



**INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN A GLOBAL SOCIETY  
CASE STUDY**

For use in May 2006 examination only

---

**INSTRUCTIONS TO CANDIDATES**

- Case study booklet required for higher level paper 3 information technology in a global society examination.

## **Case Study: Fitness Zone**

### **Overview**

Fitness Zone is an independent health and fitness centre based in the old docks area of Cardiff, South Wales. The fitness centre has developed over the years as a boxing gym, which was a popular venue with local people during the 1950s and 1960s and has a long tradition in the area as a venue for fitness conditioning.

During the late 1990s the gym was taken over by a new management team which extended the premises and changed the focus of the gym from boxing training and conditioning to offer a wider range of facilities and fitness services. This was partly due to the declining number of members and the changing nature of the population.

The gym enjoys an increasingly good reputation with its clients and the management takes pride in being able to offer a personalized service to all its customers.

The advent of new technology has opened up new opportunities for Fitness Zone to improve the administration of the business and to develop new ways of adding value to its customer service.

### **Human Resources**

Fitness Zone has a small management team consisting of a Managing Director, a Director of Marketing and a Fitness Team Manager. The Managing Director and Director of Marketing are responsible for the administrative side of the business. The Fitness Team Manager is responsible for the day to day running of the premises and the fitness training staff who are mostly employed on a part time basis.

### **Customers**

The customer base for the gym has changed significantly in recent years with many young professional people moving into the area to take advantage of the developments in Cardiff Bay. Fitness Zone now has approximately 600 clients who regularly attend the centre at least once a week.

### **IT Systems**

Fitness Zone has used networked computer systems for its general administrative functions for a number of years. The business uses standard office software including word processing, spreadsheets and DTP. It also has a purpose built information system that is used to track membership of the gym.

In addition to the administrative use of IT, the business is increasingly using IT to support the clients who use the gym. There is a new swipe card entrance system that links to the gym membership system and records the usage of facilities by the members. The gym also provides two computers with Internet access, using broadband technology for its members to use.

## **Challenges Faced**

Fitness Zone is an independent organization and therefore struggles to compete with big chain health and fitness centres developing in the area. Fitness Zone believes that its strength is in being able to offer an individual service and customized solutions to its clients, which is not always possible in larger organizations. However, to be able to do this economically, Fitness Zone needs to make use of some new information and communication technologies.

Fitness Zone wants to streamline the administration of the business to get the best possible use from its current IT system. This will include a complete review of the current office systems and investigating future possibilities that could be implemented. Fitness Zone is also keen to use data collected by the organization more effectively, for example, analysing customer usage patterns to determine special offers. It wishes to produce targeted electronic mailings for particular groups of customers.

In addition Fitness Zone is considering investing in an expert system to advise clients on their training needs based on their previous training records and current fitness assessment.

Fitness Zone would like to investigate an opportunity to extend this facility to offer a Lifestyle Management Programme. This system would offer customized information to members about health and fitness issues and personalized training and dietary advice. Members could sign up to this program and access it at the gym or remotely via the Internet. They could input information over the Internet and extract expert advice from the system.

---