



*The entertainment industry's fastest growing attraction finds a rising popularity in the U.S. and worldwide.*

# Indoor trampoline parks are “springing” up everywhere!

Just three years ago there were only about 35 to 40 indoor trampoline parks in operation. Today the International Association of Trampoline Parks (IATP) has been able to identify over 280 existing parks or those in the development stages of opening.

Parks are being built on an average of five to six per month. This may not include a number of existing family entertainment centers (FECs) that may

have or will be adding trampoline courts to their existing facilities. In addition, inquiries come into the association weekly from all over the world asking for information on how to open an indoor trampoline park.

So what is driving this growth? According to Jeff Platt, Chairman of the Board for the IATP and President/CEO of Sky Zone Franchise Group LLC, parks offer kids an opportunity to exer-

By Tracy Sarris

cise while having fun and parents are looking for healthy activities for their kids and the whole family.

For those who have never been to a trampoline park, the average park is about 25,000-40,000 square feet and houses a variety of “courts” that can be made up of one or any number of trampoline “beds” that stretch from wall-to-wall and are connected to form one large surface that is enclosed with padded side walls or angled trampolines.

The average cost to open a trampoline park varies dramatically based on size and location, but is estimated to be between \$1 million and \$2 million.

According to Phillip Howell, President of Best American Trampolines Inc., a main court has an average of 40+ beds, but there isn't a maximum number aside from the limitation of the building's dimensions.

Guests are able to jump, flip, and literally bounce off the walls. There are also a variety of trampoline attractions that take physical activities to a whole new level. From trampoline dodge ball courts and slam dunk basketball courts





to fitness classes, kid's areas, and foam pits where you can launch yourself from a trampoline into a giant pit of foam blocks.

## HISTORY AND GROWTH

St. Louis, Mo., native Rick Platt, Founder of Sky Zone, created the world's first indoor all-trampoline park based on an idea to develop a game using his patented system for interlocking all-trampoline walled playing fields. The first park opened in June 2004 in Las Vegas and operated under the name of Sky Mania.

To help get the business off the ground, Platt recruited his son Jeff while he was still a student at Washington University. By 2008 they had opened additional locations in Chesterfield, Mo., and Sacramento, Calif., and by 2009 began franchising Sky Zone in select markets across the U.S.

Today, there are 55 Sky Zone parks open, another 85 franchises that have been sold but not yet open, with locations now found in the U.S., Canada, Australia, and Mexico. The company expects to open another 35 locations this year, 40 locations the following year, and have a total of 200 franchises sold across the world by the end of 2015.

Howell, whose company provides consulting, full park design and layout, manufacturing, and installation, indicates they are seeing the most growth within the U.S. currently, but suspects the international business will catch up in the next year or two. Best American Trampolines has been in the trampoline business since 1978, but entered the indoor market in 2007.

"We have a park being shipped into the U.K. with a May opening expected," said Howell. "We also have one being shipped to Dubai, UAE, which is expected to open in July."

Sky Zone was the pioneer in indoor trampoline parks, but it didn't take long for other independently owned parks and new franchise brands to start springing up all over the U.S. and beyond.



Rebounderz:  
Foam Pit

The first Rebounderz opened in July 2008 in Longwood, Fla. By 2010, Rebounderz Franchise and Development Inc. was founded and there are now six parks in the U.S. and several franchise locations due to be finalized in Canada. Owners Mark Gurley, CEO, and Al Palladino, President, expect anywhere from eight to 10 new franchises to be sold this year.

## STANDALONE PARKS VERSUS FUN CENTERS

Sky Zone's brand is focused on having only trampoline attractions in its parks while parks like Off the Wall Trampoline Fun Center in Coconut

Creek, Fla., and Rebounderz Extreme Fun Center in Jacksonville, Fla., have incorporated other attractions that bring them closer to the FEC model.

Jeff Platt commented, "I think Sky Zone could evolve, but for the time being our brand is focused on developing core activities around trampolines. Our brand is about 'Awesome Healthy Fun' so anything new introduced needs to fit our brand attributes."

Rebounderz is already starting to make the transition with its Jacksonville location being the first true FEC in the Rebounderz family.

In addition to the 10,000 square feet of trampoline attractions, the



Rebounderz:  
Arcade





Best  
American  
Trampolines:  
Slam Dunk  
Basketball

40,000-square-foot facility offers a state-of-the-art “Call of Duty” style laser tag attraction, archery tag, mini-bowling, five themed event rooms, and a video arcade, all of which can be reserved for groups or special events as well as open play. It also offers a full-service cafe with pizza, subs, and other food items as well as wine and beer for non-participating guests.

Rebounderz of Jacksonville’s Owner, David Zorn, believes that the trampolines will continue to be the primary source of revenue, representing over 60 percent of sales. The location initially opened in September 2012 as a

trampoline park, but completed its planned expansion into an FEC in December 2013, becoming the largest indoor FEC in north Florida.

“At present, the majority of our facilities are trampoline parks,” said Palladino. “While the standalone trampoline facility is still a fantastic business offering, one that continues to grow in popularity to this day, the introduction of non-trampoline offerings provides something for everyone when it comes to active entertainment.”

Although their styles and philosophies differ slightly in some areas, you will find that the industry as a whole

***“The (trampoline) industry as a whole seems to echo the same idea of safe, healthy, family fun and fitness.”***



Best  
American  
Trampolines:  
Foam Pit

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## CHALLENGES

One area that all parks share a common interest in is optimal safety. The popularity and exponential growth of trampoline parks and the potential for injuries sparked concern early on and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) began meeting with stakeholders in 2011 to establish a special task group to develop a new standard for indoor trampoline parks.

In just 18 months, ASTM F2970-13, Practice for the Design, Manufacture, Installation, Operation, Maintenance, Inspection, and Major Modification of Trampoline Courts was developed by a special task group of ASTM F24 Amusement Rides and Devices. Founding members of the IATP Board of Directors were part of the task group that contributed over 10,000 volunteer hours into developing this standard.

The purpose of the standard is to delineate requirements regarding the design, manufacture, installation, operation, maintenance, inspection, and major modification of commercial or institutional trampoline courts operated with the primary purpose of amusement, entertainment, or recreation. It establishes industry practices for the purpose of reducing potential hazards to patrons, court attendants, and spectators.

Legislation recently passed in Michigan requires owners to comply with the ASTM standard as part of the regulatory requirements. Other states are looking to regulate the industry as well and many park owners, along with the IATP, are actively engaged in promoting optimal industry legislation that includes patron education and responsibility.

“Five years ago, you could open a trampoline park without any regulation, standards, or best practices to point to and you were in business and, for the most part, could be very successful,” said Platt.



***"The introduction of non-trampoline offerings provides something for everyone when it comes to active entertainment."***

He added, "The industry has evolved, for the better. There are now a set of standards published that operators should be following while the industry is working diligently to retrofit its parks. And, in the face of competition, customer service and strategic marketing becomes that much more important, forcing operators to raise the bar."

From a manufacturer's perspective, Howell commented, "Regulating the industry will bring all of the requirements for manufacturing to a more level playing field. There will ultimately be manufacturers who meet the baseline requirements and then you will have manufacturers who will continue to offer a premium product and build well above the minimum requirements."

"Either way, these regulations should help prolong the life of the industry by heightening the overall design and manufacturing requirements for ALL manufacturers."

So what does the future hold for the indoor trampoline park industry and why the overwhelming attraction?

According to Howell, "Aside from the fun and excitement of jumping on a trampoline, I think the main reason people are drawn to these indoor trampoline parks can be attributed to most people's desire to be around other people."

"When you take a fun action sport like trampolining, and then you incorporate fun games like dodge ball or the

slam dunk, and then add a bunch of people into the mix, you create a very fun and energetic atmosphere."

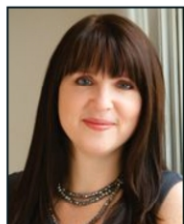
"Indoor trampoline parks cater to all ages, which allow a family with both a four-year-old and a 15-year-old the opportunity to enjoy the same activity. Most entertainment facilities are much more age specific, whereas a trampoline park allows the entire family to join in the fun."

As far as the future is concerned, Platt said, "In the next couple of years, like most evolving industries, I think we will see the trampoline park industry consolidate. Additionally, I do not think we will see the same level of growth that we have experienced in the last three years due to industry standards, government regulations, and challenges with securing insurance."

One thing is for certain, people of all ages, shapes and physical abilities are "catching air," getting fit, and having a great time doing it! ▲

*Tracy Sarris is the Executive Vice President of the International Association of Trampoline Parks (IATP). IATP is a 501(c)(6) industry trade association whose purpose is to promote safe operations, facilitate commercial success, and stimulate growth of the trampoline park industry. For more information, visit ([www.indoortrampolineparks.org](http://www.indoortrampolineparks.org)).*

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