

PILATES FOR SMALL SPACES

Pilates is big business as populations of all ages benefit from the mind/body/strength/stretch/etc of this comprehensive exercise! As we work to bring more people into this activity and keep those already invested interested, non-profits are stretching the boundaries of their group fitness instructors, personal trainers and space limitations to appeal to a wider audience, while keeping true to the Pilates base.

*Equipment purchases are often on the horizon when we think of expanding programs and the variety of equipment and programming options can make decisions more complicated. OnSite Fitness spoke with representatives from three of the top Pilates equipment manufacturers to learn what equipment and features space challenged facilities should look for as their Pilates programs grow. **OSF***

SMALL SPACE SOLUTIONS: BALANCED BODY

Responses by Ken Endelman, Founder & CEO

OSF: Pilates studios are becoming more prevalent as the popularity increases. How can non-profits really compete in this niche market?

ENDELMAN: It's the quality of your instructors that allows you to compete. In any form of exercise – particularly group exercise – a good instructor is important. But this is doubly so with Pilates because instructors need to know how to modify the exercises to best meet the needs of a wide variety of body types and fitness levels. They will also need to keep it fresh and fun. Not doing either of these will lead to member dissatisfaction no matter where you are – a studio, a club or a non-profit.

OSF: What are clients typically looking for in each environment?

ENDELMAN: Clients who are experiencing Pilates in a studio environment are usually attracted by the intimacy and quiet focus of the richer mind-body experience they provide. That's not to say a non-profit can't offer the same experience – it can – but that's how studios differentiate themselves in the market. The beauty of the non-profit is that it allows people who want to try new forms of exercise the opportunity to do so at an affordable price – particularly in group programming.

OSF: How do non-profits decide between a personal training environment or group fitness for their equipment based Pilates program?

ENDELMAN: Pilates will work well in both models. Group classes are appealing to clients due to the smaller price. Personal Training is appealing as they can address specific challenges for each client. Another consideration is your instructor's experience. If you have instructors with more group x experience then that may be the

way to go.

Space is also a driver. Do you have the room to do group programming? There are a lot of new “stack and store” equipment designs that can really assist space-challenged facilities. Some Reformers can be stored vertically (standing on end) and have wheels for easy portability. Others can stack horizontally right on top of each other. And some have the capability to do both. Chairs are even easier to move and store due to their smaller size and weight, and many of these can also be stacked.

At a recent exposition we constructed a space-saving studio to demonstrate how facilities could provide Pilates classes in as little as 200 square feet of space. This prototype studio was constructed in a 10' x 20' exhibit and showcased a variety of equipment and storage solutions for space-challenged facilities. Our goal was to show that with the right combination of equipment and space-saving furniture, it's easy to offer a robust program in a small space.

OSF: Is there a way to determine the expected return of a larger piece of Pilates equipment in accordance with space requirements?

ENDELMAN: Definitely. A lot of Pilates manufacturers have online ROI calculators to figure out just that. We have one on our web site where you can plug in any type of equipment, estimated numbers of class sessions and pricing, and get a pretty solid estimate as to how long it will take you to recoup your initial investment.

OSF: What new Pilates equipment enhancements are on the horizon?

ENDELMAN: I really think that Chair programming is going to take off. It provides such a great strength workout for the arms, legs, glutes and back. And when you add in resistance tubing you really





are able to perform a wide variety of Reformer exercises in a fraction of the space. And many Chairs are lightweight, portable and can stack. They are a perfect solution for non-profits looking to implement an equipment-based Pilates program but who may not have the room for a lot of Reformers.

For more information about *Balanced Body*, go to www.balancedbody.com

SMALL SPACE SOLUTIONS: PEAK PILATES

Responses by Jennifer Schumacher,
East Coast Commercial Sales Account Representative

OSF: Pilates studios are becoming more prevalent as the popularity increases. How can non-profits really compete in this niche market?

SCHUMACHER: The most cost effective way - as well as the fastest return on investment - is by offering group exercise classes.

OSF: What are clients typically looking for in each environment?

SCHUMACHER: With the economy currently the way it is, people want Pilates but they don't want to pay high dollars for private instruction. It is much more reasonable for clients to continue their

Pilates sessions in a group class setting, as this means less money out of their pockets.

The main goal of a facility is to retain members. By having a Pilates program in their facility, the club keeps its members from finding Pilates down the street in an actual Pilates Studio. It is because of this that Group Exercise is one of the biggest retention tools a club could offer.

OSF: How do non-profits decide between a personal training environment or group fitness for their equipment based Pilates program?

SCHUMACHER: It completely depends on their space and instructors; the problem a non-profit in particular can face would occur when they get a certified instructor in their program and they build up their clients and then realize they can get paid more if they open their own studio or even work from home. Finding instructors is hard because non-profits can't pay as much for



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instructors.

OSF: Is there a way to determine the expected return of a larger piece of Pilates equipment in accordance with space requirements?

SCHUMACHER: Space issues are huge with most non-profits. They often use the same space for many activities. In this situation, the foldable reformer is great because it folds and rolls easily for storage. There is also a stackable reformer that can easily stack with two people, so larger pieces of equipment are still doable and have a great ROI and space is no longer an issue.

OSF: If a non-profit decides the better way to go equipment-wise is something small, such as rings or balls, is there a way to estimate the ROI?

SCHUMACHER: Most facilities that use smaller equipment don't charge for these classes but can definitely evaluate participation, which leads to retention when using those smaller pieces of equipment. Most non-profits that don't want to make the initial investment in the reformers and Cadillacs will start with the chair. When those classes get full and members want more, they can move into the bigger equipment.

OSF: What new Pilates equipment enhancements are on the horizon?

SCHUMACHER: The hottest trend in Pilates is certainly turning out to be the Pilates chair. They are stackable and accommodate all body types. Stackable and foldable equipment is also quite important when dealing with space issues, especially since many clubs and studios use the same dedicated space to host a variety of activities. Turnkey packages are also becoming quite popular, as they offer a combination of equipment, training, programming and implementation. These packages are essentially a "plug-n-play" resource for anyone looking to add Pilates to their existing offerings in a timely manner.

For more information about Peak Pilates, go to www.peakpilates.com



SMALL SPACE SOLUTIONS: STOTT PILATES®

Responses by Carol Tricoche,
Global Sales Director, Full Solutions

OSF: Pilates studios are becoming more prevalent as the popularity increases. How can non-profits really compete in this niche market?

TRICOCHÉ: Be competitive with the niche market by hosting Pilates courses at your facility to train your already talented and dedicated staff to be your Pilates Staff. A number of Pilates suppliers provide top notch education to you your staff that qualifies your staff to be well trained Pilates Instructors and the training can be conducted at your facility at a cost that is affordable for your staff. Also, by offering equipment based classes with the popular Pilates Reformer.

OSF: How do non-profits decide between a personal training environment or group fitness for their equipment based Pilates program?

TRICOCHÉ: This is determined by space availability and the goal of the facility for adding Pilates equipment programming. Having a dedicated Pilates studio is usually the most successful program because it allows for the environment people are looking for and on going programs; private, semi-private and group training. In the end this means a higher return on investment for the facility.

OSF: Is there a way to determine the expected return of a larger piece of Pilates equipment in accordance with space requirements?



TRICOCHÉ: Absolutely, here is an example of ROI based on facility space, amount of equipment, and amount of instructors and the amount of hours expected to work in a studio.

For a 400 sq ft studio of reformers with 6 reformers, 6 instructors averaging a combination of 10 hours of week of privates, semi-privates, and group training, can see annual gross revenues of \$215,000 per year.

For an 800 sq ft fully equipped studio of all Pilates equipment with 4 reformers, Cadillac, 4 chairs, barrels etc., and 6 instructors averaging a combination 17 hours per week of privates, semi-privates, and group training can see annuals gross revenues of \$310,000 per year.

OSF: Assuming a group environment, what is the best way to



store equipment to keep it out of the way? Any special storage suggestions when there isn't a storage closet?

TRICOCHÉ: Stackable reformers are the best way, as they take up less space for storage. You can either stack them up and place them against a wall, or store them in a closet as long as the closet is big enough for a reformer, but most facilities stack them and place against a non usage wall.

OSF: Typically, do non-profit facilities train their own staff on new equipment at the facility expense, or seek staff who are already trained on new equipment?

TRICOCHÉ: The demand for finding Pilates instructors is greater than there are those available. The most successful studios implementing a Pilates program have brought the training to their facility. By hosting a program at the facility it makes the training for the staff members a fraction of the regular individual cost. Some non-profits pay for the training in entirety for their staff since hosting is affordable, some charge their staff but offer it to them at their hosting cost. It really depends on the facility's education benefits package.

OSF: What new Pilates equipment enhancements are on the horizon?

TRICOCHÉ: The latest version of Reformer is a refined Pilates machine and perfect for facilities looking to implement multi-faceted, cutting-edge Pilates programming in a limited space. It provides facilities and trainers with a complete system, including specialized programming around rehabilitation, while enhancing the training regimens for the active-aging market and elite athletes looking for advanced sports conditioning - ultimately increasing who can do Pilates and what they can do.

For more information about STOTT PILATES® go to www.stottpilates.com



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