



Hi-tech exercise bikes encourage people to get fit and stay fit

Cisco technology enables people in different locations around the world to compete against one another in a fun and safe environment

CUSTOMER NAME: **Instyle Fitness**
INDUSTRY: **Leisure**
LOCATION: **West Sussex, England**
COMPANY SIZE: **10 employees**

Case Study

BUSINESS IMPACT

Benefits delivered by the Cisco solution include:

- Adds social element to exercise routine as users can race each other online
- Entertainment value increases motivation and length of time people exercise
- Easier for gyms to capture and retain members



CUSTOMER PROFILE AND CHALLENGE

Instyle Fitness owner, Duncan Lawson, was first introduced to the power of technology when he worked in a large company that had developed an interactive, diagnostic health pod. With a goal of using technology to help with preventative healthcare, he took over Instyle Fitness in 2001. The company sells exercise machines mounted with screens and fitted with software that allow users to choose riding programs that take them through a variety of routes. These include legendary race routes located around the world, as well as fantasy routes.

When Lawson started with Instyle Fitness, he knew there would be little point in competing against the large, established players selling standard exercise equipment. Lawson knew that his business should offer something different; he also understood that the fitness world needed an innovative product that would motivate and inspire people to exercise. "Around 30 percent of the population has been a gym member at some time, but the drop-out rate is very high. Looking at the industry, it scores very poorly in new innovations with gyms offering very similar packages." The challenge was to bring technology into the traditional world of the gym, which remains little changed since the 1980s.

SOLUTION AND RESULTS

Instyle Fitness use Cisco technology to simultaneously offer users the excitement found in multiplayer online games with the opportunity to get fit. Simple to install and maintain, the solution offers numerous benefits:

- Users can choose a variety of courses where the machine's resistance correlates with visual images. Wireless technology extends this level of interaction by enabling users to race against a friend in the gym, or a stranger in another country.
- The system records and stores personal information and results on remote servers – that can be accessed over the Internet – allowing users to chart their progress.
- The equipment also enables users to race against a ghost rider who replays their best performance, or to set a pacer according to predetermined fitness goals.
- Health club owners can better attract and retain customers, as well as charge additional fees for use of the machines, or for participation in inter-club or global competitions.
- The use of softphones (software telephones) and Bluetooth headsets can be added for hands-free coaching, or for racers to chat with one another.

Future plans are to adapt the system so that energy generated by the user powers the Cisco routers.

“The fitness industry does not deal with the social and mental aspects of exercise. There is lots of equipment in gyms but no motivation. You need to be motivated; and the secret of our technology is that it engages customers both socially and mentally.”

Duncan Lawson

Owner, Instyle Fitness

For more on information:

www.instylefitness.co.uk

www.cisco.com/web/UK/solutions/smb/smb_home.html