



OVERVIEW

Education Partner Profile

Akro Studio opened in 2003, and in August of 2005 became the Exclusive MERRITHEW Licensed Training Center in Spain. Two Lead Instructor Trainers and ten Instructor Trainers have trained over 2,000 professionals in Spain, and in regions of South America.

Equipment Partner Profile

Thomas Wellness Group started in 1994, and has been the Exclusive Equipment Distributor for MERRITHEW in Spain and Andorra since 2014. In addition to selling equipment, they offer maintenance contracts, tech services, and installation of all equipment, they sell. The staff also offers business advice and project management assistance to their clients.

Business Situation

Akro Studio and Thomas Wellness Group realized the opportunity to build a strong Licensed Training Center and Distributor relationship in Spain by collaborating on education and equipment sales to expand their market channels, and better serve the existing customer community.

- Co-hosting jointly branded events called MOVIN' PEOPLE
- Implementing a joint commission-based referral program
- Integrating website components and online store capabilities
- Cross-promoting each other's company and services
- Sharing knowledge and resources
- Combining education and equipment sales to maximize profits

Benefits

- Increased sales and brand awareness
- Increased client acquisition
- Expansion into new channels
- Increased community satisfaction and engagement
- Shared event expenses

MERRITHEW™ Licensed Training Center Akro Studio and Distributor Thomas Wellness Group enter a successful, and mutually beneficial partnership in Spain.

SITUATION

A lot can be gained when two partners with separate offers work in tandem, combining efforts to maximize results for both.

Akro Studio first became a Licensed Training Center in August of 2005 and Thomas Wellness Group became the Exclusive Equipment Distributor for MERRITHEW in 2014. The two companies both saw the value of entering a collaborative relationship in their territory. They realized the potential value in education sales and equipment sales by working cohesively to serve existing customers, increase revenue and expand market reach for both companies.

When agreeing to enter into this sustainable business relationship both companies brought their strengths and expertise to the table. Thomas Wellness Group has long-standing experience in equipment distribution, marketing, service and maintenance. And Akro Studio brings extensive education and training experience. Both companies share the same goal of striving to sell more MERRITHEW equipment and education, and to secure themselves as the go-to partners for MERRITHEW in the region.

SOLUTION

Events

The two companies began to work closely together to coordinate and execute shared events called MOVIN' PEOPLE, which combine mind-body education and equipment presentations. These events are targeted to the general public, as well as fitness professionals. In its first year, the event in Madrid attracted approximately 350 people. There are more of these events planned in various cities.

Joint Referral Program

They have agreed upon a set commission-based referral program, which encourages teamwork and cross-promotion on behalf of both companies.

Integrated Websites and Online Stores

The websites of both Akro Studio and Thomas Wellness Group work to support the success of the other's by including supporting information and links back to the other's website. Both online shops allow customers to interact with products and to find videos that provide more information.

Knowledge Sharing

The two companies are working together to share resources, knowledge, market information, and to release media content together, which is proving to be mutually beneficial. Both companies have also agreed to work together on customer service, sales and improving the customer experience.

"We're encouraged to see two of our valued partners, Akro Studio and Thomas Wellness Group, working together and supporting each other to achieve mutually beneficial goals. Together, we are raising MERRITHEW brand awareness, developing and expanding the community of STOTT PILATES®, Total Barre™, Halo™ Training, and CORE™ trained professionals, and servicing the market needs with high-quality Pilates equipment, accessories and education."

Sandy Gardner
Vice President, Sales & Customer Service
MERRITHEW

"By working together in this synergistic manner, Akro Studio and Thomas Wellness Group are well-poised to service the ongoing needs of our professional community in Spain. Our 2,700+ students and instructors, in this growing market, have benefited greatly from the support they have received as a result of this strong partnership."

Lesley Hopps
Director, Education Services
MERRITHEW



BENEFITS AND IMPACT

When a Licensed Training Center and a Distributor relationship is functioning optimally, as it is between Akro Studio and Thomas Wellness Group, the benefits to both companies are immediately apparent.

Increased Sales and Brand Awareness

Sales metrics are on the rise for both companies. Thomas Wellness Group has experienced a 50% sales increase on sales of MERRITHEW equipment from 2014 to 2015. It is also expected that Akro Studio's education revenue will continue to grow as this partnership blossoms. The collaboration was essential to the spike in sales and community engagement for both companies. Marketing efforts have also been combined, and this has resulted in greater awareness for both companies. The partnership is building a strong relationship between training and equipment sales with many synergies.

Client Acquisition and Expansion

Through partnering, both companies are better able to serve customers. Akro Studio and Thomas Wellness Group now have the opportunity to expand into more diverse channels than before the partnership (clubs, rehab centers, dance centers, yoga centers, and home users). They also have future plans to penetrate and grow the rehab market segment of their businesses.

Increased Community Satisfaction and Engagement

Since the launch of the business relationship, both companies have noticed increased community satisfaction and engagement. Customers now have the opportunity to learn more about education or training and have the ability to purchase equipment and training within the same purchase experience, leading to a more satisfying and engaging shopping experience. Both companies do a really great job of networking and outreach throughout the country. Customers are exposed to more opportunities to take part in education and to purchase equipment. This increased engagement, along with the streamlined purchase process, results in happier customers in the community.

Shared Events Expenses

By combining forces to co-host their MOVIN' PEOPLE events, the resources required from each company is reduced as it becomes a shared responsibility. This allows for events that combine both equipment and education to have the opportunity to grow, become larger in scale and reach more people.

Leaders in Mindful Movement™, MERRITHEW™ was co-founded by Lindsay and Moira Merrithew in 1988. The company is dedicated to enriching the lives of others by providing responsible exercise modalities and innovative fitness brands across the globe. MERRITHEW fitness brands include STOTT PILATES®, ZEN•GA™, Total Barre™ and CORE™ Athletic Conditioning & Performance Training.™ MERRITHEW has trained more than 40,000 students in over 100 countries. Quality, commitment and innovation drive the development of our fitness products, which are found in elite athletic clubs, hotels, spas and professional studios the world over.



For more information about MERRITHEW products and services, contact the commercial sales team:

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