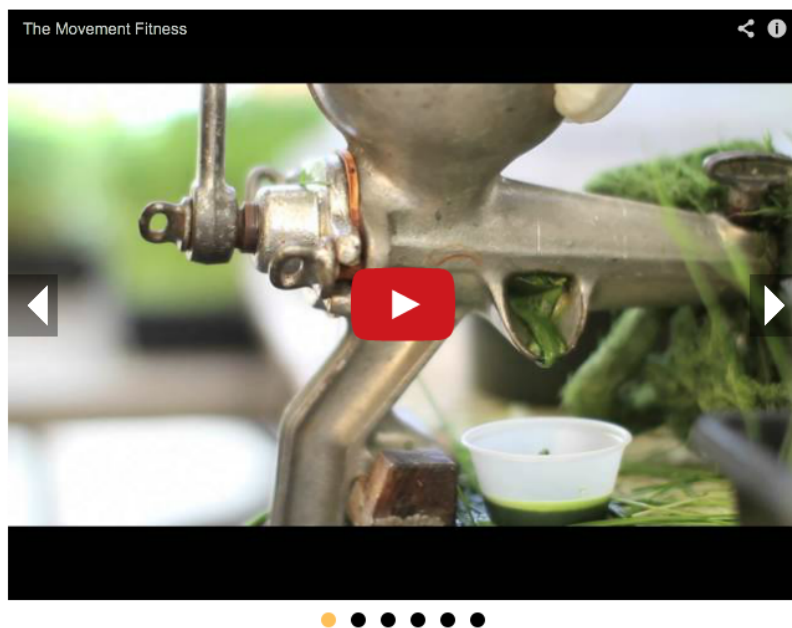


The Movement studio: The gym that gives back every day of the year

1 Comment

New York, United States



Recently I was undertaking some online research and stumbled upon an American search result, which grabbed my attention: 'Charity-Driven Gyms Are Popping Up All Over The Country.'

Gyms undertake random acts of charity all the time, but these new gyms are different as they embed charity at the very heart of their business. So, this is the story of 'The Movement', a recently opened boutique fitness studio in New York City that operates by the philosophy of: give back, move forward (the intrinsic joy and satisfaction of exercise while simultaneously helping others). It donates \$1 per person per class to The National Brain Tumour Society, not just for a few days, but every day of the year. It is the first fitness business I have discovered that donates a portion of **every** sales it makes.

How the studio started

Jordan and Dana Canino are lifelong athletes who envisioned a studio that would allow them to make a positive difference in the lives of others. However, their definition of 'others' is far wider than the customers who attend the hybrid cardio, strength and yoga classes at the 3,200 square feet (297 square metres) facility. So they started with the question: How do we create a place where people are not only changing their own lives, but also the lives of others?

Deeply embedded charity

When a business aligns itself with a charity, there should always be some compelling story that drives the partnership. Across the United States, there are more than 1.5 million non-profit organisations (National Center for Charitable Statistics) and many would be worthy of our support, but which one? The Movement is partnering with The National Brain Tumour Society (NBTS), but why this cause?

700,000 Americans are living with a primary brain tumour and 70,000 more will be diagnosed this year, according to the NBTS, so perhaps there is a shared connection between The Movement and the NBTS. I discovered Andrea Canino, Jordan's mother, had died of a brain tumour when he was just 18 so this was a deeply personal cause, giving purpose and meaning to The Movement. 'Our hope is to start a true movement, that, when you give back, you're enabling yourself to move forward. It motivates people to not only go to a class and get their sweat on, but also motivates them to help fight a terrible disease' says Canino.

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Location:	New York, United States
Start date:	May 2014
Status:	Ongoing
Impact:	National
Submitted:	12 July 2014
Causes:	
Charity:	National Brain Tumor Society

I dedicate this workout to...

Recently I was reading an article about The Movement, written by Heidi Kristoffer, a highly rated American yoga instructor. In the article she recalled a comment made by a SoulCycle instructor during a recent class she was attending: 'If you feel like you can't do it for yourself, do it for someone else who needs this more than you do.' Kristoffer found the idea of mentally dedicating her workout to someone other than herself, very powerful. Now imagine this being amplified by everyone else in the class, across all classes, every day of the year. Suddenly that Tuesday evening class at 8pm that you're half-minded to skip takes on a whole new meaning. 'Sometimes we need to do things for ourselves, but often the power of doing something with the intention of helping the greater good, or just one other person, can be life-changing' says Kristoffer.

The media are excited

There are more than 30,500 gyms across the United States (source: IHRSA) with boutique studios regularly popping up, so what has the American media have to say about The Movement? Well for a small studio open only since May 2014, it is generating quite some buzz: 'The Movement Ignites a Charitable Fitness Revolution', 'Fitness studio ready to stand out', 'The Rise of Charity Driven Gyms', 'Five Fitness Studios That Give Back' are just four articles that capture the attention of journalists who are asking themselves: 'what's the story here and why should I and my readers care?'

Project results

Presently only 30 classes per week are operating as this new studio seeks more clients. This translates to a donation to the National Brain Tumour Society of \$1,000 over a month. They are expecting to reach between 56-70 classes per week by September 2014 meaning donations should double. As importantly, they are raising awareness of the charity every time someone interacts with the business.

GYMTOPIA COMMENT

So what can your business do?

Your organisation is probably already working with one or more charities, but it may be superficial and short-term. Here are a few ways to harness your business to create more social impact:

- Discover a charity partner that shares an authentic common purpose with your business.
- Ensure your charity partner and its cause genuinely means something to your primary stakeholders (staff, customers, suppliers, investors).
- Commit to work together over the long-term – think 'partner' more than short term 'date'.
- Visualise a successful and socially useful outcome and plan towards it.
- Help drive a project rather than simply handing over money.

Don't send out a press release until you have meaningful results to share. What matters is impact not intention.

Who will you be dedicating your next workout to?

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Is your organisation doing amazing things to improve the lives of a local, national or international community? If so, we would love to share your story.

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14

14

1

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