



**HI-TEC**<sup>®</sup>

# CASE STUDY:

INNOVATIVE WAYS OF CREATING REVENUE –  
INCLUDING OUTSIDE OF THE TRADITIONAL  
SQUASH CLUB OPERATION

**CLUB KELBURN**



**SQUASH**  
NEW ZEALAND

# OVERVIEW

Squash facilities contribute to building strong, healthy and vibrant communities. Many are managed by volunteers and this means that, unfortunately, a number of squash courts sit idle between the hours of 9am-5pm on weekdays. From a business perspective many squash facilities are proving to not be financially sustainable which makes investing into upgrades a tough proposition. This means that a lot of clubs are losing out on potential income, wasting space and are missing a big opportunity to get more people in the facility and enjoying the game.

Club Kelburn's Rob Walker took over management of the centre in 1994. Since then the facility has diversified its offerings while keeping squash as its core business. A gym area has since been established, basketball hoops have been added and virtual solutions are now used to help increase court utilisation and get more people in the door and being active.

## CHALLENGES

### Technology

Virtual exercise is growing in popularity worldwide as more and more facilities use technology to provide video-based workouts for members to use during non-peak times throughout the day.

### Utilisation

Many courts sit empty for around 80% of the day. This not only has a detrimental effect on income, but is a waste of expensive real estate.

### Expectations

Today's consumers want their leisure time shaped around them. They expect immediate satisfaction and want your schedule to adapt to theirs, not the opposite.

## SOLUTIONS

### Booking System

Most facilities offer a booking process that is driven by technology. These days customers want 'no barrier' experiences. They want to be able to pay, book and select a court without any hassle.

### Alternative Uses

Most other indoor sports and fitness activities fight for the same space. During the day squash courts offer a temporary space to do other sports and activities such as soccer, basketball, table tennis, gymnastics, Cross Fit, dance, Pilates and cycling.

### Scheduling

Offering activities at convenient time of the day can have a huge impact in getting more people through the door. Providing programmes for schools, workplaces and other community groups could be offered as a way to get non-members using the facility during 'off peak' times.

## RESULTS

8

Squash courts and gym areas available.

4

Courts with a basketball hoop.

2

Monthly league programmes available. Games are played by negotiating times with opponents.

## CONCLUSION

People's lives are getting busier and the traditional working week is changing the available leisure time that people have. Therefore squash clubs need to consider when and how people want to play squash and use the facility. Simply opening the doors during 'off peak' times is not the magic solution.

Rob acknowledges that you must "give them what they want, and they will come."

Providing an online booking system allows members and the public to access the courts for a game. Hiring out court space for other activities presents opportunities to increase revenue and attract external funding. Ultimately though, people vote with their feet and by offering programmes and activities that people want to do means they will constantly turn up.