

health club

management

SEPTEMBER 2016

No 239



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Combatting child obesity

Although the UK government's new childhood obesity strategy has been widely criticised – experts are calling it “embarrassing”, “weak” and “underwhelming” – there are some clear wins and exciting opportunities for the activity sector

Back in February, health secretary Jeremy Hunt described the rise in childhood obesity as a “national emergency” and promised a “gamechanging” response from the government. In the end, those promises have fallen flat; campaigners are particularly dismayed by the lack of restrictions on junk food promotions and advertising targeted at kids, as well as the fact that the much vaunted sugar tax – originally announced in March – will rely on voluntary action by the food and drink industry.

Yet once again, what's happened is that diet and nutrition have dominated the headlines and skewed people's perceptions of how good, or otherwise, the strategy is. If you look at the other side of the obesity equation – calories out rather than calories in – there are some exciting opportunities.

The big win for the ‘calories out’ sector lies in the strategy's recommendation that children should be active for at least 60 minutes a day, of which 30 minutes should be during school hours. Funds raised by the sugar tax will be allocated to schools to help deliver this.

There will also be a voluntary, Ofsted-monitored healthy rating scheme for primary schools – recognising schools where children eat better and move more – while the County Sports Partnerships are tasked with working with sporting NGBs, the Youth Sport Trust and other national and local providers to ensure every primary school in England has access to high-quality sport and physical activity.

In addition, the strategy says every public sector building, from leisure centres to hospitals, should have a food environment designed so the easy choices are also the healthy ones – a topic we analyse in depth on page 68, and which could be a quick win in our facilities.

**Imagine if we could build classrooms
where kids could be taught while
being active. What better way of
making activity a ‘whole day’ affair?**

So although the national media has seized on the negatives for its headlines, there's plenty for the activity sector to be getting its teeth into. The main problem is that – as Conservative MP Dan Poulter said when the strategy was launched – “there's a worrying lack of practical measures about how we can turn warm words into reality”.

But we needn't wait for this to be spelled out by government. ukactive released its own kids strategy in July, championing the need for 60 minutes' activity a day and offering inspiration on how to



Engage to Compete: School staff run lunchtime activities

turn “words into reality”. Suggestions include creating a ‘whole day’ approach to physical activity; encouraging daily walks to school; using external providers to create activity opportunities in schools; and ensuring there are plenty of out-of-school activities on offer.

Opportunities abound here for the fitness sector. Some are more obvious, such as going into schools to facilitate Daily Mile walks (see *HCM* July 16, p46) and lunchtime activities – Fit for Sport's Engage to Compete programme, which trains school staff to offer lunchtime activity sessions, is an excellent model.

Others are more imaginative, but not impossible with funding. On page 60, we look at the benefits of outdoor schools, where classes take place exclusively outside. That might not be replicable everywhere, but imagine if we could build active classrooms around the UK where kids could be taught while being active – all in co-operation with fitness providers. What better way of making activity a ‘whole day’ affair?

Meanwhile, ukactive is lobbying for sugar tax funding to be made available for out-of-school, as well as in-school, activities. The tax may fall short of generating the predicted £520m – this is based on the status quo being maintained, but in practice any food and drink manufacturers who cut the sugar content of their products by 20 per cent will escape the tax – but there will still be a significant pot of money to go after. If ukactive succeeds in its mission, programmes such as MEND – which tackles childhood obesity at its roots via a full family approach (see p75) – should be looking to fund a broad roll-out.

Kate Cracknell
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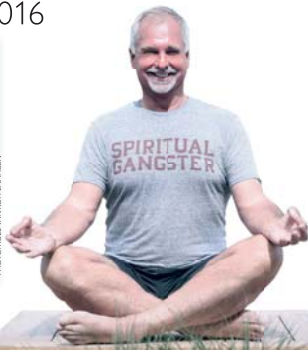
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health club management

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The mainstream health club operators dipping a toe in the boutique fitness studio market

Pokémon Go: Passing fad, or a masterclass in driving physical activity participation?



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Singapore's green buildings show how urban density and nature can go hand in hand

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Actress Gwyneth Paltrow launches a new organic skincare range called Goop



Pop star Björk's travelling exhibition brings virtual reality to the masses

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Shanghai Disneyland: We go undercover to find out whether Disney delivers

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Inside the Olympic Stadium – West Ham United's new home

Using sport to bring about social change: Why Premiership Rugby is taking the sport to children in Brazil



Funding cuts are impacting the number and quality of leisure qualifications

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If so, we'd love to hear from you – email: healthclub@leisuremedia.com

A new era of 'fitness streets'?

Having watched our industry evolve for near-on 30 years, and more recently spending two years with a large private operator exploring the boutique sector, I feel we've entered one of our most exciting times to date.

Specifically, I believe the boutique fitness studio option provides numerous intriguing opportunities for operators:

- To capitalise on consumers' increasing dislike of, and resistance to, buying a membership to the whole of a traditional club when perhaps they only want to use the treadmill, classes or weights.
- To flex their creative muscles by producing a compelling 'paradise' for just one or a handful of activities – thereby capturing the imagination, spend and loyalty of a specific fitness consumer.
- To experiment with creating sub-brands – or 'powered by' brands – to bring in a new type of fitness consumer who wouldn't naturally associate with the bigger brand.

However, with the boutique fitness market now maturing and becoming more refined, it needs to be a carefully considered, strategic move. In-depth demographic and

location research is needed, as a smaller, single-discipline offering is inevitably going to be a higher risk proposition.

In addition, insight into what consumers really want is vital – you can't simply assume that, for example, indoor cycling and circuits are the way to go. In fact, the multi-site operator research I was involved in showed that running, dance and weights were the most desired formats.

Going forward I see the natural progression being geographical clustering of various boutiques, creating 'fitness streets' where consumers have many options in one location, allowing them to fit between formats to suit their mood and goal. Although this approach may seem at odds with traditional industry thinking, it offers operators a chance to both feed off and support each other.

Michael Clark
Owner, Creative Fitness UK



There's a demand for dance-based boutiques, says Clark



People need to work up to recommended activity levels

► ‘Build up to...’ – how to motivate people to move

You’ve got to feel for the general public, constantly bombarded with the message to get active, start exercising and improve their health.

A recent article in *The Lancet* reported that, to offset the eight hours a day some people spend sitting at work, you need to do JUST one hour’s physical activity (see p122).

One hour. Who has this spare hour in a day? Those of us who exercise regularly know how hard it can be to create a routine that includes as many sessions per week as we would ideally like to do, let alone be able to find an hour per day on top of what we already have going on.

So for those who find the idea of physical activity and exercise abhorrent, the idea of five hours each week has to be a step too far.

I believe that all of our physical activity and exercise messages should start with “build up to...”.

Build up to 30 minutes, build up to three days, five days each week. Offset the eight hours sitting each day by building up to an hour of physical activity.

‘Build up to’ instantly removes the barrier of achievement level: ‘I need to do an hour every day, and if I don’t I’m a failure.’ ‘Build up to’ allows for simple progression, multiple opportunities for success and an improvement in self-efficacy and confidence.

There are multiple ways of communicating public health messages, but if we really want people to believe they can do something, we need to help them succeed – not fail.

Dr Paul Bedford
Founder,
Retention Guru



Cost-effective boutique offerings

I was interested to read your recent article on how mainstream operators are branching into the boutique market (see *HCM* Aug 16, p46 – and also part two of this series on p46 of this month’s magazine).

Boutique fitness studios are one of the key forces driving growth in the global fitness club and studio market. Rather than see this as a threat, there’s an opportunity here for traditional health clubs to adapt their strategies to meet changing consumer needs – and increase their revenue in the process.

It doesn’t have to be a standalone studio: by creating a boutique experience inside a large health club, operators are able to upsell a higher premium membership while keeping members retained and engaged with a new proposition (see *HCM* Aug 16, p60). In this way, traditional fitness facilities have the ability to move quickly within the boutique sphere, as many have the space, customer base and infrastructure already in place. If done properly, such a move can help them keep ahead of the competition.

We’re seeing a number of operators successfully – and cost-effectively – launching smaller, boutique-style training spaces in their clubs, featuring multi-purpose equipment. For example, Westwood Clubs in Ireland and Virgin Active in South Africa both offer Total Gym Gravity classes in boutique settings, bringing new customers through the door as well as being able to upsell these sessions to their existing customers.

To succeed in this market, operators must ensure they’re offering a complete experience from the very start, with dedicated front-of-house teams and a seamless journey for the customer, making the process as easy as possible for them.

Andy Gill
Director, Ethics Leisure



Many operators have the space to create boutique studios within their clubs, says Gill



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PEOPLE

I felt that, if I could put my hands under the earth,
I could expand the movement and go much deeper

JOHNNY G

CREATOR – SPINNING, KRANKING AND IN-TRINITY

Johnny G promises his In-Trinity product will take the mind-body experience to a new level, doing for integrated movement what Spinning did for the lower body and Kranking for the upper body.

An elevated fitness board set on an incline, In-Trinity takes the workout off the floor – and in doing so, it opens up a whole range of movements. With a reputation for being ahead of the curve, Johnny G says he's always used his own body as a reference point. In-Trinity is the culmination of his years of experience, informed by yoga, pilates, tai chi, martial arts and bodyweight training.

REACHING DEEPER

He came up with the idea while lying on the grass next to a river in Brazil. "I felt that, if I could put my hands under the earth, I could expand the movement and go much deeper than the ground would allow," he says. He spent years experimenting with a park bench set on a rock in his garden, until he discovered the angle which captured the essence of that feeling he'd had in Brazil. Matrix Fitness did the engineering and brought In-Trinity to life.

"Elevating training in this way means we can go under the floor and use negative space," he continues. "The timing and tempo is slow and mindful and the workout is balancing and grounding."

Johnny G believes there's a strong need for this type of 'yin' exercise, as the fitness industry is currently dominated by 'yang' exercise – the likes of high intensity training, which he says places too much emphasis on energy out and not enough on restoring energy.

Indeed, he'd like the industry to place more emphasis on restorative mind-body exercise, including subtleties such as balance, co-ordination, agility and flexibility.

"I'd like fitness professionals to start educating their clients about the importance of longevity," he explains. "We're so connected all the time, and our responsiveness has to be so immediate, that there's a real need to escape and flush out time. I hope people will start to become more comfortable with lower level activity."

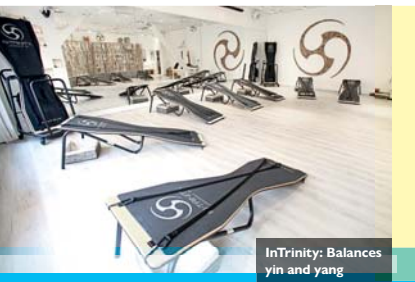
STRIKING A BALANCE

"Energy needs to be monitored so we're not over-pushing," he adds. "At the moment, the trends are all goal-orientated and about pushing hard. This obsession with high intensity is even coming into the mind-body space, with bootcamp and weights being introduced to yoga. But this approach is lacking in balance and leads to burn-out."

"I've seen a lot of people who can keep pushing their heart rate, but they aren't able to bring it down quickly enough to recover and restore. In-Trinity gets the body working in a completely different way, integrating yin and yang energies and offering the muscles a good workout while giving the heart a break."

Johnny G refers to ancient Eastern thinking, which is all about restoring and nourishing the body and mind so it can cope with life's challenges: "There are three energy systems in Chinese medicine, and the individual performs optimally when these three are in balance," he says. "Jing, the energy with which we are born and which can't be replaced, but which can be nourished and protected; shen, the spiritual energy; and the physical energy chi."

Like other mind-body practices, In-Trinity can nourish these energy systems: "It's much easier to start from a calm place and then turn up the volume than to start from an intense place and try to calm down," he says. "Some people might feel they aren't training hard enough, but this subtle, calming style of training gives the individual the artillery to face whatever life throws at them."



InTrinity: Balances
yin and yang



Johnny G: Our obsession with HIIT lacks balance and is leading to burn-out



LifeBEAM's Cliff Chen is aiming to tackle the obesity crisis with the help of technology

“It was the Spike Jones movie *Her* which really inspired us. We liked the idea of putting a person into your ear”

CLIFF CHEN

CREATIVE AND EXPERIENCE DIRECTOR, LIFEBEAM

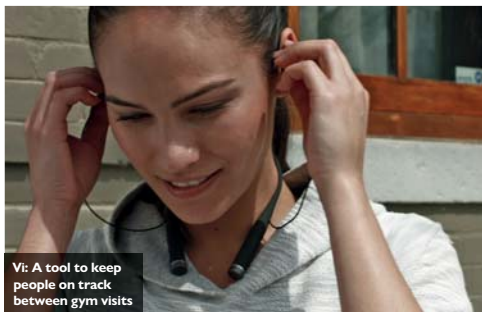
“Technology has been instrumental in inducing inactive lifestyles, so we now want to use it to bring about a positive change,” says LifeBEAM's Cliff Chen. “We want to take on the big hairy problem of obesity.”

LifeBEAM's artificial intelligence personal trainer, Vi, could indeed be a game changer when it comes on stream early next year. It's a fitness tracker, a PT, a phone and a music player all wrapped up in one set of top quality headphones, designed in partnership with Harman/Kardon.

AI PERSONAL TRAINERS

The company's background is in biomechanics for the aerospace sector, but in 2012, LifeBEAM crossed over to the consumer market, developing wearable tech for clients like Samsung and Under Armour.

The idea to create a PT controlled by artificial intelligence emerged three years ago. “We had lots of bio-feedback capabilities that we wanted to bring to a



Vi: A tool to keep people on track between gym visits

consumer audience. We were also passionate about health and sports, so we wanted to move into this market," says Chen. "But it was the Spike Jones movie, *Her* – about an AI character – which really inspired us to go down this route. We liked the idea of putting a person into your ear: we've all lived with Siri, and bio-sensing technology is getting smaller, so we knew it was possible."

The Vi product contains a string of sensors worn around the neck and in the ear – to relay workout feedback back to the system – and a microphone to talk to 'her'.

"Having a device in the ear is advantageous, because it can give a lot of accurate physiological data," says Chen. "But Vi is more than just hardware: it's a product that's able to build a relationship."

Vi will constantly look for patterns in behaviour to gain intelligence about the individual. For example, she will ask for feedback on mood and sleep quality and will assess the workout against the backdrop of this information. She will then store this data for future workouts, to build up a picture of the individual.

"Part of the intelligence is to work out what kind of motivation the individual user needs – whether it's gentle or more assertive encouragement. We wanted to create a nuanced personality who will be the perfect companion for exercise," says Chen.

SMASHING TARGETS

There are early indications that this will be a popular product. The company launched a Kickstarter campaign in June, and within 90 minutes had smashed its rather conservative target of US\$100,000. The final result was a staggering US\$1.7m from 7,257 backers.

At the moment LifeBEAM is well into the manufacturing phase, working on the interactive software and conversational logic. The first products, for those who invested via the crowdfunding campaign, will be launched in December. Vi will be on public release in Q1 of next year, with the US and other English-speaking markets being targeted first.

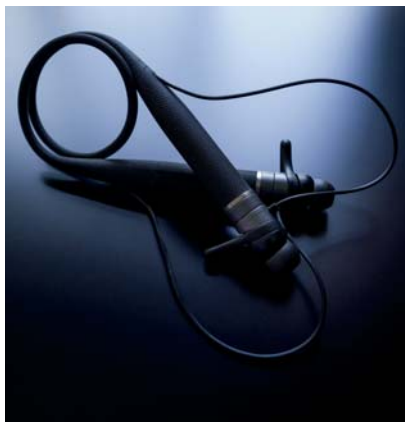
Currently Vi is focused on running, but it won't be a running-only product: cycling will be the next activity to come on stream and other sports will follow, including swimming. Further down the line it will also track diet. It will be priced at US\$279, but pre-orders will get a discount.

A COMPLEMENTARY TOOL

Chen believes Vi could attract a new audience to the health and fitness industry – those who are interested in technology but not currently active. However, he emphasises that LifeBEAM is trying to provide an additional tool for motivation rather than replace personal trainers.

"We hope Vi will become an accessible companion that holds people accountable to their exercise goals," says Chen. "However, we're fully aware the product can't replace the trainer – there's so much more a person can do in terms of seeing form and making adjustments. But this could be an amazing tool for gyms and PTs to use to help their clients stay on track and meet their goals."

"It will let the personal trainer review training and activity between appointments and provide an unprecedented amount of accurate personal information. We urge the industry to embrace this as exciting tool and not see it as an existential threat." ●



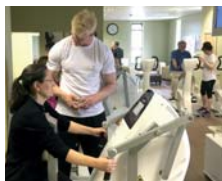
Vi (above and below) features sensors worn around the neck, with headphones and a speaker to interact with the system





health sport activity

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International news

Hard Candy's German clubs in administration

Jopp AG, the health and wellness company which operates nine Hard Candy fitness clubs under a franchise agreement in the German capital of Berlin, has been placed in administration.

As a result the company – which also operates four clubs under the Superwoman brand – has been forced to close some of its 13 clubs.

It's unclear at this stage how many of Jopp's clubs will be forced to close, but at the time of writing at least seven Hard Candy clubs had shut their doors. Two of the Hard Candy clubs – in Berlin's Bergmannstrasse and at the city's Europa Center – remain open to members.

In a statement, interim receiver Torsten Martini said: "As things stand now, it is not realistic that the branches which have closed will open again."

"Operations at the Superwoman gym at the Ciou shopping centre and the Hard Candy club on Bergmannstrasse continue to date – but whether these clubs can remain open permanently is not known."

Jopp AG opened its first Hard Candy club in Berlin in September 2013, with Madonna attending the grand launch. Much of Hard Candy's planned European expansion was resting on the success of



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

The Hard Candy clubs carry images of the pop star who founded the chain

Jopp and its clubs. The company also held exclusive rights to operate the brand in Austria and Switzerland.

The Hard Candy brand was launched by superstar singer Madonna and fitness entrepreneur Mark Mastrov in 2010.

Earlier this year, the only remaining Hard Candy club in North America – in Toronto, Canada – closed its doors and was rebranded as Aura Fitness by its owner. There are still Hard Candy clubs operating in four countries – Mexico, Russia, Italy and Australia.

The chain's first club was a 9,144sq m site which opened in New Mexico in

November 2010, offering Zumba, yoga and cardio-kickboxing classes.

At the time, Mark Mastrov, chair of New Evolution Ventures, told Health Club Management: "Hard Candy plans to open eight to 10 facilities in Europe in the next 12-18 months. Our goal is to create an environment inspired by Madonna's vision of what the ideal gym would be."

"Hard Candy Fitness will be a reflection of Madonna's point of view and will reflect her input on every detail, including music, space, light and other design cues. Madonna's touch will be everywhere."

Details: http://lei.sr?o=3fzps_H

Ex-convict to stream 'prison-style boot camp'

A former convict will be streaming live workout sessions from his prison-style boot camp, as he attempts to expand his exercise programme beyond New York, US.

Coss Marte developed the ConBody exercise programme for people living in small places – such as a cell block – while he was serving time in prison.

The ConBody programme – which uses no equipment and which is based on military techniques – offers more than 40 classes each week and has around 400 clients. Marte is looking for further growth ConBody Live Streaming, which launched on 1 September 2016.

The streaming service will include three 30-minute sessions each day, five days a week, with membership costing US\$5 (£3.80) per month.

Marte's boot camp is in a basement studio on Broome Street in New York,

not far from where he used to be a drug dealer. The 30-year-old started dealing drugs at the age of 13. By 19, he was making US\$2m a year, but he spent most of his teenage years in and out of prison.

At 23, the prison's medical team told Marte he could die in jail because of high blood pressure and high levels of cholesterol. Marte

took immediate action, losing 70lbs in six months using his fitness regime.

On leaving New York's Greene Correctional Facility in 2013, Marte began holding fitness classes in a park. He then



ConBody is based on military boot camp techniques

received support from Defy Ventures, a New York-based organisation that offers training to formerly imprisoned people on how to become entrepreneurs.

Details: http://lei.sr?o=mzb8D_H

Prime Time opens 'highest' club in Europe

High flyers working in the central business district of Frankfurt, Germany, are being offered an exercise space which reflects their occupational status.

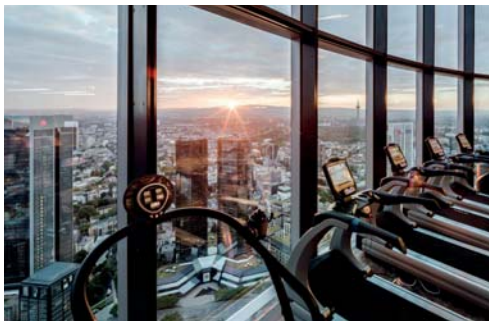
Prime Time Fitness – which operates six clubs in the German banking capital – has opened its newest gym on the 53rd and 54th floors of the Main Tower skyscraper in the heart of the city.

Located 200m above the busy streets, the 500sq m (5,381sq ft) club offers stunning 270-degree views of Frankfurt – as well as an exclusive fitness experience.

"When you work out at that height, you get very relaxed because you're far above your daily tasks and problems," says Prime Time managing director Henrik Gockel. "You're able to observe the hectic pace of life – and the traffic jams – from far above and think to yourself 'what for?' So after the workout, which is an escape from reality, you will feel strengthened and are able to dive back in again."

Targeting people who work in the city's Bankenviertel – or central business district – the club has an emphasis on individual and personal training. Memberships start at €100 (£84) a month.

The club houses a 100sq m (1,076sq ft) CV area with True and Woodway Curve



Located 200m above the busy streets, the club has 270-degree views of Frankfurt

treadmills and bikes, Freemotion incline treadmills, Octane steppers and other equipment supplied by Matrix and Cybex.

There's also a 50sq m (538sq ft), 11-station milon Premium circuit – including two milibration plates and a milonizer – and a 150sq m (1,614sq ft) Cybex strength and free weights area with racks and benches.

A 80sq m (861sq ft) functional training area completes the gym floor and the club has been fitted out with an Activio heart rate system. According to Gockel, the number of memberships will be limited to ensure "the best training service and access to all equipment without waiting".

"We will look to cap the number of members at around 500," Gockel adds. "For the monthly membership, each of our members gets six one-to-one training sessions per year."

The Main Tower is the fourth highest building in Germany and is owned by the Hessische Landesbank HELABA, the government bank of the state of Hessen. The building houses 62,000sq m (667,382sq ft) of office space and more than 2,500 people work in the building.

Prime Time club members will have direct access to the two express elevators through fingerprint control.

Details: http://lei.sr7a=W3D6t_H

Youfit expansion hots up with Baltimore opening

US-based budget club operator Youfit has opened its latest site in Baltimore, Maryland, US, increasing the number of sites in its portfolio to nearly 120.

The Baltimore club features a large gym floor with resistance stations and CV machines supplied by Cybex, and also offers personal training through its branded YouCoach programme.

There's also a 30-minute Express Circuit, while SilverSneakers classes – a wellness programme designed exclusively for older adults and created by fitness giant HealthVays – will be made available.

The club is Youfit's second in the state of Maryland. Founded in 2008 by entrepreneur Rick Berks, Youfit is currently one of the fastest-growing fitness companies in the US, with an average of three clubs opening each month.

Details: http://lei.sr7a=P6Y3g_H



Fast-growing fitness chain Youfit was founded in 2008 by entrepreneur Rick Berks

Cost of inactivity tops US\$67bn globally

Sedentary lifestyles are costing the global economy \$67.5bn (£51bn, €66bn) a year in healthcare and productivity losses – and developed nations are bearing the brunt of the inactivity epidemic.

A study of one million people, undertaken by an international team of researchers, estimates that the overall cost of inactivity to healthcare systems internationally is US\$53.8bn, while a further US\$13.7bn is lost through diminished productivity.

The results of the study, published in the medical journal *Lancet* in August, show that high-income countries bear a larger proportion of the economic burden caused by physical inactivity – with 81 per cent of the global healthcare costs and 60.4 per cent of indirect costs picked up by developed nations.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=a8W2t_H

The Gym Group secures new Doncaster site



Treharne's group has over 80 clubs

No-contract fitness operator The Gym Group is continuing its expansion in the north of England after securing a 21,000 sq ft space for a new gym at the Frenchgate Shopping Centre in Doncaster. The UK's only listed gym chain is set to open the new site in November 2016, taking the number of clubs in the company's UK portfolio to more than 80 facilities.

John Treharne, founder and CEO of The Gym Group, said: "Frenchgate offers the perfect town centre location for us. All being well, The Gym Doncaster should be welcoming people through its doors this side of Christmas."

The group has continued its strong growth this year, having launched six gyms in the first half of 2016 – with a further eight sites currently in fit-out – and says it's on course to achieve its target of 15 to 20 openings for 2016.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=t7dzW_H



PHOTO SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Today's obese kids will be tomorrow's obese adults, unless we get them moving

Experts slam obesity strategy

Experts and campaign groups have poured scorn on the government's Childhood Obesity Strategy, describing it as a "missed opportunity", "embarrassing" and "weak" (see also p3).

The government released the 13-page document last month, outlining its aim to significantly reduce England's rate of childhood obesity within the next 10 years. Key points include the introduction of a soft drinks industry levy across the UK and new guidelines for children to have at least 60 minutes of physical activity every day, with 30 minutes in schools and the other half-an-hour during home time.

The strategy has, however, come under fire for not going far enough.

The Obesity Health Alliance said the measures were far from ambitious and had let down the next generation, who will pay the price for the government's failure to take strong action.

The alliance, which is a coalition of 33 national charities, medical royal colleges, and campaign groups, said: "The government's plan is underwhelming and a missed opportunity to tackle the obesity crisis and its devastating burden on the health of both society and the NHS."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=f5Zzy_H

Fall in leisure qualifications

The number of training qualifications awarded across the leisure, travel and tourism sector has fallen for the second year running, according to official government statistics out last month.

Citigroup's *Annual Qualifications Market Report* shows that the number of leisure-related certificates (other than GCSE, AS and A level) awarded during 2014–15 fell to 424,400 – a drop of 11 per cent from the 475,000 seen in 2013–14. It's a further fall from the 548,200 awards handed out in 2012–13.

The training landscape within the leisure, travel and tourism is dominated by the top



Number of leisure-related awards fell by 11 per cent

five awarding organisations, which between them hand out 71 per cent of all certificates in the sector.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=B7t3v_H



CEO Glenn Earlam said the group is keen to strengthen brand awareness

DLL relaunches brand

Racquet and fitness club operator David Lloyd Leisure (DLL) has relaunched its brand – a strategic move supported by a nationwide marketing push.

The group's integrated campaign, called Come to Life, includes the brand's first ever national TV advert and a major marketing effort involving social, interactive and digital channels, as well as outdoor ads, door drops and in-club communications.

The TV ad focuses on the breadth of offering at DLL, its inclusive family approach and the facilities available – conveying the idea that DLL is a place for everyone, whether they're two or 80 years old.

The campaign follows a significant investment and expansion programme which has seen DLL invest £80m in refurbishing and developing 77 of its existing UK clubs.

Speaking to *Health Club Management*, DLL chief executive Glenn Earlam said the campaign is part of a strategy to strengthen awareness of the company's offering.

"There are too many people in our target market who don't know who we are or what we do," Earlam said.

There will be a full interview with Earlam in the October edition of HCM,

Details: http://leisr?a=2b2b7_H

British Military Fitness gets public funding



BMF instructors will provide sessions

Public sector employees will be able to get a taste of military workouts for free thanks to a tie-up between British Military Fitness (BMF) and the Sport England-funded Exercise Movement and Dance Partnership (EMDP).

BMF and EMDP will work together to encourage group exercise by taking outdoor fitness sessions into councils and other workplaces across Greater London.

The offer is open to 20 organisations on a 'first come, first served' basis.

Details: http://leisr?a=P6e6w_H

Everyone Active wins tender for London sites



£29m will be spent on sport facilities

Everyone Active has won the tender to continue running leisure centres in the London Borough of Havering, with the local council planning to spend £29m on sports facilities.

Everyone Active has been Havering Council's leisure centre operator for two decades and has been appointed to run facilities for a further 20 years. The company will be working with the council to provide a range of leisure facilities in improved or new buildings.

Details: http://leisr?a=Q9V3_Q_H

Nuffield Health completes Virgin deal

Nuffield Health has become the UK's second largest fitness provider after completing a deal to acquire 35 Virgin Active clubs.

The deal, originally announced in June and believed to be worth around £80m, increases the number of clubs in the not-for-profit healthcare company's portfolio to 112 – second only to budget operator Pure Gym and its 165 sites.

A multi-million investment programme will now begin to turn the sites into Nuffield Health Fitness & Wellbeing Centres. Plans include enhancing current facilities with the addition of medical



The Virgin Active clubs will now be rebranded

clinics within a number of the gyms, featuring services such as physiotherapy, in-depth health assessments, nutritional therapy and private GP appointments.

Details: http://leisr?a=Q4v2x_H

Bannatyne completes Lowestoft club revamp

The Bannatyne Group has invested £500,000 on equipment and facilities at its Lowestoft health club.

The refurbishment is part of the group's £16m investment programme to update all its UK health clubs. The group has 66 sites across the UK, with some 200,000 members.

At the Lowestoft site, a new training area has been created, featuring an Omnia 8 Rig, which aims to increase member interaction by allowing up to eight gym-goers to simultaneously swing, balance and hang from the equipment to strengthen core muscles. WaterRowers and Technogym Skillmills have also been installed. The club, which has 2,800 members, has installed Myzone heart rate monitors and the Bannatyne app, allowing members to keep track of their progress.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=G7h7C_H

Plans revealed for £5m Minsthorpe centre



The centre will house a 25m pool

Details of a new £5m leisure centre planned for Minsthorpe in West Yorkshire have been made public by Wakefield Council.

The new facility – to be built on the site of the former Minsthorpe swimming pool – will house a 25m, six-lane swimming pool alongside a 50-station health and fitness suite and group exercise spaces. Pool-side seating and a viewing area are also planned.

The centre will be funded entirely by the council, which is currently working with consultants and architects to develop the plans. A public consultation has now also been launched to gauge residents' views on the proposals.

"This is a very important and exciting project for the people of the south east of Yorkshire," said councillor Les

Details: http://lei.sr?a=d3X2g_H



Sessions will be delivered to small groups by gym instructors and personal trainers

Apex sessions for Fitness4Less

Budget health and fitness operator Fitness4Less is introducing four Apex gym floor sessions into 12 of its sites.

The Apex programme, which is provided by the Physical Company, is a series of 30-minute ready-made gym floor group training solutions.

The sessions encourage members to make the most of gym facilities and innovative kit on the gym floor.

Fifty members of staff across the 12 locations and two Topnotch Health Clubs in the group have completed the Apex training, and the clubs will be rolling out Ignite, Agility, Strength and Core sessions.

Sessions will be delivered by gym instructors and personal trainers to ensure a high level of interaction in groups of up to 12 people.

The four APEX programmes offer different types of workouts. Strength is, unsurprisingly, for people who want to get stronger and are looking for maximum training efficiency; Ignite is designed to get members leaner, fitter and faster; Core helps strengthen and protect the spine and improve core strength, posture, balance and stability; and Agility allows people to 'train like an athlete'.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=h6u8z_H

GLL and NCL merger completed

North Country Leisure (NCL) and Greenwich Leisure Limited (GLL) are to "fully merge" their operations later this year and phase out the NCL brand entirely.

NCL, a leisure trust which operates centres in the north-east of England, will become part of GLL, the UK's largest leisure charitable social enterprise. The two have worked closely together since January 2015, when NCL agreed to become a subsidiary of GLL.

NCL continued, however, to operate all of its 12 centres under its own brand and has since added four more facilities to its



GLL's Better brand will be phased in across NCL sites

portfolio of managed sites. The latest move will see the NCL brand being gradually phased out and replaced with GLL's Better consumer-facing brand.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=T7G3V_H

A black and white photograph of a woman with her hair in a ponytail, wearing a dark tank top and leggings. She is using a Matrix S-Drive Performance Trainer machine, which is a rowing machine with a large flywheel and a resistance strap. She is in a dynamic pose, leaning forward with her arms extended, as if in the middle of a stroke. The background is a blurred gym setting.

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Independent news



The survey will chart the studio sector

Global fitness studio survey launched

The Association of Fitness Studios (AFS) is encouraging fitness businesses to take part in a study which looks to chart the global state of the fitness studio industry. The Annual Fitness Studio Operating & Financial Benchmarking Study, now in its second year, will collect key operational and performance data about studio businesses and study the economic impact of the growing market.

AFS has partnered with fitness brand insights and research specialist ClubIntel, which will gather the data – such as number of members, pay for various job titles and revenue – confidentially from operators. The information will then be made available in a comprehensive report on the global fitness studio market.

All the businesses which complete the survey will receive a free copy of the report when published.

Details: http://lei.sr?o=WqM6D_H



Little Venice will become the Ten Health's seventh London-based studio

Ten Health expands in London

Independently-owned pilates chain

Ten Health & Fitness (THF) has acquired Little Venice Pilates – a single-site studio in west London. Little Venice will become the seventh property in Ten Health's portfolio of London-based studios, joining sites in Mayfair, St James, Chiswick, Hatton Gardens, Notting Hill and the City.

Historically, Little Venice Pilates has offered its clients an integrated, clinical and personal approach to exercise and wellbeing through one-on-one and small group pilates as well as gyrokinetics sessions. It also offers physiotherapy, osteopathy, massage and the Alexander

technique – a system designed to promote wellbeing by retraining one's awareness and habits of posture to ensure minimum effort and strain.

Ten Health and Fitness founder, Joanne Mathews, said there are no immediate plans to change the everyday running of the studio: "It's a fantastic west London location, already popular in the community and a great space for exercise, treatment and injury rehab," she said. "We have no plans to come charging in and start changing all the things the clients love about it."

Details: http://lei.sr?o=G6N6B_H

Heritage boxing gym launched

A new heritage boxing gym has been established in Birmingham's Jewellery Quarter, attracting more than 300 members since its opening in July.

Launched by former heavyweight boxer Neil Perkins, Henrietta Street Gym is situated in the Derwent Works area of the Jewellery Quarter.

The 3,600sq ft (334sq m) building – which was an old metalworks factory – has undergone a £180,000 renovation. Developer Javelin Block has retained its original brickwork features and lift shaft.

A further £120,000 has been spent on equipment provided by ProBox and Volverson, including authentic brown leather punch bags, boxing gloves, weights, bench press, Olympic bars and flooring.

Perkins had targeted 400 members by March 2017, but looks to have a waiting list

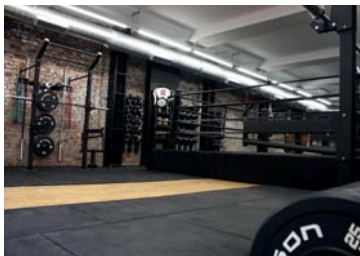
before the end of this year. The gym offers three types of monthly membership: off-peak (£35), standard (£49) and elite (£69).

"The area is quite affluent and clients are from around the city centre. They live and work half-a-mile from the gym," he said.

It took Perkins and developer Javelin Block two-and-a-half years to find a suitable site for the gym in the West Midlands city.

Perkins is now hoping he doesn't have to wait as long to find suitable female trainers to work in the gym, with 15 freelance male trainers but no women at this stage.

He added: "In terms of membership, we have about a 60/40 split between men and women, but more women are



The boxing gym has £120k of equipment

joining. I'm in need of a female trainer. I've been trying to get one but it's hard. Good trainers are hard to find. Good female trainers are like gold dust."

Details: http://lei.sr?o=wG5G7B_H



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Technology news

Tony de Leede and Wexer launch Move 123

Fitness industry entrepreneur Tony de Leede has teamed up with virtual fitness platform Wexer to launch a new virtual training service for health clubs.

Called Move 123, the new venture will make a library of online fitness content available for clubs to use through the Wexer platform.

The virtual fitness classes provided by the new service will be focused on six different categories – ranging from low intensity classes such as yoga, stretch and pilates to dance and high intensity classes.

According to de Leede, the content has been designed to ease timetable pressures at clubs.

"Our partnership with Wexer Virtual will enable club groups to deliver world-class virtual content that has been designed with both the member and club in mind," he added.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E8b9C_H



Move 123: Six different categories



Facebook remains the most popular platform among the top 20 health club chains

Budget gyms rule social media

Budget health club chains continue to lead the way when it comes to social media engagement in the fitness sector.

The *Social Media Fitness Index Q2 2016* report, from data specialist LeisureDB, reveals that Leeds-based Xercise4Less has overtaken Pure Gym as the top ranked health club operator when measured by the number of interactions achieved across the 'big four' social media platforms – Facebook, Instagram, Twitter and YouTube.

Xercise4Less ranked first with an overall engagement score of more than 80 per cent – 8 per cent ahead of closest rival

Pure Gym. Covering the three-month period from 1 April to 30 June 2016, the report shows that the overall number of social media likes, followers, subscribers and views received by the top 20 UK private health club operators increased on figures from Q1 2016.

Facebook likes increased by 5 per cent during the period and there was also an impressive 20 per cent increase in the number of people following fitness chains on Instagram. The report also shows that Facebook is the most common platform among the top 20 private brands.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=n4q5J_H

Netpulse releases Feedback app

Tech company Netpulse, provider of mobile apps for health clubs, has released a new app product which lets gym members give immediate feedback to clubs through their smartphones.

Mobile Feedback for Netpulse's Club Mobile App is designed to help health club operators easily access real-time feedback from members.

Gym users can rate the club after each workout, providing information to help operators improve services, identify which members to upsell to, and which members to try and save from cancelling their membership.

"Traditional feedback like email surveys require too much effort from the member, resulting in low participation," said Greg Skoot, Netpulse's vice president of growth. "With Mobile Feedback, the process is seamless for the member; giving

club operators a level of insight that was never before possible."

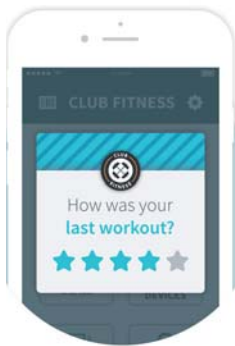
Mobile Feedback enables clubs to discover upsells among members who give positive ratings, prevent cancellations by taking immediate action on negative ratings, and improve service by using feedback to keep staff accountable.

It will also be able to promote positive reviews by posting on review sites such as Yelp. Feedback is gathered automatically by the club's app.

"With companies like Uber using mobile feedback tools for years with great success, we're excited to now bring this technology to the fitness industry," said John Ford, president of Netpulse.

"This makes giving feedback at the gym frictionless and habit forming, ensuring that members are doing it regularly."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=E8b9C_H



The app offers immediate feedback

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Supplier news

Nautilus revenues boosted by Octane deal

US-based fitness equipment provider Nautilus saw its revenues increase by 32 per cent in the second quarter of 2016 – thanks to increased sales resulting from the January acquisition of elliptical specialist Octane Fitness.

Nautilus acquired Octane Fitness from private equity firm North Castle Partners in a deal worth US\$115m (€107m, £78m) – a strategic move designed to help it accelerate growth by extending into higher price point products, penetrate new channels of distribution and expand into new international markets.

The move seems to have worked, as Nautilus reported net sales of US\$78.5m (€70m, £59m) for the second quarter of 2016 – a 31.6 per cent increase compared to \$59.7m (€44.7m, £33m) in the same quarter of 2015.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=S3tgd_H



Nautilus' brands include Schwinn



Olympic champion runner Sanya Richard-Ross, one of the Technogym ambassadors

Technogym donates Rio kit

Technogym, the official fitness

equipment supplier to the Olympic Games, will donate 600 pieces of gym equipment to sports centres across the host city following the Games.

The kit will be shared by 22 publicly-owned sports centres, located in some of Rio de Janeiro's most disadvantaged communities. The recipients will be selected by Technogym in partnership with the Empresa Olímpica Municipal – a part of the Municipality of Rio de Janeiro.

The donation will be the culmination of Technogym's 'Let's Move for Rio' social campaign, which encouraged athletes and

members of public alike to exercise in order to increase the number of pieces of equipment being handed out.

Through the Technogym digital platform Mywellness cloud, during the Olympics, people were able to measure their physical exercise and turn it into equipment for Technogym to donate.

At the Olympic Village, athletes have collected MOVEs – the unit of measurement used by the app – by training on the connected Technogym equipment, while members of public have also joined the campaign from their gyms.

Details: http://lei.sr?a=jzN6Q_H

Life Fitness acquires ICG

US-based Brunswick Corporation – the parent company of fitness equipment supplier Life Fitness – has acquired Germany-based Indoor Cycling Group (ICG) for an undisclosed sum.

The deal will see ICG, a specialised provider of indoor cycling equipment, being added to Life Fitness' burgeoning portfolio of wellbeing and fitness brands.

According to Life Fitness president Chris Clawson, the addition of ICG is a strategic move to "diversify and augment" the company's existing group exercise offering.

"With ICG's innovative technology, expertise in cycling and talented team, we will be well-positioned to advance in the indoor cycling and group exercise categories," Clawson said.

"We know that ICG's culture of innovation and customer-focused

approach are a great fit for our team. We look forward to having the ICG group join the Life Fitness family."

Founded in 1995, ICG is headquartered in Nuremberg, Germany, and is singularly focused on the indoor cycling business.

The company's founder and chief executive officer, Bernd Pürschel, will remain in his position and will report directly to Clawson.

The news of the deal was received with some surprise, as ICG had an existing working relationship with another equipment supplier, Matrix.

ICG had, for example, added the 'Matrix Powered By ICG' mark to its Tomahawk indoor cycles, to "clearly express the powerful unification between ICG and Matrix Fitness in key international markets".

Details: http://lei.sr?a=z9X8p_H



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People news

Colin Jackson takes up ambassador role

Everyone Active's Sporting Champions

a scheme set up to support athletes from across the UK, has announced medal winning Olympic athlete Colin Jackson CBE as an ambassador for the sports development programme.

Olympic and Paralympic athletes supported by the scheme as 'gold sponsored athletes' include British male gymnast Max Whitlock, who won two Olympic gold medals at Rio 2016; Tonia Couch, a female diver, who finished 5th in the synchronised 10m platform final at the Games; and Alyson Dixon, who finished 28th in the women's marathon in Brazil.

On becoming an ambassador, Jackson, who won a silver medal in the 110m high hurdles at the 1988 Olympic Games in Seoul, said: "I'm proud to be involved with a scheme so dedicated to supporting athletic talent from grassroots up."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=g7Z2n_H



Jackson wants to help drive excellence



Newell joins Wattbike from fitness equipment giant Life Fitness

Wattbike aims for global growth

Indoor bike manufacturer Wattbike is accelerating its push to grow its brand across international markets.

The company, which last year secured a major deal to supply testing bikes to the UCI World Cycling Centre in Aigle, Switzerland, has appointed Steve Newell as sales director to drive the growth.

Newell joins Wattbike from fitness equipment giant Life Fitness, where he spent four years as business development manager for the EMEA zone. His career also includes stints at Technogym, Keiser and Myzone.

According to Newell, Wattbike will look to expand its presence in both the leisure and professional sports markets. "In addition to the many leisure operators who offer a Wattbike experience to members and users, the brand is also well established in the sports sector," he added.

"Many national governing bodies of sport and individual top tier sports clubs are investing in the product because of the proven impact it can have on the performances of athletes."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=d2d4q_H

Lifetime recruits down under

Lifetime Training has appointed Sean Cosgrove as its new head of commercial operations. Cosgrove joins the UK-based training provider from Australian Institute of Fitness (AIF), where he was chief operating officer. Relocating to the UK, Sydney native Cosgrove will take up his post with immediate effect.

In his new role, Cosgrove will be tasked with providing an operational plan to help Lifetime grow its business, as well as shape the curriculum team's priorities to support the creation, development and launch of new training programmes.

During his time at AIF, he was credited with transforming the company's sales and marketing strategy from a traditional media approach into one orientated on digital and social channels. Under his watch, AIF became one of the first fitness brands to use photo-messaging

app Snapchat to reach out to the Millennials market. Cosgrove has also held operational and managerial roles in a variety of commercial businesses in the education, leisure and fitness sectors – including Fitness First Australia, BlueFit Leisure and South Pacific Health Clubs.

Mike Jones, commercial director at Lifetime Training, says: "At Lifetime, we're always seeking fresh thinking and new ideas to take our training programmes to the next level. By recruiting Sean, we're bringing Australia's top talent and forward-thinking fitness education to the UK to further build on our award-winning programmes and learning experience."

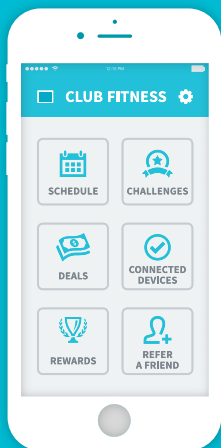
Commenting on his appointment, Cosgrove said: "I look forward to applying my knowledge to enhance Lifetime's programmes and reputation."

Details: http://lei.sr?a=6w3P_H



Cosgrove joins Lifetime from AIF

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EVENTS CALENDAR

SEPTEMBER

20–21 | Leisure Industry Week NEC, Birmingham, UK

A trade show, plus educational streams including health, fitness and sport (see p94).
www.liw.co.uk

21–23 | Interbike Expo Mandalay Bay, Las Vegas, Nevada, US

With hundreds of exhibitors on one floor, this is where the bike industry gathers to celebrate, educate and conduct business.
www.interbike.com

OCTOBER

12–14 | Club Industry Show Hyatt Regency, Chicago, Illinois, US

An event aimed at leading, connecting and inspiring the fitness community.
www.clubindustryshow.com

17–20 | 16th Annual IHRSA European Congress Seville, Spain

Seminars are designed to help the 500+ visitors improve and grow their business.
www.ihrsa.org/congress

NOVEMBER

9 | ukactive Summit QEII Centre, London, UK

The largest political event in the activity sector's calendar, attracting influencers from physical activity, health, policy, brand, media, research, charity and local authority.
www.ukactive.com



CHARITY EVENT

19–22 January 2017 Alpine Challenge

The Alpine Challenge is a winter team event in which teams of four battle it out to race over 150km-plus of skiing or snow boarding runs across 15 resorts in Portes du Soleil, France, for two days. The team that visits the most checkpoints across the 15 resorts and clocks up the most distance (tracked via GPS) wins. The event is organised by youth charity Snow-Camp, which uses a combination of winter sports and life skill programmes to support young people in inner cities.

Various fundraising packages and prices are available.
www.snow-camp.co.uk



16–19 | SIBEC Europe Ritz-Carlton Abama, Tenerife

The UK and Europe's major health and fitness operators join leading suppliers for one-to-one meetings. Extensive networking opportunities are also on offer throughout the event.
www.sibec.eu

29–30 | BASES Conference East Midland's Conference Centre, Nottingham, UK

The annual conference of BASES, the professional body for sport and exercise sciences in the UK.
www.bases.org.uk

17–19 | International Council on Active Ageing Conference Orange County Convention Center, Orlando, US

Connect with leading active ageing experts and learn about older adult wellness at this popular annual conference.
<http://icaa.cc/>

JANUARY 2017

18–19 | The London Health Show Olympia, London, UK

Encompasses nutrition and supplements, beauty and anti-ageing, complementary health, sports and fitness, organic/natural products, and healthcare equipment.
www.londonhealthshow.com

CHARITY EVENT

9 October 2016 London Bridges Challenge

Join supporters of Diabetes UK in a 10-mile hike that takes in some of London's most iconic bridges. Participants will cross 13 bridges, with the route starting at the home of Chelsea Football Club and on through the heart of London and over Tower Bridge. Families are encouraged to take part; children under 12 go free. Registration is £5 per person with no set sponsorship.
Details: www.diabetes.org.uk

26 | FIBO Innovation Tour UK London, UK

FIBO's Innovation Tour kicks off in London with presentations on the market situation, plus new developments in the fitness, wellness and health industry.
www.europeactive.eu

31 January–2 February | Spatex 2017 Ricoh Arena, Coventry, UK

The 21st year of the UK's largest pool, spa and wellness show.
www.spatex.co.uk



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Following its overwhelming success in 2015, the dedicated Matrix show is back in October, and promises to offer a lively and packed schedule of fitness industry experiences and information

ENGAGING product demonstrations, topical guest speakers, networking with international industry experts and unrivalled entertainment...the Matrix International Show is back for 2016. Following the overwhelming success of last year's show, Matrix Fitness UK will host its own exhibition at the Ricoh Arena in Coventry on October 13 & 14.

Keen to offer the industry something different, the show aims to deliver a diverse display of product demonstrations and training, industry networking, topical panel discussions and entertainment. Spanning a day and a half, attendees will be able to use their time effectively to develop their skills and become fully immersed in the Matrix experience.

Director of strategic marketing for EMEA & UK, Gemma Bonnett, said: "The Matrix International Show is so much more than just another show. It's an unforgettable experience that

encapsulates where the fitness industry is heading. We're bringing together experts from various fitness-related disciplines to deliver a varied programme of discussion panels and keynote sessions.

"We're combining this with live product demonstrations of new and existing Matrix

the individual equipment user's needs. We believe that by applying this approach to the show, we're offering something completely different."

Among the guest speakers is Herman Rutgers, an international executive with extensive experience in managing

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It's an unforgettable experience
that encapsulates where the
fitness industry is heading**

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international businesses including those in the fitness industry.

Herman is representing Europe Active and will present a seminar entitled 'The Current State of the International Fitness Market: Key Challenges and Opportunities'.

Seminars will take place on Thursday with a group workout session on Friday morning. Other highlights include the display of Red Bull Racing and Renault F1 cars, and the presence of Matrix Ambassadors and partners including the Matrix latest partner, Wasps Rugby.

On display will be a full range of Matrix and partner products including the S-Drive Performance Trainer, In-Trinity, Connexus, the Magnum strength range, RFID connected cardiovascular equipment and the Ziva product range.

To register for free and receive updates, visit: www.matrixinternationalshow2016.eventbrite.co.uk

The Matrix International Show includes an evening of exclusive entertainment



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Tony de Leede

Boutique wellness villages, meditation pods and a virtual-only club concept for older women. These are just some of the things keeping the Australian fitness industry veteran busy, as he explains to **Kate Cracknell**

The health and fitness industry keeps evolving, and it's more exciting – and in many ways scarier – than I've ever known it," says Tony de Leede, by way of explaining his seemingly endless enthusiasm for working within the sector.

It would be very easy for the Australian fitness industry veteran to kick back and relax, enjoying the fruits of his decades of labour. But that just isn't de Leede's style. Now aged 63, he's been at the forefront of the sector since the age of 27, when he launched Australian Body Works in Atlanta, US – a chain he built up to 23 clubs over 20 years, ultimately selling to LA Fitness in the US in 2000.

Also on his extensive CV: co-owner of both the high-end Gwinganna spa resort in Australia and Komune Resort in Bali, a surfing and wellness destination; founder of Australia's 30-minute, low-cost workout chain Fit n Fast, which he launched in 2011 and has taken to the 18 sites it has today; former owner of CardioTheater; and investor in a number of other businesses including meditation pod Somadome, for which he has the exclusive rights for Australia and New Zealand.

He was also CEO of Fitness First Australia back in its heyday, between 2000 and 2008 – a role he only agreed

to take on if he could buy a share of the business. In spite of it being a public company, a deal was agreed whereby he acquired a 15 per cent stake.

This is a theme that weaves throughout de Leede's CV: a desire for either ownership of, or at least a share in, the businesses he's involved in. That's no doubt the entrepreneur in him, but it's a philosophy he now implements for staff working across all his businesses.

"If you want people to have an ownership mentality when they're working for you, then give them some of the ownership. In some cases, our staff have chosen to actually invest money, but in all of the businesses I run, a significant number of key team members have 'sweat equity' – a share of the business in return for their hard work."

"I've always done this, as far back as Australia Bodyworks, and it constitutes golden handcuffs. But people wear those handcuffs with a big smile: they're working hard, but they're sharing in the upside."

FITNESS FUSION

Returning to de Leede's comment that the health and fitness industry is more exciting than he's ever known it, what's catching his eye right now?

"One of the things I find really interesting is the way different styles of exercise are being blended together. I call it 'fitness fusion' and I liken it to food fusion, which came on strong in the last couple of decades and brought all kinds of flavours and cuisines together. The same is happening with exercise: we're seeing pilates blended with boxing, yoga with BodyPump, and it works. Millennials in particular love the variety – it keeps them motivated and it gives them a great workout."

And how about his 'scarier' comment – just how quickly and dramatically are things changing at the moment? When we last spoke, for an interview in early 2011, de Leede had just launched Fit n Fast on the basis that three things were needed to succeed in fitness: to be cheaper, better and faster than the competition. So has all that changed in the last five years?

"Faster is definitely still there – just look at all the HIIT and the 30-minute workouts. Cheaper is still relevant too: all around the world, people want their basic bread and butter membership, and many of them go to cheaper gyms to get it. Better is subjective, but yes, it still applies. ▶



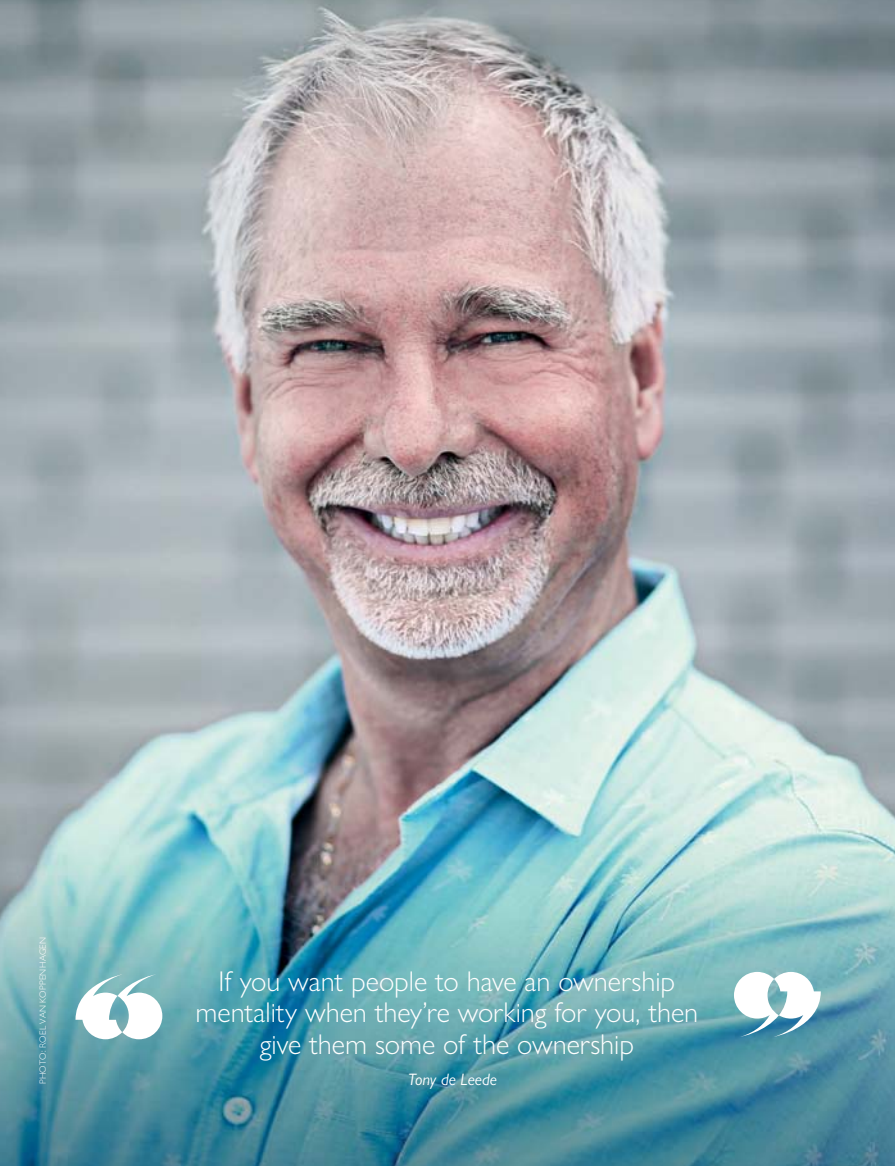


PHOTO: ROEL VAN LOFFENHAGEN



If you want people to have an ownership mentality when they're working for you, then give them some of the ownership



Tony de Leede

- "But things are changing much faster than they ever have and there's a twist. Our basic Fit n Fast clubs deliver well against all three points, but they aren't doing the numbers I thought they would. There's way too much competition, so really we're just competing on convenience – there's no incentive to go past three other places to get to mine, because as far as the consumers are concerned, the treadmills are essentially the same.

"In the meantime, although people want a cheap membership and a convenient location for their gym usage, increasingly they're also willing to visit a separate studio where they pay a premium – and indeed potentially travel further – for the classes they want, led by the instructors they like."

WELLNESS VILLAGES

"We're therefore testing out a new model. In May, we rebranded one of our Fit n Fast clubs in Sydney as YogaBar – a boutique wellness village offering classes, healthy foods and retail. We sell fortnightly memberships – equating to A\$39.95 a week – but we're selling far more 10- and 20-visit passes that work out at between A\$18 and A\$26 a class. And we've already found that well over half the people who come and work out at YogaBar also have a base membership somewhere else."

He continues: "YogaBar currently offers yoga and barre classes, plus we've kept around 250sq m of Fit n Fast gym space. As we roll this model out, I think we'll always aim to have a gym area alongside two to four boutique studios – although that said, we're looking at some new locations right now that are very small, with space for only one or two studios.

"We'll have a clearer direction over the next six to 12 months, but there will certainly be a number of different 'tribes' within each village. We're currently experimenting with a number of different blends and exercise concepts to work out what the different tribes might be. Cycling with functional, and fighting with HIIT, are two fusion concepts we'll be developing to sit alongside YogaBar and Fit n Fast, so we'll be creating brands for those too.

"We may end up even taking an existing brand and licensing it. I'm certainly not thinking I need to recreate too much if I can find a brand I can work with."

And the offering is likely to be different in different locations: yoga may not always be part of the mix.



By the end of 2018, I'm hoping to be on a path to an exit from Fit n Fast and YogaBar. I want to give the investors a return



YogaBar will therefore be just one brand that will sit under an umbrella brand, yet to be named.

In the long run, all 18 Fit n Fast sites may be converted to wellness villages. That's still to be decided, however, because a new pricing structure at Fit n Fast is suggesting there's still life in that model.

Having introduced new programming – short format classes like boxing and the Quickie Max (Q Max) – Fit n Fast is now offering an optional trade-up to premium membership which includes access to this programming. The price point: A\$20.95 a week, compared to A\$13.95 a week for basic membership. And it's proving popular. "We thought we'd get about a 20–30 per cent take-up, but in fact more like 60–70 per cent of members have opted in to this higher level membership," says de Leede.

What's clear, though, is that de Leede wants to put his foot on the accelerator in terms of getting the estate delivering to its full potential, whether that's converting to wellness villages or boosting revenue at any remaining Fit n Fast clubs: "We aim to move strongly into converting a lot of our clubs and developing some new ones next year," he says, adding: "By the end of 2018, I'm hoping to be on a path to an exit – not that I want to get out of that side of the business, but I want to give the investors a return."

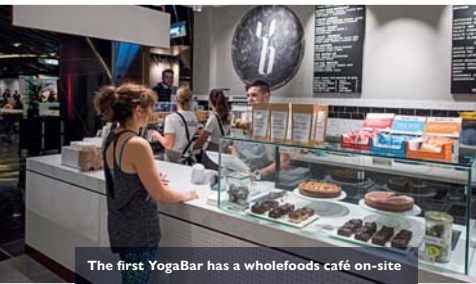
AN UNTAPPED MARKET

But there is another motivating factor for selling the business, and that's another new business idea that he's itching to get properly started on.

"We're going to explore the whole realm of virtual," he says. "In fact we've already started. We've developed our virtual exercise content – Move 1, 2, 3 – which comes in 10-, 20- and 30-minute formats. That's already available on Vvexer, but the real reason we've created it is for our new concept, Club W.

"Club W is going to be an all-virtual facility targeting women, and especially older women. We'll have four virtual exercise rooms and an active education room – bikes and treadmills with personal screens, so you can watch short information films while you're exercising.

"For that, we're also developing another brand – Mind 1, 2, 3 – which comprises five-, 10- and 15-minute bites of knowledge sharing. That might be nutrition, life coaching, skincare, juicing, how to get through the menopause – hundreds, even thousands, of topics people are interested in. Little bits of information to help people live a better life. ►



The first YogaBar has a wholefoods café on-site

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As you get older, you don't exercise to be very fit, but to live better and live longer, says de Leede

► "Meanwhile, given this is an audience who may never have been to a gym before, they can start from the beginning with Move: there'll be 10-minute sessions to learn basic moves for yoga, for example, or five stretches to alleviate lower back pain.

"Because that's what it's all about when you get to my age. It isn't about being very fit any more. We just want to take care of ourselves, to live longer and live better, and we want to do that in an environment we're comfortable with."

Which begs the obvious question: will older women be comfortable with a virtual-only club?

"It might be virtual exercise and knowledge on screens, but the clubs will be staffed: they'll be hi-tech but also high touch, with plenty of people to show new members around, hold their hands, be their companions and their coaches.

"We're aiming for all instructors to be aged over 40 and even 50+. They'll be referred to as 'hosts' – we aren't going to use any words that are fitness-related – and we'll also have karma staff, who will be volunteers who get free membership in return.

"We'll also have two rooms where local businesses can offer 15-minute appointments with, say, a nutritionist, a naturopath, a hair stylist, a life coach or an energy healer – all those small local businesses out there which don't have shop front presence, but which are good businesses.

"Many older women don't have anywhere to go to socialise, so Club W facilities will be like community centres that focus on wellness and activity. There'll be a wellness lounge where they can come and have a cup of tea, and some days that might be all they'll do. But if they want to do some activity, there'll be four different rooms offering Zumba dancing in 15- or 20-minute slots, or perhaps a 30-minute beginner Vinyasa yoga class. The club will also have a meditation zone with Somadome meditation pods."

MEDITATION GOES MAINSTREAM

Here de Leede confidently predicts another trend:

"I think these pods will hit the mainstream as soon as they're being mass produced. We're already in

conversation with a number of operators who see them as a perfect alternative to having sunbeds in their clubs. They take up about the same space, and they can bring in additional revenue in the same way that sunbathing can, but meditation is an easy sell whereas sunbeds are controversial – and in fact have been banned in a number of markets, including Australia.

"We'll also see the pods in offices, airport lounges, hair salons, Starbucks... they'll be everywhere. We even have plans for what we're calling the 'Somahome'.

"But returning to Club W, really this is my end game.

This is what it's all about. I have huge, global aspirations for this brand and I'm really excited about it.

"So all in all we have a lot going on. This is my year of moving quickly. Hopefully I'll be able to slow down just a tad next year – that's what I keep trying to do – but it never quite happens. Boredom isn't an issue in my world, that's for sure!" ●



Many older women don't have anywhere to go to socialise, so Club W facilities will be like community centres that focus on wellness and activity



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READY, STEADY...



Pokémon Go got people off the sofa and walking – for fun. So what can fitness providers learn from this success?

Kate Cracknell reports

Some have been hailing it a cure for obesity. Others are being more pragmatic, acknowledging it as a fun trend – albeit one that is, at least until the novelty wears off, getting sedentary people off the sofa in their droves.

But however you view it, Pokémon Go has certainly dominated the headlines since it launched at the beginning of July.

And deservedly so: I only have to glance out of my window, at pretty much any time of the day and well past sunset, to see people of all ages – from kids to teens in hoodies to older folks (with no kids in sight to use as an excuse) – playing the game... and having fun while walking.

The debate has already been rumbling about how long-term the appeal of

Pokémon Go might be – how sustainable its boost to activity levels, and how significant its impact on public health. So rather than repeat those discussions, we've asked the experts a question we believe to be far more important for the fitness and activity sector in the long run: What can we learn from the huge success of Pokémon Go?



AN COPPENS

**CHIEF GAME CHANGER,
GAMIFICATION NATION**

To understand what lessons gyms can take from Pokémon Go, we first have to ask: why does it work?

One key is that it hooks you from the word go: it's almost guaranteed

that you'll catch a Pokémon in the first moments of gameplay, and these opportunities arise frequently in the first few days. This keeps people engaged and wanting to catch more, because it seemed easy. What quick wins can gyms focus on with new members?

To progress any further in the game, you need to visit PokéStops – ammunition stops – and you have to physically walk there. People are motivated to travel the distances to see what happens – but exercise is the by-product of the game, not the end in itself. This is another important learning for fitness providers.

Walking distances are also rewarded with medals, and that feelgood buzz of achievement, combined with the endorphins from physical exercise, is a winning formula.

It's almost guaranteed you'll catch a Pokémon in the first moments of gameplay. This engages people because it seemed easy. So what quick wins can gyms focus on with new members?

An Coppens



Pokémon Go: People are exercising without realising it

Because of its popularity, players also experience a sense of belonging even before they join teams: players are easily recognisable as most will be walking around staring at their smartphones! Gyms need to create this sense of 'club'.

Added positive buzz comes from finding Pokémon and catching them, which isn't a guarantee. The combination of curiosity and achievement are what in the gamification world we call 'white hat motivators'; the scarcity and fear of missing out on Pokémon is a 'black hat motivator'. Think of it as 'toward' motivation and 'away from' motivation. Fitness almost always focuses on 'toward' motivation – perhaps it's time to exploit the fear of missing out?

The thing that keeps Pokémon Go users interested is the element of surprise and delight when a new Pokémon is won, a bit of competition to keep a Pokégym under their ownership, and the friendship of others using the application – all great learnings for gyms, which need to add creativity and gamification to their offer. This sort of technology is here to stay, and gyms should join in the fun.



Social interaction: Hundreds of Pokémon Go players met up at Millennium Park in Chicago, US, this summer

STEVE HANANN / SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



DR WILLIAM BIRD
CEO, INTELLIGENT HEALTH

Since its launch, Pokémon Go has inspired millions of players to go outside and get active in a way that traditional health campaigns have not. We're therefore likely to see many organisations and campaigns attempt

to emulate the success of Pokémon Go.

For health and fitness providers, the key lesson to take away from the success of Pokémon Go is that, if done well, games and fun, free initiatives can help break down the perceived barriers to becoming active.

The potential of using games to promote physical activity can be demonstrated through Intelligent Health's award-winning Beat the Street scheme (see *HCM* Aug 16, p10), which transforms a town into a real life game that the whole community is invited to play. With more than 450,000 players of all ages to date, the game reaches a wide demographic including the most inactive, older and elderly people, and those from hard to reach communities.

Beat the Street also transforms the health of those who have taken part: in 2015, one in every seven adults said they were inactive at the start of the game – but by the end, 78 per cent of these people said they had become more active. With evidence of sustained change over six to eight months, Beat the Street has proved that gamification can have a positive long-term effect on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities.

I'm incredibly excited to see if Pokémon Go can keep its players active and exploring outdoors in the coming months, as well as its larger impact on health and fitness providers. The game has helped break down the barriers to physical activity for millions of people; hopefully organisations can learn from Pokémon Go's success and do the same for people in their local areas.



DAVID MINTON
DIRECTOR, THE LEISURE
DATABASE COMPANY

Gamifying fitness isn't new, but Pokémon Go is so popular because it's fun and it's getting people to exercise without realising it.

It rapidly overtook Snapchat,

Instagram and WhatsApp in terms of usage minutes each day and could be the killer app for fitness tracking: Jawbone UP users were logging 62 per cent more step activity in the weeks after its launch.

Meanwhile, operators were quick to recognise the power of the game: Virgin Active started offering 5k Pokémon Go runs, while Pure Gym launched Pokémon Go-themed master classes.

So what next? Which fitness brand will be the first to buy 'lures' to fill their locations with Pokémon monsters for players to catch? Will fitness brands be advertising their array of Pokémon? Brands will need to consider if there will be a centralised effort to use the app across sports and leisure centres, outdoor pitches, indoor studios.

One thing is for sure: Poke-fever drains the phone battery quickly with the GPS activity, so could fitness sites offer secure fast-charging stations too?

But beware: gamers are notoriously fickle and other developers are piling in, so fitness brands must be aware this is a rapidly changing scene. Don't put all eggs in the one Pokémon Go basket.

Nevertheless, augmented reality (AR) is here to stay, and this sort of approach – using AR to 'augment' your experience, VR to immerse you into a 'virtual' environment, or MR to 'mix' reality – will certainly impact the UK's £4.4bn fitness business going forward. With Sky announcing its launch of AR-TV, there's more opportunity coming to offer clients enhanced experiences. Can't wait. ●



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Boost member engagement with technology

Engaging members is an ongoing challenge for any club. Engaged members are more motivated, more committed to your business, and happier with the services you provide. Member engagement revolves around communication and customer experience. It is the effect and aggregate of all the interactions clients have with your business, from marketing to commercials to the motivational messages your coaches send to their clients.

Today, engagement is all about personalisation. Consumers have become savvy to marketing messages and know when they're being sold to. Impersonal, mass messages are no longer the key to success. But you also don't have time to sit at your desk all day to type personal

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messages to your clients. The solution is to pick the right tools for the job.

Supercharging communication

Technology can be used to improve engagement and communication between

your members and your staff. High engagement creates a sense of belonging, which boosts motivation. Engagement is about communication, and technology provides a plethora of options to improve communication. Of course, there's private



Through the club app, members can form social connections and motivate each other

messaging, but keep in mind that one-on-one is time-intensive.

Collective communication in the form of discussion or special interest groups is more efficient. Your members can form social connections and motivate each other. For you and your staff, it becomes easy to post motivational group messages, share knowledge, engage your members one on one, share challenges, and so on. And because you can always maintain a dialogue, interaction never becomes forced or unengaged.

Challenge and reward members

A second important factor to engagement is the customer experience. For clubs, a good customer experience generally means that members are motivated and reach their goals in a positive club

By using mobile apps for progress tracking and communication, it's easy to create an atmosphere of friendly competition

environment. You can stimulate all these factors at once by setting up a challenge and reward system. By using mobile apps for progress tracking and communication, it's easy to create an atmosphere of friendly competition that will keep your members motivated and committed.

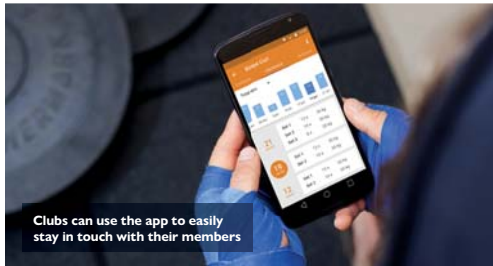
An app to boost engagement

We all have smartphones nowadays. That's why a club mobile app is a great

tool to engage your clients. The groups you have set up can be made accessible through your app, so your members can interact with you wherever they are.

For added motivation, you can easily set up daily workout or nutrition reminders for your members, or push notifications to notify them of special offers, challenges, or new classes. Daily use of these mobile apps will 'force' your members to be involved with fitness and nutrition on a daily basis, and these daily repetitions are building blocks of new habits.

The options to extend the contact moments with your health club members are endless, and each moment is another chance to increase your members' motivation and to remind them to keep on working on a healthier lifestyle.



Clubs can use the app to easily stay in touch with their members

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A NEW ADVENTURE

In the second of a two-part series, **Stephen Tharrett** and **Mark Williamson**, co-founders of ClubIntel, speak to some of the mainstream US operators who are now launching their own boutique studios

Pure Gym, Third Space and Fitness First Middle East. These were some of the operators we spoke to in the last edition of *Health Club Management*, who explained how and why they'd taken the plunge into the boutique fitness segment.

In this second part of the series, we speak to a selection of traditional club operators in the US who have also ventured into the boutique arena.

ACAC'S BOUTIQUE BRAND EDGE

Interview with CEO Greg Wells



Atlantic Coast Athletic Clubs (ACAC) opened its first club in 1984 and has since evolved into an 11-club chain of premium wellness and fitness centres serving members in Virginia, Maryland and Pennsylvania. The company has been at the leading edge of the medical fitness movement in the US, having developed and licensed its own proprietary Physician Referred Exercise Programme (P.R.E.P.). In 2015,



Edge offers boutique yoga, cycling and youth athletic performance



the company introduced a boutique fitness studio, Edge, to its home market of Charlottesville. The studio offers three distinct experiences: yoga, cycling, and youth athletic performance.

What drove your decision to open a boutique fitness studio?

There were two reasons for taking the plunge. First was to leverage existing trends in the market: we'd recently seen an explosion of boutique fitness studios and a growing demand for the boutique experience. Second was to probe a

research and development angle – we wanted to see if we could leverage our expertise in the health club business and successfully operate a boutique brand that would complement our existing offerings in the community.

And why a standalone, separately branded studio?

If we'd incorporated the new brand into our existing clubs, it would have been extremely confusing for our members and would have prevented us from creating a uniquely branded offering that we could charge people extra for.

What are the key differences between operating a chain of premium health clubs and operating a boutique studio like Edge?

One major difference revolves around marketing. While traditional marketing

Make sure there's a big enough pool of extremely talented, inspiring instructors to pull from. They're critical to differentiating the product - Greg Wells



For boutique concepts, the tribal mix must work – yoga aficionados might not easily mesh with cycling clients

strategies play a key role in our clubs, for the studio it's entirely driven by word-of-mouth and social media – and specifically the micro social networks of the instructors themselves. The social media bang has to come from the instructors carrying on dialogue with their clients, not the studio itself trying to post.

Have there been any unexpected issues when rolling out Edge?

There were several, some of which remain with us even nine months after opening.

For example, it was extremely hard to differentiate classes at the Edge from the classes we already offered in our three local clubs. ACAC has an established reputation for great classes, so it was hard to create a strong brand differentiation for Edge in the minds of members and consumers.

The quality of the instructors is also critical to the studio experience; you need the best, most dynamic instructors in the market. Unfortunately, due to the small pool of instructors in the Charlottesville market and the fact that most of the best instructors already taught at ACAC clubs, it was hard to bring in anyone who offered anything more dynamic or inspiring than what our clubs already offered.

In addition it was, and continues to be, incredibly challenging to foster a sense of ownership among the instructors. In a traditional studio, the instructors take a pride of ownership: it's their life. In the case of our Edge studio, however, which is part of a larger organisation, it was

challenging to try and generate this same sense of entrepreneurship and ownership.

Finally, there were challenges around offering three types of experiences whose tribes didn't align. The mix of cycling clients, yoga clients and youth sports performance clients didn't mesh, making it hard to create the tribal communities that are essential to the boutique studio experience.

Has Edge performed to the company's expectations?

After nine months, the studio is still performing below our expectations. However, it's continuing to grow as we address some of the errors that were made at the onset.

What advice would you offer traditional operators who might be considering opening a boutique studio?

Firstly, make sure the studio brand offers an experience that can be supported by the market. In particular, make sure you select the right offerings so you can foster the right tribal atmosphere.

Make sure there's a big enough pool of extremely talented and inspiring instructors to pull from. The instructors are critical to differentiating the product.

Understand how important social media and word-of-mouth are to your marketing efforts, and in particular how important your instructors are to this effort. You need a grassroots-driven buzz by people who really take a sense of ownership of the product.

THE STUDIO BY LEISURE SPORTS

Interview with vice president Erin Gilmour



Leisure Sports opened its first club in northern California the early 1980s. Today, the company owns and operates six large, high-end fitness resorts

with locations in California, Nevada and Oregon – two of which are aligned with premium hotel properties. The company recently opened a boutique fitness studio in Danville, CA, called The Studio – a high-style boutique club that offers three distinct training zones (mind-body, cycling and HIIT) served by five studios, along with full amenities, locker rooms, massage, child-sitting area and fitness equipment. Consumers can purchase a membership to The Studio by Leisure Sports for US\$169 a month.

What drove your decision to open a boutique fitness studio?

The decision was a strategic one from the very beginning. We'd kept abreast of the growth in boutique fitness studios and, after we'd visited several, realised these studios were doing something our large clubs had trouble achieving at scale: providing a unique and engaging experience that fostered a community of passionate fans. ▶



The Studio is a standalone business with its own management team

- Furthermore, the market for large-scale fitness resorts was shrinking, so we knew we needed a new business model to continue growing. The decision was made to pursue a 'proof of concept' for a boutique studio, with a view to opening additional boutiques in the future.

What was your approach to branding and managing the studio?

From the beginning, we understood that the studio and our existing clubs were two different businesses. As a result, we appointed a team to have responsibility for, and authority over, the introduction and delivery of The Studio brand. The management team for The Studio is only involved in operating The

Studio, although as a vice president of the company I do stay abreast of what's happening on the club side.

In addition, we realised we had to brand The Studio separately from the other clubs if we wanted to communicate its unique experience and foster a community around the brand. However, we also understood there was cachet in our name, and as a result wanted to bring that credibility forward. The decision was made to call it The Studio by Leisure Sports.

What are the key differences between operating a chain of premium clubs and a boutique studio?

We've found there to be several differences, including the fact that the boutique requires a more vigilant approach to ongoing refinement across the various touchpoints of the experience. Every interaction between staff and member is heightened in the boutique, and consequently greater attention has to be given to understanding each interaction and elevating the game.

The level of training for the staff has been considerably more extensive than in our traditional properties too. As the interactions between staff and members are more intimate, it requires everyone to understand what's required across every touchpoint of the experience.

The success of the boutique is far more dependent on fostering a strong community than a traditional club. A studio is a community.

Social media is king. Having a strong social media presence that's built around connecting the community (members) is very different from the way you approach marketing for a traditional club.

Pricing is also very different. We underpriced our offering out of the box. We made pricing assumptions based on our club experience rather than fully understanding the pricing dynamics of the studio market.

Tell us more about the marketing

In the studio segment, word-of-mouth and social media are the name of the game – not direct mail, not email blasts, not print ads. At the moment, our number one source of new clients and members is from member referral. Furthermore, the ability to leverage social media to build community reinforces the word-of-mouth and fosters heightened interest in the brand.

What advice would you offer traditional club operators considering opening a boutique fitness studio?

Make building a community your number one priority. Second to this is fostering a highly attractive, inspirational experience. ►



The Studio's mind-body classes command a premium price

Interactions between staff and members are more intimate, so everyone has to understand what's required across every touchpoint of the experience – Erin Gilmour

Fitness without limits

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BY SportsArt

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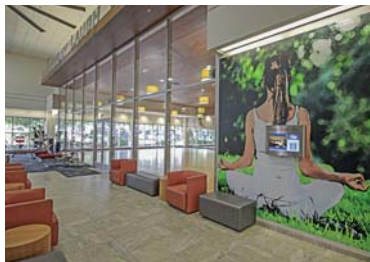
*Senza UI is available on SportsArt Status cardio line
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The Gainesville club operates like a 'wellness mall'



Each zone at Gainesville has different branding

► ZIG WHEN OTHERS ZAG

While the objective of this article was to share the experiences and insights of traditional operators which have ventured into the boutique studio business, we would not be doing readers justice unless we shared some alternative perspectives. We therefore spoke to Joe Cirulli, founder and CEO of Gainesville Health and Fitness Center in the US and former president of IHRSA.

Cirulli's club group is one of the most successful and respected health and fitness club groups in the US: it first opened its doors in 1978 and still boasts retention levels of close to 80 per cent. Cirulli himself has been honoured for his entrepreneurial excellence by numerous business publications.



Gainesville members can choose their tribe

moved away from a generic shopping experience to one supported by multiple boutique-like experiences, where shoppers could engage with a variety of novel brands within their own themed spaces (Lululemon, Coach, etc).

The book became the driving force for reinventing our club, changing it from a singular generic fitness club to a 'lifestyle mall' with multiple internal boutiques.

Over the past five years, we've changed our club to a destination with numerous boutique fitness options designed to appeal to the interests of different communities of members.

Can you share a few more details about your approach?

We decided the answer didn't lie in creating generic spaces for multiple uses, but rather in creating uniquely branded spaces, each with a specific purpose, to offer different experiences within the club.

In most cases, but not all, each studio and its accompanying programme carries an additional cost to members. For example, we created an X-Force Body Studio that houses our X-Force programme. It has its own tone, attitude, voice and image. We also have the Tribe Studio, which looks and feels entirely different from X-Force or our other studios within the club.

The same is true for Crossfit, pilates and personal training. In essence, we've created a club composed of multiple branded boutique-styled experiences that appeal to different communities of members. Once our members enter the club, they have the opportunity to choose their experience.

Are there any additional insights you would like to share regarding your approach?

First, we realised that – because each of these boutique-style experiences is highly specialised – we had to assign a leader to each studio. That leader is empowered to foster the experience the respective community is seeking. Each experience is managed as its own business.

Second, we have a strong internal culture that serves as the foundation for everything we do. We wanted the cultural DNA of Gainesville Health and Fitness to be the foundation of every programme we offer.

While our goal is to continue evolving this approach inside the Gainesville club, we've recently opened our first free-standing X-Force Studio in a different market. What we've learned inside our clubs has given us great insight into how to move some of these programmes outside of our centres.

THE GAINESVILLE APPROACH



Interview with
Joe Cirulli, founder
and CEO

.....

You've taken a
different approach
to leveraging the

boutique fitness trend in your club.
Can you share your thinking?

Five years ago, I read a book entitled *New Rules of Retail – Competing in the world's toughest marketplace*. In the book, the authors tell the story of how some traditional retailers such as Bloomingdales

We've changed our club to a destination with numerous boutique options that appeal to the interests of different communities of members – Joe Cirulli

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SIX LESSONS FOR OPERATORS INTERESTED IN LAUNCHING A BOUTIQUE

1 Evolving your health and fitness business requires a different way of thinking.

As Albert Einstein said: "We cannot solve our problems with the same thinking we used when we created them." Stay abreast of trends, both in the club industry and the general marketplace. Be open to new ways of evolving the value proposition of your business. For some that might mean extending the brand through a standalone boutique fitness studio; for others it might be about adapting the delivery of the present value proposition to leverage the innovation offered by boutiques.

2 Understand the core competencies and brand promise of your business, then determine if these align with operating a boutique experience.

Several of our interviewees said boutique operation requires specialist experience – in particular when it comes to the level of talent required among instructors and staff, the quality of the programmes, the building of communities, and marketing. What you can't do is take what your club presently does and dump it into a studio; it won't work. Also, ask yourself if you have the talent to make it work. Finally, ask yourself if it might not be

better to stick to what you do best, but evolve it to the demands of today's consumer preferences. Don't dilute your own brand's strengths in an effort to try and be something you aren't.

3 If you decide to operate a boutique studio, separate from the traditional business, both in management and branding.

A common theme expressed by many of our interviewees, and supported by research our firm has conducted, is the importance of separating the DNA of your existing business from the studio's DNA. A studio requires different thinking and different actions, and as a result must be distinctly separate from your existing cultural DNA.

Furthermore, the boutique studio needs to be a distinctly different brand, with its own promise, attitude, voice and persona.

Along these same lines, it appears the studio needs its own location, as locating it within your existing facilities precludes the creation of a separate cultural DNA and brand promise.

4 Marketing the studio requires an entirely different approach compared to marketing a traditional fitness club.

Word-of-mouth and social media lie at the core of the studio marketing

approach. Furthermore, it's about your people building micro-communities using instructor social networks as well as those of their fans.

It also requires your social media strategy to possess a high degree of trusted authenticity.

5 Studios are about helping people find their tribe.

While every club has a few small, organically-driven tribes among its membership, studios thrive or die based on their ability to foster a strong, passionate, social community. And building community doesn't happen passively – it requires disciplined effort.

The studio has to be relevant, aspirational, trusted and intimate in the way that it speaks to its audience. Nothing about the experience can be cookie-cutter or artificial.

6 The instructors and staff have to feel it's their life.

Your studio staff have to develop a powerful sense of ownership of the studio experience. If they just feel like employees, they will never buy into the studio's vision, and consequently your business will never be able to generate the necessary buzz and commitment.

In addition, your instructors really have to be the crème de la crème – the very best instructors in the market.

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

Stephen Tharrett (left) is a 35-year veteran of the fitness industry, having served in multiple leadership roles, including CEO of the Russian Fitness Group, SVP for ClubCorp and president of IHRSA. **Mark Williamson** (right) has over 25 years' experience in market

research, working for some of the largest hospitality brands in the world.

Stephen and Mark are the co-founders of ClubIntel (www.club-intel.com), a brand insights firm based in the US. Stephen can be reached at stevet@club-intel.com



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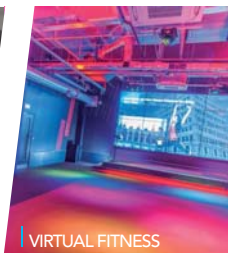
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TRACKING Vs RETENTION



Dr Melynn Hillsdon investigates the impact using activity trackers has on member retention

Devices, apps or systems for self-monitoring – tracking physical activity – are becoming very common: among gym members, just over a quarter (27 per cent) say they track their physical activity, with the most common method being a phone-based app.

For the rest of this article, I will use the terms 'trackers' and 'non-trackers' to differentiate between members who use an app or other technology to track their activity versus those who don't.

Tracking is more common in members under the age of 25 and gradually reduces with age: members aged 45 years and older are 80 per cent less likely to be trackers than members aged under 25 years.

Males are 20 per cent more likely to be trackers than females, and tracking is most common when members are in the first six to 12 months of their health club membership. Long-standing members and members who are just starting out are least likely to be trackers.

WHAT MAKES A TRACKER?

So what are the characteristics of trackers? Overall the differences between trackers and non-trackers are fairly small, but there are a few differences in terms of preferred activities and motivations for exercise.

Trackers are more likely than non-trackers to say their main reason for visiting their club is to take part in:

- A gym workout (82 per cent of trackers vs 72 per cent of non-trackers)
- Group cycling class (16 per cent of trackers vs 11 per cent of non-trackers)
- Personal training session (8 per cent of trackers vs 5 per cent of non-trackers)

However, they're less likely to visit their club primarily for swimming (24 per cent versus 30 per cent).

The proportion of members who say they usually visit their club for an exercise class (other than cycling), or for non-exercise reasons, doesn't differ significantly between trackers and non-trackers. The frequency of club visits is also similar across both groups.

The odds of being a tracker rather than a non-tracker are higher if members' motives for exercise are:

- Wanting to be physically fit (15 per cent higher odds of being a tracker)
- To improve their body shape (17 per cent higher)
- To enjoy the gym (13 per cent higher)
- To look better due to bigger muscles (7 per cent higher)
- To be attractive (6 per cent higher)

BEWARE MIDDLE-AGED MEN

Trackers are commonly younger males who typically attend their clubs for gym workouts and group cycling classes, who are reasonably experienced gym users, and who are motivated primarily by aesthetic reasons.

The good news is that retention among this group – by far the largest group of members who use activity trackers – is not affected by their use of these trackers. Similarly, according to our research, use of trackers among female members does not have an impact – either negative or positive – on retention.

However, there are user groups where gyms should be more attentive to tracking habits – in particular among middle-aged men, and indeed any males aged over 25. While the additional risk of cancelling remains fairly small among this group, there is nevertheless an increased risk if they track their activity.

It's possible that, among this group, members who are attracted to self-monitoring their behaviour via apps and wearables are already struggling to maintain an exercise habit that would lead to them achieving their goals. Could it be that the data from the wearables is reinforcing the fact that achieving a regular exercise habit is hard to do, and that – although they've made some progress – what's required to actually achieve their expected outcomes is more than they'd hoped they would have to do? Consequently, they feel disillusioned and contemplate giving up on their membership.

Our research shows activity tracking has no impact on retention in some groups, but increases cancellation by up to 23 per cent in others

Meanwhile, the odds of being a tracker are lower if members' motives for exercise are:

- To maintain health and wellbeing (16 per cent lower odds of being a tracker)
- To have more energy (9 per cent lower odds of being a tracker)
- To lose weight (7 per cent lower odds)

Other types of motivations don't differ between groups.

However, even though they're less likely to exercise specifically to lose weight, more trackers than non-trackers report losing weight (63 per cent vs 51 per cent). Similarly, more trackers will report feeling fitter (91 per cent vs 88 per cent), improving the way they look (78 per cent vs 69 per cent), having more energy (84 per cent vs 79 per cent) and feeling happier (88 per cent vs 84 per cent) and healthier (90 per cent vs 87 per cent).

One key thing to note, however, is that it isn't currently possible to determine whether members who make good progress choose to track their activity, or whether tracking leads to more progress. This requires additional research.

IMPACT ON RETENTION?

Trackers are 22 per cent more likely to cancel each month compared to non-trackers – equivalent to four extra cancellations a month for every 1,000 members that start the month.

However, taking account of other factors – such as differences in age, gender, length of membership and visit frequency – reduces the increased risk among trackers from 22 per cent to 10 per cent. That is, our research shows that activity tracking per se leads to a 10 per cent increased risk of leaving.

But this varies across different demographic groups. Among younger, male members there was no association between tracking and risk of cancelling, whereas among older male members the risk of cancelling each month was 23 per cent higher in trackers, even when other factors were taken into account.

Among females, there was no relationship between app use and increased risk of cancellation.

So why these differences between genders and ages? It's possible that middle-aged males who track their exercise have more unrealistic expectations about the

changes in their physique and the way they look compared to other members, and when these expectations are not met they may cancel their membership (see briefing, p54). Whatever the reason, with many clubs viewing tracking and the use of wearables as a key retention solution – and indeed as an alternative to staff coaching and feedback – this first study to examine this question suggests a rethink is needed.

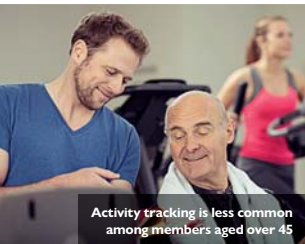
More research is now required to build on the results of this study. We need to better understand what it is users of tracking technology are hoping their wearables are doing for them, and how fitness staff can interact with members and their wearables to help people better achieve their goals. ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Dr Melvyn Hillsdon is associate professor of exercise and health at the University of Exeter, where he researches

physical activity and population health. Since his landmark retention report in 2001 (*Winning the Retention Battle*), he has published numerous reports into the determinants of membership retention.



Activity tracking is less common among members aged over 45

STAY on TRACK



Fitness trackers are becoming increasingly sophisticated – and popular.

Tom Walker looks at some of the hottest products on the market



3D ANALYSIS

PRODUCT: **ATLAS WRISTBAND**

The Atlas Wristband is geared toward strength training. Instead of just cardio-based exercises such as running and cycling. The device measures gym activities by analysing wrist motions in 3D and then comparing them against an inbuilt library of common exercises.

The wristband can be programmed to guide the user and keep track of their progress, as well as acting like an electronic personal trainer.

The moment the wearer hits his or her rep goal, they feel a vibration to signal the beginning of rest time. When it's time to start on the next set, Atlas gives out another signal. The wristband is also waterproof to a depth of 30 meters.

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD**

ATLAS WRISTBAND



WEIGH IT UP

PRODUCT: **BEAST**

While there are now data capture tech solutions which allow the tracking and measuring of weight training – such as PushStrength and GymWatch – Italian-designed Beast is looking to disrupt the market by displaying results in real time.

Beast's magnetic sensor can be attached to weights – such as barbells, dumbbells, kettlebells or gym machines – as well as to the body during free training. The sensor is then linked to a smartphone app to record the data and produce a live stream showing effort levels.

Users are able to review their performance in detail during rest time, get suggestions from Beast, and improve training by adjusting loads, sets or reps based on their training goals.

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD** **BEAST**



24/7 MONITORING

PRODUCT: **SAMSUNG GEAR FIT2**

With its eye-catching design and sophisticated tracking abilities, Gear Fit2 aims to secure a market for itself as a hybrid between a smartwatch and a fitness device.

Its key strengths are its design and self-activating tracking mechanisms: Gear Fit2 is able to automatically track the steps and other forms of exercise undertaken by its owner – such as riding a bike, using a rowing machine, doing squats and even yoga poses. It can detect when the user is sleeping, and estimate the daily calorie spend based on activity. It also checks the user's heart rate every 10 minutes.

Fit2 then takes all the data it gathers and uses it to produce a 24-hour log of the user's activities.

fitness-kit.net **KEYWORD** **SAMSUNG**

FROM GYM TO BOARDROOM

PRODUCT: FITBIT BLAZE

The newest product in the Fitbit family of trackers is being marketed as being fit not just for the gym but also for the boardroom.

The unit itself now looks more like a designer watch, and the user is also given the opportunity to add a high level of customisation to its look and feel, as the straps can be easily replaced and swapped depending upon their attire.

Fitbit Blaze is designed to be worn throughout the day and night and measures pretty much everything during that time – steps, calories burned, stairs climbed, active time, resting heart rate and even quality of sleep.

The user is also offered a number of sport modes to choose from, which will record different activities using the built-in heart rate monitor.

When paired up with a smartphone armed with a GPS sensor, Fitbit can also act as a running watch.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **FITBIT**



The Fitbit Blaze (above); Gymwatch (below) measures limb movements



ONE-FOR-ALL TRACKER

PRODUCT: GYMWATCH

German-designed Gymwatch is based on a patented sensor and, when it first launched in 2014, was one of the first trackers designed to measure the motion and strength expended in a wide range of exercises – encompassing both cardio and strength work.

The latest, updated version – which is compatible with the Apple Watch – was launched earlier this year.

Strapped around a user's arm or leg muscles (or both with two sensors), the device includes an accelerometer, gyroscope and magnetometer to record the course of limb movements on all axes and measure the time under tension of different muscle contractions.

Programmed to recognise more than 900 different activities, Gymwatch can be connected to iOS and Android apps to provide feedback on the exercise sessions, to help users perform the exercises properly and get maximum results.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **GYMWATCH**

THE AI TRAINER

PRODUCT: VI

Developed by Israeli technology firm LifeBeam, Vi is a personal training product driven by artificial intelligence (AI). The product is designed to harness the user's data to provide customised two-way fitness coaching.

Part fitness tracker, part smartwatch, part PT, Vi applies AI to the user's workout data, biometrics and goals to coach them through tailored workout plans. It will also adapt these plans according to terrain, weather and location.

As well as talking to its owner, Vi can also play their favourite music (via Spotify and Apple Music) through its Harman/Kardon-designed headphones – and even enable the receiving of phone calls.

The product contains a string of sensors and is worn around the neck, attached to two headphones – which relay workout feedback from Vi – and a microphone for the user to speak to her. It also communicates with the user via text message, asking for feedback on mood, sleep quality and body condition.

See p14 for more information.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **LIFEBEAM**



Vi (above) has a string of sensors worn around the neck; Moov Now (below) acts like a virtual coach to its users



ACTIONABLE INSIGHT

PRODUCT: MOOV NOW

Launched on 16 July, Moov Now is marketed as the wearable fitness product which goes "further than any other on the market". The bold claim by its creator – California-based company Moov Inc – is based on the product being a virtual coach.

Moov Now has the ability to provide real-time feedback with actionable insight into every workout, so users not only know the number of kilometres they've run or laps they've swum, but how to improve every movement.

The product tracks activity and form while exercising and also provides real-time audio and visual guidance on the user's activities. For example, when running, the user is advised when to land softer, shorten stride or pick up the pace.

For swimming, the programme provides automatic lap, stroke and turn breakdown, while the cycling programme monitors speed, distance, cadence and elevation. It also provides gear coaching for the rider. There are also seven-minute workout and cardio boxing programmes.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **MOOV**

Access story

Gladstone's new access control solution doesn't just provide enhanced security and track attendance: it delivers invaluable insights into exactly how customers use your facilities

Most leisure centre and health club operators don't need to be told that in today's climate of austerity, understanding and responding to the needs of their customers is essential to the success, if not the survival, of their business.

Yet in many facilities what customers do once they go past reception is still anyone's guess. While reception turnstiles track their attendance, data on what they do afterwards is largely lost – a particular issue for operators that offer all-inclusive memberships.

To overcome this problem, savvy operators are investing in multi-sector access control solutions developed by suppliers such as Gladstone, which control access and collect customer data, not just at reception but throughout the whole site: at the gym, the studio, the pool and the spa.

However, Gladstone understands that not every leisure operator is in a position to install turnstiles at the threshold of every facility within their club or centre. To cater for this, the company has developed

a system which allows data on specific facility usage to be captured via a mounted touch-screen at the main reception turnstiles, where customers must answer a simple question or number of questions before being allowed to proceed.

Gladstone, which consulted access experts ASP on the hardware design, originally developed the solution for Oldham Community Leisure, but is now offering a tailor-made version of it to all its clients.

"Providing enhanced data on how a member uses a club or centre would normally involve unprecedented investment in access control hardware covering the whole facility," says Gladstone's managing director, Tom Withers. "Our solution provides an answer where installing physical access control in all areas is either not practical or not affordable."

Another unique feature of the product is the System Monitoring Tool, which prevents data from being lost because a staff member manually releases the turnstiles to let a customer in if the system denies them access – for example, if they have an unpaid sale.

Using the System Monitoring Tool, staff can now go into a web portal and simply click a button to override the access denial. This gives the customer a one-day grace period, enabling them to pass through the turnstiles while the site still collects their data.

The access control solution also allows individual members to choose multi-ID options – so one person can check in using an RFID band, card or mobile – as well as supporting biometrics, should operators require it.

"Like all our products, Gladstone's access control solution can be adapted to meet each operator's specific needs," says Withers. "But the ultimate aim is to support our clients not only to control access within their facilities, but also to gain a much better understanding of their customers' behaviour and needs."



The new Royton Leisure Centre



Jim McMahon MP, former leader of Oldham Council with Stuart Lockwood, CEO of Oldham Community Leisure at the opening of the new Oldham Leisure Centre.

CASE STUDY - Oldham Community Leisure moved to Gladstone from its previous software supplier ahead of launching two new leisure centres at the end of 2015

Our trust operates 11 leisure centres, swimming pools and synthetic pitches in Oldham, and we chose to partner Gladstone because we knew their software and services could make a real difference to the efficiency of our sites. In particular, we were impressed by the tailor-made access control solution they designed for our two new centres: Royton Leisure Centre, opened in September, and Oldham Leisure Centre, opened in November.

Oldham Council invested £23m in these two sites, and being able to show exactly how they were being used was a major condition of our new operating contract. Our contract aside, it's a basic requirement for OCL that we constantly look for new ways to understand our members. So it was vital for both us and the council that we should be able to gather data on specific facility usage, yet we also wanted customers to be able to move around our centres unhindered by questions. Of all the suppliers we spoke to, only Gladstone took our ideas on board.

While we were in favour of installing turnstiles activated by RFID at reception and the gym, we didn't want turnstiles at the pool, as we felt the wet environment would inevitably cause problems with the electronic equipment. We knew data relating to class and activity bookings would be captured when members scanned in at the reception turnstiles, while turnstiles at the gym would track gym usage, so swimming was the missing piece of the jigsaw.

To overcome this, Gladstone developed a system which allows data on pool usage to be collected using a mounted touch-screen at the main reception turnstiles. Before being allowed access, customers simply touch "Yes" or "No" in response to the question, "Are you going to swim today?"



Access barriers and activity capture screen at Oldham Leisure Centre.

The major benefit of this system is that we now understand the real demand for activities, especially swimming. As a direct result of this, we are currently revising our swimming timetable so that it better meets the needs of users. We are also reviewing staffing within the gym, to ensure we have enough staff on the floor to deal with queries at our busiest times. And as well as assisting with programming and staffing decisions, the data provides a much clearer picture of where investment is needed.

In addition to its data collection benefits, the solution is helping us to protect our revenue by making sure that everyone who passes through the turnstiles is either a member or has paid. It has also enabled us to introduce new products without additional staffing costs – such as an early-morning members-only swim session – and to offer pay-as-you-go customers the chance to purchase RFID bands that will allow them to access sessions paid for online without having to queue.

In short, Gladstone has delivered, on time, an access control solution that allows us to monitor usage across all areas of our buildings. What's more, the simple yet effective visual interfaces they have created ensure that our customers can operate the system successfully every time.

Peter Howson, head of customer relations, OCL



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THE WORLD'S A PLAYGROUND

Outdoor schooling has many benefits, from making learning more memorable to enhancing focus and academic performance. It also teaches kids to be active. **Kate Cracknell** reports

Q&A WITH ANN GLASER

Head of Tiny Treks
Washington State, US

What is Tiny Treks?

Tiny Treks is an outdoor school, founded in the United States 19 years ago, with sites in California and Washington State, where my school is. It offers programme of guided learning for young children which takes place exclusively outdoors.

We take children from the age of two, starting off in our Parent Child Programme. We all go out for an hour and a half every week – each child with a parent – to explore and understand the natural world together. We go to a different park, lake or farm every week and I choose a theme according to what's there. So for example, if I know a particular farm has a beaver dam, my theme might be beavers. We'll talk about what a beaver is, where they live, we go see the dam and we talk about how they live.

And it isn't just the kids who learn. Probably without the parents even realising it, I'm teaching them things they can do with their children outdoors, and I'm showing them places they didn't even realise were there.

The success of that programme led to us launching a programme for three- to five-year-olds. With this age group, we go out twice a week for three hours at a time. We don't do paper or pens. We don't work on ABCs or 123s – it's truly a forest kindergarten and, although we talk about what we're seeing, it's largely experiential. It's about being deeply in nature, feeling and figuring out what to do.

What's the idea behind Tiny Treks?

At the heart of it is a desire for children to fall in love with nature, but we also believe it's really important for



children to see adults doing real physical work.

We're all so busy nowadays. We have our cleaners, our gardeners. But we're busy sitting at our desks. Kids don't ever see their parents doing physical work in the way previous generations have done. They're not seeing us digging the soil or chopping wood, so they aren't learning that they need to move, to use their bodies.

At Tiny Treks we're all out there together, digging,

weeding, planting seeds on the farm. The kids see us being enthusiastic when shoots of plants are coming through and that enthusiasm rubs off on them. They see us

Kids don't see their parents doing physical work in the way previous generations have done, so they aren't learning that they need to move, to use their bodies

Ann Glaser, Tiny Treks



Tiny Treks children get involved with activities such as digging, weeding and planting seeds

making beds for the plants and they come and help build stone circles around them. We don't force the kids to do anything – there's no "come here, do this", no regimented activities – but they see what we're doing and they naturally want to get involved.

We also go out into the forest for 'quiet time' where they have time to explore for themselves. Kids today are given very little time to figure out what to do by themselves, and it creates adults who don't know what to do without their computer or phone. So we step back and just let them explore – there's very little guidance other than keeping them safe. At first they don't know what to do, but they soon come up with their own plans.

If they climb a tree, we don't tell them not to. We might explain the physics of it – we'll talk about how far they should go along a branch before it could break under their weight – but we do it in such a way that they think it through for themselves.

It's about giving kids the confidence in themselves and their bodies. We teach them to move. You can spot our kids among a group of their peers: they're the ones who are so physically aware of how to climb it's actually beautiful to watch. They move naturally and instinctively, they have core strength, they have tensile strength. And they don't mind getting their hands muddy. It's amazing how many children won't do that nowadays.

Are there any academic benefits to this kind of approach?

Many of our kids also go to a 'normal' indoor pre-school, but I've had children who've only come to us and they've gone on to the next stage of schooling with no problems. They have outdoor knowledge as their basis for science and maths, and the listening skills of being around adults. ▶

TINY TREKS: A PARENT'S PERSPECTIVE

**The classroom is an
exciting open forest**



Seattle's climate is like the UK's, so when my wife suggested sending our three-year-old daughter to an outdoor school (outdoors 100 per cent of the time, all year), I thought it was a bit harsh. However, in the last two years I've seen my daughter fall in love with being outdoors: she's now just as comfortable playing outdoors as indoors.

She's also learned a lot about nature, as her 'classroom' is a local forest which changes with the seasons. For example, salmon swim up the river next to their site in the autumn.

The advent of the iPad and on-demand content means my kids' favourite programmes are always available – it's so easy not to move. But I believe that, to love health and fitness, you have to first love movement; enjoying the outdoors at an early age is one of the first steps to more movement-based play and learning.

Rob Barker, president, Precor





Tiny Treks pupils are encouraged to climb

- In fact, it's so successful that parents whose kids have been through Tiny Treks are now asking if we can run after-school classes at nearby elementary schools, and in response we're starting a five- to seven-year-old class this autumn. It was full within days of announcing it.

At Tiny Treks, children also learn to slow down – to be content doing the same activity for hours without saying "I'm bored". That has a long-term impact: research by Queen Maud University College in Norway suggests that kids who have been to outdoor pre-school have higher

levels of concentration all through elementary school. They're able to focus on their school work for longer.

What might gyms learn from this?

If you go into the woods and a branch has come down off a tree, kids will have great fun with it. So one idea, if you have outdoor space, is that you don't turn it into a formal playground. Put out branches, tree stumps, an old boat – what we call "loose parts". Put out unusual things that allow kids to play naturally. ●

Research suggests that kids who've been to an outdoor pre-school have higher levels of concentration all through elementary school

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE **Natural Connections, UK**

Children from 125 schools across the south-west of England are happier, healthier and more motivated to learn thanks to a new project commissioned by Natural England that has turned the outdoors into a classroom and helped schools transform ways of teaching.

The findings were released last month by the Natural Connections Demonstration project, a four-year initiative to help schoolchildren – particularly those from disadvantaged areas – experience the benefits of the natural environment by empowering teachers to use the outdoors to support learning. The project – funded by Natural England, Defra and Historic England and delivered by Plymouth University – is the largest of its kind in England and has already helped more than 40,000 primary and secondary school pupils get out of their classrooms and into the outdoors – whether for a maths lesson in a local park or drama out on the school field.

Ninety-two per cent of teachers surveyed said pupils were more engaged with learning when outdoors, and 85 per cent saw a positive impact on their behaviour.

The majority of children also thought they learned better and achieved more when learning outside: 92 per cent of pupils involved in the project said they enjoyed their lessons more when outdoors, with 90 per cent feeling happier and healthier as a result.

The project has also found that taking lessons outside can help motivate teachers, with 79 per cent reporting a positive impact on their teaching practice. Almost 70 per cent of teachers said outdoor learning had a positive impact on their job satisfaction and 72 per cent reported improved wellbeing.

Natural England is now working with partners to help share the findings from this project, to support and enhance the provision of outdoor learning in schools across England.

Open-sided, sustainable bamboo buildings make up the Green School campus in Bali, Indonesia



Ibuku has built 15 of the school's classrooms

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE The Bamboo School, Bali

When Elora Hardy was a little girl growing up in Bali, her mother asked her to draw a picture of her dream home. She drew a fairy mushroom house. But rather than simply putting the drawing on the wall, her mother went a step further: she built it.

Twenty-five years later, that same creative boldness – the drive to turn seemingly fanciful ideas into reality – is central to Hardy's own vision, as founder and creative director of Ibuku: a Bali-based company that designs and builds soaring, curving, beautiful, solid and sustainable structures almost exclusively from bamboo.

Her father and stepmother are inspired by the same agenda, and conceived the Green School: a campus comprised entirely of open-sided, sustainable bamboo buildings. The school has a similarly avant-garde curriculum designed to help children "to cultivate physical sensibilities that will enable them to adapt and be capable in the world... to develop spiritual awareness and emotional intuition, and to encourage them to be in awe of life's possibilities".

Ibuku – which translates roughly as 'Mother Earth' – has played its part. Over the past five years, the firm has built close to 70 permanent bamboo structures on Bali, including 15 new classrooms at Green School.

Elora Hardy's
Ibuku specialises
in bamboo
construction



OUTDOOR SCHOOLS



The Greene School in Florida will be built around two central spaces: the piazza and the organic garden



► GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE The Greene School, Florida, US

The Greene School is a new educational complex being built in Florida, US – named after the school's founders, philanthropists Jeff and Mei Sze Greene.

Based on the concept of a learning garden – an organic space for discovery and growth – the project aims to provide students up to grade 4 with an environment in which they can seamlessly experience both technology and nature, inside the classroom as well as outside.

"Fostering a sense of community has become one of the most important goals in the design of new teaching

spaces. The more we can share spaces, collaborate and exchange ideas with each other, the more creative we get", says Carlo Ratti, a founding partner of Carlo Ratti Associati, the firm that designed the new school.

The school has been designed around two central shared spaces: the 'piazza' and the garden. In addition, all the classrooms open to the outside. There's also a large green space next to the school building which includes organic gardens, and the school's library is located in a cabin in the woods.

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE Long Crendon School Aylesbury, UK

At Long Crendon school in Aylesbury, UK, an outdoor learning space for its year 1 to 6 students has become a way of life.

The whole ethos is that kids should be outdoors as much as possible, in all weather: students of all ages take part in supervised forest school activities in a wooded area alongside the playing field two days a week – for example, climbing trees and learning how to light fires and make charcoal.

Many of the outdoor activities have been designed so they link to curriculum subjects, thereby complementing classroom lessons. The school believes this plays a large role in its ongoing exam success – Long Crendon consistently scores highly on this front – as well as its students' improved mental health.

GLOBAL BEST PRACTICE Waldkindergarten, Germany

The idea of the forest kindergarten originated in Scandinavia, with the first being founded by a Danish woman, Ella Flatau, in the 1950s.

However, it's in Germany that the concept has really taken hold. After a few unofficial schools opening through the 70s and 80s, the movement gathered strong momentum through the 1990s; the country now has well over 1,000 forest kindergartens. Austria and Switzerland have now also latched onto the idea.

The model is similar to that of Tiny Treks, with small groups of children – up to the age of six – spend half of each day outside getting close to nature... climbing, playing and getting muddy.

And the benefits? Research by the University of Heidelberg, Germany, assessed children in their first year of elementary school, comparing those who had attended forest kindergartens with those coming from standard kindergartens. In six categories – including cognitive tasks, social behaviour, creativity and physical ability – Waldkindergarten graduates significantly outperformed their peers.

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TOTAL TRANSFORMATION IN MILTON KEYNES

With a 10-year contract to manage five leisure centres in Milton Keynes, leisure operator 1Life is has embarked on a £1.3m investment programme to breathe new life into the portfolio

Innovation runs right through the core of the new and improved Woughton Leisure Centre, which has been given the 1Life treatment.

Having recently won a 10-year contract to manage five leisure facilities in Milton Keynes, leisure operator 1Life embarked on a £1.3m investment programme to breathe new life into the portfolio, with Woughton Leisure Centre becoming the jewel in the crown.

What was once an ageing 1970s facility on the brink of closure has been transformed into a cutting edge operation with physical activity options for all the family. 1Life has combined its exercise adherence knowledge with the guiding principles in the government's recent *Sporting Future* strategy to bring the centre into the 21st century.

A clever conversion of under-utilised theatre space has seen the site become the UK's first Group Fitness Centre of Excellence, while the complete reimagining of the gym and studios makes it the first leisure centre in the world to offer Immersive Cycling classes.

What makes 1Life's reinvention of Woughton Leisure Centre all the more remarkable is the vast array of challenges the operator needed to overcome in creating a sustainable activity hub for the whole community.

The challenge

Milton Keynes is widely regarded as one of the toughest markets in the country for local authority operators, having one of the highest densities of private gyms in the country, in addition to soaring rates of inactivity and obesity. The city was last year dubbed "the fattest place in England" with almost three quarters of the Milton Keynes's population overweight or obese.

According to Paul Sanders, assistant director of community facilities for Milton Keynes Council: "Woughton Leisure Centre is in an area of deprivation with a lot of social issues and it is the residents in these areas who we really want to be



THE TRIP™ - a fully immersive fitness class

engaging through physical activity."

Until recently, Milton Keynes Council had been significantly subsidising Woughton Leisure Centre and was seriously considering closing the facility in the face of ongoing austerity, despite the clear local need for accessible exercise provision. With this in mind, 1Life examined a number of different options based on the competition issues in the marketplace and also the opportunities to be creative engaging the local population.

"We just didn't feel that doing a traditional gym extension was going to enable us to achieve the council's objective, which was to maximise savings,

and enable us to compete in a sustainable way in the marketplace," says operations director Stephen Waterman.

The solutions

One of the most distinctive aspects of Woughton Leisure Centre was its old and unused theatre. Where some operators would have seen wasted space, 1Life saw the potential for a groundbreaking group exercise development.

Making use of the unique setting and its high ceilings, the operator has converted the space into the UK's first ever Group Fitness Centre of Excellence. Boasting five studio spaces which offer in excess of 160 instructor-led classes, plus 80 virtual classes a week, the centre hosts a comprehensive range of group exercise opportunities designed to appeal to all demographics, particularly females.

Having witnessed the boom in boutique fitness in nearby London, 1Life has sought to tap into the resultant consumer demand and deliver a solution that appeals to the people who wouldn't typically use the gym. The operator has created a broad suite of options and price plans so

THE 1LIFE JOURNEY

In 2013 the company underwent a root and branch transformation which saw it change from Leisure Connection to become 1Life: an aspirational brand that puts people – staff, clients, customers and community – at its heart.

that consumers can tap into packages that suit their particular needs.

"The vast majority of the participation that will take place at Woughton Leisure Centre will be from people within the local catchment. In addition, we're also aiming to attract customers from across the whole of Milton Keynes and Buckinghamshire," added Waterman.

"We've concentrated efforts on creating a centre of excellence, which will have city-wide scope to increase participation, and also regionally and beyond."

The future of group fitness

As has become the operator's hallmark, utilising the latest technology has played a central role in 1Life's regeneration of Woughton Leisure Centre. Nowhere is this more evident than in the Group Cycling Studio, where the operator has partnered with group fitness giant Les Mills to make Woughton the first leisure centre in the world to offer a completely unique group cycling experience.

Called THE TRIP™, this immersive fitness class takes participants on an exciting virtual cycling tour of futuristic cityscapes and alpine vistas, enhanced by the most advanced audio-visual equipment, cinema-sized screens and premium Stages Indoor Cycling bikes.

By choosing Stages bikes, 1Life benefits from exercise bikes which have instantly adjustable resistance, a console per bike and Stages Power Meters.

In time, these extra features will enable 1Life to provide more training facilities and tailored classes for local cycling clubs – helping to further establish Woughton as a community hub for all types of activity.

In addition to offering a range of Les Mills' world-leading group fitness classes, 1Life expects to work even more closely with the fitness firm as Woughton is set



The innovative solutions and transformed facilities



to serve as a hub for Les Mills instructor training and educational sessions.

"Les Mills are proud to partner with 1Life at the revolutionised Woughton Leisure Centre," said Les Mills UK chief executive, Martin Franklin.

"The investment and commitment to develop both their instructor team to elite level across the board and the facility will combine to create an amazing experience for the people of Milton Keynes."

A new way of working

By eschewing the typical leisure operator approach of simply installing a new gym in favour of a range of innovative and targeted leisure offers, 1Life expects to lead a new era of emphasis on group exercise within leisure centres, offering tailored solutions for a wide range of

demographics and encouraging everyone to get the most out of life. "Many authorities are now looking to partners such as 1Life to deliver these innovative ideas," says Paul Sanders.

"This approach will ensure that leisure facilities can safeguard their future and engage ever more people in activity."

SERIES ROADMAP

This series of promotional features outlines the raft of innovative leisure projects that 1Life has introduced as part of its new contract in Milton Keynes

CONTENTS

1. Introduction to 1Life (HCM Jan 2016, p.40)
2. How the MK contract was won
3. Transforming Woughton Leisure Centre
4. How we turned a tractor shed into a functional training hub
5. Tackling inactivity at Windmill Hill Golf Centre



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JUNK THE JUNK

Obesity levels are reaching epidemic proportions, with poor diet choices being one of the contributing factors. Is it time for the health and fitness sector to take the lead and stop serving unhealthy food in its facilities? **Kath Hudson** reports

There's a new sugar tax at Sheffield International Venues (SIV). This is the ground-breaking move, announced in July, which will see the trust adding a 20 pence charge to all drinks with added sugar sold at cafés and vending machines across its 11 sports and leisure facilities.

In May 2016, then chancellor George Osborne announced a new sugar tax on the soft drinks industry, aimed at high-sugar drinks – a move endorsed by the health community. The tax, however, isn't officially expected to come into

force until 2018 at the earliest – and SIV's early move makes it the first leisure operator in the UK to introduce a sugar tax on unhealthy fizzy drinks.

Steve Brailey, CEO of SIV, says the income from the additional levy at SIV facilities will be reinvested in its entirety in obesity and diabetes prevention programmes. "We're proud to be the first leisure operator in the UK to make this bold move," he adds.

He continues: "Obesity is a major issue in Sheffield, with more than half of all adults in the city obese or

overweight, and this is contributing to an alarming rise in type 2 diabetes.

"By introducing the sugar tax, we hope to shift customer demand from fizzy drinks to healthy alternatives. By reinvesting all money generated through the tax in new health projects, we also hope to further improve the health and wellbeing of Sheffield people."

So should other operators follow suit or, with pressure on the bottom line and high customer demand for post-workout treats, is this really too tough an ask? We ask the experts.



Tam Fry Child Obesity Forum: Spokesperson

With 25 per cent of four-year-olds and a third of 11-year-olds either overweight or obese, we have an emergency on our hands. It's high time the government took hold of nutrition: making good food cheaper, unhealthy food more expensive, and holding the food industry to account.

However, the health and fitness sector can't wait until this happens. The industry is promoting healthier lifestyles and behaviour change, so it has a duty to its clients not to tempt them into poor food choices. Every measure should be taken to improve the food offering in clubs, or stop serving food altogether. Too many people reward themselves with an unhealthy treat after exercise, often putting back

more calories than they've just expended – and by selling junk food, operators are perpetuating this habit.

I appreciate this is even more difficult in times of austerity. Vending machines and processed food are undeniably easy ways for operators to make money and, sadly, even hospitals are relying on the sale of junk food to remain afloat.

Junk food is cheaper and more convenient to sell: 55 snack bars take up the same space as three bananas and have a longer shelf life. It's also much cheaper to buy in processed food than healthy food, and there's more demand for it.

However, it's been shown that it's also possible to make money selling healthy food. If operators want to be consistent with their message, and make a difference to the nation's health, they should refuse to sell anything that isn't healthy.

Vending machines in clubs typically sell unhealthy, sugar-filled junk food and drinks

It's unethical to invite people with medical conditions exacerbated by sugar into an environment where junk food is sold and heavily promoted – Craig Lister

Craig Lister

The Green Gym: Managing director

I believe it's unethical to invite people via exercise referral, who have medical conditions exacerbated by sugar intake, into an environment where junk food is both sold and heavily promoted. We wouldn't surround people who are giving up smoking with cigarettes.

Too much sugar is harmful and often highly addictive; many people suffering from obesity and type 2 diabetes have strong addictions and little willpower when faced with sugary products. We really have to help them, not make things harder for them.

Many of the products currently on offer at health and fitness facilities contain more calories than the average person expends in their average workout. So some people – who have come to the facility to get fitter and healthier – will leave having consumed more calories than they've burned. The food offering is getting in the way of operators helping their clients to achieve their health goals.

Equally, eye-level vending machines that target children serve to establish the negative habit of eating sugar after exercise. With childhood obesity already such an issue, those in the business of promoting a healthy lifestyle should not be doing this.

Healthy food can work as an option. Franchising out either the whole operation to a local operator, or buying in from local operators, are both ways that are proven to work.

When I was group health and fitness manager at Jubilee Hall [a leisure trust in London], we franchised the café out to someone who was able to offer healthy rice and pasta dishes. It was so successful that people would come for lunch even if they weren't working out at the club. I'd like to see operators offering healthier sandwiches and tasty, appetising fruit salads. Even without a lot of effort, healthy food can look fantastic and deliver a healthy profit margin.

The industry now has excellent staff, qualifications, facilities and equipment, but the food offering is all too frequently

letting us down. It's the last barrier the sector has to a closer relationship with the healthcare sector: it sends out the wrong messages and gets in the way of the sector reaching its potential.





People may eat more calories than they burn if they opt for an unhealthy post-workout snack

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Craig Senior

MyActive: Group food, beverage and retail manager

With all of our decisions, we consult staff and members – and the message that consistently comes back to us is that people want choice. Some families allow their kids to have sweets after swimming and that's their treat of the week. We don't want to take away that choice.

However, we have made unhealthy options more expensive in order to subsidise the healthy options: we've lowered the price of fruit and some healthy items are sold at cost. People often associate fresh with expensive, but we want to change that.

We try to make the healthy options as appealing as possible and have introduced a menu that allows people to pick and

choose healthy foods to create a meal, such as seared chicken breast, salmon or halloumi with a carb and a vegetable. This is also offered to children, with a 'Super Dudes' menu to try and educate them to make the right food choices.

In addition, we take care to source the best quality ingredients and regularly update staff training to ensure food is cooked in the healthiest way – for example, grilled or griddled rather than fried.

Meanwhile, by placing fruit pots, yoghurts and granola bars on the counter as opposed to confectionery, we aim to point our clients in the right direction. Similarly, fruit platters are offered at children's parties rather than crisps.

However, we see our role as educating and helping, not preaching. We don't want to make our clients feel guilty about things and we try to offer choice for all, rather than focusing on particular demographics.

Gareth Dix

Tempus Leisure: Health and wellbeing manager

I think we should be aspiring to ban all unhealthy food and junk food from leisure centres and health clubs, and Tempus would definitely like to be part of that movement, but it can't be achieved in isolation. It needs to be part of a joined-up effort from all public health venues, including hospitals.

Nationwide, there needs to be a bigger push towards healthy eating, including a review of sports sponsorship and junk food marketing. Children bring Gatorade

into our centres to drink because they've been watching their idols drinking it during the European football championships.

Our approach to food and beverage is to be customer-led, but we've made an effort to promote the healthier options and gradually phase out unhealthy options. Some of our centres no longer sell chips, for example. All that said, we live in a customer-orientated world and we need to give our customers what they want – and some like the convenience of vending machines. However, we're continually looking into healthy options for vending – and we always aim to vend bottled water as an alternative to soft drinks. ●



I think we should aspire to ban unhealthy food from health clubs, but it can't be achieved in isolation. It needs to be part of a joined-up effort – Gareth Dix

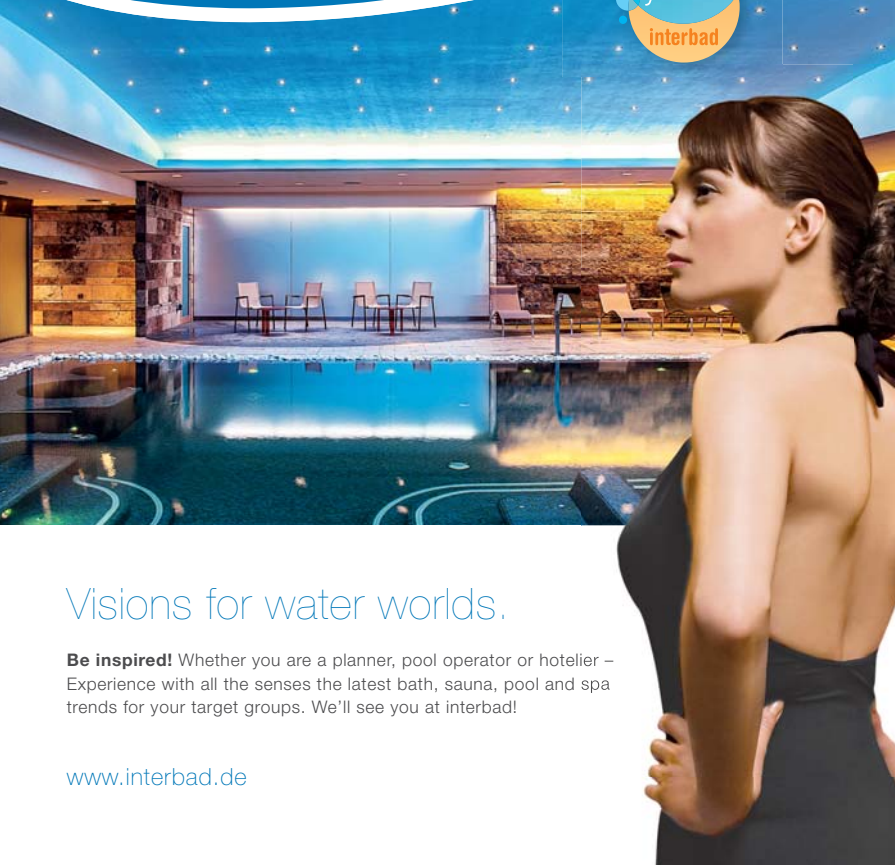


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SHAPING UP

According to the World Health Organization, by 2014, 39 per cent of the world's population was overweight. With many people getting lost in a maze of conflicting advice, there's a clear role for the fitness sector to step in and help. **Kath Hudson** reports on some of the programmes that aim to remove the guesswork

Virtuagym's nutrition module

Software provider Virtuagym offers a nutrition module that members can either download as a nutrition app, or else access via an online club portal to track their exercise and food intake, as well as monitor sleep. Both the app and portal can be bespoke branded for individual clubs.

The food app generates personalised nutrition plans based on a variety of goals and lifestyles, or alternatively plans can be assigned by a coach. All nutrition plans are based on gender, height, weight, lifestyle and goals. The system isn't restrictive in choice of food, but instead gives calorie and macronutrient targets. Users can scan their food and drink intake using barcode scanners, or combine products and save them on the system as meals they want to re-use.

Meanwhile, users of the Virtuagym fitness app can choose from 250 ready-made workouts, as well as adding exercises via their activity calendar. They can also upload data from activity trackers. The two Virtuagym apps – food and fitness – are also integrated, meaning that logged activities directly impact the daily calorie count, giving a larger calorie allowance following exercise.

All tracked progress can be accessed by coaches, allowing for effective guidance of large groups of clients, both in person and virtually. This community can then be used as a client communication tool, to share nutrition information as well as tips on healthy recipes.

The Virtuagym apps can integrate food and fitness



An online tie-up allows you to order the right food

PHOTOS: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM

Active Nutrition

Active Nation has white labelled the The Retention People's Nutrition Complete programme as Active Nutrition. This offers a structured weight change plan with recipe and meal ideas, plus a traffic light guide to show what's healthy.

There's also the functionality to order the relevant shopping from a local supermarket, via a link-up with online shopping tool mySupermarket.co.uk, and have it delivered to your home.

People can buy an Active Nutrition membership online, or it's free for those with a standard exercise-based membership. Users receive a log-in to the Active Nutrition portal, where they can personalise their account according to goals, habits, height, weight, dietary preferences and so on. A personalised meal plan is then created, showing recipes and the ingredients needed; people can veto anything they don't like until they get their ideal nutrition plan.

Activity trackers can also be linked with the profile, or else users can upload this information manually. Graphs show progress for calories burned and consumed, activity levels and weight changes, while photos can be added to track progress.

Users also have access to lifestyle and wellness support on the website, where new articles are posted each month.



Nuffield Health's food clubs can answer participants' questions and provide that essential group motivation

Nuffield Health: Healthy Weight Programme

Nuffield Health launched its Healthy Weight Programme in 2015 with the intention of putting an end to fad diets. This 12-week personalised programme helps individuals reach their healthy weight in a healthy way and is available in a number of Nuffield Health Fitness and Wellbeing gyms, to both members and non-members.

The programme consists of two nutrition consultations with a nutritional therapist; two Health MOTs; two one-to-one exercise sessions with a PT; and access to group food club workshops and specially designed exercise classes.

Nutritional therapists go through lifestyle demands and medical conditions to identify the right health goals and foods

for each person. PTs track progress, checking measures such as blood pressure, cholesterol and BMI both at the beginning and throughout the programme. Meanwhile the two personalised exercise sessions take place one at the beginning of the scheme, and one when participants are fitter and stronger.

As weight management is proven to be easier and more effective when surrounded by others going through the same thing, the rest of the programme is delivered in a group setting: exercise taster sessions to give participants the skills and confidence to join timetable classes, and food clubs to answer practical questions such as how to measure portion sizes and how to eat when travelling or at work.

Jiyo

Integrated with MINDBODY, Jiyo is a comprehensive digital platform that aims to support users to become their best selves through a mixture of education, intuitive tracking technology and behavioural nudges.

Its aim is to make users more aware of their behaviour, as well as identifying their unique sets of strengths, by offering insights and suggestions based on observations about their behaviour.

For example, Jiyo may note that the user tends to sleep less when he or she uses his or her phone late at night, and may automatically suggest a meditation session in the evenings. Similarly, if Jiyo notices a user has been sitting

for a long period of time, it may suggest a brief desk-based exercise. From a nutrition perspective, in addition to offering behavioural nudges – such as reminding a user to drink water throughout the day, or to abate cravings for snacks by keeping cut vegetables on hand – Jiyo offers curated content from leading experts in the industry, including from renowned nutritionist and author Kimberly Snyder.

Videos and articles from experts offer information on nutrition topics, from the health benefits of chia seeds and bee pollen to the little-known truth about zero-calorie foods and their unhealthy ingredients.



Jiyo nudges users to eat healthier foods



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MEND aims to educate whole families

► MyActive: MEND

An evidence-based programme for children – devised by dietitians, psychologists and fitness instructors – MEND puts the emphasis on lifestyle and fun. It takes a holistic approach, looking at the whole family and empowering parents to change their children's behaviour first, and then their own.

Parents are educated in making healthier food choices, such as how to read labels and how to assess what's healthy and what isn't, as well as suitable portion sizes. They're also shown how to play with their children to encourage them to be more physically active. This might mean signposting them to local

amenities such as parks, or encouraging them to introduce a walk to school each day.

For young children, the sessions take place once a week for 10 weeks; older children come twice weekly. MyActive tries to embed every programme in the local community, so people can continue to be active even when the programme finishes.

At the moment it's a commissioned service, but MyActive plans to remodel the MEND brand to extend its reach; some of its principles are already being exported into MyActive's wider golf, leisure and food experience offerings.

Vivafit

Women-only fitness franchise Vivafit offers a clinical nutrition programme as part of its membership, which includes two consultations with a qualified nutritionist, supported by weekly customised coaching emails and message-based access to a nutritionist at all times.

The nutritionist completes a health questionnaire with each participant – taking into account factors like sleep quality and stress levels, as well as assessing eating style and lifestyle patterns – before drawing up a personalised eating plan which takes into account all of these lifestyle factors.

The member is weighed and measured each month, with the information recorded and assessed by the nutritionist to see if the plan needs to be adjusted. The exercise element is overseen by fitness staff. ●



Vivafit: Online access to a nutritionist

A WORKOUT WITH HERITAGE

When the original Les Mills gym opened in Auckland in 1968, it attracted a large following of athletes. Today, thousands of clubs benefit from the brand's high-powered approach to fitness

After 25 years of continuous development, with a dedicated team of researchers and scientists now in its squad, it is undeniable that BODYPUMP™, the fuel that spread the Les Mills fire across the globe, will continue to evolve and endeavor to give revolutionary workouts for years to come. BODYPUMP has been challenging muscles for decades. From its humble beginnings as a dumbbell class in a basement gym, to the biggest fitness class in clubs around the world, this is the BODYPUMP story.

While some are born into families of businessmen, craftsmen or even fishermen, BODYPUMP was born into a family of athletes.

The Mills family had athletic blood pumping through their veins long before



Today's fitness members are looking for more athletic-based classes



The first Les Mills gym members were mostly serious athletes

the creation of the first Les Mills World of Fitness. Phillip Mills is the second generation to drive the family business and he believes authenticity is the reason BODYPUMP became so popular so fast.

When Phillip's father, Les Mills, opened the first Les Mills World of Fitness gym in Auckland in 1968, most of its members were athletes. With Les competing in four Olympics between 1958 and 1972, and Phillip representing New Zealand for 10 years in track and field – it is no surprise that much of their community was from a sporting background.

Long before the creation of BODYPUMP, when fitness for the masses involved a lot of aerobics and tae-bo, the Les Mills family and its gym, were weight training. It was this athletic style, in an

environment full of elite athletes, that people seemed drawn to. Soon a simple, but popular, dumbbell class was offered within the gym.

"People loved group fitness but wanted something more athletic than the stereotypical 'leotards and legwarmers' classes," says Phillip Mills.

The benefits of strength training on fitness and functionality meant the class quickly became so popular that the amount of dumbbells needed made the whole thing almost unfeasible. This issue created the first step that took a simple dumbbell class towards the global phenomenon that is BODYPUMP today.

With his wife Jackie, also a former New Zealand athlete and gymnast, Phillip created a group barbell class as a more



Les Mills pioneered the concept of 'strong is the new skinny' well before it entered the mainstream market

efficient system to deliver all the benefits of strength training.

BODYPUMP for every body

Feminism was also taking off in New Zealand at this time. Women were chasing strength and empowerment not only metaphorically, but physically as well. "We wanted to break the stigma that women couldn't, or shouldn't, weight train", says chief creative officer Dr Jackie Mills.

Jackie knew weight training was perceived as 'masculine' exercise that created bulky, muscular bodies. She had been incorporating weight training into her exercise through her gymnastic career and knew that the right type of strength

With so much goodness packed into just one class, the BODYPUMP concept quickly shot into the international fitness stratosphere

training could create a strong lean body. Championing "strong is the new skinny" well before its time, Jackie and Phillip emphasised the gains involved in strength training: from cardiovascular health to joint functionality to hormone responses.

Participants soon realised that weight training in a group environment

accompanied by great music, and led by a motivating coach, was more fun than a traditional weights workout.

With so much goodness packed into just one exercise class, the BODYPUMP concept quickly shot into the international fitness stratosphere.

Now BODYPUMP can be found in more than 15,000 health and fitness clubs around the world. Read the full story at: www.lesmills.com/uk/knowledge/newsfeed/history-of-bodypump/

This January Les Mills will launch its 100th BODYPUMP release. That's 25 years of BODYPUMP classes across the globe. Find out how your club can get involved at www.bodypump.com

Make your BODYPUMP 100 January launch your best ever. Book your free space at a Power of Events seminar today at www.bodypump.com



Les Mills classes now inspire people all over the world

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Helpful HELPING

How can personal trainers help people become more engaged in changing their activity behaviours? Are counselling skills the answer? **Debbie Lawrence** shares her thoughts

There's been talk recently about the value of offering PTs training in counselling, the idea being that they would be better able to support people through the process of behaviour change.

I suggested similar 20 years ago when I was starting out on my therapy training, and I can certainly see the value of these skills in supporting clients. However, I wonder if it's really just about skills.

Yes, there are skills that can be practised and developed, such as active listening, open questions and reflective statements – skills that are already covered by many personal training qualifications. However, my view is that it isn't that simple, with the skills aspect really just the first step.

I use the term 'helpful helping' to describe an approach that I advocate. This approach isn't something that can be learned in just one sitting – it's a much longer and deeper journey.

DEFINING 'HELPFUL HELPING'

The process of successful change depends on a person's motivation, their self-belief and their commitment to take action and use all the inner and outer resources they possess to keep going.

For some people, once the decision to make a change is made, the rest is about planning, action and doing what needs to be done to achieve the goal. This is where PTs are helpful, because they have the know-how – the tools and skills to help people achieve their fitness goals. This is where they can work their magic.

However, for many people the decision doesn't happen that quickly. It's a slower process, and one that involves swinging between wanting to change

and not wanting to change. This is where the 'helpful helping' element is needed.

At the decision-making stage, the focus should be on building the individual's motivation – and this really needs to come from inside. Nevertheless, there are ways to support this externally.

The way *not* to support motivation is by telling someone what they should do, what's wrong with what they're currently doing, or what we think the benefits of them changing would be for them.

Helping isn't about judging, blaming or shaming – and yet, unwittingly, this is often what happens. Rather than building motivation, this often builds more discord, defence and resistance – all of which sways the balance towards giving up.

What's needed is someone who can listen empathetically and make contact with the discord, defence and resistance – someone who doesn't feel the need to change it, fix it, blame it or shame it, but who can 'move and dance' with the uncomfortable internal struggles in an accepting way.

Having such a person by your side can be life-changing. It promotes self-acceptance and acknowledgement of things that are usually swept under the carpet. Helping someone get to know their demons – all the voices that stop them making changes – provides a strong foundation on which autonomous decisions and choices can be made. It doesn't necessarily lead to immediate behaviour change, but it does make everything more conscious.

FACILITATING THE CONVERSATION

The skills aspect is arguably the easiest part to learn: listening, open questions, reflective statements. The challenge is developing the deeper awareness – how



Clients often need an empathetic approach



PTs must learn how to tune in to clients more deeply

Helpful helping is about releasing the need to control. If we haven't lived another person's life, how can we know what's right for them?

to truly tune in to a person, so they feel free to be themselves and do what they need to do in their own time.

Learning the art of facilitating the conversation is key, so the person begins to speak about the potential benefits were they to make a change. When they're able to vocalise this for themselves, they're on the road to building the motivation to change. Their focus becomes less on why they can't do something and more on why they want to do it.

Helpful helping is about working with the person, not working on them. It's about finding out how they got where they are, and why they stay there, and only then moving on from there.

HOW TO BE MORE HELPFUL

Primarily, helpfulness is about having an attitude of compassion and trust: compassion for the struggles and

challenges the person faces, and trust in them that they will know – and do – what's right for them. It's a willingness to believe in people's potential to hold the reins themselves when the time is right for them to shift and make changes.

Being helpful is about helping someone see the resources and skills they have in themselves, affirming and accentuating all the positive things they do and building them up rather than putting them down.

Helpful helping is also about releasing the need to control. If we haven't lived another person's life, how can we possibly know what's right for them? Letting someone make their own decisions in their own time builds autonomy. Every decision they make is an opportunity to learn and build personal power. Every decision someone else makes simply builds dependence.

Finally, helpful helping is about self-awareness and connection – looking deep

inside ourselves to explore the prejudices we might have, the judgements we might make about people who are overweight, who aren't active, who drink or smoke, who don't follow healthy eating guidance.

The more mindful we become of our pre-judgements and how unhelpful they are, the more able we are to resist projecting them onto others or letting them get in the way of helping and showing empathy. ●

ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Debbie Lawrence studied integrative counselling to a post-graduate level. She has worked as a voluntary counsellor in a

GP surgery and a school, and has since explored a range of other therapeutic approaches such as motivational interviewing and solution-focused therapy. She's currently qualification lead (sport, active health and fitness) for VTCT. debbielawrence@vtct.org.uk



A NEW GENERATION OF LEADERS

The fitness sector needs leaders who are willing to challenge everything that's gone before, as ukactive's **Geraldine Tuck** explains

Clear career progression, regular sharpening of skills and targeted talent development are the bedrock of many industries. But in the physical activity sector, we often rely more on the natural drive and passion of our people to achieve success in our workplaces. Is that enough?

Having experienced first-hand the ukactive Future Leaders learning programme at the world-class IESE business school in Barcelona this summer, I can now clearly see that it's time for a new approach. The nature of our service-driven environments make it a challenge to step back from the day-to-day business, but this is essential to assess where we're going. Only through regular reassessment can we identify the real change that will lead to sustained business growth and development in our sector.

A NEED FOR TOP TALENT

As former Fitness First CEO Andy Cosslett explained when he addressed the group one evening, in terms of our staff, we've won half the battle in attracting them, but there's a long way to go before



The industry attracts passionate people, but it must also nurture them

industries with more tangible career paths and professional reputations, including clear graduate-level entry routes. These are sectors where programmes such as Future Leaders are commonplace.

That's not to say we necessarily need top-flight graduates to transform our businesses, but we shouldn't hide from the

programme. We know that the best results for our sector will come from those with vision and clarity of thought, rather than those who simply follow what has gone before. We need a generation of leaders who are ready to break the mould and find new models of success – people who will question everything we know and interrogate the assumptions of the past. These leaders will be eager for innovation and genuinely excited by the chance to shape the future.

In times of certainty and prosperity, a winning mindset may well be enough. But as our sector matures to face volatile and complex challenges, do our teams possess the skills to tackle these problems and transform threat into opportunity? ●

We need leaders who will question everything we know and interrogate the assumptions of the past

we win the war. People are the most important element of our sector and there was an overriding sense, even from our most gifted young leaders, that their skills are being undernourished.

"The winning mindset of the people we attract is fantastic, but our development of them is key," said Cosslett. "Creating an environment where people feel respected and are given the opportunities to learn will set our teams up for success and ultimately ensure that our businesses will thrive."

We should also consider the reasons why, as a sector, we generally fail to attract Oxbridge/Russell Group graduates. All too often, they're tempted away from us by

fact that the sector's struggles to attract top talent reflect a need for stronger programmes for management, fast-tracking and leadership.

BREAKING THE MOULD

Investing in our teams is the best investment we can make. A recent ACAS report estimated that it costs more than £30,000 to replace a single employee; there can be no doubt that retaining or re-training staff is often a much more cost-effective solution.

At IESE, a highlight for me was witnessing the huge thirst for knowledge and development shared by each individual present at this inaugural

Want to know more?

To understand more about Future Leaders, or to discuss the need for programmes that develop our next generation of leaders, contact geraldinetuck@ukactive.org.uk



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2016 IHRSA EUROPEAN CONGRESS

Kristen Walsh looks ahead to this year's event which takes place in Seville, Spain, in October

The IHRSA European Congress has been designed to provide thought-provoking commentary on trends shaping business and the fitness industry across Europe and beyond; while taking place in Europe, the learnings for club operators have relevance far beyond this continent.

Presentations from experts from inside and outside the health club

industry are complemented by networking events, focus group discussions, and lunch and evening receptions – all of which offers great opportunities to build relationships with colleagues from other markets.

Last year's event, held in Marseille, France, attracted more than 550 participants from a record 42 countries and six continents, and the 16th Annual IHRSA European

Congress – taking place on 17–20 October at the Barceló Sevilla Renacimiento in Seville, Spain – is expected to attract similar numbers.

You might be an owner, general manager, department manager or investor in the industry. You might work for a single health club company, multi-site operator or franchise. The event is ideal for anyone in a decision-making role in the health club business.

INNOVATION THE LEGO WAY

Two keynote speakers will address Congress attendees this year.

The first is David Robertson PhD, a professor at Wharton School who specialises in global innovation and IT, and who also authored the book *Brick by Brick: How Lego reinvented its innovation system and conquered the toy industry*.

His session – entitled 'Innovation management: The Lego Story' – will explain how managers are bombarded with dozens of theories on how to manage innovation. These theories all

promise growth and profits, but the actual results are less positive.

Using the case study of Lego, Robertson's session will explore how to manage innovation across a company.

In 2003, Lego almost went bankrupt. Lego's managers had followed the advice of experts – "head for blue ocean", "practice disruptive innovation", "open innovation", "develop the full

ABOUT THE VENUE

The Barceló Sevilla Renacimiento is an iconic hotel located on the banks of the Guadalquivir River, and is a perfect point from which to experience Seville.

Ample transportation options are available from just outside the hotel, while a pleasant 20-minute walk over La Barqueta Bridge will bring you to Alameda de Hércules, a bustling square full of bars and café terraces. From there, it's a short stroll to historical sites such as the cathedral, the Giralda tower, the Alcázar Palace and the Santa Cruz neighbourhood.

There's plenty to do around the hotel too. Catch a live music show or sporting event at the Rocio Jurado Arena or the Olympic Stadium – both are within walking distance of the Barceló Sevilla Renacimiento – or rent bikes and ride along the river's bicycle path.

Seville, the birthplace of flamenco, is home to half a dozen tablaos (flamenco performance centres) and countless peñas (small clubs), so visitors don't have to venture far to experience the region's defining art form.

Learn more about Seville's many attractions at www.visitasevilla.es



The hotel is close to Seville's centre



Speaker David Robertson



Explore Seville's historic sites

FANCY A TRIP TO SEVILLE? – WHY YOU SHOULD ATTEND IHRSA EUROPE

So why should you attend IHRSA Europe 2016? Some of this year's highlights will include:

- One of the best networking opportunities for the industry in Europe, with more than 500 industry professionals in attendance.
- Seminars designed to help you improve your operation and grow your

business, with simultaneous translation into French, Italian, Polish, Portuguese, Russian and Spanish.

- The opportunity to meet one-to-one with leading suppliers of fitness equipment and services.
- The opportunity to step back from your day-to-day operations and plan for a better future.

- Tours of some of the area's leading health and fitness clubs.

Log on to ihrsa.org/congress to learn more, to register for this event and to reserve a hotel room. Should you have any questions, please contact us by emailing IHRSAevents@ihrsa.org or calling +1 617-316-6796

EUROPEAN CLUB LEADERSHIP AWARD

The European Club Leadership Award recognises the European club leader who has done the most to advance his/her company and the industry through strong leadership and performance.

The 2016 award will be presented during the IHRSA European Congress. The application deadline is 9 September. For more information and to obtain an application form, visit www.ihrsa.org/awards

spectrum of innovation" – and that advice almost led them to ruin.

But in one of the most successful turnarounds in modern business history, Lego restructured its innovation management system and saved the company. Today, it's the most profitable and fastest growing company in the toy industry: sales have grown by 24 per cent a year, and profits by 45 per cent, every year for the past four years. The goal of this session is tell the Lego story and the lessons to be learned.

DIGITAL DISRUPTION

Meanwhile Marcos Eguillor, managing partner of BinaryKnowledge and adjunct professor at IE Business School in Spain, will present the theme of 'Going digital: The disruptive opportunity for the global health club & fitness business'.

In his session, Eguillor will:

- Review developing trends in the digital market, and discuss what digital transformation really means to your business.
- Offer an understanding of new users and their demands for connected fitness and e-health solutions.

- Offer insights into how the future of health clubs and the fitness industry might look globally, compared to the journeys lived by other industries.
- Explain what to do – and how to do it – when facing and embracing these changes, and dealing with the competition.

Other presenters will include IHRSA board chair Rasmus Ingerslev, who will present on 'Growing the fitness industry through innovation and technology'.

The full speaker line-up for the event is available at www.ihrsa.org/congress



Speaker Marcos Eguillor

ABOUT IHRSA

Founded in 1981, IHRSA – the International Health, Racquet & Sportsclub Association – is the only global trade association, representing more than 10,000 health and fitness facilities and suppliers worldwide. Locate an IHRSA club at www.healthclubs.com

To learn how IHRSA can help your business thrive, visit www.ihrsa.org





For those who find the gym intimidating, gym budd-e can address their concerns 24/7

REVOLUTIONISING THE GYM FLOOR

oneone fitness, UK developer of premium software based solutions, has launched gym budd-e, an interactive fitness kiosk designed to transform members' gym floor experience

INFORMATION PROVIDER

The comprehensive and customisable toolbox of fitness and facility information provides extensive exercise support including health and fitness calculators, unique workout programmes and exercise demonstrations. "A recent survey, carried out by Virgin Active, found around 26 per cent of 2,000 adults questioned avoid gyms entirely due to reservations about operating equipment and lack of support. Gym budd-e is able to break down this barrier by being on-hand to address members' concerns, 24/7.

STAFF SUPPORTER

Gym budd-e complements a full staff quota, dispersing information to members quickly and easily, especially at peak times when fitness professionals are busy. It further ensures staff receive member feedback instantly via the provision of its feedback function. Members can submit

comments and queries from gym budd-e which are emailed directly to relevant staff, giving operators instant access to the valuable opinions of their customers.

The information toolbox also showcases staff bios and quickly connects members to a fitness professional best suited to cater to their individual needs. Its sleek, high tech, HD screen is an additional channel operators can use to promote the services offered by their staff.

REVENUE GENERATOR

Internal and external promotional messages can be featured on gym budd-e's HD touchscreen, with the option of selling advertising space to external companies who wish to promote products and services to thousands of members. Savvy operators can make gym budd-e a profitable additional revenue stream from the point of installation. Gyms can also promote their own services to encourage secondary spend.



PT's benefit from gym budd-e as it's helped them connect with members



Third Space, Canary Wharf in London, is using gym budd-e to improve the member experience



Members can use gym budd-e to check class availability

THIRD SPACE

One operator already benefiting from gym budd-e is Third Space, Canary Wharf, which installed the fitness kiosk prior to the product's official UK launch. Offering members three floors of extensive training space, a comprehensive class timetable and leading fitness facilities including an indoor climbing wall and full sized basketball court, Third Space use the multi-functional toolbox to improve member retention and make their facility information more easily accessible.

Magda Slawinska, fitness manager at Third Space, explains: "Many of our members have fed back the value of gym budd-e, appreciating the availability of our class timetable on the gym floor and benefiting from effortlessly finding and connecting with our PTs. The feedback function has also been very popular, which

is invaluable as it means we have instant access to member insight."

She adds: "The gym budd-e team are always on hand to update our features, recently they added training workouts which people can send to themselves via email, making information easily accessible and reducing our carbon footprint at the same time. Instant access to these workouts gives our members more variety, allowing them to switch up their workouts and have fun with their training."

Third Space personal trainer, Nadir Hergunerler has witnessed an increase in clients since the installation of the fitness kiosk, stating: "Reviewing my PT profile on gym budd-e makes people feel more inclined to approach me about my services. They're already aware of my specialisms and availability and feel confident getting in contact."

Third Space members' most popular gym budd-e features revealed in 16,620 page views:

Training information

40%

Customer content

29%

Trainer profiles

27%

Other

4%

With more and more digitally-savvy gym members who demand information instantly, it is important for operators to embrace tech-led initiatives designed to improve members' overall gym experience.

Stephen Parkes, CEO of oneone fitness and founder of gym budd-e, says: "We've created a high-spec, quality information toolbox for the modern-day gym floor. Gym budd-e can be utilised by a broad range of fitness professionals and meets the demands of digitally-driven gym goers. Its sophisticated programming means gym budd-e can be constantly updated and tailored to suit the needs of its users."

COMPANY PROFILE

Founded in 2013, oneone fitness is a UK based developer of innovative, premium software based solutions, specifically designed for the fitness industry. Its offering includes the market leading fitness support terminal, gym budd-e; an aesthetically impressive, reliable, durable, fully interactive source of fitness expertise and support, which can be easily integrated into any health club environment.

oneone Fitness passionately believes in leveraging its in-house fitness expertise to provide customisable software solutions that benefit gyms, personal trainers and individual members, simultaneously assisting both client and personal trainer retention. A firm belief in excellence and innovation lies at the heart of oneone fitness' culture, ensuring it continually strives to evolve and enhance its offering. More information about oneone fitness visit their Twitter page, @oneonefitness



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WEB: www.gymbudde.com

Up and running

What's a gym without working equipment? **Kate Corney** looks at what's new in servicing and maintenance. For more information, log on to **fitness-kit.net** and type the company name under 'keyword search'

PRECOR'S AUTOMATIC UPDATES

Precor has introduced two servicing updates to its gym products.

The new Android-based P82 console automatically downloads free software updates when connected to the web. Meanwhile, the recently launched Preva 6.0 features a modernised operating system with the ability to add digital services, customised content and third-party training apps.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **PRECOR**



MATRIX ASSET MANAGEMENT

Asset Management software by Matrix Fitness now sends customers emails if their internet-connected products are offline, have error codes or need servicing.

The updated system provides error code descriptions with diagrams, part lists and owner manuals, to make fault-reporting accurate. The system also provides usage patterns, so customers can rotate equipment for even wear.

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **MATRIX**



GRS ON-THE-GO SITE

Gym Repair Services (GRS) has a new mobile-responsive website for its Concept2 maintenance and equipment servicing requirements.

GRS services range from one-off repairs and maintenance to all-inclusive bespoke service contracts and sales of new and refurbished fitness equipment.

The new website is designed to provide a more user-friendly and engaging experience. Adrian Dockerill, GRS owner, explains: "The site also has downloadable manuals, a troubleshooting guide and a convenient online booking system to book a fault or service call."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **GRS**



PULSE GOES ONLINE

Pulse has a new online service portal that allows centre staff to raise service calls, view the progress of repairs and request parts. The new platform also lets you store and view previous transactions, making the process for requesting new equipment parts simple.

Operations manager for Pulse Fitness, Joe Riley, says: "Moving our maintenance service online has also meant that staff can log direct requests and orders at a time that suits them, not just during the nine-to-five day."



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **PULSE**

LFCONNECT PROTECT

Life Fitness has launched LFconnect Protect, a digital service team to diagnose and fix software issues in real time for connected Life Fitness equipment.

Life Fitness says it's moving to this practical model of customer support and service to give customers confidence about its internet-connected products.

The agents provide solutions to errors and dispatch service technicians.

The service is available for all connected Life Fitness cardio platforms.



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD **LIFE FITNESS**

SERVICSPORT SERVICING AND MAINTENANCE

ServiceSport gym equipment service and repair company is now expanding its business in London with a rapid response to reported repair jobs, as well as providing UK-wide coverage using local hubs of engineers.

ServiceSport has a range of service and repair packages, from one-off repairs to full management of fitness equipment. The company also supplies refurbished parts and equipment.



fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

SERVICSPORT



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PRAMA is a new category of fitness. **PRAMA** is a revolutionary experience. **PRAMA** is simple to use. **PRAMA** means a completely **NEW** and **UNIQUE** experience for your members.

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Tech revolution

Prama from Pavigym is helping operator 1610 reach all corners of the local community

The town of Chard, which nestles in a corner of rural Somerset in the UK, seems an unlikely setting for technological innovation – but a quiet revolution is nevertheless taking place in the town's new health and fitness centre, 1610 Chard, which is home to the UK's largest Prama studio.

1610 invested £500,000 in making the centre – which opened in March of this year – the most up-to-date sports and fitness facility in Somerset. At the heart of the operation is the Prama studio, an immersive environment with interactive flooring and walls, plus full mood lighting, to create a new fitness experience for the local community.

Prama is now driving the group exercise programming at the centre, with classes hitting 94 per cent weekly occupancy, and membership sales exceeding targets within the first two months of opening.

A TAILORED APPROACH

The same has proved to be true at another 1610 centre – the King Alfred Sports Centre in Highbridge – where a Prama studio opened in 2015 as part of a £450,000 refurbishment, following severe flood damage in 2014.

Membership grew by 32 per cent in the first four months after re-opening, with Prama playing a leading role in both this and the revitalisation of the centre.

1610 CEO Tim Nightingale says: "Customers demand choice, quality, interactivity and innovation. People want to work out in environments that entertain them, and where they can socialise but still achieve their long-term goals."

"1610 has radically reviewed its operational model for the coming year, with the driver for staff being personalisation of core business operations. Prama will be a key tool in that approach, because it can be tailored to an individual's needs to help every customer achieve their own health and fitness goals."

DIVERSE USER GROUPS

1610 manages 19 leisure centres in the south-west of England, including on shared



The Prama studio in Chard has interactive walls and floors

People want to work out in environments that entertain them, and where they can socialise but still achieve their long-term goals

— Tim Nightingale



school sites; the Prama installation at the King Alfred Sports Centre was the first time the equipment has been installed on a school site anywhere in the world.

King Alfred pupils were also the first school children in the UK to try out the new Prama training technology. It has been a catalyst for many who are unsure about structured sport to engage in fitness and sign up for gym membership.

1610 has also launched a Prama Kids programme for younger children, which has been adapted for activity and storytelling. The programme appeals to both able-bodied and disabled children

thanks to the sensory and musical nature of the product.

The versatility of Prama has allowed 1610 to also use the studio with other groups, such as corporate clients and GP referral clients.

Meanwhile the success of Prama taster sessions with local football and rugby teams has also led to a new, bespoke Prama Performance service, which is expected to launch this summer.

It looks certain that the Prama technological revolution is set to continue in Somerset for some time to come.

www.pavigym.com

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(PATENT PENDING)



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TECHNOGYM

The Wellness Company

Dressed in black

Village Gym Watford's refurbishment has seen it introduce the new Diamond Black Artis range from Technogym – the first UK club to do so

► In July, following a £1.5m investment, Village Gym Watford completed a full refurbishment of its gym facilities.

To support a growing membership base, the gym floor was expanded by 20 per cent to extend all areas, including cardio, strength and functional.

Village Gym Watford was the first UK site to install the new Diamond Black Artis range from Technogym. "We invested in the new range to differentiate ourselves from our competitors, creating a truly premium experience for our members and guests," explains Anthony Heskins, general manager at Village Watford.

"The Black Artis equipment features the latest Unity digital platform, giving our members a fully personalised experience. The equipment not only looks extremely sleek, but also ties in nicely with the Village brand colours of black and green, bringing the overall visuals of the club together really well. Feedback from members in the first month has been great."

INTEGRATED SYSTEMS

The investment also included Technogym's mywellness cloud, which further enhances the user experience.

For Village, mywellness cloud presents a great opportunity to engage with members on a deeper level – and with over 400 mywellness accounts created so far, it has already proved to be a fantastic tool for the Watford fitness team.

"The fitness team know which members are on the gym floor, so the trainers can approach people knowing who they are and what activities they do, both in and



Village Gym Watford is the first UK site to offer Black Artis



Technogym recognises that our members live digital lives, and ensures fitness and wellbeing are a part of this – Tony Orme



outside the gym," says Heskins. "This also provides opportunities to boost PT revenue, by helping the fitness team engage with members."

As part of a commitment to helping members understand their health metrics, Village has also invested in a Tanita professional body composition monitor, which integrates with the mywellness system.

"We find Tanita's integration with mywellness really effective," says Heskins. "For members with injuries, we're able to use Tanita to determine any muscle imbalances. For goal-orientated members, such as those looking to lose weight, we can provide a programme based on their personal results. Using Tanita on a regular basis helps them understand their progress and the impact of looking at overall body composition."

"Technogym recognises that our members live digital lives, and ensures fitness and wellbeing are a part of this," says Tony Orme, marketing director, health & fitness for Village Hotel Club.

VERSATILE TRAINING

Village's investment also included three Technogym Skillmills. "This has been a great new toy for the gym and our members have been really excited to try it out," says Heskins.

"Skillmill has been positioned alongside our functional space, allowing us to offer our members something quite different from our competitors. It allows members to train in many different ways – such as a sled push, sprints and agility training – on just one piece of equipment. It's hugely versatile." ●

www.technogym.com



The Unity digital platform can be highly personalised

WATTBIKE

Powering players for the pitch

The Wattbike makes athletes accountable to themselves, their coaches and teammates. The consistency and reliability of the data means that there is no hiding behind the numbers, making it the perfect tool to ensure the best team is selected for the new season

PREPARING PLAYERS FOR THE PITCH

A rugby player's training routine is often perceived as being the toughest of any sport. Gruelling, physical and high intensity. The Wattbike has formed a crucial part of the England Rugby strength and conditioning programme, with players using the bike for pre-season, rehabilitation, recovery and offloading.

England coach, Eddie Jones comments: "From personal experience, I know the value of the Wattbike. Whether it's recovery from illness, rehab from injury, or pushing performance levels to new heights, the detailed data the Wattbike delivers is invaluable."

There are no secrets in rugby training, just immense attention to detail and how you use the tools at your disposal is key. Wattbike fits into this category and all the top teams are using it. We're just trying to use it more effectively!"

Newly-appointed Harlequins forwards coach, and former England forwards coach, Graham Rowntree adds: "Using the Wattbike has been one of the most influential factors in improving our fitness. In rugby it's all about repeated power outputs and being able to hold intensity into the 80th minute of a game."

The Wattbike does so much more than any other training tool; its accuracy, reliability and consistency, in regards to its training data, are all extremely precise which is great for sport specific training and when having to make comparisons between the team."

As well as testing maximum power output, the inbuilt assessments allow coaches and players to ensure they are always training in the correct 'zones', with the ability to analyse and progress this over a long period of time.

Jones continues: "The Wattbike enables the players to break new ground, uninhibited by personal expectations.

"We can accurately match up the demands of the game by position and then push the players to their limit and beyond, safe in the knowledge that there's no impact injury danger."

The Saracens, who were victorious double champions this season, winning both the Premiership and European Cup, also use the Wattbike through the season.

Phillip Morrow, performance director explains: "The Wattbike is a tough piece of training equipment, that can be used to challenge all of your energy systems as well as pushing the legs to produce force when you're fatigued. The ability to

measure power output is great for setting targets for the players as well as giving us the capability to manipulate sessions to target different aspects of training."

With six bikes, the Saracens focus on conditioning sessions throughout the season as a form of offload training, limiting the amount of running the players are doing, which is key for the larger, load bearing players. The full squad then

England Rugby head coach Eddie Jones says the data from Wattbike is 'invaluable'



Whether it's recovery from illness, rehab from injury, or pushing performance levels to new heights, the detailed data the Wattbike delivers is invaluable

England Rugby head coach Eddie Jones

work on the bikes for maximum energy sprints and general energy system training through pre-season.

Philip adds: "We also make use of the bikes a lot with our injured and rehabbing players when they are limited with the amount of 'on feet' work they can do."

Saracens and England-capped player, Richard Wigglesworth, suffered a shoulder injury this year in the Championship Cup final with just two weeks left of the season. Over the summer, he carried out a 12-week rehabilitation programme, where the Wattbike played a central role:

"My injury means I can't run for eight out of the 12-week rehab period, so I needed an alternative to maintain my fitness. The Wattbike, and the resistance it allows, are the closest thing I can do to replicate the 'running week' of pre-season training that the rest of the team will be doing," Richard says. "Rugby is obviously an extremely physically-demanding game. And power training is completely key. Powerful players win games, and training on the Wattbike plays a big part in keeping this a focus for the team."

As a team, the Saracens always finish the weight programmes with a Wattbike peak power test. We're a competitive bunch and you'll often find people crowded around your bike comparing numbers. However, it's hard to beat the power of Billy (Vunipola)!"

Saracens and England back-row, Billy Vunipola is renowned for his power and force, and is a player to be reckoned with on the Wattbike. Billy says: "The Wattbike plays a massive part of our anaerobic and off-feet, aerobic work. It saves us loading our legs every day, as in pre-season you



**Leicester City FC's
Strength & Power
Coach, Mitchell Willis is
a Wattbike advocate**

get through a lot of running, so the bikes allow us to still improve fitness but not aggravate the joints."

We use the bikes every other day through pre-season, and on Monday mornings through the season – and there's definitely no hiding on the Wattbike."

FOOTBALL

For managers and coaches, structuring their team's pre-season training correctly, and making accurate comparisons between players, makes all the difference to their prospects for the season.

Recent Premier League winners, Leicester City Football Club, had an incredible season and have been using the Wattbike for power development and conditioning since 2012. Mitchell Willis, LCFC strength & power coach, explains:

"I first came across the Wattbike when I worked with the Leicester Tigers in 2009, where they were used extensively with

the academy and first team squads. When I moved to Leicester City in 2012, the Wattbikes were amongst the first pieces of equipment that came to the new gym."

We never considered any other bikes, I knew the Wattbikes well; how to use them, the physical qualities and the amount of feedback the performance monitors provide. We have a philosophy of 'training = testing and testing = training' and we continually monitor performance, so Wattbike perfectly matches this."

The team use the bikes for power development which involves intermittent supramaximal bursts with extended recovery periods. This allows lower limb power to develop, whilst safely overloading the players using the air resistance and magnet settings. Conditioning sessions focus on longer intervals of continuous work, targeting specific energy system development.

Mitchell continues: "The bikes have also played a key role with international players who have returned late to us this pre-season – we administered additional 'off-feet' conditioning sessions using the bikes to help bring them up to speed with the rest of the squad."

Player's time on the bikes is dependent on the phase, training or injury status. Some players perform up to three sessions per week. Midfielders, Andy King and Matty James use the Wattbike frequently; Andy mainly for power development and Matty for his rehab."



Billy Vunipola, Saracens and England Back-Row, is renowned for his power

wattbike

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WEB: www.wattbike.com



**LEISURE
INDUSTRY
WEEK**
NEC Birmingham UK
20th-21st September 2016

LIV2016

We look ahead to the UK's largest trade event for leisure professionals, now entering its 28th year

A single word sits on the tip of every leisure operator's tongue: skills. And that – the continued development of the leisure workforce – is inextricably linked with the availability of top-class education, both through key delivery partners and the events calendar.

Leisure Industry Week (LIV) is keen to contribute to this agenda. Backed by a sector-specific marketing campaign, as well as partnerships with key delivery organisations and a world-class speaker line-up, LIV 2016 will deliver six education streams.

HEALTH

Backed by sporta, the national association of leisure and cultural trusts, the Health education stream will focus on the impact of physical activity on the nation's health, as well as the role that the sport and leisure industry is able to play in driving change.

The Health education stream will focus on everything from paediatric wellness through to GP referrals and increasing exercise programmes for our ageing population.

The seminar programme will also highlight the benefits of integrating physical activity into everyday life, and how the industry can benefit commercially from an increased emphasis on health practices such as physiotherapy, chiropractic treatment, rehabilitation and more.

The link between leisure, physical activity, health, medicine and fitness should be closer than ever – and the health education stream will deliver a programme that should ensure a stronger bond exists between all the relevant industry professionals.

FITNESS

Listen and learn from the industry's finest educators, coaches and professionals: any level of fitness professional will come away from LIV with practical knowledge and skills that can be applied in their role.

The Fitness stream consists of three pillars: The Fitness Business School, Practical Coaching, and the Gym Operators' Conference.



Leisure Industry Week offers two full days of trade show

Fitness Business School

Designed to build business acumen among fitness professionals, The Fitness Business School allows delegates to learn from the most prominent coaches and educators – with over 200 years of experience between them – who have developed their own businesses successfully.

It will enable delegates to develop and shape their careers thanks to high quality advice, round-table discussions and cutting-edge information.

Delegates will be offered a rounded view of the industry, exploring some of the available career paths and gaining an understanding of how to drive a fitness



LIW's Sports education stream will focus on encouraging sports participation and developing facilities

business forward. Topics will include how to gain more clients on a commercial gym floor; understanding social media; and how digital media has broadened the scope of opportunities to fitness professionals.

Practical Coaching

Targeted at fitness professionals including PTs, fitness managers and nutritionists, Practical Coaching at LIW will deliver a world class line-up of industry figureheads discussing the practical application of training and nutrition.

Via two-hour workshops, delegates will learn from the likes of nutrition and behavioural change specialist Gary Mendoza, fitness entrepreneur Jamie Alderton, and founder of Mac-Nutrition Martin MacDonald.

Practical Coaching is designed to address and improve industry standards from beginner to advanced level, with a clear focus on the implementation of evidence-based

information to improve performance on a day-to-day basis, whether in a facility or online with clients.

Operators' Conference

The Operators Conference will host top speakers discussing broader industry issues and trends, such as retention, digital marketing, team management, secondary spend and business performance.

In a packed two-day schedule, attendees will hear from the likes of Raja Saggi, head of B2B marketing at Google; Nick Eastwood, deputy chair at Wasps Rugby Club; and Sol Orwell, a seven-figure entrepreneur and co-founder of Examine.com, a resource on nutrition and supplements.

The Operators' Conference should be top of the list for any operator wanting to improve workforce development, boost profitability, drive down costs and stay abreast of industry trends and developments.

SPORTS

The Sports education stream will focus on two main themes: encouraging sporting participation and developing sports facilities.

Delegates will discover workshops with a host of leading brands, providing practical tools and tips for increasing sports awareness and participation via new groups and demographics. The programme will also tackle the often daunting process of facility development, offering advice on planning, material selection and multi-use considerations.

The Sports education stream is ideal for anyone working in the sports industry or looking to add sports to their business. The seminars are designed

LIW speakers (l-r): Nick Eastwood of Wasps Rugby Club, Google's Raja Saggi and entrepreneur Sol Orwell





The Spa & Wet Leisure stream will focus on increasing swimming participation and improving operations

- to attract delegates from National Governing Bodies, schools, universities, sports clubs, sports facilities, local councils, gym chains and golf clubs, as well as functional training specialists, strength and conditioning coaches, groundskeepers and sports coaches.

PLAY

Delegates interested in the Play education stream will come from varied industry sectors including hotels, campsites, schools, councils, visitor attractions, country parks, adventure parks, activity centres, academies and many more areas.

This education stream will tackle the issue of inactivity through the medium of play, offering practical insight into how play businesses can become a primary outlet for physical activity among both children and adults.

Delegates can explore seminars on differentiation, branding, market diversification, safeguarding and training needs. The play education stream will explain the importance of play to all ages and backgrounds, as well as the need to create facilities for active and game-based play. It will also provide operators with the tools to attract new audiences and boost profitability.

FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Delivered in partnership with the Facilities Management Forum and Sport & Leisure Facilities Forum, the Facilities Management education stream is devoted to all aspects of the design and layout of a leisure facility.

Delegates will leave armed with the knowledge they need to drive down costs and increase operational efficiency in their own facilities, as well as with case studies and examples they can draw on to improve customer experience.

Featuring topics and discussion on entry systems, energy efficiency, booking software, lighting, flooring, layout and planning, the facilities management education stream is ideal for facilities managers, procurement teams, architects, interior designers, specifiers, pool maintenance professionals, IT professionals, cleaners and operations managers.

SPA & WET LEISURE

With its focus on increasing swimming participation and improving operational efficiency, the Spa & Wet Leisure education stream targets pool operators, gyms, water parks and spas, as well as leisure trusts and councils, coaches, pool designers, pool maintenance professionals and engineers. In partnership with STA, RLSS and SPATA, the stream will deliver seminars on swim class programming, water treatment, filtration and more. ●

ESSENTIAL SHOW INFO

Opening times

Tuesday 20 September: 9:00am – 17:00pm

Wednesday 21 September: 9:00am – 17:00pm

Registration

Take advantage of a Leisure Media exclusive offer: get a £299 LIW ticket free of charge, provided you register online before 1 September.

Visit: <http://goo.gl/FVZhFL>



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LEISURE INDUSTRY WEEK



"LIW 2015 was an unbelievable event" – Octane Fitness



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LeisureIndustryWeek



@LIW

Join 1000's of key stakeholders

SMART MOVE AHEAD OF COIN CHANGE

With a new £1 coin due in early 2017, there's never been a better time for UK health clubs to switch their locker, access and vending systems to a cashless GANTNER smart card solution



With the clock ticking on the introduction of the new £1 coin and all the changes that will entail, it's the perfect time for health clubs to install

a cashless system. GANTNER's range of access, locker and payment systems not only reduce costs for operators, but also greatly enhance the customer experience

As the Treasury prepares to launch the new 12-sided, £1 coin in March 2017, UK businesses have just six more months to get their coin-operated systems such as lockers and vending machines in order.

But rather than go through the costly process of replacing equipment or upgrading software so that your facility can accept the new coins, now is the perfect time to consider switching to a cashless system from GANTNER.

Smart card technology can reduce operational and staffing costs, while at the same time greatly enhancing convenience for your members

With patented NFC (near field communications) locker and access systems designed for all the needs of modern health clubs and leisure centres, GANTNER has enabled leading brands such as Virgin Active, Fitness First, Fresh Fitness, Hard Candy, McFit and Holmes Place to make the switch to cashless quickly, easily and economically.

A GANTNER NFC system, used with swipe cards, smartphones or wristbands, can be installed as a new system or retrofitted into existing technologies.

Customisable to a health club's branding and logo, the smart card technology can reduce operational and staffing costs, while at the same time greatly enhancing convenience for your members in key areas of the health club – most notably the changing rooms, reception and access areas, and catering areas.

SECURE CHANGING ROOMS

If your current lockers can only accept coins, then now is the ideal time to change to a battery-powered or fully-networked GANTNER locking system.

Operating with NFC-enabled smart cards, the system provides a status display showing which lockers are available or in-use.

Multiple locker modes provide operators with the flexibility to make all lockers available or to individually assign or rent lockers for a defined time period. For enhanced security, all locker openings and closings are recorded, meaning operators can easily track who is using them.

If a member forgets which locker they used, information terminals in the changing room can display their locker number, requiring no call-out time from staff.

Health and fitness clubs can eliminate the usual maintenance costs associated with lost keys and forgotten PINs, failed lockers, theft, members claiming lockers for long periods of time, as well as valuable time spent managing lockers.



A GANTNER secure access and locker system reduces the workload of your frontline staff, and delivers a seamless service to your members



The GANTNER RFID wristband can be configured to give access to a member's workout plan

ACCESS CONTROL

GANTNER's NFC applications – including access control and cashless payments – create an integrated solution that allows members and visitors to have a seamless experience through your club.

This integrated system allows members to gain access, check-in, use a locker or a gym's networked fitness equipment and make a payment in the shop or café all with just one membership card.

One club to offer all these benefits to customers with a single smart card is the recently opened Alex Fitness in London's Chelsea. The club has installed GANTNER's networked locking systems, access systems, and networked fitness with the Technogym Key. The latter enables users to track and record all their fitness progress, as well as synchronise with all their favourite fitness apps.

FULLY-AUTOMATED CARD SOLUTION

To make life even more convenient for both operators and customers, GANTNER has also recently introduced its new card-dispensing machine – GAT CardDispensing Station, which is ideal for 24/7 leisure facilities.

The station can automatically produce tickets and membership cards, reducing the need for continuous staffing of reception desks, as well as cutting peak-time traffic queues and administrative expenses.



Members can use their smart card or wristband in the café



GANTNER's technology means no more lost locker keys or PINs



Members can simply sign-up online to receive a pin that they enter at the GAT CardDispensing Station to pick up their new smart card.

The robust yet compact dispensing machine can be loaded with NFC cards and customised with a facility's own logo, colours and design.

BOOSTING SPEND

GANTNER technology can also be linked to your vending machines and café and retail payments, meaning that members need not carry any cash in the facility at all. Cards can be pre-loaded or linked to a verified customer account.

Cashless systems have been shown to substantially boost in-club secondary spend by increasing convenience, as well as impulse purchases.

Contact GANTNER about its many secure cashless technologies designed for the health club and leisure market, to stay one step ahead of the competition...and the Royal Mint's next coin change.

Gantner
technologies

TEL: +44 (0)1245 69 75 88

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WEB: www.gantner.com



**LEISURE
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EXHIBITOR NEWS

The latest news from exhibitors at LIW 2016

Active IQ

Tel: 0845 688 1278
(UK local number)
www.activeiq.co.uk

Active IQ is an awarding organisation recognised and regulated by Ofqual designing qualifications that support clear career pathways. We pride ourselves on excellent customer service, and strive to provide high quality resources for our qualifications enabling training providers to help students along a clear career pathway to success. We believe that excelling in the active leisure sector starts with first-class qualifications and education – so that trainees can progress to become outstanding professionals.

SECTION: FITNESS

**“We believe that
excelling in the active
leisure sector starts
with first-class
qualifications”**

Ashbourne

Tel: 0871 271 2088 (UK number)
www.ashbourne-memberships.co.uk
For over 25 years Ashbourne has helped hundreds of clubs manage their membership payments. As well as Direct Debit collections, Ashbourne provides a complete club software package at no extra cost, giving you all this: entry/access control; email and text recruitment + retention tools; a KPI dashboard; a complete EPOS till system; personalised online joining form and class booking system. Visit us on stand D2 at LIW, right by the show entrance, to see our latest services including Scheduler+, which makes it really easy for you to schedule facilities, classes and staffing levels.

SECTION: FITNESS

ClubWise

Tel: +44 (0)1844 348300
www.clubwise.com/clubwise/

Operators will be able to take their business up a gear and tackle one of the biggest problems that gyms of all sizes face with an exciting new addition to ClubWise's billing and club management solution. This revolutionary new product will be showcased, prior to release, exclusively at LIW. Come along to stand F100 and take the first step in getting ahead of your competitors.

SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

Core Health & Fitness

Tel: +44 (0)1494 688260
www.corehandf.com

Since Core Health & Fitness consolidated all of our brands – Star Trac, StairMaster, Nautilus and Schwinn – in 2015m we have launched over 70 new products, some of which will be seen at this year's LIW. Under the Star Trac and StairMaster brands we have launched new cardio screens with OpenHub technology – allowing users a variety of connectivity options including fitness tracking, HDMI and Bluetooth connection. All new Star Trac Studio bikes – the Studio 3, 5 and 7 – combine user-focused features with best-in class biomechanics. The StairMaster AirFit Upper Body is a brand new upper body ergometer which allows the user to get their heart rate racing in a high performance fitness centre, or can be used for rehab exercises using the convertible crank arms and comfortable grips. New Nautilus strength—including Inspiration Strength®, HumanSport® and Evo – as well as our XPLOAD Zone functional training rig will be demonstrated by our world-class Master Trainer team.

SECTION: FITNESS



The Stairmaster AirFit Upper Body
is a new upper body ergometer

DFC

Tel: +44 (0)1908 422000

www.debitfinance.co.uk

DFC manages your Direct Debit payments differently. Tailoring a bespoke service to each of its clients, it does more to continuously deliver an exceptional service that goes above and beyond. With clients ranging in size and sector, DFC strives to offer the most up-to-date technology that meets varying individual needs. Its belief in total transparency and no hidden costs means it streamlines lengthy admin processes in a manner you can both rely upon and trust. You can leave DFC to collect your Direct Debits, while you concentrate on running – and growing – your business.

SECTION: FITNESS

DFC's direct debit services are tailored bespoke to each client



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM



Join eGym on stand D20 to take part in the Strength Test Challenge

eGym

Tel: +44 (0)20 3701 4267

www.egym.co.uk/business

Customers are demanding better experiences from their gyms. That's why eGym developed a unique ecosystem of software and 'smart' connected gym equipment – delivering greater results for members and higher profits for owners. eGym's core business is designed specifically to benefit gym members. While strength training data is captured on eGym equipment, open API's enable the recording of additional data. Current integrations include: cardio equipment supplier Matrix, membership management software ClubManager, as well as a range of other fitness technologies. Enabling greater data sharing with members, not only helps trainers understand the results of individuals, but also enables the ability to manage all members. eGym individualises every training session, coaches the user and automatically progresses their workout – beginning with pre-set loads based on strength tests. This ensures your members train at the right intensity and guarantees they achieve results. All training sessions are recorded and immediate visible on the eGym Fitness app. Plus trainers can monitor their clients activity via the eGym Trainer app. eGym truly does offer a digital solution with great advantages for gyms. Join us on stand D20 to take the eGym Strength Test Challenge. Can you beat the best? sales@egym.co.uk

SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

FEED INTO FITNESS

eGym helps clubs create effective feedback loops and boost members' performance in the gym

Despite best intentions, it can sometimes be difficult to produce results for the majority of gym members. In fact, we barely 'touch' a significant proportion of them. Understanding how effective digital tools can be more proactive in providing positive feedback is a key factor that will help increase training performance and improve member retention.

FEEDBACK

In a way, it's the fault of human behaviour. Most of us are just not very good at keeping to what we say we're going to do. Even when we look at science, our success has been very limited. Part of the problem is that we have ingrained feedback loops that perpetuate less than ideal behaviours (that last piece of cake is very difficult to resist). At eGym, we recognise the key to keeping customers and producing better fitness results is driven by ease of use and meaningful feedback.

To be effective, feedback loops need to meet certain criteria. Firstly, a specific behaviour has to be captured (in as near to real time as possible), measured and stored. That information needs to be given to the individual in an appropriate and relevant manner and

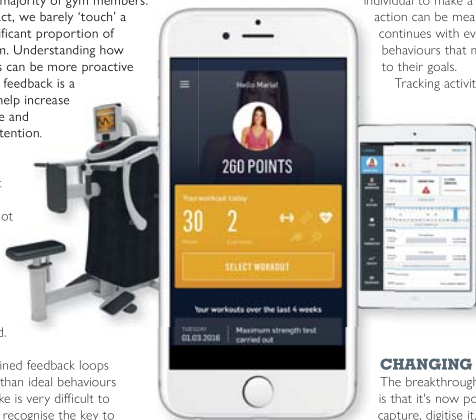
must highlight one or more possible responses and actions. And finally there is an opportunity for the individual to make a choice and act. This last action can be measured and the process continues with every action stimulating new behaviours that move the individual closer to their goals.

Tracking activity is not new and the original pedometers pre-date the noughties. But like the 'Quantified Self' movement, they never had mass appeal. The NikeFuel band was really the first tracking device to engage the weekend athlete - but Nike buried it in 2013. The Achilles heel of most of these devices is still the question of accuracy and valid data.

CHANGING BEHAVIOUR

The breakthrough for the fitness sector is that it's now possible to automate data capture, digitise it, transform it and deliver it back to the gym user in a way that stimulates and reinforces the new behaviour.

eGym uses a number of automated processes invisible to the user to optimise their performance, such as automated progression and visual cues to ensure proper form. The process starts with pre-set loads based on an initial strength test. Performances against targets are immediately



eGym users can gain rewards

“eGym has helped my members to manage their own workouts and removed a lot of the hurdles that instructors have with progressing individual training programmes in the right way. eGym really manages the customers better and for customers it's perfect because it's proving and showing their success and motivating them to keep working hard

Dan Morgan, Director at Blue Leisure Management, Oakwood Sports Centre



Members access valuable data via the eGym Fitness App

are immediately available via a front-facing display and recorded to the eGym cloud. It is also important to note that workout intensity is automatically set at a level to enable on-going progression for members.

GAMIFICATION

A members workout data is accessed directly via the eGym Fitness App, which is easily shared to the gym's trainers – who can then choose to interact immediately, providing encouragement in-situ or remotely. A popular feature of the Fitness app that provides immediate visual feedback, simple challenges and rewards for your workout is the eGym activity points. It's a great gamification element that is proven to motivate members. When members regularly work out they'll climb up the activity rankings and may even pass their friends on the points leaderboard, this in itself generates a sense of internal satisfaction.

The most used elements of the eGym Fitness app is the 'Biological Age' feature. Based on the maximum strength calculation, the biological age provides an on-going assessment of the members current age of muscle groups; so members can continue to compare to their actual age and see improvements in their results.

Jochen Michaelis, managing director UK at eGym states: "There's a lot of science and solution-driven considerations that goes on behind the scenes of our app, which the member never sees.

"That's how we like it. The eGym habit is proving to get members hooked. Our customers are now interacting better with their members and are seeing them attend more often"

“ eGym is easy to use, time efficient and fits with the overall philosophy of The Hurlingham Club. The combination of eGym machines along with the Trainer App is perfect for both our trainers and customers. In just the first 7 months, we saw a 20% increase in overall gym activity. ”

David Lester, Supervisor at The Hurlingham Club

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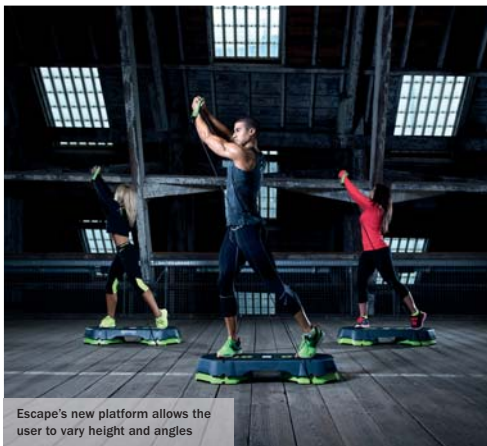
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www.escapefitness.com

Escape is launching its new STEP and RISER in the UK at LIW, (stand E50). It is a multi-configurable platform solution that's perfect for Step classes, bootcamps and plyometrics. By varying the height and angles, the platforms are also suited to advanced workouts helping with muscle strengthening as well as balance and co-ordination. The clever anatomical hot-spot targets on the wide platforms enable creative and effective programming, helping members to follow choreography. The lightweight, patented locking system allows for easy transportation and transitions from horizontal to incline work. Safety is key with non-slip feet and surfaces.

SECTION: FITNESS

◀ **The STEP and RISER is perfect for Step classes, bootcamps and plyometrics** ▶



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Facilities Management Forum is celebrating 20 years at the heart of the business. The Facilities Management Forum makes its most-anticipated return yet with the celebration of its 20th anniversary. The industry-renowned event returns bigger and better than ever in 2017 with keynote speakers, leading brands and some of the most innovative product and service providers in facilities management. Over the last 20 years, the event has continuously developed in size and scope, offering invaluable insight into a wide variety of topics within the facilities management industry, all while providing unparalleled access to the latest products and services. Taking place on the 30–31 January 2017 at the Radisson Blu Hotel, London Stansted, the event is the ideal platform to discover what's new, learn how to cut costs and make profitable connections. A representative from Solid Management comments: "Anyone thinking of attending the Facilities Management Forum should just do it."

SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

“Over the last 20 years, the event has continuously developed in size and scope, offering invaluable insight into a wide variety of topics within the facilities management industry”



The event will offer sessions by keynote speakers



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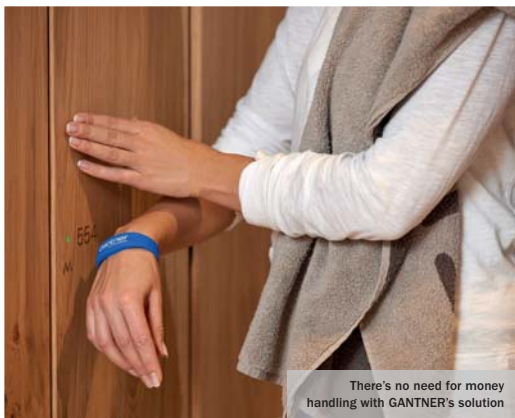
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SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT



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SECTION: FACILITIES MANAGEMENT

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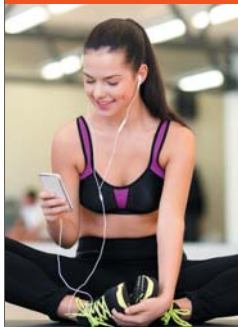
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Octane Fitness has an impressive history of breakthroughs in the zero-impact cardiovascular category. The company has perfected the elliptical machine, with features such as SmartStride® interactive ergonomics and MultiGrip and Converging Path handlebars. Octane introduced a new category with the xRide® recumbent elliptical, which burns more calories and uses more glutes than a recumbent bike. The unique LateralX® takes workouts in a new direction, with 10 varying planes of motion and greater hip abductor/adductor activity. The XT-One™ equips exercisers to walk, run, hike or climb – all on one machine with various challenges for better results. And the innovative Zero Runner® delivers zero-impact running by replicating natural running strides without stressful repetitive impact. As for programming, Octane's exclusive CROSS CIRCUIT® combines cardio and strength intervals for effective, efficient training. Octane is the leader in every category of zero impact exercise.

SECTION: FITNESS

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SECTION: FITNESS



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► Physical Company

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Physical Company – the provider of complete fitness solutions – is unveiling 16 new products on Stand E20 of Leisure Industry Week 2016. Fitness professional and award winning personal trainer Katie Bulmer-Cooke will be demonstrating the products on the stand and putting visitors through their paces. Physical Company will be unveiling its new PU Fractional Plates alongside a newly designed set of Olympic rubber bumper plates. It will also be showcasing new Olympic bars with the launch of the 6ft Elite Women's Olympic Bar, Competition 7ft Olympic Bar and a 7ft Olympic Hex Bar – not to mention a Swiss Bar and Olympic Bar holders. The team is also expanding its already extensive functional training lines by launching the PBX PowerBag, a new mini Kamagon Ball, and redesigned Slam Balls with better grip. Physical Company will also be showcasing new Battle Ropes alongside its heavy-duty resistance tubing, new wrist and ankle weights and adjustable hurdles. Witnessing a trend in power enhancing products, Physical Company will also be unveiling the Sprinter Harness, designed to help athletes accelerate quicker, alongside a 3-in-1 Soft Plyo and the 3-in-1 Wooden Plyo Box.

SECTION: FITNESS



Physical Company will launch 16 new products at LIW 2016



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SECTION: FITNESS

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Wattbike, creator of the preeminent indoor bike, will be at LIW showcasing the popular, innovative Wattbike 'Zone', which has helped operators bring the motivational atmosphere of the studio environment out onto the gym floor. The Wattbike Small Group Training classes will be in action throughout the show and the Wattbike Power Cycling Software will also be on display, which takes group indoor cycling to a completely new level, allowing individuals to train at levels based on their own personal fitness but in a group environment. For operators interested in running Wattbike Small Group Training, or creating their own 'Zones', the team will be on hand to talk through creative options to transform gym floor spaces, as well as upcoming education launches, instructor courses and workshops. Wattbike Master Trainers will be on stand throughout the two days to help demonstrate the many benefits of the Wattbike, including the inbuilt performance tests, the Polar View, the in-depth, accurate data capture and the technology advancements to the Wattbike app – the Hub – which is a cloud based home for all Wattbike data. The Hub effectively acts as a portable personal trainer for the user, with suggested performance tests, workouts and training plans.

SECTION: FITNESS



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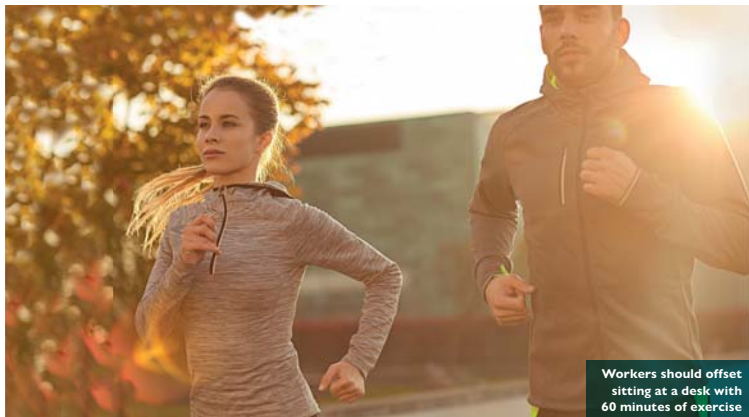
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Workers should offset sitting at a desk with 60 minutes of exercise

Window of opportunity

Office workers need to schedule an hour of exercise a day or risk serious health issues, says study

Health clubs should think about programmes they can offer local businesses to get employees away from their desks for at least one hour, if a major new study* is anything to go by.

Research published in *The Lancet* in July, and based on more than 1 million adults globally, found that desk-bound employees who sit down for at least eight hours a day can increase their risk of premature death by up to 60 per cent. That risk can be offset, however, by doing at least one hour of physical activity a day: visiting the gym, playing sports, cycling or taking a brisk walk.

Note from the author

Physical inactivity is linked to an increased risk of heart disease, diabetes and some cancers and is associated with more than five million deaths every year.

The study's lead author, professor Ulff Ekelund from the Norwegian School of

Sports Sciences says: "There has been a lot of concern about the health risks associated with today's more sedentary lifestyles. Our message is a positive one: it is possible to reduce – or even eliminate – these risks if we are active enough [outside this sedentary period]."

"For many people who commute to work and have office-based jobs, there is no way to escape sitting for prolonged periods of time. For these people in particular, we cannot stress enough the importance of getting exercise, whether it's getting out for a walk at lunchtime, going for a run in the morning or cycling to work."

"An hour of physical activity per day is the ideal, but if this is unmanageable, then at least doing some exercise each day can help reduce the risk."

Sedentary risks

People who sat for eight hours a day but were physically active at other times had

a much lower risk of death compared to those who sat for fewer hours a day, but were not physically active.

This, the report says, suggests that physical activity is particularly important, no matter how many hours a day are spent sitting.

The increased risk of death associated with sitting for eight hours a day was eliminated among people who did a minimum of one hour's physical activity a day. The greatest risk of death was for people who sat for long periods of time and were inactive.

The findings are part of a four-paper series. The authors of the series warn that there has been too little progress in tackling the global pandemic of physical inactivity since the 2012 Olympics, with a quarter of adults worldwide still failing to meet current recommendations on physical activity.

The report says the threat caused by physical inactivity on public health is now as great as that of smoking – and is causing more deaths than obesity.

Commenting on the findings, UK active executive director Steven Ward said: "It's vital that we elevate physical inactivity to become a top tier public health concern and give people more opportunities to be active at work and at home." ●

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* Ekelund, U et al. Does physical activity attenuate, or even eliminate, the detrimental association of sitting time with mortality? *The Lancet*, July 2016

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