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# FASTER FITNESS

Charleston, S.C.

## Innovation: The Wireless Workout

By Anne B. McDonnell, Senior Editor

It's only a matter of time before every fitness center offers members exercise programs that are stored on hand-held computers. But Faster Fitness is ahead of the game, since it created its own such system, called the Faster Fitness Wireless Workout. Chris McNeil, president of Faster Fitness, explains: "...trainers access and add to a client's workout information with hand-held computers that link to web-based software over a Bluetooth wireless connection." The program features graphing of client progress, and shows past performance and future goals. This helps trainers to make changes to exercise programs, including increasing weight or repetitions for resistance training, or changing a cardio program. The system also filters out exercises for clients, based on choice or contraindications.

A big advantage of this system over older ways of keeping track of client programs (i.e., cards, files of paper) is that trainers have better control of each client's program and progress. They have "visual access to the entire timeline of progress, without flipping through stacks of cards, or deciphering another trainer's handwriting," explains McNeil. Clients also have more control. They can watch their progress using "quick reports," which are generated on paper by the trainer, or they can view their exercise program via a personal page on the Faster Fitness website.

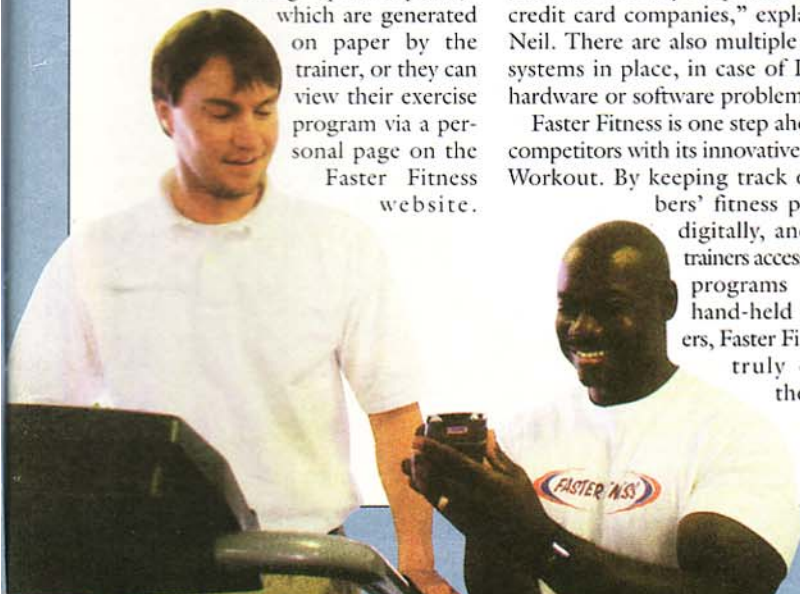
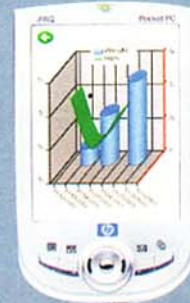
Another great advantage to using this system is that there is no loss of information in "the files," or in a transition from one trainer to another.

McNeil says that this innovative software program has benefitted the fitness center in a variety of ways. For one, workouts for clients now run more smoothly, with no lost time looking for information. It has also enhanced communication between clients and trainers, and between trainers and management. In addition, client progress, referrals and retention rates can now be tracked by facility management. Finally, member retention has increased, according to McNeil, since the system helps members to "maximize their fitness success [by encouraging them] to work toward their goals and maintain their successful results." And, on a practical note, the system has eliminated file cabinets full of workout cards, and the confusion of finding information on paper forms.

Since private information is now held in computer databases, security was a concern for Faster Fitness. To address this, data is transferred using secure and pass-coded systems, "much like those used by hospitals, banks and credit card companies," explains McNeil. There are also multiple back-up systems in place, in case of Internet, hardware or software problems.

Faster Fitness is one step ahead of its competitors with its innovative Wireless Workout. By keeping track of members' fitness programs digitally, and giving trainers access to those programs through hand-held computers, Faster Fitness has truly entered the digital age of fitness.

The system has eliminated file cabinets full of workout cards.



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