

Local trainer hopes Fit Girl App is an App-solute success

By **Linda Fechter**

Wicked Local Cohasset

Posted Oct 14, 2012 @ 11:27 AM

Cohasset — Doug Bennett has been a personal trainer for more than 23 years. He owns the Body Studio — a fitness studio near Cohasset Harbor. For more than a decade Bennett has helped hundreds of women and men lose anywhere from 5 to 100 pounds plus. As a former division 1A wrestler for Clemson University with degrees in biology and nutrition, Bennett now hopes to bring his brand of fitness to the world, specifically women, via an iTunes “app” called “Fit Girl.”

Fit Girl was launched two months ago. Now a mainstream word, “app” is computer software that helps the consumer perform a specific task, in this case, a workout geared specifically towards women that can be downloaded and viewed on an Iphone or Ipad. Not everyone can afford or has access to a personal trainer and even those that do can not always find the time to work out at a gym, however, according to Bennett, this app, if done regularly can dramatically change ones fitness level and physique.

“I want to reach a larger audience, beyond the South Shore..beyond New England,” explains Bennett. “I want to give women everywhere the tools they need to work out at home, or on vacation or a business trip, at a very small price.”

Fit Girl has been a year in the making. Bennett first did a beta study — a test for a computer product prior to commercial release. Beta testing is the last stage of product testing, and normally can involve sending the product to beta test sites outside the company for real-world exposure or offering the product for a free trial download over the Internet.

Bennett asked 60 women to try Fit Girl and followed them every step of the way offering daily advice and encouragement via email (and phone). This on-line group provided him with encouraging feedback, which encouraged him about the potential success of the program. Bennett is very excited about the fact that the test group lost an average of 18 pounds over three months using Fit Girl’s simple Body Thin Diet and exercise regimen both developed by Bennett, whose experience also includes being an assistant athletic trainer for Umass Amherst.

As for what it takes to create an app for iTunes...it is not for the faint of heart. According to Bennett the process was extremely challenging and very costly, well into the tens of thousand of dollars. In an effort to keep costs down he even wrote some of the computer code himself, having studied internet marketing for the last five years. In addition to Bennett’s own time there were several costs associated with producing this program such as the cost of hiring a video production company; creating and writing the computer code; and the fee for the personal trainers who are featured in the app — demonstrating the proper and safe way to do each of the exercises.

“I wanted to give women workouts that could help them transform their shape, whether they have to lose 25 pounds or 125,” says Bennett. “The exercises focus on body concerns that affect the majority of women.”

Bennett hopes that this app, which costs \$1.99, will find its niche as an affordable and transportable training option. He stresses that old adage, for less than the price of a cup of coffee a woman can have all the benefits of a personal trainer or gym membership, as long as they put in the effort that’s required.

If getting outside the local market was his goal, Bennett has already achieved success. Most of his downloads are coming from Australia where he has focused the majority of his marketing energy via the internet. **Fit Girl first debuted over the summer on the website greatapps.com. It has reached # 4 in the list of the top iPad apps for health and fitness and has stayed in the top 100 since it launched.** With more than 6,000 apps that promise health and wellness, the market is extremely competitive, however, Bennett is hopeful about the future success of this app, and has already begun working on another app and a Kindle book.

“I studied all the fitness apps out there and found there is a lack of programs with a workout sequence like this,” says Bennett. “Many apps have celebrity names on them but there were not many that impressed me. I designed Fit Girl to truly be a blueprint for a woman’s body, with laser focus on their biggest concerns. I believe it works.”

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