

The inconvenient truth is there is no such thing as either the correct ratio of members: piece of equipment nor cardio:resistance: free weights – here is why.

BIG problems with operators using equipment ratios ...



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GYMetrix can calculate the precise amount of equipment required to match customers demand for the equipment, by measuring the demand levels for it with sensors, so at first we thought we could come up with the answer.

We went through previous studies

looking at what our calculations were about the amount of equipment required, and compared this to the number of members that a gym had.

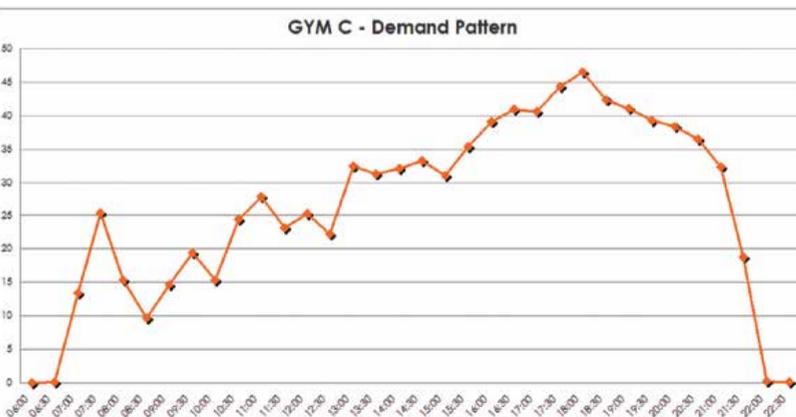
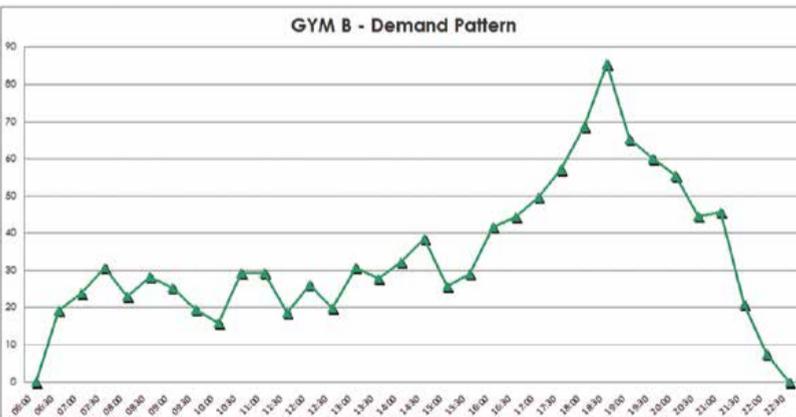
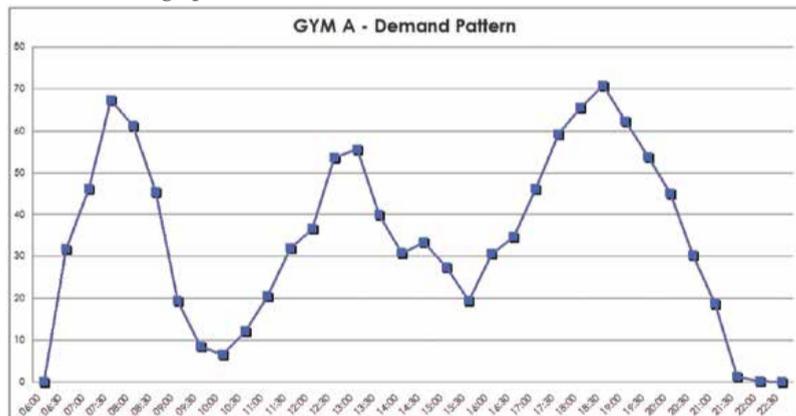
The first thing that surprised us was the high variation that were seeing, they ranged from 22 members: piece of equipment to 52 pieces members: piece of equipment

When we investigated further we realised what was causing this huge variation.

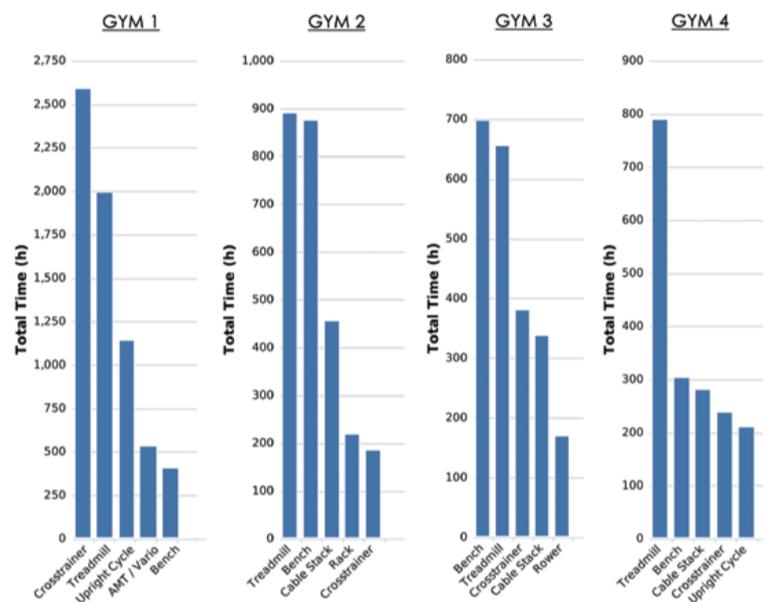
1) Peak Period Attendance Determines a Gyms equipment requirement.

We must start by defining what exactly determines a gyms equipment requirement.

A gym's capacity requirement is determined by the peak time customer demand levels, generally for most gyms this is after customers finish work so between 5.30pm and 7pm, although this is not always the case.



Examples of Different Demand Ratios



This is the period where the gym needs to supply enough of the individual equipment types –Treadmills / Benches / Racks / Crosstrainers etc that their customers will be able to use them and they won't have to wait because they are constantly in use by other customers ie demand is greater than supply.

Different gyms then could have the same number of members but because they have different daily attendance patterns, they will have different equipment requirements in their peak period.

If operators are wanting to use ratios then a better ratio to use would be the number of customers attending per hour in peak relative to the quantity of equipment, as it is peak attendance that determines what the equipment supply needs to be, not the number of members.

2) Different Gyms have different amounts of dormant members.

The second thing to cause the variation was the variation that different clubs had in terms of dormant members – sleepers as they are sometimes referred.

Two clubs could have the same number of members, and the same attendance patterns, but if they have very different numbers of dormant members they will then have a very different equipment requirement.

We have also found that even the same gyms have different numbers of dormant members according to how old the club is – it seems when a gym first opens and members have just signed up, that they have a relatively low number of dormant members, but as time progresses the number of dormant members increases.

Price points and cancellation

policies will also affect the number of dormant members.

3) Different Gyms have different demand patterns for the equipment types

That there exists a golden Equipment ratio of how much Cardio Vs Resistance Vs Free Weights etc is a myth.

Even the theory that by looking at the demographics of customers this can be determined is incorrect, we have found gyms with identical demographics located close to each other have very different demand patterns. A far bigger determinant of customer demand patterns is the gyms instructors and what equipment they are inducting customers on and what they are teaching customers to use. What other customers in the gym are doing also seems a big determinant as customers are inclined to copy other customers.

Here are four examples of gyms that have similar demographics but very different demand levels (measured in hours per week) for the equipment types in the peak periods.

Although many operators assume that Treadmills will always have the most demand followed by Crosstrainers, as the data shows us in these examples this is far from always being the case.

In summary – although many operators and equipment suppliers use equipment ratios to determine how much equipment they should buy and in what quantities, in fact data has proved that these will be far from accurate and the inconvenient truth is each gym has a unique demand pattern and there is no such thing as a golden one size fits all ratio.