

# SUPPLY SIDE

## PILATES A to Z



Photos courtesy of Balanced Body

A B C D E F G H I J K L

Our Supply Side Feature offers expert advice from suppliers to help give you an insider edge with your upcoming facility purchases and expenditures. In each issue, OSF editors will provide an industry expert to give you the insight on how to ask the "right questions" for product and service purchases for your facility. This won't make you an expert, but will give you the knowledge to ask those right questions when you are in the purchase mode. Send your specific topic requests and questions to us at [editor@onsite-fitness.com](mailto:editor@onsite-fitness.com), and we'll get you an expert answer.

**ONSITE FITNESS:** There's a lot to take into account when introducing a Pilates program to your facility. What would you tell a facility manager to consider when is contemplating introducing Pilates into their organization?

**PILATES EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS:** There are a number of questions that you need to ask yourself, and these questions need to be answered in an initial investigation phase, well before you begin to set up the program.

At the outset, you'll need to figure out whether there is an interest among your membership for starting a Pilates Program at your facility. It's a good idea to explain what you envision and poll your members to see

whether the program is something they would participate in. If there is indeed interest expressed, then you may want to put together a brief business plan that answers a lot of fundamental questions, such as:

- How much floor space will we need to devote to Pilates? You'll have to examine where you have floor space that can be available to commit to Pilates and, since it is a "mind-body" exercise, that area needs to be in a place where members can dedicate their focus solely to their movements without distraction. You also need to determine whether you'll conduct classes with mats or whether you can add equipment. A typical Reformer, for instance, requires 60 square feet of floor space, so if you do not have a dedicated Pilates equipment room, you'll need to have an area to store the machines between classes.
- What type of programming will we offer? Many facilities start with free mat classes and then may later transition into fee-based Reformer classes. But remember that just because mat work is used as an introductory class, it is not an introductory form of exercise. In fact, mat work is actually harder than Reformer work, as there is less assisted resistance. It could be that you'll decide that your facility will continue with mat classes only and it's best to get a feel from participants as to whether you need to progress to classes where more equipment is utilized.
- Where will I get my instructors? Much like other types of group exercise,

Pilates must have a certified instructor present during the class and an enthusiastic and knowledgeable instructor can make the difference in the success of the program. You'll need to decide whether you want to obtain training for some people that you have on your existing staff or whether you want to hire outside instructors who have already been trained. There are pros and cons to both, but you'll want to find someone who has good fitness knowledge, enthusiasm for the program and continued involvement with it. The quality of the Pilates trainers can have a great affect on the participation levels in the program so the importance of the selection of these individuals cannot be overstated.

- What kind of equipment will I need? If you've determined that you have enough space to utilize equipment, then you'll need to decide which types are best for your classes, assuming that you don't want to go the route of simply utilizing Pilates for personal training, which is an option as well. Remember, unlike most group exercise, Pilates equipment classes are taught in small group sessions with typically only 4-6 participants per class. Therefore you don't need a large number of any single type of equipment. At that point, it simply becomes a matter of how much you are willing or able to invest. Keep in mind that the major Pilates equipment manufacturers do have leasing plans available as well, which will minimize your initial investment in the program.

**OSF:** What are the basic types of equipment for Pilates?

**PILATES ES:** Mat classes are typically performed in groups of 10-12 and are similar to yoga, with the difference being that the body is virtually in constant motion in Pilates, rather than the assumption of various held poses as in yoga. Mat classes may be done using only the body's natural resistance against the floor or a wall, or some small equipment can be added to enhance the movements. A myriad of equipment can be included are such devices as the Magic Circle, foam rollers, stability balls, balance boards and foam cushions, all of which enhance mat routines.

Equipment classes utilize equipment that is available in a number of different adaptations, but these are the basic pieces:

- The Reformer - the cornerstone of Pilates equipment, it provides a resistance workout to a participant who lies, sits, kneels, or even stands on a free sliding carriage;
- The Trapeze Table - or as it is often referred to, the Cadillac. This device can allow for up to 200 individual exercises, as simple as assisted motions, or as advanced as acrobatics by hanging from its upper bars.
- The Barrel - allows you to do core stretching and flexibility moves, and the Ladder Barrel enhances this by allowing you to adjust your footing to create a more challenging angle.
- The Chair - it's built with resistance pedals that you press down on while performing series of demanding stretching exercises that build strength in the legs and the shoulders.

**OSF:** You mention certified instructors. Where can I get my instructors certified and trained?

**PILATES ES:** The Pilates Method Alliance (PMA) is a non-profit organization that provides the only nationally recognized certification exam for Pilates and has been doing so since 2005. While not all instructors that you have on site need to be certified, the PMA recommends that at least one certified instructor be on staff and



STOTT PILATES photography © Merrithew Corporation



present while Pilates programs are being taught.

All of the major manufacturers of Pilates equipment offer instructor training, either through licensed training facilities or through host facilities that sponsor a visit from a certified master trainer in Pilates. There are also a number of companies in the market who will train Pilates instructors in specific methodologies, either as a form of continuing education, or to prepare instructors for certification. These trainers instruct on anything from the classical "contrology" originally taught by Joseph Pilates in his studio in the first half of the last century, to methods based on his teachings, but adding more contemporary updates that takes into account modern scientific research on biomechanics that was simply unavailable in his day.

**OSF:** Pilates is still a foreign concept to many people who go to our facilities. Since most are not that familiar with the activities, how best do you present the concept to them and then encourage them to regularly attend classes?

**PILATES ES:** Pilates can be introduced in a number of ways, but it's important to have a champion of the program within your organization. Whether that's someone that you've hired from outside to lead classes or a newly trained personal trainer is unimportant, as long as it's someone with a vested interest in the program, is charged with making the program run smoothly, can creatively adapt programs to individual needs, and has strong organizational and leadership skills.

One excellent way to bring in new participants is to tailor programming to the unique demographics that already exist in your facility. Pilates exercises are very versatile and can be modified to meet a variety of these demographics. For instance, programs can be easily customized to meet the needs of expectant mothers, the aging populations or any number other groups that exist within your membership. It can also be introduced to members who are interested in sports-specific training, with programming that can be part of an overall conditioning program for golf, tennis, cycling or any number of other activities.

Survey your members about what they are interested in and then figure out ways to create Pilates programs to complement those interests.

#### PILATES EDUCATION & CERTIFICATION:

There are currently two predominant philosophies when it comes to Pilates education. One is the classical approach based on the original teachings and equipment designed by Joseph Pilates. The other is a contemporary approach that takes into consideration modern scientific research to supplement the classical approach. Other programs meld the two philosophies together.

#### BALANCED BODY

Balanced Body University (BBU), the training division of Balanced Body Inc., has created a curriculum where both approaches are featured as well as blended together based on a current understanding of human biomechanics. The result is an educational offering where instructors can customize programs easily and effectively for all types of clients and members- from the post-rehab client, to the serious fitness buffs and athletes.

The instructor training classes are modular in format with easy-to-manage segments. Instructors can begin teaching what they learned as soon as the weekend is over. This allows your program to get started quickly and grow at the pace that best suits a center's needs. BBU offers Quarterly Updates on CD-ROM providing relevant and topical programming information to keep their classes fresh and interesting.

#### PEAK PILATES

Peak Pilates educational workshops and certification programs are grounded in the classical Pilates method and emphasize an integrated and systematic approach for a balanced workout.

Their certification programs focus on professional development with a proprietary coaching/training model. Continuing education workshops are open to Pilates and fitness professionals, as well as enthusiasts. All certification programs are offered through a modular educational pathway, allowing individuals to progress at their own pace and all programs are supported with comprehensive manuals and DVD's.

## STOTT PILATES

STOTT Pilates is a contemporary approach to the original exercise method pioneered by the late Joseph Pilates. Developed in collaboration with physical therapists and sports medicine professionals, the repertoire consists of more than 500 systematic, mind-body exercises that can be performed on a mat or specialized equipment pieces. Their Education Department continues to develop and refine the method to ensure that it is practical, relevant and in line with the latest exercise science research.

STOTT PILATES training and certification programs are available at numerous locations worldwide offering more than 12 programs depending on background or area of interest.

## PILATES EQUIPMENT:

### BALANCED BODY

With over 30 years in business and 17 U.S. patents, Balanced Body equipment accommodates a wide range of body types, is easy to use, ergonomic, quiet, durable and offers some of the finest wood products available.

- The Pilates Allegro® Reformer was specifically designed particularly those who may be short on floor space.
- The Allegro is a full featured Pilates Reformer that is light enough for one person to move, and can be easily stored by stacking one on top of another or by standing them on end.
- The Tower of Power™ can be easily added to an Allegro, expanding programming versatility by giving you the capability of a Reformer, a half-trapeze and a mat - all in the same compact footprint.
- The Allegro Sport™ Reformer is a simpler version of our Allegro System. The Sport is also a full-featured Reformer with a minimal storage footprint.

Balanced Body provides consultations on Pilates business planning, programming strategies, education, facility layout, marketing, return on investment models and more.

### PEAK PILATES

- Reformer Frame is constructed of solid premium white Oak, with flawless mortise & tenon joinery.
- Carriage is constructed from a multi-core, 13-ply Baltic Birch with reinforced cross bracing for rigid stability.
- Foam Padding is an Olympic grade athletic foam. This material will last 3 times as long as other foam padding, minimizing costly re-upholstery.
- 4-Gear Position System (incorporates our proprietary "Negative Gear"), along with our 3-Way Adjustable Foot Bar (optional) effectively expands your range of work to accommodate all heights, body types and ranges of hip and knee flexion.

### STOTT PILATES

STOTT PILATES equipment offers unique features including:

- Exclusive whisper-smooth, patented rolling mechanism on all reformers
- Our reformers have a 6-carriage-stop versus 4-carriage stop
- Higher carriage heights make it easier to mount and dismount reformers
- All STOTT PILATES reformers can be ordered with an additional six inches of length to the supporting rails and carriage to accommodate people taller than 6'4"
- Limited lifetime warranty on all large equipment including reformers and the Cadillac
- The Group SPX™ Reformer, developed for clubs with limited or multi-purpose space, is lightweight and portable without compromising quality and strength. **OSF**



STOTT PILATES photography © Merrithew Corporation

## PILATES SOURCES

### EQUIPMENT SUPPLIERS & TRAINING:

#### Balanced Body

Phone: 888-603-8894  
www.pilates.com

#### PEAK PILATES

Phone: 303-998-1531  
Toll Free: 800-925-3674  
www.peakpilates.com

#### STOTT PILATES

Phone: 416-482-4050  
Toll Free: 800-910-0001  
www.stottpilates.com

### ASSOCIATIONS & SERVICES:

#### PILATES METHOD ALLIANCE (PMA)

Phone: 305-573-4946  
Toll Free: 866-573-4945  
www.pilatesmethodalliance.org

#### MINDBODY ONLINE

Internet Pilates Scheduling  
Toll Free: 877-755-4279  
www.mindbodyonline.com

#### WELLWORKS

Internet Pilates Scheduling  
Toll Free: 888-515-3099  
www.wellworks.com

### PILATES ACCESSORIES:

#### OPTP

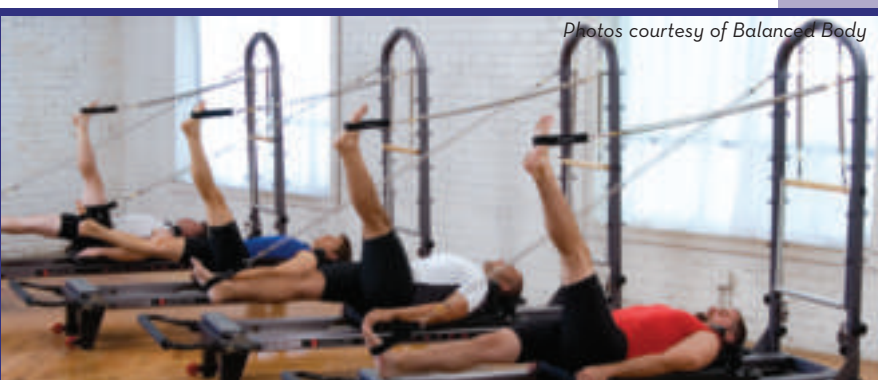
Phone: 763-553-0452  
Toll Free: 888-819-0121  
www.optp.com

#### POWER SYSTEMS

Toll Free: 800-321-6975  
www.power-systems.com

#### SPRI PRODUCTS

Toll Free: 800-222-7774  
www.spriproducts.com



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