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LIFESTYLE

David Barton's New Luxury Gym Empire Is Equipped For Success

Two years ago, David Barton, pioneer of the notorious, nightclub-esque DavidBartonGym exercise empire, tapped into a high-tech sector of the luxury fitness arena with an innovative gym concept: [TMPL](#).



Struggling to stay afloat in a fitness market saturated by budget gyms and boutique studios, Barton left his namesake company after 22 years in 2013. Thus, Barton wanted to find a capital partner before expanding TMPL further than its Hell's Kitchen location.

Now a subsidiary of [Town Sports International Holdings Inc.](#), the Northeast's largest owner and operator of fitness clubs, TMPL has the resources and business foundation fit for brand growth.

Luckily, the entrepreneur hardly had to break a sweat in finding his perfect parent company. After taking over the former DavidBartonGym Astor Place location, TSI CEO Patrick Walsh reached out to Barton last year, offering him a chandelier from the gym to which he was deeply emotionally attached. Appreciative of the sentiment, Barton invited Walsh to take a look at TMPL, who offered to buy it on the spot immediately after touring the facilities.

"I can leverage their resources to grow TMPL, and they did not have a product which could compete credibly in the high-end market," says Barton. "This was the perfect marriage."



TMPL proves to be a forward-thinking choice for TSI's first foray into the luxury market, as the gym's inventive fitness model centers around metabolic science. Members are encouraged to undergo a metabolic analysis upon joining, using their own biological data to shape workout routines that will maximize individual results.

"Gyms are historically stuck in scientific antiquity. Giving two people the same exercise prescription can make one lose weight and the other gain weight," comments Barton. "I want to give people the greatest possible chance to have the body that they are looking for, and we can't do that without understanding what's really going on with the metabolism."



While this revolutionary approach to fitness certainly differentiates TMPL from its competitors, Walsh attributes his initial TMPL attraction to the atmosphere, a product of Barton's design expertise.

"When you walk in, the look and feel is just not like any other gym," says Walsh. Dramatic lighting and intense music emulate Barton's signature nightclub vibes, adding a surge of energy to the top-notch amenities, including smart cardio machines, a virtual reality spinning studio, 20 tons of free weights and a 25-meter saltwater pool. "We are Chrome Hearts with a hint of Harry Winston," says Barton of the TMPL brand.

The acquisition, according to Walsh, will allow Barton to put all of his effort into the design and customer experience of TMPL, deferring the management of operations to TSI. And Barton is not wasting any time — the fitness guru already has plans to open a second TMPL in New York's West Village this summer, right above Gourmet Garage at the corner of West 10th and 7th.



"I create each gym to reflect the tastes and sensibilities of the local market, so it will aesthetically look different," says Barton of TMPL's new location. "What will stay the same will be the culture."

But this upcoming opening is just the beginning. Both Walsh and Barton see a promising future for TMPL, hoping to eventually expand the fitness empire to several different locations. "It will be a much bigger gym under our umbrella than it ever would've been on its own," says Walsh.