

# Maintaining Value Perception With Your Members In Tough Times

This is not an advertisement. It is a public interest article.



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In this uncertain economy, customers are evaluating everything they spend their money on. If they don't think sufficient value is there, they will cut that expenditure. Just ask Starbucks. Successful clubs understand that an important component of their value perception is conveyed through aesthetics. That's why clubs have always invested in updating their color schemes, wall & floor coverings, and furnishings. And why they buy new equipment even when the old equipment is perfectly functional. Aesthetics and the look of newness help build a club's value perception.

Clubs know that it helps member recruiting and retention to have people say, "Wow! This place has all new equipment!" Unfortunately right now, few clubs can afford to make everything in the club brand new. But they can still make a strong value statement if they make at least one area of the club brand new. "Wow, this place has a whole new X area!" Ideally, it should be an area that gets the most member exposure. The NSGA annual study indicates that strength training is the most popular form of exercise. This suggests the strength area gets the most exposure. So if you're going to pick one area to make a value statement with brand new equipment, the strength area is where most members will see it.

The best news is that the strength area is the place that costs the least amount to make everything brand new. For the same cost of a few new cardio pieces that only a few people will see, you can put all new dumbbells and barbells in your strength area, which almost everyone will see. It gets down to making the strongest value statement for the least amount of your precious money.

If the club down the street or across town upgrades nothing and you've got a brand new weight area you win. If that club spends their money on a few cardio pieces that few people will see, you win.

We don't want our friends in the cardio industry to be mad at us for suggesting clubs buy strength equipment rather than cardio. But enabling clubs to make the best possible value statement for the least amount of money helps them survive now so they can buy cardio later when the economy recovers. If the cardio people had an idea to help clubs survive so that they could buy weight lifting equipment in the future, we wouldn't be mad at them.

We'd love them.

In addition to your weight lifting equipment being brand new, the mere act of putting your club's logo on your plates and dumbbells makes a statement that your club has the resources to afford more than generic equipment. It's simply another good impression that helps in member recruiting and retention. That might explain why we can barely keep up with our logo plate orders with no end in sight.

We recently discovered that logo plates have an additional value that surprised us. We shipped some new logo plates to a club for use on existing plate-loaded machines. Soon after mounting the plates on



U.S. Olympic Skiing  
Park City, UT

the machines, floor managers started overhearing club members talk about how nice the new machines looked. The new plates created the impressions that the machines themselves were new! Of course, if your plate loaded machines are too old to look

provides greater protection, and knurled grip areas resist slippage because dropping the plate is not good for the Urethane coating or the user's toes.

Staying afloat in economic turbulence is simply a matter of strategy. Maintaining a strong value

## New Club Value Statements



**Specialized Bicycle**  
Morgan Hill, CA



**Saw Mill Club**  
Mt. Kisco, NY



**D. Lee's Powerhouse**  
Pheba, MS



**Sportfit Club**  
Bowie, MD

## New Team Spirit Boosters



**New York Mets**  
New York, NY



**U.S. Olympic Snowboarding**  
Park City, UT



**Northern Kentucky U**  
Highland Heights, KY



**Minnesota Vikings**  
Eden Prairie, MN

new in this way, brand new logo loading plates will nevertheless enhance the visual aesthetics for your members.

I would be remiss if I didn't point out that you also save money if you buy equipment that retains its new "look & feel" longer. An Ivanko stainless steel Olympic bar never rusts, chips, cracks, or peels. And its 218,000 PSI tensile strength provides the strongest bend resistance in the industry. These features provide a longer life of sending "like new" quality signals to users. Other bars that cost less lose their newness faster, with replacement costs that soon overtake the stainless steel investment. The same is true of Urethane plates and dumbbells. Ivanko's thicker coating of Urethane

perception to continue attracting and retaining members is key. Finding ways to make the strongest value statement for the least amount of money is sensible. At Ivanko, we stand ready to help you with that strategy.

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*Ivanko Barbell Company was founded by Tom Lincir in 1967, and it is the leading provider of professional and commercial grade barbell and dumbbell products worldwide. Your comments or questions are welcome. Contact Chet Groskreutz at Ivanko Barbell Company, call 1.310.514.1155 ext. 209, send correspondence to P.O. Box 1470, San Pedro, CA U.S.A. 90733, or e-mail [chet@ivankobarbell.com](mailto:chet@ivankobarbell.com)*