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TELOS PERFORMANCE CENTER

Dallas, Texas

Innovation: TELOS Performance Center Renovation

By Anne B. McDannell, Senior Editor

Built as a racquetball club in the early 1980s, the TELOS Performance Center had "lost its appeal in the marketplace," says General Manager Brent Darden. Since the name of the facility is derived from Greek (to accomplish one's mission or goal in life; the embodiment of the whole; completeness), facility management decided that the redesign should incorporate Greek and Roman themes.

One major change, called the Coliseum, was once a basketball court, and is now the cardio and weight equipment area. It features color-matched flooring, and equipment frames and pads; free-standing mirrors and Greco/Roman finishes. It offers a surround-sound music system, and all cardio equipment is wired for individual entertainment, including a channel for viewing the children's nursery. Lemon water and workout towels are provided atop Greco/Roman pillars. Says Darden, "Providing lemon water on the workout floor is one of the touches most appreciated by members." Since the redesign, revenues from personal training (which takes place in this area) has grown from approximately \$30,000 per month to more than \$100,000 per month, says Darden.

Another redesigned area includes new yoga and Pilates studios. They feature a zen rock garden, water fountain and stone bridge at their entrances, which serve to separate this area from the bustling activity of the other areas. Each room is sound-proof, with suspended wood flooring and natural bamboo ceilings. In fact, local Boy Scouts provided the labor to lash and tie the bamboo in place as part of their service and craft requirements. This new area, says Darden, "helped to secure a national contract with Power Pilates as one of its training centers, and will generate revenues of more than \$20,000 per month."

Also redesigned were the entrance, lobby and member services desk; the

pro shop; a conference room; Caesar's Café; massage rooms; and a Kids Activity Room. Says Darden, "The use of a warm color palette throughout, and natural elements of stone, slate, cork, bamboo, wood and light help create a sense of tranquility and relaxation [that is] uncommon in most clubs."

These changes haven't only made an impression on the facility's members and within its immediate market — industry companies have noticed, too. Explains Darden, "Free Motion and Nautilus equipment manufacturers have identified TELOS as their regional showcase for prospective buyers, and included photos of our Coliseum in their sales brochures. The same is true for Mondo flooring company."

Most important, the renovation of the fitness center was accomplished without ever closing the facility, and without interruption to any programs or services. Plus, the "construction was performed by in-house maintenance staff, which helped control cost, ensured timely completion and generated an attitude of ownership among the staff," says Darden.

As for the members, Darden says, "Of course, the existing membership was excited about all the improvements,... and there have been a multitude of ex-members rejoin after seeing the changes.... Further evidence [of our success] is the closing ratio of our sales department once a prospect has toured the facility, which has averaged 73 percent."

The final measure of the renovation's success is in the financial numbers: "The renovations have helped us turn around a club that had a negative EBITDA [earnings before interest, taxes, depreciation and amortization] of more than \$70,000 a month, to one that achieved a positive monthly EBITDA in less than one year," Darden explains. Now, that's one successful redesign. **FM**

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