

Capturing the Deconditioned Market

By David Norman

For years the health and fitness community have been able to influence individuals to join their facilities. Yet the majority of these members have been drawn from a relatively small market, those who are 'already fit'. Depending on your research statistics, the 'already fit' audience consists of only between 14% and 21% of the population, which leaves facility operators a large pool (as much as 80% of the population) of potential new membership sales and supporting ancillary revenues untapped.

Health clubs have rarely penetrated this 'de-conditioned, yet interested' market as their market penetration percentage hovers in the low-mid teens if they are lucky. Regardless of the reasons, traditional owners and operators have failed to create a model that is compelling enough to attract and satisfy the largest market share in our industry, this 'de-conditioned, yet interested' audience. This failure has resulted in missed revenue and growth opportunities for numerous club owners and operators. However in true entrepreneurial spirit, missed opportunities for one usually results in someone else's gain. The rise of Curves and other express circuit facilities, and their success in attracting untrained and inexperienced prospects, has generated a huge influx of new memberships. And traditional and new health clubs operations can learn and capitalise from this. For we have all heard the "once I get in shape, I'll join your facility" statements before. As operators know, getting in shape should be the reason that people join our facility, so, when we hear stories like this, two questions should surface to compete with this potential threat to your market. The first is how have these express circuits been able to reach the deconditioned market?, followed by what do we need to do as owners and operators to appeal to that same market while most importantly having a unique selling proposition (USP) to distinguish and separate our facilities as the ultimate health and fitness resource for that market?

These specialty express circuits have become a phenomenon because it serves as a solution to many of the key concerns of the "de-conditioned, yet-interested" market. Of the variables associated for this market's rapid growth; time, lack of results, confusion, no social connection/support and intimidating or non-inviting club environment have been indicated as the major deterrents for this audience to join today's mainstream facilities. How have the express circuit facilities overcome these concerns to control that market segment? One common denominator that we all have (regardless of fitness level, age, gender, social

economic status, and other factors) is time, or lack of it. Express circuit facilities have exploited this denominator to their advantage by making their choice in a health and fitness membership attractive to the time sensitive. Very seldom, if ever, do we hear prospects or members say, "I have all the time in the world so I don't think this will work for me," as their reason for not joining or quitting their membership.

Recognising that the majority of this market has most likely never stepped foot in a workout area before in their life, doing anything is better than doing nothing - thus results are almost a guarantee from that previous lifestyle. And this is an area you can use in your USP to compete and separate your facility. Understanding the current fitness level, as stated above, allows for or even mandates simplicity for continuous execution. This is where most facilities and fitness professionals fail. In an attempt to impress a new member or prospect, during the orientation (if any) they show them all the equipment plus cardio. In reality, all the first-time exerciser needs is a simple push, pull, lower body exercise routine and few minutes on a cardio machine and they are in and out in twenty minutes. Remember this audience may have gone many, many years without any of this so called 'exercise stuff'. We then 'fire hose' them with all types of exercises and they say to themselves, "I made it this many years without exercising, I will take my chances and see if I can make another 'x' many years." What have we really done? All this succeeds in doing is making it to easier for people to say no to exercise rather than yes. One of the reasons that enabled WeightWatchers to become so successful over the years was leveraging the personal connection of regular meetings. By offering specific times and instructor lead express circuits, you can capitalise on this emotional need for greater exercise compliance (retention) and increase ancillary sales. Finally, most express circuits are either single stand alone businesses or separate rooms in clubs secluded from the 'weight room'. This can be done in space as small as 80 Metres square, wherein the deconditioned, inexperienced exerciser feels more comfortable and at ease working without "all eyes on them" - unintimidated by the "already fit crowd". With an understanding of why express circuits are so appealing, club operators can learn from their successes, and profit from this market as well.

The big question is how do you differentiate your facility from all of the other express circuits out there on every corner? Knowing what has made express circuits successful, then duplicating their environment while enhancing at least one aspect of their workings in order to make your facility's circuit one notch better is the key. Once you are able to raise the bar on one of those variables then you need to let your audience know the difference and how that difference benefits the end user. And the simplest way to make sure that your express circuit is superior to all others is by providing the end-users a tangible difference that they can feel each time they come to workout in a circuit environment.

The simplest way to make sure that your express circuit is superior to all others is by providing the end-users a tangible difference that they can feel each time they come to workout in a circuit environment. The only way to achieve this distinction is via STRIVE Smart Strength. STRIVE Smart Strength technology, utilizing an adjustable cam, is extremely user friendly with the simple 1-2-3 routine. This exclusive adjustable cam technology enables your members to achieve a more complete workout by activating more muscle fibers within a full range of motion over a multiple set routine. In addition to a more effective workout, the single set at three different cam settings offers psychological variety that eliminates new member boredom. Your members will get in and out much quicker, with more effective results. Combined by the fact that the majority of member's goals are body shaping and weight management this STRIVE advantage follows science. As we all know, the only place body fat is metabolized for fuel is in the muscle cell in the presence of oxygen therefore on Strive one can get the results faster and importantly feel the workout difference every time one trains. You only have 30 days to capture them and Strive will help accomplish this.

Now that you have a technically superior solution to the circuit workout with STRIVE Smart Strength, how do you make the necessary noise so that your audience is aware of that difference? STRIVE Smart Strength makes this step simple. With the STRIVE extensive "launch" program and comprehensive staff education, marketing your unique selling proposition (USP) becomes effortless. As one Director noted,

"I have never seen so much support BEFORE the equipment arrives – we were able to distribute newsletters, have posters and videos playing throughout our facility to promote the arrival".

This launch combined with template press releases for your local media and STRIVE's staff in-service generates the energy and buzz that will make your facility the talk of your market. Once the circuit arrives, the momentum created via the "launch" program will hit critical mass. When your members experience the fun, energy, excitement of STRIVE, and quickly see the results from the STRIVE Smart Strength circuit, they become a part of your sales staff by inviting their friends, family and co-workers to join your facility and participate in the STRIVE group circuit classes. The competitive advantage of STRIVE's patented technology, in conjunction with the "launch" program, will separate your business from all competition. In fact, we are so confident in this advantage that all circuits are backed by a 90-Day 100% MONEY BACK GUARANTEE including shipping!

There are those who are leaders and those who are dreamers, which one are you? Experience the difference; with STRIVE's Guarantee, you have nothing to lose except memberships to your competition.

If you have at least 100 square metres of space or would like to upgrade your current line of equipment to capitalize on this strategy, contact 1-2-3 Strive Australasia at: 1800 771 079 or e-mail us at sales@123strive.com for a complimentary business consultation to ensure the best strategy to exceed your objectives.

