

Steve Cook Leaves Optimum Nutrition, Starts a Gym and an App

written by Mike Roberto | January 18, 2018

PricePLOW has been covering more news lately on our YouTube channel.

One story that could have a big impact on the industry is that Steve Cook is no longer with Optimum Nutrition. Despite the brand never truly embracing “celebrity presence” (even though this is clearly the current direction of the industry), you could say that Steve Cook was the closest thing to being the face of the ON brand.

That is no more, as Steve discussed in his video below about his departure:

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Personally (this is PricePLOW founder Mike writing), I think the community went a bit easy on Steve here, for two reasons:

1. Steve Cook is an *international brand*, but a gym is a local one

I will just come out and say it – by starting a gym, *Steve is thinking too small*.

Steve is loved by viewers from Texas to India to Australia – not just in SoCal. When drama starts at that gym – and it *will* (see next point) – it will ultimately suck time away from the *scaleable* things Steve can do:



Think *globally*

- Killer fitness video content
- Improving the app
- A new supplement company

The three items above have reach. They scale. **They are global. Owning a local gym is not.**

This doesn't mean it's a bad idea if executed properly though, as explained below. I just hate to see good people with huge personas going anywhere near the trap of small thinking.

2. **Owning a gym is a complete and total pain in the ass**

As fans of Steve, the last thing we want to see is him getting bogged down by the minutiae of running a gym. This is why he needs a very strong business partner who can deal with the BS that comes along with it.

For instance, some things the owner will have to deal with:

- Those two personal trainers that are always begging for clients, but add no value... or worse – they poach from other trainers.

- That one machine that keeps breaking, and you spend hours hunting down parts.
- Relationship drama that finds its way into the building (likely due to said personal trainers)



Is this a mistake? Not unless he allows it to be... but the pitfalls of owning and dealing with a gym are numerous

Landlord wants a three year lease and a huge deposit or else rent is going up (or that leaky pipe just might not get fixed so soon...)

- The employee you hired disappeared because he didn't want to clean a toilet that someone blew out after taking the wrong pre workout
- Steroids getting dealt out of the locker room
- Transients / sales people constantly wandering in

The list goes on, but the next thing you know, the rest of us who *aren't* at the local gym aren't getting that quality content anymore. The day-to-day of owning a business simply catches up with you, and now there's no way for that Australian to stay connected.

So we hope Steve has someone who can handle the nonsense so he can do what he does best – make killer content, inspire individuals, and maybe even put out a supplement line that can be his real focus.

There are only so many good dudes in this industry, and Steve is clearly one of them. The last thing I want to see is him disappear from the fitness content world because he's too busy dealing with any of the gym drama described above.

But done *right*, this will be awesome

On the other side of the coin, if started with some foresight, Steve could have it all.

It bears repeating that Steve needs an incredibly strong partner / business manager who's willing to muck through the trenches and deal with the day-to-day stuff discussed above. Once things are rocking and rolling, **the gym needs to be the vehicle for all of the scalable items discussed above.**

The benefits of local: FUN.

Meanwhile, nobody is arguing that the gym atmosphere won't be *fun*... because it will be!

You don't get the same kind of relationships running an online media or international business as you do running a local one – shaking real hands and seeing real people. Watching progress happen in person. And doing things like getting involved in a local community efforts and helping kids who you can see and actually affect. That's the good stuff right there, and it's right there at the gym's front door.

Maybe Steve doesn't *want* to be international for a while. Maybe he's ready to "retire". And that's perfectly fine.

Do what you love... and love what you do

You might be thinking, "*screw you PricePLOW guy, Steve can do whatever he wants*" – and you're right. But let me tell you this, out of my own selfish interests: **There are only so many good dudes in this industry, and Steve is clearly one of them.** The last thing I want to see is him disappear from the fitness content world because he's too busy dealing with any of the gym drama described above.

Ultimately, for long term success, the gym is merely the *setting*, not the business itself. The app/persona/supplements are the bigger picture with reach. But they cannot flourish if the gym turns into a *job*.

And trust me, having seen both sides, the last thing a free entrepreneurial man wants is to go back to a stinkin job.