

Celeste Kirby-Brown highlights how technology is set to impact on fitness clubs in 2013.

In the latest Australian and New Zealand Fitness Industry Survey it is predicted that "2013 is set to be one of the biggest years ever in the fitness industry."

Within our vibrant and expanding industry, the report states "technology is moving very quickly and there are options for both members and clubs never seen before."

Among key findings, they survey highlights:

Trend 1: Going Cashless

With consumers becoming increasingly accepting of mobile and cashless payments, the fitness industry is likely to see a rise in cashless payments increase in clubs.

With the latest credit cards including Visa payWave or MasterCard PayPass Technology; with most club membership cards now including RFID chips; and smartphones including payment technology, consumers can swipe their card, chip or phone against a reader to pay for purchases and/or gain access to facilities.

Trend 2: Mobile Sales Tools

More businesses are investing in mobile sales tools, allowing their salespeople to close sales on the go. These tools might be iPhones or more likely iPads with larger screens. Sales people access the membership software through the app. They can look up member details or use the app to sign up a new member anywhere, anytime.

The iconnect360 membership management software offers a mobile sales app for iPhones and iPads.

Trend 3: Smart Phones Become Mobile Wallets

Mobile phones are becoming surrogate wallets and, as well as being used for cashless payments, are assimilating many of the cards and bits of paper (can now be) assimilated into smart phones.

Trend 4: 'Scan to buy' from offline media

With more businesses using QR codes on emails, advertising posters, bus stops as well as embedded RFID chip to transfer information quickly and conveniently, the fitness industry can also make use of this technology.

QR codes in a club might enable members to scan and download class timetables while an embedded RFID chip in a poster could advertise personal training packages.

Trend 5: Nanny Apps

Smartphone Apps that have been developed to allow users to look after their fitness and well-being, specifically developed to monitor exercise, health and diet.

Trend 6: Going Green

With the price and demand for power increasing, why not go green and harness the human energy used in spin classes, on treadmills and other equipment to generate power.

SportsArt Fitness' Green System cardio equipment and ECO-POWR™ treadmills harnesses the energy that exercisers generate and feeds it back into the power grid as useable power. Meanwhile, Ezipay is about to start collecting data for its next survey, and will this year be surveying members and club owners and managers in both Australia and New Zealand and will focus on personal training, bookings and communication channels.

Celeste Kirby-Brown is Director of Sales, Marketing and Relationships for Ezipay. To participate in the Australian and New Zealand Fitness Industry Survey or to download previous surveys and reports go to www.ezipay.com/fitness-industry-survey.

Ezipay is an outsourced direct debit service provider dedicated to offering a payment collection system that assists businesses in the regulation of their cash flow and revenue without the hassle of managing members' bills.

With close links to the fitness industry Ezipay offer small to medium growth business of all types an easy online payment collection option.