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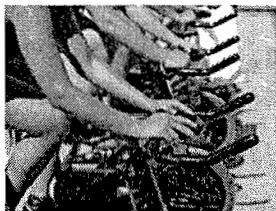
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Ask an Industry Leader

Hervey Lavoie and Fred Hoffman discuss revisiting club design and how your members will react:

Q: "How often should we revisit our club's design and layout? Also, how do members typically respond to changes in the club's layout?"

A: **These days we know that "change" is a constant.**

This means that every club should have a forward looking, 5 year master plan and revisit it at six month intervals. Such an exercise will provide a conceptual framework for regular consideration of opportunities to improve your member experience, freshen your look and sharpen your competitive edge in an increasingly crowded club market.

A master plan will envision a sequence of high priority upgrades and allow each package of improvements to be undertaken within the conceptual context of the next wave of improvements. This approach minimizes the chances that next year's childcare expansion will undo this year's carpet replacement. Looking beyond current needs will always result in a more effectively allocated budget for capital improvements.

... member terminations trend lower during construction of facility improvements.

We often see member terminations trend lower during construction of facility improvements. The members want to stick around, see and enjoy the renovations. Member response to change can be influenced by how they are conceived, presented, promoted and executed. Changes need to be characterized as "improvements" and sold to the members as value propositions. Member surveys and advisory boards are effective means of gaining member participation in and support for change.

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A: I believe that owners should visit their club's layout and design on an on-going basis. By talking to managers, staff and members, they will acquire a better understanding of how the club is functioning, and will quickly become aware of any problems or issues that affect the overall member experience. But more importantly, a

Members want to feel at broad vision with long terms goals, careful thought, and an open dialogue with the architects

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home in a club and don't like unexpected changes to their routine.

demographic and as member's needs evolve.

and design team during the club's planning phase will ensure both an attractive and functional design and layout. The decision to completely overhaul the club will come as a result of changes in programming, advances in equipment design and function, normal 'wear and tear', a changing

When planning to change the layout of your club, avoid negative reactions from members by communicating in advance what changes will take place and what the benefits will be. Members want to feel at home in a club and don't like unexpected changes to their routine. (Visualize your reaction to someone rearranging your furniture without your prior knowledge or consent). Help them to adapt by providing progress updates and having staff available to explain and introduce the new layout to them.

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