

## EXPERTS' CORNER

### FACILITIES



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# How can my club create a lifestyle experience for the members?

**CLUBS ARE CONTINUALLY** looking to engage their membership with fun programs and activities, while also being relevant to prospective members who desire a club experience that fits in with today's societal lifestyle. A goal for many clubs should be to offer an experience that members will boast about and that new members will want to be a part of—an experience that members of all ages can enjoy whether they have a young family with children or have been a member of the club for more than 20 years.

The best way to get at the heart of what will make your club more of a destination lifestyle experience is to ask your members what drives them to use their club and what would they like to enjoy. While a simple task, gathering this knowledge will allow you to begin planning what is needed at your club to bring a great experience to your members.

Today, more private clubs are transitioning from the traditional golf/tennis/swim clubs to a year-round lifestyle club for members. This place is available to everyone in the family at any time of the year. Many times, to be this place requires adding or expanding facilities on your campus. Keep in mind that any facility improvements should follow a long-term

plan and not be done as one-off projects. Some of the facilities building on the lifestyle experience include:

- **A Golf Performance Center** that offers golfers an opportunity to hone their game with the club's professionals indoors using the latest technology and golf simulators for players of all levels. Finally, this performance center would need a place for members to gather and socialize for drinks.
- **Health & Wellness Center** that provides members of all ages with the equipment, programming and amenities to keep members fit and healthy. According to our research, health/wellness/fitness is the third most important activity to members at clubs where it is being offered. It is equally important across all age segments.
- **Resort-style pool complexes** that not only have fun pools, but great socializing spaces for members of all ages.
- **Expanded recreation offerings** like paddle/platform tennis or bocce, with each providing spaces for members to congregate before and after matches.

Clubs should always be looking to see what amenity could fit into their club culture. A small movie theater with F&B service can provide a perfect experience for private club members. The movie-going experience has changed over the last five years and clubs sit primed to take advantage of this shift.

While facilities play a vital role in providing a great lifestyle experience,

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do not overlook the importance of programming for all your amenities. The above amenities will truly be successful with a variety of programming for member engagement. Social activities from themed dinners to fun events like trivia nights—a very popular activity all across St. Louis—continue to provide value to members, especially during the winter.

When looking to expand or enrich the lifestyle experience at your club, listen to your members and ensure that what you do adheres to your mission or purpose as a club. Their input will give you a clear understanding of your club's identity, and subsequently what your club should offer. 

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