

## Fishing In Profitable Waters

LET'S MAKE THIS CLEAR UP FRONT: I'm not suggesting tennis providers ignore or lessen the appeal of programs available to kids. We must continue to get more kids into tennis, and it's probably more imperative now than ever, in light of the most recent research that shows overall tennis participation for ages 6 to 17 actually slipped from 2014 to 2015. In fact, we should re-double our efforts at the local level. We need to play a long game here—young players are our industry's future.

But we also need to make sure we're not forgetting a key segment of our playing population—a group that has the time, energy, desire and, especially for our businesses, the money. I'm talking about the 50-plus market.

The U.S. Census Bureau says about one of every three Americans is over the age of 55. Staying healthy and fit is a priority for this group, and the lifetime sport of tennis should play a vital role in serving those desires. Baby-boomers helped this sport grow decades ago; let's not assume they no longer have an interest in tennis and being active.

Yes, there is money to be made by reaching out to this segment of the population, but this is also about running sustainable programs and building customer loyalty that can reach down generations—including into the youth market. Baby-boomers have children and grandchildren, too.

In your outreach to players and potential players, are you using materials and messages that appeal to the 50-plus crowd? Are your clinics, leagues and programs, along with your marketing and advertising, reassuring baby-boomers that the clinic you'd like

them to attend won't be full of young players that they'll have trouble keeping up with? Don't assume one email or one poster will appeal to every type of player, age or gender. Tailor your messages and, when appropriate, your tennis programs.

With all the emphasis on youth, sometimes it's easy for older players to get lost in the mix, and then forgotten completely. It's one reason why we have this "leaky bucket"—we get new players into tennis, yet we also lose a nearly equal number of existing players.

Appealing to the 50-plus market will get and keep players on your courts, buying lessons, court time, apparel and equipment. It's not like you need to reinvent anything; there are plenty of programs out there already—like POP Tennis with ROG on shorter courts, Cardio Tennis, and Masters Tennis—that can easily cater to this huge audience and provide them with all the right reasons to play this game. Doing so will help retain one group of players, and provide you the resources to help attract another.

**Peter Francesconi**  
*Editorial Director*  
Peter@TennisIndustryMag.com



**PUBLISHER**  
JEFF WILLIAMS

**EDITORIAL DIRECTOR**  
PETER FRANCESCONI

**MANAGING EDITOR**  
SCOTT GRAMLING

**CREATIVE DIRECTOR**  
IAN KNOWLES

**SENIOR EDITOR**  
ED MCGROGAN

**ART DIRECTOR**  
CHRISTIAN RODRIGUEZ

**SPECIAL CONTRIBUTOR**  
BOB PATTERSON

**CONTRIBUTING EDITORS**  
ROBIN BATEMAN, CYNTHIA CANTRELL,  
PEG CONNOR, KENT OSWALD, CYNTHIA  
SHERMAN, MARY HELEN SPRECHER

**CONTRIBUTING PHOTOGRAPHERS**  
BOB KENAS, DAVID KENAS

**WEBMASTER**  
GREG RAVEN

**ASSOCIATE EDITOR**  
TIM McARTHUR

**EDITORIAL DIRECTION**  
10TEN MEDIA

**TENNIS INDUSTRY**  
48 W 21st St., New York, NY 10010  
646-783-1450  
info@tennisindustrymag.com

**ADVERTISING DIRECTOR**  
JOHN HANNA  
770-650-1102, x.125  
hanna@knowatlanta.com

**APPAREL ADVERTISING**  
CYNTHIA SHERMAN  
203-558-5911  
cstennisindustry@gmail.com

Tennis Industry is published 10 times per year: monthly, January through August with combined issues in September/October and November/December, by Tennis Media Company, 48 W 21st St., New York, NY 10010. Periodical postage paid in Duluth, GA and at additional mailing offices (USPS #004-354). July 2016, Volume 44, Number 7 © 2016 by Tennis Media Company. All rights reserved. Tennis Industry, TI and logo are trademarks of Tennis Media Company. Printed in the U.S.A. Phone advertising: 770-650-1102 x 125. Phone circulation and editorial: 646-783-1450. Yearly subscriptions \$25 in the U.S., \$40+ elsewhere. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Tennis Industry, 48 W 21st St., New York, NY 10010. Tennis Industry is the official magazine of the USRSA, TIA and ASBA.

Looking for back issues of Tennis Industry/Racquet Sports Industry? Visit the archives at our website at [TennisIndustryMag.com](http://TennisIndustryMag.com) for free digital versions.

