

Background

The iGym?

We've already had the Nike+, the wireless running shoe that records progress and sends the information to an iPod nano. Now Apple and Nike are ¹ _____ up again to bring us interactive workouts in the gym.

Nike and Apple are joining up with 24-Hour Fitness and Virgin Atlantic Health clubs to develop machines that ² _____ iPod nanos to be connected to running machines and other gym equipment. This will help gym members to see their progress, set ¹⁵ personal targets and then upload the data to the Nike+ website. Nike claim that people who go to gyms will use these machines to ³ _____ them to work harder and get fitter.

²⁰ Gibson Harris, a gym manager based in the USA, says he thinks this is a ⁴ _____ idea. 'People who come to our gym to exercise always expect it to have the latest technology. ²⁵ So to satisfy the customers' needs we need to keep one step ahead of them. This new system will help us to do that.' ³⁰ Gibson also says that it will help the personal trainers who work in his gym to give a better service. 'The personal trainers will be able to see how our members are ⁵ _____. They will be able to tailor the courses to the exact needs of the clients taking into ³⁵ account their performance and their requirements.'

Nike hopes that customers will use other ⁶ _____ too. They

will be able to join social networking ⁴⁰ sites and ⁷ _____ their performances with their friends or challenge others to workout goals. The online community that has grown up around the Nike+ running shoe ⁴⁵ surprised everyone and this new product will build on that.

But Charrissa Guilbert who works for a rival gym is not a fan of the new technology. 'Customer service ⁵⁰ is about the personal touch, about ⁸ _____ care. The more gadgets you have, the less you need human contact. This new system will reduce the role of personal trainers not ⁵⁵ increase it. A machine can only record how you are doing, it cannot help you improve by showing you what you are doing wrong or what you could do better. Our customers expect our staff ⁶⁰ to supply a ⁹ _____ service not just print off some results from a website.'

Gibson Harris, though, is convinced that the new technology is going to be a ⁶⁵ success. 'The nano is already a central part of people's visit to the gym. We see more and more people using it; it is small and ¹⁰ _____ and does not get in the way. People can ⁷⁰ work out to the music they choose but now they will be able to see exactly how they are doing. In my opinion it is the perfect new product and I cannot wait to see it in action.' Only time will ⁷⁵ tell if he is right.

Exercises

1 Work with a partner. Discuss these questions.

- 1 What do you do to keep fit?
- 2 How can technology help us keep fit?
- 2 Have you ever used a gym? What did / would you like and dislike about it?
- 2 Why do people use gyms? What sort of service do they expect?

2 You are going to read a text about using Apple iPods with gym equipment. How do you think the two things might be used together? Now quickly read the text to see if you are right.

3 Complete the text with the words in the list.

enable brilliant compare customer features
lightweight motivate performing personal teaming

4 Read the text again and decide if the statements are true (T) or false (F). If you think they are false, say why.

- 1 Nike+ shoes have an iPod in them.
- 2 The iPod nano is being developed to connect to gym machines.
- 3 Gibson Harris thinks people expect a gym to use new technology.
- 4 The iPod nano will replace personal trainers.
- 5 People are surprised by the Nike+ running shoe.
- 6 Charrissa Guilbert thinks Nike and Apple have got it wrong.
- 7 She thinks people prefer the personal touch.
- 8 Gibson Harris disagrees with Charrissa.

5 Match these words from the text to the correct definition:

to team up plug into to tailor to take into account
feature(s) a gadget to work out a goal

- 1 to connect a piece of electrical equipment to the main supply of electricity or to another piece of electrical equipment: _____
- 2 something that you hope to achieve: _____
- 3 to join with others in order to do something together: _____
- 4 something important, interesting or typical of a place or thing: _____
- 5 a small tool or device that does something useful: _____
- 6 to exercise: _____
- 7 to consider particular facts, circumstances, etc. when making a decision about something: _____
- 8 to make or adapt something for a particular purpose, person, etc.: _____

6 Now make some sentences of your own using each of the words in 5.

7 Look back at the text and choose three words you could use in your day-to-day work.

8 Work with a partner or in small groups. Decide whose point of view you you agree with. Discuss your opinion with a partner telling them why you agree or disagree.

- Gibson Harris think the iPod is 'perfect' for use in gym.
- Charrissa Guilbert says people want customer service not technology.