



## Running the Streets of San Francisco

AT&T energizes a boot camp–style physical-training program.

The hills in and around San Francisco are part of the city's charm—that is, until you have to run them at 6 a.m. That's what Mike Giometti does almost every day, with scores of clients. Giometti owns SF Outdoor Fitness, a five-year-old boot camp–style fitness program whose regimen includes running, pushups, sit-ups and other muscle-building exercises. For his gym and office, Giometti uses nothing but the landscape of the Golden Gate City—and his wireless phone. "There's something so energizing about working out with other people and doing it outside," Giometti says. "And with San Francisco's weather, you can be outside all year."

A Northwestern University graduate and former social worker, Giometti trains eight to 15 people per session. After his 6 a.m. class, Giometti conducts a second one at 7 a.m. and a third at 6:30 p.m. for those who can't—or won't—get out of bed early. "My 6 a.m. clients tend to be lawyers, bankers and other corporate types who have to be in the office around 8 a.m.," Giometti says. "Clients who take the 7 a.m. class are more likely to work in the film industry or for nonprofits, or those who are self-employed." Each session lasts an hour. "I have two instructors I can call in if I get sick or have another obligation," Giometti says, "but for the most part I teach all the classes."

### Communication Lifeline

Because the city of San Francisco is his virtual office, Giometti's wireless phone is his lifeline. "If I didn't have the reliable wireless phone service I get from AT&T, I don't know how I could run this business the way I do," he says. Clients call to make appointments, to ask questions about training and to find out what to expect. "I have a lot of that information on my Website, but it gives people comfort to hear an actual voice on the other end of the phone," he explains. Giometti also has AT&T High Speed Internet Business Edition in his home office, so when he needs to dash off client emails, he can be confident they'll receive them.

Giometti got the idea for SF Outdoor Fitness from a friend. "I was out one day training a buddy of mine, and he suggested that I start this kind of boot-camp training," he recalls. With his family's needs outstripping his earnings as a social worker, Giometti decided to take his friend's advice. He posted flyers around town advertising his training as a good way to meet new people and get in shape. "I've always seen my training work not only as a business but as a community-building exercise as well," he says. In fact, SF Outdoor Fitness has yielded some surprising offshoots, including a book club and a movie group made up of current and former workout clients.

Make no mistake, Giometti's workouts are tough. Every two to three blocks, there are different stations for pushups, pull-ups, lunges and abdominal work. "The faster people get to the stations first, but even a beginner who has to walk will be able

### SF Outdoor Fitness Facts

- **Industry Focus**  
A boot camp–style outdoor-fitness program using the hilly landscape of San Francisco
- **Size**  
One full-time employee and two part-time independent contractors
- **Business Needs**  
A completely mobile business that relies heavily on dependable wireless services
- **Communications Solutions**  
A reliable AT&T wireless phone service and AT&T High Speed Internet Business Edition

to catch up with us and pick up what we're doing," Giometti says. About 60% of his clients are women, and ages range from 20 to about 55. Fitness levels vary too, but Giometti believes that anyone can handle his workouts. "It's so gratifying to have someone come in who smokes, and then six months to a year later, they're training for their first race," he says. "It's a real sense of accomplishment."

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—Mike Giometti, Owner, SF Outdoor Fitness

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#### **Low-Cost Structure**

Giometti, who's married and has a two-year-old and a baby on the way, credits much of the growth in his business to its low-cost structure. "If I had started a gym or even rented a studio,

the overhead in rent and utilities would have dictated much of what I could or couldn't do," he explains. Instead, Giometti has been able to adapt the program to suit the needs—and sometimes the financial circumstances—of his clients. "Some have lost their jobs or had other money issues while training with me," he recalls. No one has been turned away because he or she couldn't pay. "If I had fixed overhead costs every month, I wouldn't be able to do that," he adds. "Having reliable cell service from AT&T keeps me in touch with my clients and gives me the freedom to keep my costs so low."

Giometti attributes his clients' loyalty to two things: helping them get into great physical shape and giving them close, attentive service. "I make sure I'm available when they call, and I always get back to them if there is a change in schedule," he says. In fact, Giometti wonders if a business like his would be possible without wireless phones and the Internet. "I have a virtual office, and it suits this business format very well," he says of AT&T's service. "Without that reliable technology, I can't see how this could work."

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