

A DEDICATED PILATES STUDIO



By Carol Tricoche

More and more clubs are realizing that the “one-stop-shop” theory is what the market is demanding. With the documented increase in people interested in pilates, many clubs are jumping at the chance to offer pilates programs as well. Owners are already reaping the benefits of running successful pilates studios in their clubs with monthly gross revenues as high as \$30,000 per month.

WHAT ARE OTHER CLUBS DOING?

Owners who have recognized the benefits of offering pilates to their clients are establishing “storefront” designated pilates studios at their location. These studios essentially operate as an additional personal training service. This “business within a business” offers private, semi-private and group training opportunities. These facilities are not only seeing additional profits, but they are also experiencing increased in-

structor and member retention, and additional non-dues revenue. The demand for pilates programs in fitness facilities has grown rapidly over the past decade with 10.7 million North American participants a year. This is an extraordinary increase of 602% since 2001. Members want to enjoy their experience at a fitness facility and be able to get all of the services they want in one location.

Some facilities simply do not have the space to accommodate equipment-based pilates programming. Consequently, members are paying for these services outside of their regular fitness facility. In order to keep members from going elsewhere, it is important for owners to find a way to make space in their location to accommodate their members’ needs.

Creating a full-fledged, permanent pilates studio in your facility is a lot more advantageous than running a storefront pilates studio. A club offers additional cardio programs, childcare, locker room amenities, and other fitness programs such as cycling and kick-boxing – so why not bring that pilates experience into your club and treat it as a business within a business? A designated space for your pilates program increases your revenue opportunity and gives you the ability to offer private, semi-private, and group training throughout the day, without the interruption of sharing the space with other programs.

STOREFRONT VS. IN-HOUSE PILATES STUDIO

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IT'S ABOUT SPACE

The space needed to establish a designated pilates studio can be as little as 400 – 800 sq. ft. The 800 sq. ft. space is approximately the size of a racquetball court and can comfortably accommodate a full-

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CREATES NON-DUES REVENUE

ly-equipped pilates studio: 4 reformers, 2 trapeze tables, 4 chairs, 2 ladder barrels, and other accessories. You need to allow room for 4-6 instructors to work simultaneously in the same space while offering private, semi-private and group training. A smaller 400 sq. ft. studio can hold approximately 4 professional reformers so at the very least, you can offer programming associated with this one essential piece of pilates equipment.

HELPFUL ADVICE

It's important to use your imagination when envisioning a pilates studio within your facility. A racquetball court that is only used a few hours a day could be retrofitted to hold an 800 sq. ft. pilates "profit center". By double decking the court, your facility could actually gain 1600 sq. ft. of extra useable space. All you have to do is think of a minimum space of 400 sq. ft. in your facility that could be sectioned off with partition walls. What about an empty office space or utility area?

Once you find the perfect space to implement your in-house pilates studio, make sure to remain realistic about the amount of equipment that you can fit in the area. Choose equipment that is versatile and offers maximum programming to keep your pilates program fresh, challenging, and adaptable to your changing members' requests. For example, you can fit four reformers within a 400 sq. ft. space. The Stott Pilates V2 Max Plus™ reformer maximizes the use of space by offering mat, reformer, and cadillac exercises and V2 Max Plus™ programming all on one piece of equipment.

OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUR STAFF

With a designated space in your facility, you now have the ability to offer pilates career opportunities to your staff. A studio for private, semi-private and group training allows instructors to work together in the same space while training clients up to 5-6 hours at a time. Your current pilates instructors may be coming in to teach 1-2 mat classes per week depending on other fitness class schedules and room availability, which makes it difficult for you to offer them more hours of work. When you have your permanent pilates studio, you are able to offer more sessions – which makes not only your instructors happy, but also your members. With your own pilates studio, you can offer instructors part-time or full-time positions according to the studio's demand. This creates a win-win situation where your facility increases non-dues revenue, while instructors have the ability to earn an income.

You may want to consider recruiting and cross-training your existing quality personal trainers and group exercise instructors to be pilates instructors also. Personal trainers can subsidize their current client base with alternative training methods, and grow their personal training clientele. Group exercise instructors can't teach 4-5 hours in a row, but they can train pilates clients 4-5 hours in a row. With a designated studio, you ultimately achieve more instructors working for you exclusively in more than one venue within your fitness programming. Here's

your chance to show those dedicated individuals who are already helping you increase membership that you care about their professional growth, which in turn, means growth for your facility.

KEEP CURRENT

For a successful pilates studio, you need the proper equipment, quality instructors, and fresh programming. Pilates education doesn't stop after certification. It is vital to make sure that your instructors are attending continuing education courses and workshops at specified fitness venues or you can host workshops at your new facility.

Stott Pilates® offers over 100 workshops for continuing education annually: from rehab for back care and breast cancer, to pre and post-natal workouts, to athletic conditioning, pilates for golf conditioning, and more. All of these workshops can be accessible within your facility for your staff.

THE END RESULT

Once you have designated a space for your new pilates studio in your facility, and have agreed that equipment-based pilates programming is essential to satisfy all of your members' needs. All you have to do is make it happen. Run your pilates equipment program as you do your Personal Training program and you'll maximize your club revenue in no time.

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