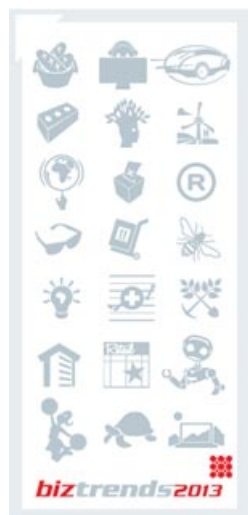


Tracking and training

By Chamendran Naidoo

23 Jan 2013

So 21 December 2012 didn't see us hiking to the nearest mountain in anticipation of the Mayan-foretold apocalypse. Well, not all of us at least. As we sighed a collective sigh, most of us sniggered at the Mayans for their inaccurate prophecies, silly headrests and lack of escalators. A few sobered individuals, however, withheld their smirks, realising the wisdom in the vision: the foretold destruction of 2012 was not of the material world, but rather something more important, yet subtle - the trends of 2012!



As we gaily simulate horse-riding while singing in Korean, the eyes of judgment fall upon us for clinging to the relics of yesteryear. Don't allow yourself to get caught doing last years' exercises or wearing scrubs that are "Soooo 2012", oh my readers. This year, you're going to be ahead of the curve and I'm going to help you do just that. So without further ado, ladies and gentlemen, I present the health trends of 2013:

1. Preventative medicine

Although preventative medicine has always been the tenet of good practice, the burden of existing diseases have long left preventative care, like the aesthetically-challenged girl at the club, standing on the wayside. Not anymore! This year, our ugly duckling shall dance as a global movement toward disease prevention gains momentum. This also sees people take arms like never before in the fight against obesity and physical inactivity through better diets, exercise regimes and quitting bad habits.

2. Activity trackers

This little tool tells you the distance you've walked, hours you've slept, stairs you've climbed (among other nifty tricks), all while assuming the humble appearance of a wristband or coin. When it comes to fitness in 2013, activity trackers definitely assist in beating the inactivity beast. Hot damn! I'll take two!

3. Cross-training and functional fitness

You don't need a flannel-shirt-wearing, tortoiseshell-specs-adoring teenager to tell you that sport-specific training is "Soooo last year". As we start to realise that the human body functions and responds best to varied stimuli, we've begun to train appropriately. This includes switching up the 'traditional' exercise in favour of more functional, off-balancing movements which make you stronger as a unit or, dare I say... at the 'core'.

4. Organic foods

Despite recent research stating organic foods to be nutritionally no different than regular, it's 2013, and people are paying attention to what's going into (and coming out of) their bodies. The insistence on organic produce stems from the harmful effects of pesticides, as well as an increased awareness of 'good karmic' foods - the benefits of which may even extend beyond this life, depending on which side of the fence you're sitting! As a knock-on effect from 'going organic', people are employing mindfulness in choosing healthy meals and even including...

5. 'Superfoods'

'Superfoods' are those that have a high level of health benefits with an inversely low level of harmful effects or artificial

properties. A lot of research is going into this department and most of the 'superfoods' are easily accessible. For those that aren't, there's usually a pill for that...

6. Energy drinks are out (almost)

Like that relationship that fizzled out toward the end and found itself alone in the dark, listening to James Blunt, so too shall be the insidious demise of the energy drink. People are starting to see the truth behind the energy drink - merely carbonated sugar and caffeine - and are forcing it on its way out. Let's hope it gives back the ring...

7. Health applications

Whether you're trying to sleep better, work out harder or even check the dosage for a specific medication, mobile apps are here for you. Used by both medical professionals as well as patients, mobile technology is changing the face of medicine and will do more so in 2013 than ever before. The excitement comes in the accessibility of it all, where anyone and everyone can pool their ideas and see it through onto their phones.

And there you have it, oh my readers, what to look out for in 2013. Go forth with this knowledge, get off of that invisible horse, hold your head up high and enjoy a cup of liquid cocoa - Mayan style!

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