FILEX
THE FITNESS INDUSTRY CONVENTION

20-22 April 2007 ✦ Sydney Convention Centre

07

Be the best, inspire the rest

Do you want to ensure your industry knowledge remains cutting-edge, rub shoulders with the world's leading fitness presenters, reignite your motivation and become inspired to achieve even more?

Don't miss this fantastic opportunity to learn from leading business presenters including Victor Brick, Grant Gamble and Justin Tamsett – with more sessions than ever before to choose from, the FILEX 2007 convention promises to deliver all of this and more!

Take advantage of the FILEX 2007 Business Gold Pass and save $$$s! GOLDPASS

For further information or a brochure, phone 02 8424 7200 or check out www.fitnessnetwork.com.au/FILEX

FILEX 2007 brought to you by

Premium sponsor

Co-Sponsors

Supported by

CLUB PROFILE: Active Women, Innisfail

OPENING A NEW FITNESS FACILITY always presents a whole range of challenges, but the most extreme forces of nature are not usually a major consideration. Last year, Cyclone Larry hit the far north Queensland coast, leaving devastation in its wake. *Club Network* spoke to club owner and manager Adam Wilson who had just opened Active Women, Innisfail when the cyclone struck.

Active Women Innisfail
Charles Street, Innisfail, QLD 4860
Ph: 07 4051 4320
Fax: 07 4031 2470
E-mail: info@activehealthclubs.com.au
Web: www.activehealthclubs.com.au

Facilities and services

Our weights area includes pin-loaded equipment and free weights. Cardio-wise we have treadmills, recumbent bikes, upright bikes and rowers. Our aerobics room hosts a mixture of pre-choreographed and freestyle classes, including BODYPUMP®, BODYSTEP®, Lite Pace, Cardioactive, circuit and boxing. We don't have a pool, but we do run aqua classes at the local council facility.

Snapshot

- Number of financial members: 360
- Size of centre: 200m²
- Owned or rented: Rented
- Growth of membership since opening: 29%
- Access to parking: Street
- Population to draw on: 25,000
- Proximity of closest competitor: 1 kilometre
- Membership prices: $14 per week if paid by direct debit, or $599 annual when paid in full.

What is the target membership demographic of the club?
Being a female only club, Active Women Innisfail caters for all ages.

What do you look for when hiring staff?
Sensational personality, excellent customer service and initiative.

What is your staff breakup?
1 full time, 5 casuals.

Do you promote the multi-skilling of your staff or do staff have separate roles?
Being a small club we all multi-skill.

How do you price yourself in the marketplace?
We fit into the mid to high end of the market.

Which frontline computer software do you run?
Sportsman Plus.

What is your most successful retention strategy?
I make a point of telephoning all lapsed-attendees, and send our members personally signed birthday cards. We also host health expo days to showcase the club.

What is your most successful marketing campaign and how did you track its success?
'12 Days of Christmas' works beautifully. We send a letter thanking our customers for their business over the past year and to help them cope with the pressure of Christmas we enclose a gift certificate for a loved one or stressed out boss. Every person who redeems the certificate gets a tour of the club and is offered the opportunity to trade in the '12 days' offer for a special membership.

Do you have any programs for special populations? How profitable/successful are they?
We offer the Mamu Aboriginal elders exercise program. The Mamu program was piloted in three clubs in Australia for six months. We ranked the highest participation and continue this program with great success. It brings an additional $720 in revenue to the club each month.

What non membership profit centres do you have?
Our profit centres include personal training, our weight management program, and sales of a range of sports clothing.

Describe your personal training operation
Trainers are employed by the club. Our personal training package is called Results+. We offer systemised 45 minute training sessions, and customers choose how many sessions they take per week.

What is your five-year plan?
Active Women Innisfail currently has 360 members; I like to follow the 2.2 members per m^2 theory, which means that we will just about be at capacity at 420 members. Our plan is to open one boutique women's health club per year. We also want to develop our mixed-sex club in Cairns into the flagship of the Active Empire. We aim to hold a combined membership base of 6,600 members.

What is your biggest challenge?
Compliance. I want our customers to come to the club and achieve their goals; if every member achieved at least one of their goals, I would have 360 walking advertisements for the club.

Describe Active Women Innisfail and the unique challenge it faced
The day that the club opened was fantastic. I had a budget to sign up 20 paid in full and 15 direct debit memberships. We achieved three times that number, signing up 106 new members – we were all shell shocked!

Active Women Innisfail started like a dream. Everything was progressing nicely, we had great feedback and a good solid membership growth. However, in our sixth week of trading news broke of a cyclone off the far north coast. Cyclone Larry was heading quickly toward the coast leaving us with little time to prepare anything. Our two clubs in Cairns were quickly secured before we headed home to ride out the storm. By Monday lunchtime life had changed for the townsfolk of Innisfail; a severe category 5 cyclone passed the coastline early on Monday morning, un-roofing thousands of homes.

Driving to Innisfail from Cairns to survey the damage to the club was almost impossible. When we finally could get through we drove into Innisfail in silence. The aftermath was something I will never forget, even more so than the howling winds of the cyclone itself. I was lucky to still have a roof on my home, lots didn't.

Our little club came out of the cyclone not too badly damaged when you consider the building next door was left roofless and windowless. We unbelievably only lost three louvers on the front of the complex – to this day I can't believe that was the only glass broken, especially considering the devastation others had incurred.

The club did, however, suffer major roof damage. The roof of the house across the road was hurled about 30 metres onto our building, puncturing a hole in the iron and breaking the timber supports, which in turn caused the suspended ceiling to collapse on top of our treadmills, reception counter and computers!

With no power or phones, a tarpaulin over the roof and a very wet floor, we moved all the equipment into the group fitness room (which managed to stay dry). We had to take up and throw out all of the carpet, and then came the frustrating part – waiting. With so much devastation, contractors of any nature were very hard to find, as replacing people's roofs was obviously the main priority.

Everyone's membership was suspended while we were closed and we phoned our members to make sure they were alright. I wanted to reopen to help everybody get back to some sort of normality, but without power, carpet or a complete roof it was impossible.

On 10 June 2006 I was over the moon to finally reopen the doors to the club after 111 days of lost business. Membership has since continued to grow at a rate of 29 per cent and it has been great to see so many of the old faces returning after all that the town went through.

Surveying the damage and tarping the hole in the roof

Surveying the damage to the ceiling

Next door building