

MARKETING: CONSTANT, IMMEDIATE & NEVER-ENDING CHANGE

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The whole idea of marketing has changed exponentially in the past few years. It's not about advertising anymore. It's about connecting. It's about media. It's about bonding with the consumers in completely new ways. Most importantly it is about adjusting to constant, immediate, and never-ending change.

As our world has turned more and more virtual, we are finding that artificial intelligence and social connections using electronic resources have become the focus of all emotional, intellectual and commercial interactions. Currently, it is not about viewing an image seven times which creates brand recognition, as it was in the past, it is about connecting.

As individuals and businesses become more and more distant and automated, the individuals and business alike strive to connect more and more. Interactions are now electronic rather than face-to-face. Instagram, Pinterest, LinkedIn and Facebook are how we connect. It is no longer through physical handshaking, but through messages across social media platforms. A complicated web of electronics has become our new socialization.

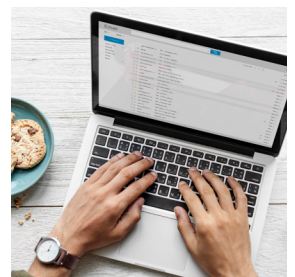


It is important for the consumer to feel a kindred spirit with the culture and the values that are represented in one's marketing and media efforts. It is about the experience that the consumer has, and the personalized and strategic interaction that the business fosters. These new engines of intelligence have virtually taken over our personal connections with ourselves, our families, our friends, and our businesses. The user experience has become key. It is about feeling comfortable and well taken care of; how easily and quickly can we interact with a business; and it is about ease of use.



Certain caveats of business remain intact. We should be able to easily review who our consumer is, what they want, and what they are buying. We should know who our current customers are, what they like and what they don't. There are simple and easy methods in which to discover this. Without asking too much information, we can find out who they are, where they live, or what they prefer. Building a demographic persona of our client is key.

We need to annually, and hopefully quarterly, re-engage with our clients. Ask them through simple survey monkey questionnaires, or Jotforms, who are they? People love to share who they are. They love to reach out and connect with others who are like-minded. Whether consumers understand this or not, they are connected to their purchases. This defines them. This tells you who they are and what they want, by what they have.



Knowing who your customers are on a day to day basis is a key to predicting the unpredictable. In determining what to sell and how to sell it, you should look at the past and see what

they have purchased. Of course, finding our first who “they” are. How old are they, what sex are they, what income bracket are they. While this information is not a perfect indicator of what type of financial investment your client is willing to make, it does provide valuable indications on what might be purchased in the future.



Blunt and often intrusive electronic questions are surprisingly answered. A virtual arena provides a cushion or space, in letting individuals feel safe sharing personal information in a public format if they can retain anonymity. Since it is not face-to-face, there is a secrecy that provides an avenue for transparency.

In simple terms, ask your customers who they are and what they want. Ask and you shall receive! And if they don't answer, go back and re-phrase the questions.

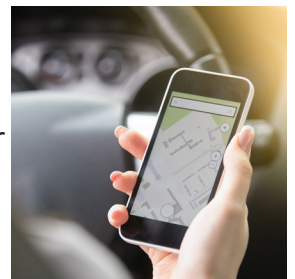
Data is everything. Data creates interactions and connections. Data encourages great customer service and engagement.



Whenever we do marketing, we must think big to small. We must think of our media as a slide cascading downward, drilling into the detail. If you are coming up with a design or marketing plan think of working large (physically) and moving to small. Starting with large posters, moving to smaller word document posters, then onto emails, further down to small social media images, and ending with a tiny text message. Think dots per inch. You need more dots per inch for large posters then you do for a tiny social media image.

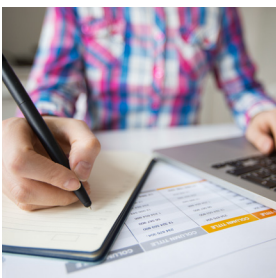
Physical marketing is still important. Don't ignore it. Branding is still simply getting in front of your customers with a consistent message. Posters and print ads and handheld flyers are still ways to connect. They are becoming more and more affordable as they are less and less important. We once paid 10 times as much for a copied tri-fold color flyer.

When deciding how to market, remember who your customer is. Find out where they shop; find out their consumer habits.



When thinking of a health club and marketing to customers and clients, remember the 30-minute rule. People do not want to drive more than 30 minutes to a venue. People no longer will travel great distances for unique selling propositions. They don't want to and they don't need to. Time is of the essence in our society. Think of who is within your 30-minute sphere.

Look at their shopping habits, see what stores are flourishing in your area. Find out where the areas are of congregation. Get involved with other successful businesses that attract consumers. Always reach for a larger demographic, and drill down to individual specifications. Remember the model large to small. It works in marketing, and it works in client engagement.



Discover where these successful businesses in your 30-minute area are advertising and how they are advertising. Find out what is working for them. Sometimes even old-fashioned radio is the way to reach clients, sometimes television,

sometimes simple text messaging techniques are the way to go. Copy and conquer.

Review how your competitors are advertising. See what they are doing to determine why they are so successful and how they got successful. It is easier and easier to do this. You don't need to secret shop anymore. You do not need to go into the club and personally be taken on a tour with a sales person. All you need to do is go on their social media sites to see what they are doing and how they are doing it.

One of the most important things to remember when building a website and creating a social media presence is that consumers do not want to spend the time walking into a facility. They will not drive and physically visit you. The first thing they will do is research you online. Remember that Google is your friend and is possibly the most important review of your own facility and clients. This is the place to start.



The secret shopper is now the online guru discovering who you are and how you are presented. Ask a friend, or associate to go in and provide a summary of who they think you are and what you have to offer. Select several individuals that you think will be honest. Select individuals that mirror your clients and select individuals that you think might make up your future customers. They will tell you exactly what you don't want to hear. They will tell you where the pitfalls are.



Ask simple questions to elicit direct responses. Find out if they would feel comfortable walking in the doors. Find out if they feel like they fit into your environment. Find out if they think your equipment is clean and inviting. Ask them to check out the locker rooms and the group fitness area. Have them review the front desk staff. What is your staff wearing; are they clean; are they smiling; are they "real". Have them look at the comments on your various pages. Get insights into what a real customer observes. This is the most important tour of your business that a client can take.

Next, have them go in and try to register for a class, see if they can easily and quickly sign up for a monthly pass online. Determine if it is effortless for them to register for an annual membership. Everything must be convenient, everything must be smooth, and everything must be professional and simple. Fast and functional is the world we live in today.



Embrace the critical. Be willing to review what you do and do not defend your methods. Embrace one change at a time and develop a system of improvement.

As a leader in the fitness industry, and one of the largest regional fitness convention businesses in the world, SCW Fitness Education goes above and beyond collecting detailed information from our network of Fitness Professionals. The results in this article are taken from almost 4,600 of our 8,500 fitness pros that attend one of our 9 regionally based annual MANIA® conventions. Our conferences are located all throughout the US in New York City, San Francisco, Orlando, Atlanta, Dallas, Chicago, Boston and Washington DC. The total breakdown of attendees is 85% Group Fitness Instructors, 60% Personal Trainers and 35% Club Owners, Directors and Managers. As you can tell, our SCW MANIA® Convention attendees do more than just one job at fitness facilities.

At every convention, we survey our attendees to understand what Fitness Professionals see on the front lines of the health and wellness industry. Our MANIA® Convention attendees are the influencers of the industry for independent health clubs, recreation centers and YMCAs along with private boutique studios. They have the deepest and most meaningful connection with the industry's clients and members. SCW uses this valuable information to support the current needs of the industry and predict future trends to be showcased at MANIA® Conferences, supported in our SCW Certifications, featured in our SCW OnDemand video services and selected for our SCW CEC series. It is necessary for SCW to understand, appreciate and respond to the demands of trainers and instructors nationwide.

This is the first time in the 34-year history of SCW that we have released this valuable and insightful research to the industry as a whole. By doing so, we hope to help the world become a healthier place by allowing the fitness industry to benefit from this valuable and detailed information. Give the client what they want. Give the public what they need.

Learn more about SCW Fitness Education at scwfit.com

About the Author, Sara Kooperman, JD



Sara Kooperman, CEO of SCW Fitness Education and WATERinMOTION®, is a visionary leader that has transformed the fitness education community. A successful business owner and advisor, she is a keynote speaker, published author, podcast presenter and sought-after industry trail-blazer. Sara has launched nine successful MANIA® fitness-professional conventions and over 35 live and online certifications. Her company has touched more than 100,000 Fitness Professionals face-to-face and engaged another 300,000+ in virtual connections and produced over 600 Fitness Instructor Training video. She also is the proud recipient of the Illinois State Business Woman of the Year and AEA's Global Award for Contribution to the Aquatic Industry. Sara is well-known for her creativity and impact on the health and wellness industry. She has a unique ability to share her passion and devotion towards fitness education through her humor, enthusiasm and her effervescent no-nonsense personality. Sara serves on the Gold's Gym Think Tank, is on the Women in Fitness Association Board of Directors and is a proud inductee into the National Fitness Hall of Fame. Sara has left an indelible mark on the fitness industry as a whole.

About SCW



SCW Fitness Education has been in business for 35 years and is the largest provider continuing education conferences in the world focusing on Group Fitness and Personal Training with an emphasis on execution, leadership and management. With nine (9) regional shows spanning 32 years, MANIA® Conferences are held in Washington D.C., New York City, California (San Francisco), Florida (Orlando), Atlanta, Dallas, Philadelphia, Midwest (Chicago), and Boston annually. SCW reaches over 8,500 fitness professionals in face-to-face contacts, 70K on our email list, and another 200,000+ in virtual connections. MANIA® Conventions offer 17 sessions running every per hour on all different aspects of the fitness/wellness industry (HIIT, Functional Training, Cycling, Mind/Body, Barre, Dance, Aqua, Nutrition, Recovery, Business & Leadership.) MANIA® SCW is unparalleled in its provision of certifications, continuing education courses and conventions to fitness professionals in multiple disciplines both live and online.

About MANIA®



MANIA® is more than just a Fitness Pro Convention; it's the place where the fitness community goes to be educated, inspired and recharged! As the largest global provider of Fitness Conferences in the world, earn up to 24 CECs in a single weekend, running up to 19 sessions every hour, featuring 70+ presenters. Our 9 MANIA® Conventions in NYC, CA, FL, GA, TX, PA, IL, MA and DC attract world-renowned fitness educators leading over 35 Certifications and 250 sessions.

About Club Industry Business Summit

CLUB INDUSTRY BUSINESS SUMMIT

Grow your business and build your career at the Club Industry Business Summit. This is the most educational, intimate and affordable event and is a must-attend for you and your team! Club Industry Business Summits are led by 30+ hand-picked elite fitness experts held at the MANIA® Conventions in New York City, San Francisco, Orlando, Atlanta, Dallas, Philadelphia and Boston. Take advantage of 3-days of laser-focused fitness business sessions exclusively dedicated to marketing, technology, trends, sales, retention, social media, products, programming, finance and leadership. Owners, Managers and Directors reach deep into new trends for Commercial Multipurpose Clubs, Boutique Studios, YMCAs, JCCs, Park & Recs, Universities, and Hospital Wellness Centers.