten keys to successful club operation. As he left, he said, 'these need work; too boring.' Two days later, at a meeting in his office, I was introduced to *Brother Beusman*. Curt changed my life in more ways than I can count. I will miss him.

• • •

Cecil Spearman, Founder and Owner, Laguna Niguel Racquet and Sports Club, Laguna Beach, California commented:

Curt was a talented athlete, an outstanding student who obtained a PhD. He was a courageous entrepreneur who started two companies that enjoyed immense success. As brilliant as he was, he also enjoyed life and had a wonderful personality. His most outstanding quality, however, was his willingness to help others. He always shared with other club owners and never expected anything in return. Curt was 'ONE OF A KIND' and will be missed *BIG TIME!*

• • •

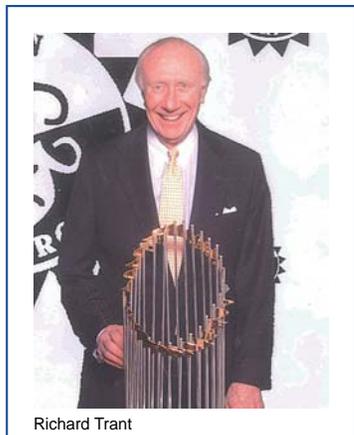
John and Jan Doyle, Founders and

Former Owners of The Belmont Athletic Club in Long Beach, California commented:

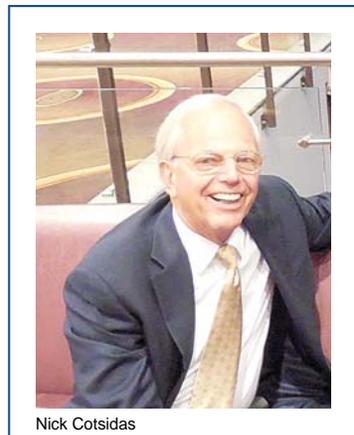
We have lost a Friend and a Legend!
Just the week before Curt's passing, I was going through some very old files, and I came across the article that I had saved from your **May 2001 Edition of CLUB INSIDER** about Curt's *10 Commandments of Recreation Marketing*. They were great words of wisdom and inspiration when they were first delivered, and they were just as inspiring when I reread them now (See **Sidebar on Page #14**).

The last time I had the pleasure of sharing any time with Curt was when he received the Lifetime Achievement Award in Chicago in 2010. You, Rick Caro, a few others and I had a chance to sit down and have a fun dinner of shared laughs and great memories. I recently told our staff, 'Curt was always so positive with a can do attitude that would encourage all of us to push ourselves to do better.' Curt was always fun and inspiring.

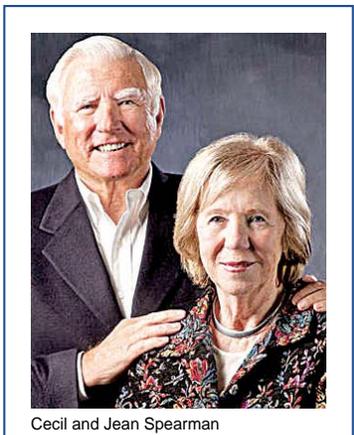
Men like Curt are a gift to all of us who had the pleasure of knowing him and listening to his advice and council. A Bright Light has left our industry, and he will always be remembered and
(See *Curt Beusman Page 14*)



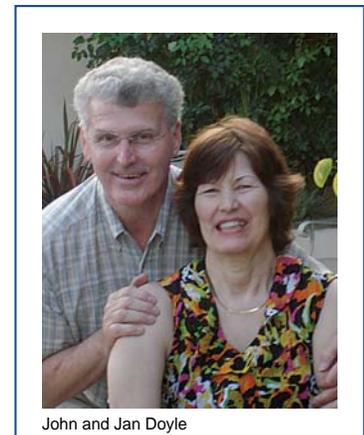
Richard Trant



Nick Cotsidas



Cecil and Jean Spearman



John and Jan Doyle



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...Curt Beusman

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definitely missed.

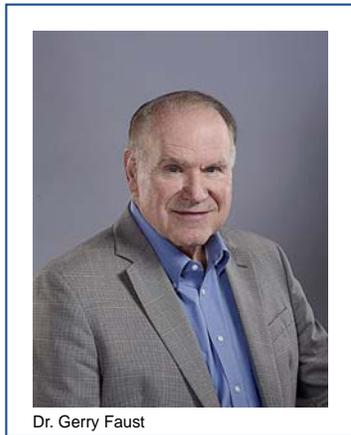
Thank You Norm for letting me share some thoughts on Curt and also Thank You for all you do and have done for this great industry of ours.

• • •

Dr. Gerry Faust, Faust Management, Inc. commented: Curt was an original member of the Faust Roundtable #1, and for almost twenty years, he inspired us all with his wit and wisdom. His insights into the industry drove many key innovations and his willingness to share and help his colleagues was legendary. He was the ideal Roundtable member. He shared so much, could take an idea and run with it to develop new and exciting insights. He asked the difficult questions when they needed asking, was not afraid to confront issues, and always with Curt, you knew he was acting out of love and generosity and with true concern for his colleagues and their businesses.

We have lost a *giant* in the industry. I will never forget his costume and poetry at my 50th Birthday party. He brought down the house with his performance, much of it at my expense. It was a true Brother Beusman performance.

• • •



Dr. Gerry Faust

Tim Rhode, Founder and Owner of 3 Maryland Athletic Clubs in Timonium, Maryland and surrounding areas, commented: We are so saddened by the news of Curt's passing. What a bright and positive influence he was in my life, as I'm sure he was for many! *Every single one* of my memories of Curt are positive... He was always a source of thoughtful insight, wit and wisdom (especially wit!). Even though we'd seen him less in recent years, he continues to have a positive influence on our lives. He will be missed.

• • •

Mark and Debbie Eisenzimmer of Cascade Athletic Clubs commented: Cascade Athletic Clubs and the entire Eisenzimmer Family are grateful



Tim Rhode

beneficiaries of over 30 years of Curt's insightful teaching, sharing, encouraging and occasionally, scolding (good critical thinker!), through IHRSA, our Faust Roundtable and other industry events. Curt helped shape the health and fitness industry and has left an indelible mark. His passing will as well. Rick, Robert and the rest of the Beusman family, our thoughts and prayers are with you during this difficult time.

• • •

Jill Kinney, Co-founder of Active Sports Clubs, commented: Curt Beusman was passionate and loud. Never did he walk into the room that he didn't own the space. Whether it was on the stage as *Brother Beusman* hollering 'Praise the date, when you raise the rate!' or even his soft spoken kind question, 'How is your family?' Curt drove his vision through words and enthusiasm. Most importantly, Curt partnered with the love of his life, Jane. She was the brick house behind the Saw Mill River business, and although she let Curt be the spokesman, she was a true partner to him. Curt encouraged us to have integrity and to grow as an industry. He was truly a leader and a well-loved one at that.

• • •

Patricia Laus, Founder and Owner of the the Atlantic Club in New Jersey commented: A little known story:

In 1982, having just read one of the first IRSA (as it was known then) newsletters, I read down the founders list and saw that Curt Beusman, owner of Sawmill River Club, was within driving range to New Jersey. I set out to visit the club and Curt.

At the time, I, personally, had no business experience. And, to add to it, I would soon find out from Curt that I really didn't have 'a business!' After a few hours with Curt, I asked him if he would consider being a 'consultant' to me.

With his impish Curt smile, he answered, 'It's not really what I do, but what the heck, let's give it a try!'

Long story short, over the next few years, Curt introduced me to the industry, his associates and he shared his intellect,



Mark and Debbie Eisenzimmer



Jill Kinney



Patricia Laus

wisdom, limitless energy and humor with me during extraordinary difficult times. In addition, Curt guided me through the tough exercise of deconstructing *what the business was*, and helped me create *what the business could become*.

One of best memories I have is Curt standing in my office asking, 'Do you have the guts to go to \$58 a month?' At the time, the industry was realizing that, for clubs to become financially viable, there should be monthly dues, not 'pay as you go.'

I responded with confidence to Curt, 'Sure, I can do that!' However, when Curt left, I thought: how am I ever going to do this?

(See Curt Beusman Page 16)

Curt Beusman's Ten Commandments for Clubs

1. Thou shalt know all of thy customers and their total spendings at thy club, yea, even better than thou knowest thine own wife's charge accounts.
2. Take not the false teachings of thy most vocal members as the true gospel of thy flock.
3. Thou shalt follow thine own true counsel on marketing and pricing, unfettered by thy naysayers of lesser vision at thy competitor's club.
4. Cast thy eyes toward new fitness activities for the greater multitude that surely will benefit thy overall gross income and insure thine own retirement plans.
5. Gather thy disciples and employees unto thy conference room and teach them the love of thy members, that they might spread the gospel of thy true club value.
6. Even though thine neighbor's wife shall seeketh a special deal and entreat thee with pleas and promises, deny her from the Rule of Equity Pricing and for all thine members.
7. Deny all discounts for local corporations for their net profits far exceed thine own meager returns.
8. Thou shalt avoid optional choices like the plague, for they truly accounteth only to the benefit of the customer and destroyeth thine own bottom line.
9. Thou shalt stagger thy price increases throughout the whole year, increasing first one, then the others to dazzle thy members with footwork.
10. Yea, though thy profits be waning and thine neighboring clubs be multiplied, despair not, for the overall fitness business shall survive and prosper mightily.

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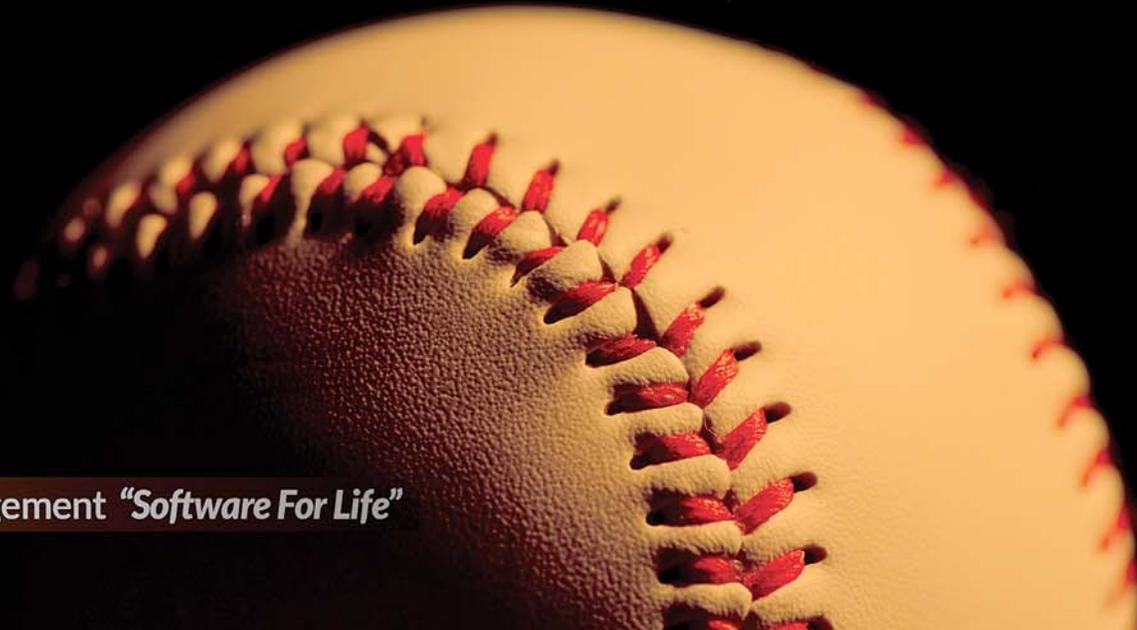
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The #1 Barrier to Driving More Paid Group Training and What You Can to Do About It Now!

By: Ron Alterio

Everywhere you go, clubs across the globe of all shapes and sizes, are still trying to figure out this thing called paid group training. Walk into any fitness center, and you'll be sure to see some form (small group, large group, team training, etc.) of paid group training on the menu. However, take one look at the number of attendees that participate in said classes, and you'd think you were watching a private 1-to-1 or 2-to-1 training session. Furthermore, ask five different staff people to define paid group training and you'll be sure to get five different answers. Why do we, as an industry, continue to struggle with something that we are so passionate about? Why do we continue to struggle with getting our members to participate in something that is so fun, so affordable and so effective?

It's not that we have the wrong class size or times. It's not about the lack of square footage. It's not about having the wrong names for the classes or the wrong toys. It's not even the price! The number one barrier to driving more paid

group programming is that **your members simply don't know what it is**; they simply haven't got a clue! You can't just dedicate space, buy the right toys and expect people to flock to these classes. To really get greater participation, we have to look beyond the traditional Xs and Os and do a better job of telling our members what paid group training is.

For decades, we have molded the consumer perception of fitness into three basic compartments: cardio, free weights and group X classes. Yet, descriptors like energy, group environment, heart racing, affordable and fun are just a few of the most common ways we try to describe group training. To the consumer, however, there isn't anything about that definition that's different than the other stuff they have been doing for years. If you want your members to respond, they will need to see and hear clear and convincing reasons as to why they should give up their normal habits and routines in exchange for this new product. Below are the most common questions your members want answers to:

1. Why should I pay for group training

when I can take the Group X classes for free?

2. Will the outcome be enough to overcome the risk of trying something new?

3. What is the difference between 1-to-1 and group training?

4. Why can't I get the same benefit from just doing machines and cardio?

5. How will my life be different after participating?

To effectively answer these questions, we need to break down paid group training into its two main components:

1. The type of movement that takes place.
2. The environment in which the movement takes place.

Movement: The critical thing that your members need to understand is that group or team training is based upon functional movement. They need to understand that the exercises done in paid group training are designed to strengthen the body to move in ways it moves in everyday life. They need not be afraid of those weird looking toys like kettle bells, ropes and



Ron Alterio

sleds since those tools are helping them strengthen the very same muscles they use when they are grocery shopping, playing with the kids, working in the yard and participating in their favorite sports. **Bottom Line:** They need to be taught that functional strength training helps them do what they do in everyday life. And, it helps them do it better. You can't get that from
(See Ron Alterio Page 18)

...Curt Beusman

continued from page 14

Deep down, it was my trust in Curt that set the foundation for the Atlantic Club to go onto become a sound business.

To this day, I find myself quoting to my staff Curt's principles: profit is not a dirty word; you need to raise your dues every year; build a business the banks would want as a client; educate your staff and your members; and in answer to a members request, we'll say 'yes' if we can, and if we can't, we'll tell you why!

You may be thinking, 'How lucky was Pat to have been coached by Curt Beusman?' The short answer is **very!**

The more important measure for me is how grateful I am to have known Curt Beusman, a most extraordinary human being, genius, business person, leader, husband, father, etc. and the extreme privilege I had to call him my friend.

• • •

Norm Cates, CLUB INSIDER Publisher Since 1993 Comments on Curt and Jane Beusman: Curt's wife of 58 years, the late Jane Beusman, provided Curt with much more than companionship. She was, in her own right, a very bright and talented business person, and over the years, Jane served as a wise sounding board for Curt, not to mention a helpful and thoughtful mind and voice on the Faust Roundtable #1 for 20 years.

Jane and Curt Beusman were also

very instrumental in the creation of CLUB INSIDER, and we will always be grateful to them for their help. I was a member of the often-mentioned Faust Roundtable #1 Group from day one. Assembled by our friend, Rick Caro, this group of veteran club owners and operators would meet every quarter to discuss our club operations and share challenges and potential solutions. This tremendous support group changed the lives of many in this group. It changed my life, for sure, because in 1993, I decided to become a *Mr. Mom*, so I could be at home with my son, Justin Cates, as we had built his Mom an antique store where she spent a lot of her time.

So, it was my turn in Chicago in late January of 1993 to present my challenge to the Roundtable #1, which was to assist me in figuring out a new, home-based business that would allow me to be a Mr. Mom for Justin, who was 8 years old at the time. Curt and Jane were in attendance with Rick Caro, Red Lerille, Dale Dibble, Cecil Spearman, Dick Trant, Todd Pulis, Tom Lyneis, Mitch Wald, Mark and Debbie Eisenzimmer, Jill Kinney and myself when, all of a sudden, Jane said: 'Our industry needs a new publication. We need a newspaper or a magazine that will be *irreverent, outspoken* and that *Tells-It-Like-It-Is* about the issues and problems in our industry when nobody else will address them.' I was standing next to a large flip chart writing down each new business suggestion that the Roundtable #1 members came up with, and Jane's idea went on the chart.

One by one, we eliminated all of the

ideas on the chart, but Jane's idea, and the *concept of CLUB INSIDER was born*. Three months later at the L'Auberge Hotel in Del Mar, California, at another Roundtable #1 Meeting, I again had the floor, and my mission that day was to pick a name for what's now known as CLUB INSIDER. Curt and Jane, and most of the rest of the Roundtable #1 crew was there, 14 total participants, plus Dr. Gerry Faust were in the room. There was an amazing brainstorming effort for this name selection, and after listening to the recording, 9 of the 14 were throwing out name ideas almost simultaneously, which I would then write on the flip chart.

I was hearing and writing name idea after name idea for this new 'irreverent, out spoken and *Tell-It-Like-It-Is*' publication when, all of a sudden, *Brother Beusman* said, 'Insider... hmm... NO! CLUB INSIDER! NO! **The CLUB INSIDER News!**' I yelled, 'That's IT!' I wrote it down on the chart, and the rest, our 22 years of publication producing our 258th edition this month... is history. Of course, we now use CLUB INSIDER as our publication's name and on our masthead, and that change was made in 2008 because of our intense focus on delivering more than news, consisting of Case-Study Cover Stories about successful club businesses in the industry, as well as an intense monthly lineup of Best Practices articles by our world class team of Contributing Authors, experts in their fields.

So, here we had *Brother Beusman*, and his wonderful wife, Jane, again weighing in on a development that would help change and improve the industry we love, just as

Curt had done way back in 1981 when, at a meeting at Rick Caro's office in New York City, a group of seven of us founded what we called IRSA then, now called IHRSA (The International Health, Racquet and Sportsclub Association). Again, the rest is history, and IHRSA's going strong and preparing for its 35th Anniversary Convention and Trade Show in Orlando, Florida in March of 2016. Don't miss it!

• • •

CLUB INSIDER is honored to remember **The Late, Great Brother Curt Beusman**, and to all of those who called *Brother Beusman* a friend, our sincere condolences go out to you. The loss of a man who has helped so many of us is a tough and a true loss for all of us in this wonderful industry. We're all going to miss Curt Beusman, and we extend our sincere condolences to Robert and Rick Beusman, as they move on in life without their beloved Dad, Curt, and their Mom, Jane. The Memorial Celebration for Brother Curt Beusman will be held at the Saw Mill Club in Mount Kisco, New York on Sunday, July 12th at 3PM.

May The Late, Great Brother Beusman Rest In Peace.

(Norm Cates, Jr. is the Founder and Publisher of CLUB INSIDER, now in its 22nd year of publication. Cates can be reached by phone at 770-635-7578 or email at Norm@clubinsideronline.com)



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If You Have One Happy Member, You Can Build A Booming Business

By: Donna Krech

Building your club's profits off just one happy member is easier than you think. Just one person is all it takes as long as you know what you are looking for, know how to pull it out of your member and then know what to do with it once you have it. I'm going to show you exactly how to do just that with *testimonial marketing*.

What is testimonial marketing? Testimonial marketing is really *emotional marketing*. It is one person sharing his experiences with a product or service to others, and it's results-based. It's a human-interest story being shared by one who's lived it; that's the *KEY*. Thus, his emotion and his experiences with the product or service are being transferred to someone else. So, when that "someone else" is looking for a solution, for the answer to their problem, the testimonial provides a trusted source which provides said solution.

Testimonial ads are effective because people actually see themselves inside the testimonial, which is why you want to change it often. A testimonial can literally be picked up and used over and over and over again. One of the reasons they're so effective is they can show up anywhere and can be just as effective as when they showed up someplace else. People are looking for the solution. When they see and hear it, they connect. Thus, they see themselves in the testimonial. When they connect, that gives and fuels hope, hence, they take action.

The first key to getting a testimonial is to never rely on the member to tell the story. They tell you and then you can craft it and create it as a marketer. The best thing to do is record it with a video recorder and then transcribe it. Now, you have their words. Put these words alongside before and after pictures and stand back in awe... because the phone is going to ring and the website visits are going to come!

The second key to capturing a good testimonial is listening for testimonial triggers. Triggers are things that spark an idea; they spark imagination. Also, you can see the person's posture adjust and how they hold themselves. When you hear those triggers or see those kinds of transformations in people, ask: "How are you feeling right now?" "What are you doing?" You start to engage them in conversation, and you listen for bigger triggers like: "I feel better now than I ever have in my life." "Wow, great. Could I ask you a few questions?"

Here's a bullet-pointed way to think about it as to what to elicit out of him to give you content:

- What was the problem that was holding

you back? Or, what is the problem you've been trying to fix?

- What were the things that were really bothering you about that problem, the obstacles, the challenges that kept you running into a brick wall?

- What was the turning point? What finally made you say, I HAVE to do something, and what was it about this that made you do it?

- In this program, what are your results?

- And finally, what would you say to somebody going through the same problem you went through?

Making the offer: When you do a testimonial, you want to have some kind of offer. It can be a very covert offer, and sometimes, maybe it needs to be so it's not so in your face. A covert offer might say, "If you have questions, email _____." This is still a call-to-action. "Get your question answered" is an offer. Another suggestion for a covert offer is to point out the fact that, "This worked for Alice; it could work for you." Or, "I'm pinching myself. I can't believe this is happening. If I can help you, let me know."

Sharing your marketing testimonials: First make sure you have your components right. Begin by making a list of possible offers and calls to action (pick up the phone, dial this number or click this link now), you've got to tell people what to do, and these are a few of the most common sense in testimonial marketing. You want an attention-grabbing headline, the testimonial itself, some educational content, a call-to-action, contact information and an offer. You don't want it to be the same testimonial every day or your audience will tune you out, so make them look different, make some longer and some shorter. Your audience will start reading them, and if we make them like the stories, they'll really start reading them.

Testimonial Sins: The biggest sin of testimonial use is when it is just hung out there like a billboard, and it's supposed to do something on its own. Somebody who is a cold viewer, reader or listener doesn't know the whole story. Sometimes, you have to use the testimonial as part of the topic, as part of your sales copy, and it adds authenticity and credibility to what you're saying. It turns your pitch into an authentic story. So, don't always look at using a testimonial by itself, in its entirety. Cut it up, break it up and pull pieces from it. Strategically, pull the context out of it that supports, strengthens and lifts up the

sales and the marketing copy that you're going to be using.

Places testimonials can be used: Think about the video testimonial I mentioned previously and how you can use it in video, audio and print, as well as where you can use those. In video, you've got TV commercials, websites, Facebook, etc. Audio files can go on a website, a podcast, a voice broadcast or even an email. One of the things I see no one do, on their website, is use video, audio and print of the same testimonial. People learn differently. Some people are visual, for others hearing is more powerful, and in others, it's reading. If you use all three mediums on a website, you have a better chance of speaking to everyone.

If you would like more training on testimonial/emotional marketing, I have an hour-long training audio you can have access to for free. Just call (866) 260 - 8446 or email info@thinandhealthy.com to request it.

...Ron Alterio

continued from page 16

just running on a treadmill or jumping on a piece of fixed equipment.

Environment: The atmosphere in small or large group training is really the differentiator. People love to be in groups. We are social creatures by design. Moreover, we tend to work harder and give a greater commitment to the work at hand when we know others are counting on us. Additionally, working in groups is a ton more fun than just sweating alone. However, even with all of the above benefits of working out in a group, nothing compares to the X factor known as the "team dynamic." There is something magical about being part of a team. People take pride in being a member of a team and there is generally a camaraderie that ensues that very few people are willing to give up on. As such, the bonds and friendships created in group training are lynchpins that helps keep the group together, and its team members working harder.

Together, **movement** and **environment** make for an experience that is unmatched in any other part of your club.

Now that we have clarified the two main ingredients that make group training so special, let's put it all together and provide a powerful sample definition that's clear, concise, and gets right to the point:

- The *ULTIMATE* fat burning, muscle building, *life changing* workout you will



Donna Krech

(Donna Krech is the Founder and owner of *Thin&Healthy Total Solutions*, and she can be reached at by phone at 419-991-1223 or email at Donna@DonnaKrech.com.)

ever participate in!

- You can't get this **EXPERIENCE** anywhere else in the club!
- Our **Team Training** combines the **POWER** of Functional Strength Training (FST) with the **ENERGY, COMRADERIE** and **FUN** of playing on a team!!
- Simply put... the exercises done in **Team Training** are designed to strengthen the very same muscles you use to live, work and play!
- The **END RESULT...** whatever you want to do in life, team training will help you do it quicker, better and longer!
- Life is good... **Team Training makes it better!**

As you can see, the above definition answers the most common questions the members have. It clearly describes what the outcome is. It states *exactly* how the member will be moving, and it describes the difference between everything else that's available in the club.

Simpler, shorter and varied versions of the above definition, married with powerful imagery can also be used with your print, social media and digital marketing efforts.

Bottom Line: We have a consumer base that was brought up believing that fitness is simply cardio, weights and group exercise classes. To get them out of that framework, we have to do a better job of reshaping the member mindset. We brought this new programming in, and it's our job to help them understand what it is.

(Ron Alterio can be reached at 717-645-3899 or by email at ron@vfp.us)

advice, etc.

“By the time I left training, I already had people committed to joining!”

-BETH SAROKA



Beth Saroka
Onslow Fitness - Jacksonville, NC

FITNESS PROS GET BEHIND FAST WEIGHT LOSS!

FAST LOSS FEEDS FITNESS AND PT!!

The 20/30 Fast Track Program just sounded too good to be true. Losing 20 pounds in 30 days? How can you do that and be safe? That is against everything I've been taught and learned in the industry, but that everybody's goal .

From the fitness perspective, we say you can expect a couple pounds of weight loss per week, not 20 lbs. in 30 days. The biggest reason I brought the 20/30 Fast Track in was because I experienced it personally from a consumer stand-point and lost 18 lbs. in 30 days. The Total Solution program is a great program; I just wanted to be able to offer short-term or fast options. The Total Solution is a 12-or 24-month "slow and steady loss" program.

I chose to bring 20/30 into our facility here to help feed the Total Solution program that we were already offering, as well as feeding fitness and personal training.

THE MISSING KEY TO INCREASED PROFITS!

One of the things that I like about the 20/30 business model is that it is set up for two (2) people with only 20-30 hours a week, which means no additional staff or overhead. After going through the 20/30 Fast Track training, I had all the tools I needed, not just for the business, but I also had a real knowledge of how the program actually works. It is a very safe, effective and healthy program. The 20/30 Fast Track program training was phenomenal .

The best part of

training was actually the practical application of the marketing we were taught, which lead to an instant list of prospects. By the time I left training, I already had people committed to joining the program! I'm very excited to bring this fast loss program into my club!

I think in the fitness industry specifically, the nutritional component has been left out. I have personally done an enormous amount of research and have looked into zillions of programs over the years. I even hired registered dietitians to meet with members in the club, free of charge. I think that the 20/30 Fast Track Plan and Thin&Healthy's Total Solution combined is the best answer to increase profits and provide amazing member results.

YOU DON'T HAVE TO PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET!!!

I've been in the fitness business for 39 years. Most gyms put the majority of their eggs into the fitness basket; their revenue is coming from fitness. I think to be competitive and to survive, you need to have more than one (1) source. You need income coming in from personal training, fitness and weight loss, and the 20/30 Fast Track feeds into all of those.

-Beth Saroka



"I went from a size 18 to a size six (6) in five (5) months, and I have more confidence now than ever! I even went to VEGAS and wore shorts, something I have not done in 10 years!"

- Kim T.



"Seeing Rex off 27 insulin shots in one (1) day, and Denny with no migraines after five (5) a week for 44 years, has inspired me to never go back to the 80 lbs. ago me!"

-Tug T.

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The Fate and Fortune of the Health and Fitness Industry

By: Stephen Tharrett and Mark Williamson

Part III

The health and fitness facility industry is an evolving entity, both domestically and internationally. While it is more of an accepted part of the American culture and lifestyle than it was 40 years ago, or even a decade ago, the industry remains somewhat susceptible to the whims of evolving global demographics, trendy popular culture and macroeconomic conditions. The fate and fortune, or destiny if you like, of the health and fitness facility industry, is now being influenced by these evolving cultural, demographic and economic forces. How the industry perceives and interprets these influences and correspondingly responds to them will determine our industry's destiny over the next few decades. The more attuned club operators are to these powerful forces of capitalistic evolution, the greater the chance as a collective community, and as individual operators, our ability to craft a fate of prosperity.

This white paper is the final installment in our trilogy series that delved into what we believed were seven of the most powerful forces impacting our industry in 2015, but also positioned to influence its destiny for decades to come. This final installment explores the impact of globalization and technology on the future of the health and fitness facility industry.

Globalization: The World Is Now One

The 21st century is an era of cultural fusion, one in which physical boundaries alone no longer allow individuals to be protective of their independent cultures. Technology has shrunk the world and, in many cases, erased many of the cultural and physical borders and protections of the past decades. At the present time, countries and cultures have fused together in a mesh of economic and popular culture. As indicated by the title of Thomas L. Friedman's landmark book, *The World is Flat*, the globe has become significantly more fused, and as a result, most business and cultural phenomena can literally impact the entire world within minutes, and often, seconds. A great example of this "snowball" like impact of a globally fused and interconnected business and cultural environment was the economic recession that raised its ugly head in 2008. What began in the U.S. and eventually touched the entire world, to this day is still wreaking havoc in many parts of the globe. This fusion of cultures means that the communities served by health and fitness clubs are no longer represented by a singular audience, but instead, consist of

multiple audiences, each with its own set of unique preferences and traditions.

According to the *IHRSA 2014 Global Report*, less than 40% of all health and fitness club members reside in the U.S. While the U.S. still has the largest number of clubs and members, its domination of the industry is slowly losing out to a global encroachment of outstanding club operators, a global market that is more aware of the value of fitness, and cultures that pursue it differently. The potential business implications for a global health and fitness industry may include:

- Industry best practices will continue to emerge from several markets, such as Asia, Europe and Latin America. Industry trends will no longer be the sole domain of U.S. clubs, but instead, will represent a blend of fused ideas from many nations (for example, the explosion of Zumba).

- Individual communities served by health and fitness facilities will continue to see a more diverse membership, made up of people who speak different languages, and more importantly, have different values and interests. Clubs will need to expand programming and find niche programs that appeal to various global audiences. Already in parts of the U.S. (California, Florida, Texas and Wisconsin, for example), club operators are finding they have to introduce new programs to satisfy the cultural expectations of its culturally diverse contingency.

- Clubs will begin considering niche markets based on cultural background. As a result, new social communities will be created around physical activity. In turn, a club targeted toward specific ethnic and cultural communities will not be far behind. This may be a domain for boutique operators. As *IHRSA's 2014 Health Club Consumer Report*, and more recently released, *2014 Fall Seasonal Trend Report* indicate, the U.S. health and fitness facility market is quite ethnically and culturally diverse.

- Fitness professionals will seek opportunities around the globe, thus changing the dynamics of employee recruitment. Global players will be forced to compete for the best talent in the health and fitness club industry.

Technology: The Antithesis of Activity

Over the past decade, technological advances have evolved so rapidly that the world seems to change as fast as technology innovates. The growth in portable digital communications and media (e.g., smart phones, hand-held computers and tablets, satellite-based



Stephen Tharrett



Mark Williamson

broadband networks, etc.), the evolution of virtual worlds and social networking sites and the continued growth in virtual games that enable individuals to do more by physically doing less is creating an entirely new business and operational framework for the health and fitness club industry. While technology has given the world many wonderful and helpful tools, it has also created a society that is less inclined to be physically active and interpersonally engaging.

As technology continues to evolve at the speed of light, people will have less reason to be active and even less reason to interact with others in a face-to-face environment. The founders of Google have even said they see a time when people never have to leave their house or take a step. Possibly, Google and their counterparts foresee a time when man will be unable to walk, move their thumbs, blink their eyes, or for that matter, speak. As a result, individuals will be able to travel across nations virtually, but may not be able to walk across the street without the help of an AED (administered by a smart phone application) and wheel chair. Among the potential implications of the technological tsunami for the health/fitness club industry are the following:

- Clubs may need to create virtual environments to supplement, and possibly even replace, their physical environments. Marketing and even basic programming may begin in the virtual world in an effort to draw interest in the physical world. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter, YouTube and who knows what other virtual platform will be part of every club's lexicon, and in a few years, operators will ask how they ever operated without them.

- Web-based exercise programming may become as important as in-club personal training is currently. Getting members started through virtual personal training may lead to new clients for in-club

personal training and programming. In reality, members can already leverage great personal training and nutritional tools on their computer or smart phone.

- The use of technology to monitor and communicate with members will free up staff or possibly their virtual avatars, to work more directly with those members who need personal attention and instruction. Eye scans and facial recognition for member check-in, fingerprint or chip entry to lockers, web-based scheduling for programs, cloud-based fitness tracking and real-time communication with members will become essential to the successful club of the future.

- Entertainment, especially for those from Generations Y and Z, will require the creative use of technology.

Reflections: In 1797, Thomas Carlyle, who lived during a large part of the 19th century, was quoted as saying, "*The true past departs not; no truth or goodness realized by man ever dies; or can die; but all is still here, through endless change.*" In this white paper, the final installment in our trilogy, we have explored two truths of today that we believe are shaping our future. These truths, be it a continually shrinking world or a global society seemingly connected at the cerebrum by chips and networks, are likely to live on, and as such, will heavily influence how our industry evolves to capture tomorrow's consumers.

The content for this white paper and the previous two white papers in this trilogy were derived from a chapter in a new book to be published later in 2015 by Healthy Learning and authored by Stephen Tharrett and Jim Peterson.

(Stephen Tharrett and Mark Williamson are Co-founders and Principals in ClubIntel, Steve and Mark may be reached at (866) 691 - 9223 or email Steve at stevet@club-intel.com)

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Digital Housekeeping For Your Business

By: Robin Schuette

Digital, digital, digital. If you're wearing an exercise tracker, welcome to the new world. I am curious how many FitBit users input additional data and manage it. For fitness owners and leaders who are also technology geeks, this is second nature. But, for most exercisers, or those just starting to exercise, digital tools may not be that useful to reach actual goals.

Digital marketing is a different story for business owners. Everyone is using digital marketing (Hello, website.). What I often see is that many businesses don't use digital tools to collect valuable information from customers at enrollment or during the prospect phase. Here are four essentials for successful marketing, digital or traditional:

1. List inventory. How many lists do you have? It doesn't matter if data is in an excel

file, a club management system or Mail Chimp (email marketing company). But, it does matter if the data is old, inaccurate or not segmented.

2. Segment your lists. Why do we segment? One simple reason is to better understand customer types and target information by age, household types, interests or purchases. Is your current system capable of producing a mailing list (or email list) for customers who have bought massage or personal training? Be sure to set key categories within any system and audit data periodically.

3. Identify number of visits per user periodically. Exercise frequency or visits is a basic benchmark. Many corporate wellness contracts require verification of visits per month to approve reimbursement. This data may also be used to establish member rewards programs.

4. Health improvement. We're in the business of improving people's health. Can we show that? Actual biometrics may be managed through software such as TriFit, often only used by personal trainers. One way memberships/sales can assist is by asking members to rank their health (from excellent to poor). After six months, ask this question again and note if there's been an improvement and congratulate the member if there has been! If not, it's time to check in on their exercise goals and program.

Beware the one-size-fits all software program: It often cannot segment AND include contract information for database marketing. If you have had success, please email me, and I'll write a case study in a future column. There is a downside to using multiple programs, as data is often duplicated or incorrect. This makes it even more important to manage lists and mailings (email and physical)



Robin Schuette

through a yearly promotional plan.

It may seem easy to start digital marketing projects. But, it's difficult to retain quality and professionalism unless you dedicate personnel to manage the
 (See **Robin Schuette** Page 23)

How to Design a Boutique Club Within a Club

By: Bruce Carter

One of the most significant changes in the fitness industry in the past ten years has been the growth of personal and group training. As a result of this, smaller clubs that specialize in this type of programming have become more popular. These clubs, often called "boutique clubs" usually range in size from 1,500 square feet to 7,500 square feet and offer one or more classes, such as cross training, yoga, hot yoga, Barre, Pilates, spin, group exercise and personal training.

There are two significant lessons that larger clubs have learned from boutique clubs. First, is that they can be strong competitors "pulling" people away from the larger clubs, and second, they are able to get significantly higher fees than larger competition. For example, recently, the owners of a 16,000 square-foot club charging \$29 per month, including spinning classes, were frustrated when a local spinning only "boutique" club at 2,500 square feet was getting \$89 per month.

So, one of the things a larger club should consider to better compete is to offer a boutique club within their club. Much of what a boutique club has going for it is its "specialized" personality. It can often appear that the smaller club is better with what they offer even though the larger

club has the same offering. This often is the result of how the specialized operation presents itself. The design and decor of the space makes the experience seem more special. Often, too, a boutique club looks like it is worth the much higher fees.

As an example, when you walk into a spin club, it is all about spinning. The lobby and room may have special graphics, lighting and sound system. There is not *another* focus, for often it is the *only* focus of the boutique club. These insights should then go into a club wanting to have a boutique club within their club. When doing a spinning room, "pretend" that this is all your club is about. What would you do differently?

It should be noted that the best way to offer a boutique club within a club is to group the rooms together, such as Barre, yoga and group (for a "mind body" area), spinning (which often needs extensive sound proofing) and group cross training. If a new club were being designed, this would be recommended. However, for existing clubs, rooms cannot be moved, but instead, they can be renovated to better accomplish this objective.

First, your offering should be looked at as *special* and not just another room. Are your yoga, group exercise or spin rooms only identified by just an entry door on a wall? The outside of the space should define the room as unique and special.

It should have accent lighting, signage, possibly graphics and other architectural features and finishes outside the room that brings motivational attention to the room. For example, a soffit above the door and unique wall coverings, specialty finishes and lighting on the walls at the entry all would help emphasize the desirability of the room. Obviously, you would want to do the same for inside the room. Once again, depending on the type of program offering, specialty lighting, flooring, wall coverings, sound systems, storage areas (to keep a room clean and uncluttered), colors and dramatic graphics should be considered.

Regarding personal and group training areas, often these are out in the open floor space of a club. However, having different flooring such as turf or different colored rubber flooring, accent lighting (such as drum or track), a separate personal training desk and signage can all make the space more special. Because the walls of these spaces often get dirty easily, use attractive finishes such as laminate, vinyl flooring or carpet squares to add excitement and durability to the wall space. Plants are always a plus while helping to purify the air of the different toxins that come from the building materials in your space.

Consider different inspirational names for your group areas. Instead of calling rooms Studio 1, 2, etc., or spinning,



Bruce Carter

use words that capture the imagination and provide a special image to your spaces, making them more "boutique," like in nature. Suggested names for rooms or areas could be Commitment, Promise, Dedication, Believe, Focus, Heart, Energy, Thrive, Power, Vigor, Joy, Thrill, Bliss, Soothe, Tranquil and Active.

Boutique operations are forcing larger clubs with broader offerings to better focus on their different offerings. No longer do "plain and average" group spaces work. The question is what can be done to make your offerings as desirable as the boutique club offering?

(See **Bruce Carter** Page 23)

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...Robin Schuette
continued from page 22

data and have a communications plan in place. One way to make content more meaningful is to personalize with photos or video of members (or team members) and their success stories. Make that part of everyone's job description, otherwise you'll never have enough content.

Digital marketing is here to stay and grow. So take the time now to make sure team members understand the communications process for inputting and managing data and collecting great stories.

(Robin Schuette, MS, co-owner, MedFit Partners, www.medfitpartners.com, is a communications navigator for businesses, helping owners choose the most effective digital and traditional channels to target best customers. For Digital Housekeeping tips, email her at rschuette@medfitpartners.com. Please call **847-475-2185** with comments or questions at. Twitter: [@Medfit1](https://twitter.com/Medfit1) [@SchuetteRobin](https://twitter.com/SchuetteRobin))

...Bruce Carter
continued from page 22

Clubs that have put a strong emphasis on these areas have found that the space they have allocated have produced the highest revenue per square foot in their operations. The need to better compete with boutique competition is increasing, yet a renewed focus on your similar spaces can result in some of the strongest assets for your club.

(Bruce Carter is President of Optimal Design Systems International and can be reached by phone at **954-385-9963** or email at bruce@optimaldsi.com)

**Make
It Fun!**

Human Talent

By: Bill McBride

While it has been reported that our ancestors have been on earth for approximately six million years, the human form in its modern capacity only evolved about 200,000 years ago. Our more modern day civilization is really only about 6,000 years old, with the 1800s bringing in industrialization. In the scope of things, that's a relatively short amount of time to really get ourselves sorted out with business productivity, work place relationships, handling dysfunction, etc. all while producing results in a dynamically changing environment.

My thought process in this article is that, whenever I talk to people about their organizations, it seems to all go to fixing *s_ _ _* --I mean *stuff*-- with a program, initiative, training or some other panacea. And, when we peel it back, it's always something about a person or group of people. People are fundamentally the root of all of our joy, success, angst and disappointment.

So, if you believe my assertion that it's all about the people we hire and how we enter and maintain our relationship with them, then you might find this article refreshingly basic and true to one of our core issues and maybe even beneficial.

Jack Welsh, former CEO of General Electric Corporation, espoused three metrics: **Employee Satisfaction**, **Customer Satisfaction** and **Cash Flow**. One of my early mentors taught me: **People, Product**, and **Profit** in that order. It seems very much the same concept.

I believe the premise to be: The happy, engaged employees would be loyal and deliver for the company and be a lightning rod for customer satisfaction. If those two occur organically, and with the help of design, you will be profitable in many more cases than not (Unless you have a really unfortunate lease; a different topic).

This brings us to talent (people) selection, hiring, onboarding and then training.

So, how do you begin to build an organization that is dependent on other people? All of whom are freethinking and independent in their value systems and approaches to life as well as their work habits and senses of right and wrong... This short article lists several steps in addition to the skills necessary to do the job you require. My suggested approach is to slow down a bit and really spend the time in hiring the right humans for the culture and job at hand. Spend the time on screening, selection, pre-onboarding, enrollment (hiring) and then onboarding and training. If you look at most successful leaders, you

will find some folks who have been on their team for a long time. This isn't by accident, and it's not entirely due to relationships. It is because leaders and other leaders, when augmenting each other's strengths and weaknesses, stay together working with common alignment and purpose.

"Only three things happen naturally in organizations: friction, confusion and under-performance. Everything else requires leadership." - Peter Drucker

So, how do you build long-term leaders, managers and associates?

Step 1: Know whom you are looking for.

You define who will be successful and win within your organization. You profile (a politically incorrect word) your current best employees in each position and you codify the traits (personality and expertise) that make them successful. You have to have a benchmark to interview against. You have to know what you are looking for in an individual. Additionally, you have to know what type of person you need on a given team based on the other team members to have balance and multiple aptitudes covered. If you don't do this pre-work, you will hire people you simply like, and you will continue the cycle of churn. Dr. Gerry Faust has taught the PAEI system, which is a quick questionnaire that can be extremely valuable in putting together and understanding team propensities:

P = Producers;
A = Administrators;
E = Entrepreneurs;
I = Integrators (People Person);

There is more to the training than just the questionnaire, but the point is having a tool and information to know what you are looking for in each position on each team. I'm not suggesting that any questionnaire be the sole factor in a hiring decision, but the more information you have, the more likely you are to make a successful hire.

Step 2: Interview with purpose.

You have to interview with a set of questions in front of you based on the position with some general organizational questions concerning culture and the way it is around here. If you "ad hoc" interviews, you won't be able to intelligently compare candidates on what is important, and in many cases, you will "fall in love" with a candidate's personality and miss true organizational and team alignment. Discipline in interviewing is critical. Use

science first, then art. The "halo" effect of hiring people you like has caused a significant amount of poor hiring decisions throughout all industries, especially ours... as we tend to be "People Persons."

Step 3: You are convinced you have the "right" candidate.

If you do, others aligned in your organization will surely agree. Expose the candidate to at least two additional interviews and consider a third group interview with peers and even subordinates. Getting feedback doesn't prevent the ultimate decision. But, involvement leads to commitment, so the more team involvement to a candidate's hiring, the more team commitment to the candidate's success.

Step 4: You enroll the candidate into your organization.

You share your vision, mission, purpose and core values (actually this should be done in an initial interview), but this is when you truly make sure they are enrolled in what you are doing BEFORE you make an offer. If you have firm belief they are enrolled, you extend an offer.

Step 5: You train them.

"The only thing worse than training an employee and having them leave, is to not train them, and have them stay." - Zig Ziglar

Typically, most club training programs are 10 days initially; 2 weeks. You should schedule every minute. Some areas to make sure you cover are:

- Shadowing;
- All Department Head One-On-Ones;
- Fitness Assessment and All Class modality participation;
- Skill Set Assessments;
- Shop Competitors;
- Going through an internal sales tour;
- Working a shift in each department.

Step 6: 30-60-90 Day Plan.

Every new employee should be set up on a 30-60-90 day plan that they are held accountable to. This will ensure they are onboarded correctly and allow you to hold them accountable. Without holding employees accountable, you are simply hoping for the best. This is not good for the new employee or for the organization. Typically, 30-60-90 day plans will focus on a few areas. Some of which I like are: People (Staff Development or Service), Product / Programming, Production



Bill McBride

(Revenue or Profit) and Club Specific "Hot Spots." You can tailor as you see fit.

We all know the very old adage: "Failure to Plan is Planning to Fail," so every employee should have a plan to succeed and win.

Step 7: Monthly Meeting.

You should meet with every direct report at least monthly, if not weekly or bi-weekly, to review his 30-60-90 day plan and work with him or her on adjustments and skill enhancement. This is the fine-tuning to keep the business moving forward with discipline and focus, versus just hoping things work out...

I hope this helps remind us of the importance of the human basics. Getting this right has a bigger impact than most things we run around handling. We all talk about Human Resources, Talent and People being our most important asset, but are we really doing all we should to make our beliefs a reality on this front?

Look For: Initiative; Ownership Mentality; Adaptability; Positive Thinking; Results Orientation; Accountability; Broad Thinking (Vision); Honesty, Integrity and Character. Skills can be trained. People First!

(Bill McBride is President & Chief Executive Officer of Active Sports Clubs & BMC3. Bill is a health club industry veteran with over 25 years of experience leading and managing all aspects of commercial health clubs, medical fitness centers, community centers and corporate fitness centers. He owns BMC3, a health club consulting company, and most recently, he and partners launched Active Sports Clubs in January of 2014. Bill has served as Chairman of the IHRSA Board of Directors and is actively engaged in industry education and speaking on industry topics throughout the world. He can be reached at: BillMcBride@BMC3.com or (415) 299-9482 BMC3.com. [Linked In: www.linkedin.com/in/billmcbride](http://www.linkedin.com/in/billmcbride), [Twitter: billmcbride65](https://twitter.com/billmcbride65))

How to Close a Gym Membership Sale At Anytime, Under Any Circumstances

By: Jim Thomas

You just never know when things will change. You get transferred to another club. You have a new boss. Your company is sold. Even if things just seem to be going crazy in the gym you have worked at for years; things change, but the expectation of sales production remains.

Here are some tips to help you make the membership sale no matter what the circumstances:

Attitude is everything. The key to remember here is that it's more important how you feel about your prospect than how they feel about you. You can't let crazy circumstances change you. The positive expectancy to win. The will to make it happen. No negatives, attitude is paramount. If this is not in place, you can't even get started.

Have commitment in your posture

and voice. You want to be using words like: Great! Fantastic! Terrific! Show confidence.

Have enthusiasm that conveys conviction and belief. It's been said many times that the definition of sales is a transfer of feelings or a transfer of enthusiasm. It really goes beyond just enthusiasm; it's your passion, your belief and your conviction for what you do that means you can't be swayed otherwise.

You must be sold. You must be sold that your company is the best. You have the best product and best service. You're the best person to help them get the results they want. You're sold on the value you bring to your customer. You are unreasonable to the point that nothing can be said that will change how you think.

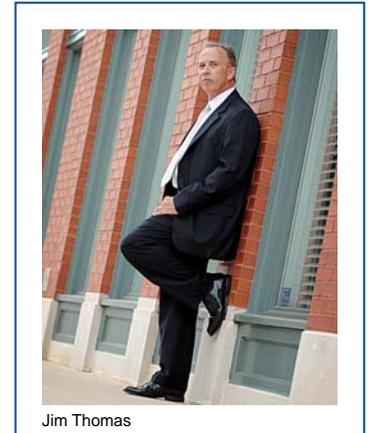
Always agree first with your prospect. This is senior to everything you do in

the sales process. Always be agreeable. Don't defend your position. Certainly, don't tell your customer they're wrong. Be agreeable. "Mary, I understand." "Mary, I agree with you." Even if your customer says they didn't come to join today, you say, "Mary, I understand; most of our guests don't come to join when they first come in." Then, follow your sales process.

Be sure you are getting daily training. If your club is providing this great, if not, be sure to get it on your own. Daily training will add a sale a day to your production.

Now, go close a sale!

(Jim Thomas is the Founder and President of Fitness Management USA Inc., a management consulting and turnaround firm specializing in the fitness and health club industry. With more than 25 years of experience owning, operating and managing clubs of all sizes, Thomas lectures



Jim Thomas

and delivers seminars and workshops across the country on the practical skills required to successfully build teamwork and market fitness programs and products. Visit his website at www.fmconsulting.net or www.jimthomasondemand.com.)

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It Really Is About The Frog and The Boiling Water..

By: Thomas Plummer

It really is about the frog and the boiling water. You know the story; the one where the frog happily swims in the science lab pot as the water gets turned up hotter and hotter, not aware that doom is just a few more degrees away.

In the fitness industry, we are the frog sitting in the pan of ever hotter water slowly starting to bubble. Yet, we still sit and stare over the edge of the pot wondering why it's getting a little warm in here and denying that change is happening no matter how we work to ignore it.

Denying change is a way of life in the fitness industry, especially in the chain driven mainstream markets. We fire a CEO or President, clean out middle management, hire another fugitive from the mainstream fitness world who wrongly believes that all of fitness is just another commodity-driven business, or sell the whole thing to guys who ran the same model 20 years ago, and then we repeat as needed.

We still manage to send out great financial reports that get a little shaky down deep, spin the stories in the trade magazines that every chain is successful and that this new guy, this time, and not like the last time, will change the world. Then, it falters, and we start over. In the mainstream world, no one is ever taken down, just rebuilding as Bally's did for a few generations, as it went from the world's best to zero units opened. Nothing lasts forever in this industry, and there is no promise that today's best will not be tomorrow's failure.

Of course, you have to take the ever positive with a strong dose of reality, because as we learn from television, you lie to protect your personal image, your stock or the next merger. In reality, if you opened 350 businesses based upon the same concept, and they all made a 30% profit, how hard would you have to work to sell that idea/franchise? So, what is the probable reality that every national group is wildly successful? If every unit in that system were all making the money they claim they are making, there would be a hundred added yearly. And, every major chain would be the next Starbucks, and every independent with 20 gyms would be selling for giant multiples.

The 20/60/20 Rule of Small Business

The 20/60/20 rule of small business is part of the reality we choose to ignore. This rule states that, in any given time, in a closed but similar business system, about 20% of the businesses would be *superstar performers*, about 60% would be *average* and about 20% would be *bottom feeders* that would have to be

propped up by the ones that do perform. This is, by the way, why the chains have to keep opening new units every year. The new ones usually have strong sales for the first few years that overcome the dogs at the bottom sucking the resources out of the system. Stop opening new units, and you would then have to deal with businesses older than five years that need a huge cash infusion to get and keep current.

We are also ignoring the rapid growth of the training-centric business segment. They will win the battle for fitness industry supremacy for one simple reason: Their team will be able to field more soldiers more quickly targeting the very heart of the mainstream world. There are two important thoughts we need to understand to define this statement:

•First of all, the guru system in the trainer world is flooding the market with new business owners. Players, such as our company, which teaches in front of about 10,000 people a year, along with Alwyn and Rachel Cosgrove, Mark Verstegen, Mike Boyle, Todd Durkin and Martin Rooney, to name a few, if any, mainstream CEOs would recognize, along with certification companies such as CrossFit and the industry's professional standard, ACE, all turn out hundreds, if not thousands, of students a year each looking to open their own businesses.

This army of next generation owners, and there is a substantial list of gurus not mentioned here, are creating somewhere between 900 - 1,800 new training gyms a quarter in this country alone. Compare this growth to the mainstream world. Where are those gurus? Where is the next generation chain guy coming from? Who is driving that market outside of frustrated venture capitalists?

•This new generation training gym owner lives by the Pareto Principle. A typical financially successful training gym, such as a 6,000 square foot model, might have 350 clients averaging over \$300 per month per client in a typical metro market and averaging about \$1.2 million with a 35% pretax net.

All of these aren't new clients developed and acquired exclusively by these owners. These gyms are taking this super client directly from chains. Pareto's Law of 80/20 states (paraphrasing) that 80% of the reward comes from about 20% of the clients. In other words, all clients in a chain gym are not created equal. If you take out 150 training clients from a typical chain gym, you might take as much as 30% of the entire deposit each month. These clients buy everything, pay often, bring friends, support special programming and contribute to the bottom line in a big way

compared to the \$19 guy just there for the equipment.

The old thought was that the fitness market would slowly fade away from being independent dominant and move toward becoming a few monstrous chains, such as the drug store business did over the last 40 years. But, the reality is that the market is shifting the other way, and the independents are devouring the guts out of the mainstream players. Why? And, why don't the chains fight back?

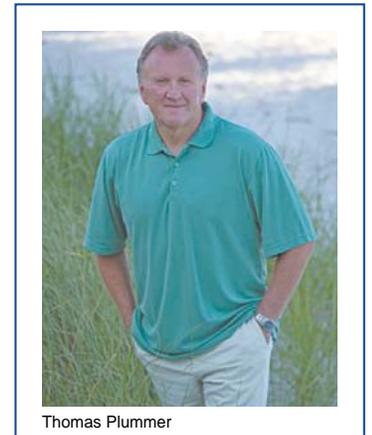
Can you imagine waking up tomorrow and every rule you have used to be successful in business for the last 30 years is now wrong and no longer works? Your tried and true marketing specials fail. Your pay system and staff model no longer works. The pricing structure you have used for the last 20 years just gets a laugh from the client. Competing now in today's market for many mainstream players is like trying to use a tool kit from the 1960s to build a smart phone. The tech to build the tech to create the tech doesn't even exist yet. But, we still believe that price specials, staff models and other once valued tools still have validity even though most are from the Jurassic Park days of the industry.

Five rules to consider to adapt to the boiling water in that very crowded pot: Here are five rules we have to consider if the mainstream world is to adapt to the boiling water in that very crowded pot...

Rule #1: It isn't about volume; it's about return per client served.

Volume, defined as how many new members you can add each month, has been the foundation of our business since 1945. But, it is now a failed model. The rule is simple; the more intensive the competition, the less effective the volume approach works. In other words, if you have five dogs chasing the same cat, only one dog is going to get lucky. Sadly, the number of potential clients in the market is not expanding as quickly as the competition for fewer potential members. *Too many low priced people all chasing the same group of clients means someone starves.*

The only survivable way going forward is to shift from volume to a higher return per client served, and you can only do this by completely redesigning the club's offerings and price structure. Most mainstream gyms only offer two choices no matter who the potential client is: (1) You can rent equipment or (2) You can pay for personal training. Even the dabblers who have that special functional room in the back don't believe there is a client seeking a different product, although it is hard to believe that all 1,000 or so training gyms opening quarterly are all wrong.



Thomas Plummer

Five to seven price points and at least four different product definitions will get it done.

Rule #2: The industry is maturing. The future is differentiation, not an extension of 1995.

Town Sports International, at one time one of the most respected brands in fitness, had about 176 gyms perfectly poised to dominate all of New York and their other three markets, and then lost 20 years of unique branding in one week by dropping their price. Now, instead of exploiting the uniqueness and letting the brand evolve into training-centric businesses, which was the path they were on, the price drop simply added hundreds of new competitors in each market already chasing the same price-driven consumer. Being one of many just added more competition instead of doing anything to separate the company from the thousands of fitness options in those markets. As the business segments mature, specialists evolve as they have in every industry, and this industry is not the exception.

Rule #3: We have to consider that there are two types of clients in the market, not just one cheap guy only driven by price.

Why as owners do we pull up in our elite cars, coming from our unique neighborhoods, where we shop at Whole Foods and other unique stores that are always situated next to our source for \$5 caffeine hits and then build a business that assumes every single potential client coming through the door is only driven by the lowest price?

There is a second potential client out there driven by the need to get what he pays for, in an environment designed just for people like him, working with professionals that are years ahead of the young and not so educated in the mainstream world. The separator is not always just affluence, but the need to buy

(See Thomas Plummer Page 28)

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...Thomas Plummer

continued from page 26

products that support lifestyle and belief system. The chains lose clients to the training gyms because the gym owners bring a unique solution to the client the chains refuse to match, and no, selling 1995 personal training does not appeal to this buyer.

Rule #4: Our staff model is wrong. We don't have the right people, and the ones we do have are doing the wrong things.

We build staff models based upon a heavy sales driven approach. The sales people rule, and the trainers, group exercise people and counter life are all secondary and expendable employees. Or, in the case of trainers, we misunderstand them so much that we just let them pay a few dollars a month to rent our entire gym, while they often make \$100,000 a year inside our businesses providing a service we don't understand and we're too lazy to master!

Trainers and specialists who can master the induction system are the future of the industry, not sales people trying to slam a membership sale at a low price, and then add on three sessions of training for \$99.

Rule #5: Our business model of high volume, low price per client can't be

patched. It has to be *destroyed and rebuilt*.

The mainstream players still live in the world where it's a game of who can rent the most equipment for the cheapest price, a game that no one wins over time. The big question for the industry is: Can the mainstream world adapt to this radically evolving business environment where the chain is aggressively being replaced by the smaller, fleeter training-centric gym?

Asked another way, can the major chains survive during the next five years and not get devoured by the next generation training gyms that thrive by taking the mainstream player's most valuable assets, the highest paying clients in their systems, but who are most likely to leave the mainstream gyms due to the perceived differentiation and higher quality product offered by those new generation businesses.

There is no sales gimmick, price special, low price sales war, old sales manual, old sales dog manager or national

sales campaign that will be able to sell a high enough volume of cheap memberships in this ever increasing competitive market. This hyper competitive market is being flooded by at least 1,000 new training gyms per quarter whose sole purpose is to acquire several hundred of the most qualified high paying buyers in the market, who in the past, would have belonged to the chains and other mainstream players.

The answer to this basic business problem, once we sit back and acknowledge that every business has to evolve or perish, can already be found in current business. Steve Jobs was driven out of his own company. It then failed, managed by a commodity business player intent on dropping the price and making their products just as cheap as everyone else's. Yet, Steve came back and changed the culture of the company and set the world on fire yet again. Howard Shultz left Starbucks, the company faltered again heading down the commodity and

excessive growth path, and he too came back and reestablished the fundamental culture. Now, it is considered one of the finest businesses in the world.

The mainstream players can evolve. But, you have to change the culture away from the equipment rental mentality of the industry, towards a return per client and a business that can serve not only the lower price seeker, but also the client who is willing to spend much more per month, therefore, driving up the return per client served.

But, time is running out. Add 4,000 training gyms per year... all focused on ripping the best payers out of the market, and the time to react and change is slipping by.

The challenge isn't if the mainstream model can be fixed, but rather, the challenge is who is going to be brave enough, or forced by their financial teams, to go first?

If there is one adage in business that never fades it is this: Most any business can be fixed; it's the damn owners who are so hard to change.

(Thomas Plummer is the Founder of The National Fitness Business Alliance and a 35-year veteran consultant and teaching guru for our industry. Thomas can be reached at thomasplummer@icloud.com)



NFBA

Adam Zeitsiff, Jonas Fitness President, Honored With Outstanding CEO Award by Long Island Business News

WOODBURY, N.Y. - The executive team at Jonas Fitness announced that their President, Adam Zeitsiff, received the Long Island Business News (LIBN) "Outstanding CEO" award at a gala which was held on May 14, 2015 in Woodbury, NY.

The Outstanding CEO Award

recognizes CEOs, Presidents and not-for-profit executives who have consistently demonstrated remarkable leadership skills, integrity, values, vision and a commitment to excellence, financial performance, community and diversity. Honorees were selected based on the biographical

information and multiple testimonial letters sent to LIBN reflecting career and professional accomplishments and follow up research on each company. Zeitsiff is among those featured in a special print and online article by LIBN commemorating the awards.

"I am honored to be recognized by the LIBN for this prestigious award," said Zeitsiff. "I have the privilege of working with some of the best and brightest people in the software industry, and I'm extremely proud of how we came together to bring the Jonas group of companies into a leading position in the health and fitness market. I am also grateful to my colleagues and friends at the Long Island Elite who all work tirelessly in support of our goal to raise funds for local charities and make a difference right in our own backyard."

In addition to his strong business acumen and 20+ years of proven success, Adam is extremely passionate about his social and community-based activities. He has served as a Board Member for the Long Island Elite (LIE) 501(c)3 charity since



Adam Zeitsiff, President of Jonas Fitness

2010, was Co-President in 2013 and 2014, and currently serves as Vice President of the organization. Adam served as the Co-Chair of the highly successful Believe Symposium in 2010 and has held numerous other Committee positions for charity events across Long Island. Adam, his wife and their two children have resided in the Long Island community since 1994.

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Matrix Fitness Expands Sales Team With Four New Hires

COTTAGE GROVE, WI - Matrix Fitness announced the addition of four new members to their sales team. The new hires include Bruce Kaplan and Ken Boardman, dealer business development managers; Erik Haessly, mountain west territory manager; and Curt Szado, northeast territory manager.

"Over the past five years, Matrix has experienced impressive growth due to increased global sales. In order to support our growing company and provide a superlative customer experience, we needed to expand our team," said Kent Stevens, Executive Vice President of Commercial Sales at JHTNA. "All of these gentlemen bring years of industry experience and knowledge to the company. Their commitment to taking customer satisfaction to the next level will be

essential for the continued growth of the Matrix brand."

Kaplan will support dealer development in the southwest region while Boardman will manage the northeast region. Haessly will support the mountain west territory, which consists of Utah, Arizona, Colorado and New Mexico. Szado will support the northeast territory of Maine, New Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode Island, Connecticut, New York and Vermont.

"Last year, Matrix had a 19% global sales growth rate in all regions, including North America, South America, EMEA and Asia Pacific," Stevens said. "We are the fastest growing commercial fitness brand in the industry, which is why we intend to continue expansion of our team throughout the year."

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Programming For The “Fun Of It!”

Recruiting and Hiring Trainers For Small Group Training Management Success

By: Laurie Cingle, M.Ed.

Success with Small Group Training (SGT) is based on 7 Keys: (1) Leverage Your Offerings, (2) Hire and Retain Champion SGT Trainers, (3) Define Metrics, (4) Identify a SGT Manager, (5) Create a Space, (6) Outline a Marketing Plan and (7) Develop a Budget. The focus of this article is **Key #2, Hire Champion SGT Trainers.**

Building a team of Small Group Trainers (SGTs) who will inspire people to enroll in programs is the best thing a manager can do to ensure the success of this program at a club.

SGTs are basically a cross between a Personal Trainer and a Group Fitness Instructor. Successful ones are hard

to find. As you begin to recruit candidates, look for people who:

- Have the right credentials, certifications and licenses;
- Are willing to commit to marketing the programs themselves;
- Are skilled in getting people to say “yes” to purchasing packages;
- Are motivated by the challenge of prospecting and selling;
- Are motivated by both money (commission) and desire to help people;
- Are skilled in connecting with groups and individual participants one-on-one;
- Understand that adherence is key to a participant’s results and are able to create a “team” among participants who hold each other accountable (different than

group fitness instructors who arrive shortly before class, teach and then depart); and

- Are willing to complete extra work outside of weekly group sessions.

The importance of selection is critical to remember in building a team. To source more and better candidates, take a proactive approach looking beyond regular recruitment channels. Waiting for candidates to contact you or looking for available trainers in the area is not enough.

Aside: An advantage is implementing preformatted small group training programs as it is easier to find multiple candidates trained and certified in that specific format. And, these program organizations provide resources to clubs and trainers to assist in implementation and on-going staff training.



Laurie Cingle

coaches; •Existing trainers and group fitness instructors; •EMTs/Fire Fighters/Police Officers; •Triathletes and cyclists; •Current facility staff; •Spouses of current trainers and instructors; and •Host a Zumba Jam.

Ideas for Sourcing SGT Candidates:

- Certification workshops hosted in your club;
- Pre-formatted program organizations;
- Retired Armed Forces (Army, Navy, Air Force, Marines);
- Current club members;
- College students and professors;
- School teachers;
- Martial Arts/Dance/Yoga/Pilates schools and instructors;
- Athletes and cheerleaders;
- Summer camp counselors;
- Gymnastics

Tip: See more people and recruit more candidates than you think you need. And, continue the process!

(Laurie Cingle, M.Ed., is a fitness business success coach, club consultant and a member of the Leadership Team at Akron General LifeStyles. Contact Laurie at laurie@lauriecingle.com)

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Thanks and Appreciation

At CLUB INSIDER, we are excited to be in our 22nd Year of this home-based health and fitness club trade newspaper! The thought that this newspaper 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. I wish to extend our most sincere Thanks and Appreciation to everyone that's made this amazing 22-year run possible.

A very sincere Thanks and Appreciation go to Rick Caro, 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 of Atlanta's Hudspeth Report for the tremendous assistance they provided us during our first 8 years of publication. Thanks and Appreciation to all of the folks at Walton Press in Monroe, Georgia. They've done an absolutely excellent job for us all these years and have printed every one of our 258 monthly editions! 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. It's amazing to know that we have several advertisers with over 15 years of continuous advertising with us. Plus, we have one advertiser, National Gym Supply, with over 19 years advertising with us! We also want to say sincere Thanks and Appreciation to all of our CLUB INSIDER Contributing Authors, past and present, who've contributed hundreds and hundreds of excellent articles to help our readers with their Best Business Practices. Thanks and Appreciation to IHRSA for all it does.

Sincere Thanks and Appreciation to my son, Justin, who started working part-time for CLUB INSIDER when he was just 8 years old (helping with mailings). This young man, pretty much behind the scenes for 22 years now, has truly been a fantastic partner for his Dad in CLUB INSIDER. Justin does our editing, publication layouts, all of our website design and maintenance, all of our bookkeeping and subscription processing work, as well as archive management and anything else that needs doing, including writing eight cover stories per year.

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. He would like to give 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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