


# HCM

JANUARY 2019

HCMmag.com

@HCMmag

UNITING THE WORLD OF FITNESS



NEW customers  
EXTRA revenue  
MORE members



MAKE LIFE **WORK OUT**

[payasugym.com/managers](https://payasugym.com/managers)

## NEW CUSTOMERS

- 92% of customers are new to the club they visit
- Benefit from national TV advertising & digital marketing power

## EXTRA REVENUE

- Increase the profitability of your business
- No cost to participate

## MORE MEMBERS

- **NEW for 2019:** Direct membership upsell service
- Supporting the growth of your core business



MAKE LIFE **WORK OUT**

[payasugym.com/managers](https://payasugym.com/managers)

## Peter Wright

The CEO of Xercise4Less says the company is gearing up to double in size **p30**

## Joe Gaunt

The industry veteran talks about his new fitness brand, Hero **p72**



# Philip Newborough

The co-founder of Bridges Fund Management on investing in fitness with a social conscience **p50**



Sign-up to  
**HCMmag**

The background of the entire page is a grayscale photograph of a person's arm and hand resting on a rowing machine handle. A dark blue banner with a light blue diagonal stripe is at the top. The FIBO logo is in large, bold, blue letters, and 'GLOBAL FITNESS' is in white, all-caps, sans-serif font to its right.

**FIBO** GLOBAL  
FITNESS

**SAVE THE DATE**  
FIBO 2019  
4 – 7 APRIL







**FIBO** GLOBAL  
FITNESS

**The leading international trade show for  
fitness, wellness & health**

Exhibition Centre Cologne | 4 + 7 April 2019



# Gym bashing has to stop

Gym-bashing has become an annual tradition for many consumer media editors. It's time the industry found an effective way to push back through the creation of our own powerful messaging

**T**his January has seen the national consumer media producing a larger-than-average clutch of their annual 'don't go to the gym' features, with everyone from *The Guardian* to *The Sunday Times* making a case for why people can do without the gym when it comes to deciding on their new year health and wellness regime.

I wonder if all consumer media editors have 'don't forget to schedule gym-bashing feature' reminders in their diaries in November, ready for the new year? It seems they must, as it happens every year like clockwork.

These pieces are pretty much always opinionated and rely on a wide range of questionable reasoning, such as the 'fact' that working out in a gym will 'make you hungry' and you'll eat more than you need afterwards, making the whole visit 'worthless'. Or my especial favourite – that we're genetically programmed to be lazy and fat and to sit around doing nothing and that trying to pretend otherwise is just a waste of money.

The more credible pieces make good arguments for lifestyle change which will improve health, but even then exercise is usually very much the poor relation when it comes to the lifestyle 'formula' which is being proposed and is relegated to last place on the list of interventions.

Many consumers are already confused by the conflicting information coming their way from experts seeking to attract consumers to their specific discipline – or Instagram feed – and this annual onslaught is just making the situation worse.

The bigger picture is that lifestyle advice is finding an eager audience, indicating that there's an opportunity for the health and fitness industry to get engaged with consumers as we head into the annual new year diet and lifestyle frenzy.

It's time for the industry to respond to this need, to step up and take its place as a powerful consumer influencer.

There's a wide open opportunity for us to produce lively, up to date annual consumer health and wellness guidelines based on valid research and best practice. These guidelines could be released each year in good time to land on editors' desks, ready for their new year editions. This would enable us fight our corner and show off the great options on offer.

These guidelines could then also be actively promoted by operators across the industry to create a baseline of knowledge among consumers which would act as an antidote to the anti-gym propaganda being promoted in the media.

PHOTO: 94LITERSTOCK.COM/ND3000



**It's not fair the valuable work done by gyms gets undermined every year**

## 6 The industry could produce annual consumer health and fitness guidelines in good time to make the new year editions

No one would claim that gyms are the only way when it comes to activity, and the health and fitness market has broadened its remit hugely over recent years in recognition of the trend towards people taking a portfolio approach to exercise.

But for many, the gym is a valid and highly valued contributor to their personal wellness routine, offering cost-effective access to expertise, equipment and camaraderie and it's just not fair that this valuable work is so routinely undermined every year.

**Liz Terry, editor**  
[lizterry@leisuremedia.com](mailto:lizterry@leisuremedia.com)  
 @elizterry

# HCM CONTENTS

## Uniting the world of fitness

JANUARY 2019 No 264



**30** Peter Wright, CEO of Xercise4Less. Here with CFO Helen Gauden



**48** Arctic explorer, Alan Chambers

**07** Editor's letter

**14** Write to reply

**18** HCM people  
**Andy Tee**

The co-founder of V1BE on taking a London boutique concept to Manchester

**20** Susan Grady

The CEO of Kildare Sport and Leisure shares her story with HCM

**22** International news

**24** UK news

**29** Research news

**30** Interview  
**Peter Wright**

The new CEO of Xercise4Less – one of the founders of Virgin Active – says the budget operator is gearing up to double in size.

**38** Talking Point  
**Switching to prevention**

Health secretary Matt Hancock has announced the government is changing its focus from cure to prevention. Is his plan deliverable? We ask the experts

**44** Legal high

Altitude training is growing in popularity as the 'train like an athlete' trend sees more people getting serious about exercise

**50** Philip  
Newborough  
tells HCM his  
inspiring story





**80** Fitness testing and body scanning can help to motivate members



**44** Altitude training is entering the mainstream



**72** Joe Gaunt talks about his new fitness brand, Hero



**66** Software gets an upgrade in 2019

## 48 Alan Chambers

The Arctic explorer shared insights into team building and working under extreme pressure at SIBEC

## 50 Interview Philip Newborough

The co-founder of Bridges Fund Management, which has backed The Gym Group, Planet Fitness and Fitness Hut tells Kate Cracknell every business needs to think about social impact

## 58 Best year ever

The latest numbers from the US show health clubs had more members in 2017 than at any time since records began. IHRSA's Kristen Walsh reports

## 60 Retail revenue

Operators share creative ways they're tapping retail as a revenue source, including a partnership between More Yoga and musician, Goldie

## 64 Sweating the details Content that kills

Jak Phillips says we need to stop demonising screen use and adopt a more nuanced attitude

## 66 Get upgraded

HCM kicks off 2019 with a rundown of the latest software features available, including queue management, facial recognition, health outcomes management and a partnership with Strava

## 72 Joe Gaunt

After a career with Virgin Active, Fitness First and WeWork, Gaunt has devised and launched a new fitness business called Hero. He explains the concept to Kate Cracknell

## 80 Fitness testing

Fitness testing and body scanning is becoming a must-have for gyms. HCM gives the low down on the latest systems.

## 96 Fitness-kit.net Product innovations

A look at new kit from Matrix and a running training app from Wellbeats

## 100 HCM Directory



# HCM

## MEET THE TEAM



**EDITOR**  
**Liz Terry**

+44 (0)1462 431385



**PUBLISHER**  
**Jan Williams**

+44 (0)1462 471909



**MANAGING EDITOR**  
**Steph Eaves**

+44 (0)1462 471934



**HEAD OF NEWS**  
**Tom Walker**

+44 (0)1462 431385

For email use: [fullname@leisuremedia.com](mailto:fullname@leisuremedia.com)

### SUBSCRIPTIONS

**Joe Neary**

+44 (0)1462 471910

**Denise Adams**

+44 (0)1462 471930

### CIRCULATION

**Michael Emmerson**

+44 (0)1462 471932

### DESIGN

**Paul McLaughlin**

+44 (0)1462 471933

### PRODUCTS EDITOR

**Lauren Heath-Jones**

+44 (0)1462 471922

### FINANCE

**Denise Adams**

+44 (0)1462 471930

### CUSTOMER SERVICES

**Tyler Landry**

+44 (0)1462 471901

### CREDIT CONTROL

**Rebekah Scott**

+44 (0)1462 733477

### HEAD OF TECH

**Michael Paramore**

+44 (0)1462 471926

### WEB TEAM

**Dean Fox**

+44 (0)1462 471900

**Emma Harris**

+44 (0)1462 471921

**Tim Nash**

+44 (0)1462 471917



## CHOOSE HOW YOU READ HCM

### PRINT

HCM magazine is available in print on subscription:  
[www.leisuresubs.com](http://www.leisuresubs.com)

### DIGITAL

Read free on online and enjoy extra links and searchability:  
[www.HCMmag.com/digital](http://www.HCMmag.com/digital)

### PDF

A PDF edition is available to read offline at:  
[www.HCMmag.com/pdf](http://www.HCMmag.com/pdf)

## OTHER RESOURCES FROM HCM

### HCM HANDBOOK

[www.healthclubhandbook.com](http://www.healthclubhandbook.com)  
[www.healthclubhandbook.com/pdf](http://www.healthclubhandbook.com/pdf)

### HCM WEBSITE

[www.HCMmag.com](http://www.HCMmag.com)

### LEISURE OPPORTUNITIES

[www.leisureopportunities.co.uk](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk)  
[www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/archive](http://www.leisureopportunities.co.uk/archive)

**HCM EZINE,  
INSTANT ALERTS & RSS**  
[www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe](http://www.leisuremedia.com/subscribe)

**BUYER SEARCH ENGINE**  
[www.fitness-kit.net](http://www.fitness-kit.net)



**HCM**  
Public Affairs Media Partner

©Cybertrek Ltd 2019 ISSN 1361-3510 (print) / 2397-2351 (online)

### COPYRIGHT NOTICE

Health Club Management is published 11 times a year by Leisure Media, Portmill House, Portmill Lane, Hitchin, Herts SG5 1DJ, UK. The views expressed in this publication are those of the author and do not necessarily represent those of the publisher The Leisure Media Company Ltd. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system or transmitted in any form or by means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recorded or otherwise, without the prior permission of the copyright holder, Cybertrek Ltd. Printed by Warners Midlands PLC. Distributed by Royal Mail Group Ltd and Whistl Ltd in the UK and Total Mail Ltd globally. ©Cybertrek Ltd 2019 ISSN 1361-3510 (print) / 2397-2351 (online).

To subscribe to HCM magazine, log on to [www.leisuresubs.com](http://www.leisuresubs.com), email [subs@leisuremedia.com](mailto:subs@leisuremedia.com) or call +44 (0)1462 471930. Annual subscription rates are UK £45, Europe £57, rest of world £80, students (UK) £22.



# SHIFT TO REAL RIDING



REAL GEAR SHIFT  
PATENT

## SKILLBIKE™

The first stationary cycle with a REAL GEAR SHIFT (Patent), SKILLBIKE™ challenges your riding skills in real hill climbs and famous races thanks to its MULTIDRIVE TECHNOLOGY™ (Patent). Improve your riding speed, power, stamina and agility with SKILLATHLETIC TRAINING: [technogym.com/hcm-skillbike](https://technogym.com/hcm-skillbike)

Integrated with Garmin, Strava and Zwift



The Wellness Company

THE WORLD'S MOST CUTTING-EDGE WORKOUT

**LES MILLS**

PRESENTS

# THE TRIP

LEAVE THEM ALL BEHIND

THE TRIP™ is the world's most cutting-edge workout. A fully immersive cycle class ridden through digitally created worlds. It is an addictive theme park journey that will get your members into the best shape of their lives.

DISCOVER HOW

LES MILLS



[lesmills.com/discoverthetrip](http://lesmills.com/discoverthetrip)

•••••

FINISH

★★★★★

"THE WORD INNOVATION IS BANDIED AROUND A LOT BUT THE TRIP IS GENUINE INNOVATION. IT'S AHEAD OF THE CURVE. NOT ONLY DOES IT ATTRACT NEW MEMBERS, BUT IT RETAINS EXISTING MEMBERS."

Tom Galvin

Head of Fitness, Barnsley Premier Leisure

★★★★★

"IT SHOWS THE IMPACT OF THE TRIP™ - IN THE SPACE OF SIX MONTHS, THE STUDIO USAGE WENT FROM 300 PER WEEK TO NEARLY 1,000 PER WEEK, WITH THE INTRODUCTION OF JUST ONE PROGRAMME."

Graham Clarke

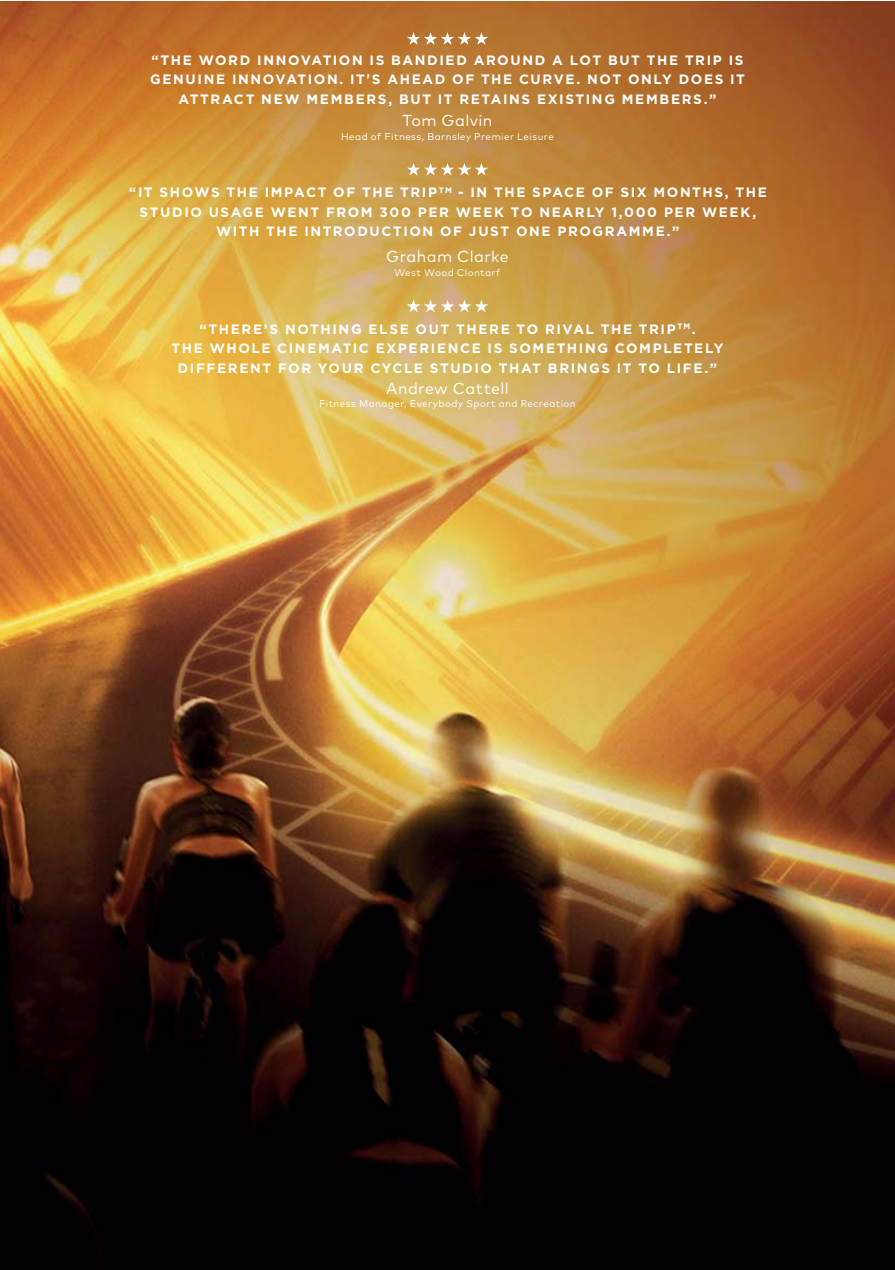
West Wood Clontarf

★★★★★

"THERE'S NOTHING ELSE OUT THERE TO RIVAL THE TRIP™. THE WHOLE CINEMATIC EXPERIENCE IS SOMETHING COMPLETELY DIFFERENT FOR YOUR CYCLE STUDIO THAT BRINGS IT TO LIFE."

Andrew Cattell

Fitness Manager, Everybody Sport and Recreation



# Write to reply

Fuel the debate about issues and opportunities across the industry.

We'd love to hear from you – email: [healthclub@leisuremedia.com](mailto:healthclub@leisuremedia.com)

**Fitness instructors often don't receive credit for the contribution they make to a club's success**



IMAGE COURTESY OF FITZONE

## More appreciation – and pay – for instructors

**Ross Perriam**, chief executive, EMDUK

Every year, it's interesting to see the release of The American College of Sports Medicine (ACSM) worldwide survey of fitness trends, as it always triggers much debate and discussion.

While the usual suspects like HIIT training and wearable technology maintain their place on the list, it's the inclusion of the 'importance of employing certified fitness professionals' which we feel is particularly significant.

Being the National Governing Body for group exercise, it's obviously great to see Group Exercise flying high at number two, but this wouldn't be there without correctly qualified instructors in place.



**Ross Perriam**

In our opinion, fitness instructors are the main reason that over three million more people are participating in group exercise than two years ago [1], by providing effective, motivating fitness sessions that keep those participants coming back.

***"We want to ensure instructors are given the remuneration they deserve. Many are paid similar rates to those paid in the 1990s, despite the pivotal role they play in retaining members"***

We want to ensure that instructors are given the recognition and remuneration they deserve. Many are still paid similar rates to those paid to instructors in the 1990s, despite the pivotal role they play in retaining members for leading operators.

This is driving some to look at leaving the sector. The recent IHRSA European CEO Study Report showed a concern

from European fitness leaders about operators in the industry being able to recruit and retain enough qualified staff.

We're under no illusions; this recognition won't happen overnight, but this high-level acknowledgement of their efforts is a positive start to that journey.

[1] EMD UK (2018) - Group Exercise National Survey



James Balfour said he believed the demand for personal training will decline as the boutique market grows

## PTs and boutique gyms can thrive side by side

Paul Swainson, head of PT, Future Fit Training

I read with interest James Balfour's interview in *HCM* November/December 2018.

I'm a huge fan of the 1Rebel brand and the innovation it's brought to the industry. I also have no doubt that 1Rebel members can get great results from attending classes regularly.

But I have to disagree with James's belief that the market for personal training will decline as a result of the growth in boutique fitness.

He suggests personal trainers "will watch you do press ups for an hour and charge you £60".

That's a dated perception which has been on the wane for some time, and while there are still some PTs that perpetuate it by hoping to earn a living purely from supervising workouts in isolation, we now better appreciate the realities of what's required to help

people adopt healthy lifestyles and achieve results.

As a consequence, personal trainers that don't change their approach will be – quite rightly – left behind.

A quality PT will provide tailored exercise programmes, one-to-one coaching and support and will work on behaviour change to instill intrinsic motivation and increase adherence. They will also offer nutrition advice.

As great as a 45-minute indoor cycling class may be, can it provide all of the above? Can two, three or four classes a week do that? Even with eucalyptus-infused towels on offer? (I jest).

Granted 1Rebel instructors are fantastic, and could offer individual advice, guidance and motivation outside classes, but then we start to blur the lines between roles and services.

***"Will boutiques take market share from PTs? Yes, definitely, but will they trigger a significant decline in the demand for personal training? I don't think so"***



Paul Swainson

more aware of the power of building a tribe mentality among their clients.

Will boutiques take market share from PTs? Yes, definitely, in the same way that online fitness media and conventional gym classes do.

But will they trigger a significant decline in the demand for personal training?

I don't think so – it's not that PTs are at risk, it's more that the nature of the service will be redefined as the market evolves, driving a jump in professionalism, quality and skill that can only benefit the whole industry. ●

Trainers are shifting towards offering more experiences themselves. For example, the popularity of small group training classes is increasing as fitness professionals become





## What is Myzone?

Myzone is a leading wearable and technology solution designed and built for the fitness industry. Myzone amplifies the group exercise experience and provides valuable data for clubs with built-in challenges, personal goals, gamification, and an online social community.





# Gamify your club:

## Your customers will love you for it!



### Benefits of Myzone

-  Get results your customers can trust with **99.4%** EKG accuracy.
-  Connect to 3rd party equipment for maximum versatility.
-  Customers can view their effort live on their smartphone.
-  Myzone users can earn points and gain status rankings.
-  Set goals and compete by measuring effort levels.



myzone.org



# ANDY TEE

CO-FOUNDER, V1BE



In London, people are familiar with the boutique concept, but elsewhere it's still relatively new, so initially it was a challenge to educate people in Manchester about our benefits, when they were used to paying budget club prices

## What is the concept and what do you do differently?

V1BE is a boutique, treadmill-based HIIT studio in Manchester, offering a smart fitout and music specially designed to match the workouts. There's also a boxing element to some of our classes.

We aim to be inclusive by using MyZone fitness tracking belts. Everyone can measure their own performance and work at an appropriate level.

One person may be running at 10 mph on the treadmill, while the person next to them could be walking with an incline, but both of them will be



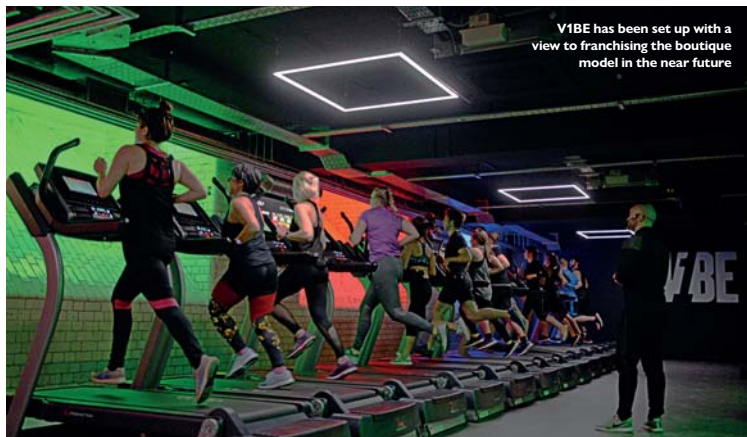
working at the appropriate effort level to get some results.

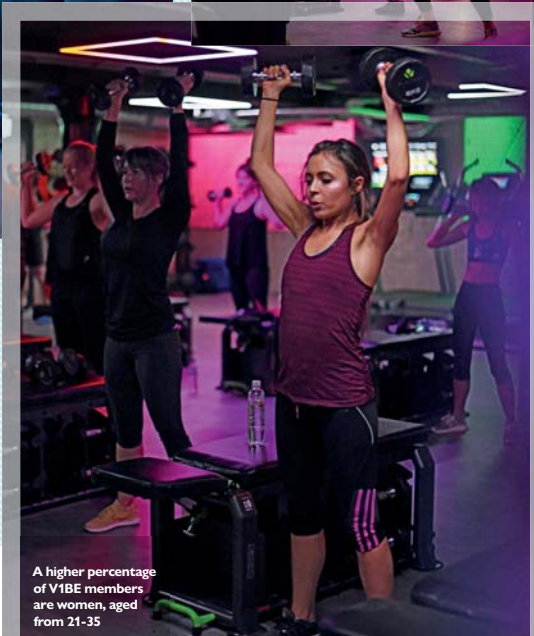
Unlike other boutiques, we're encouraging users to sign up for a membership rather than pay as you go, as we like the cashflow which recurring payments bring. To pay as you go costs £15 per class, while five classes a month costs £45 via direct debit and unlimited access is £95.

## Who is behind the concept?

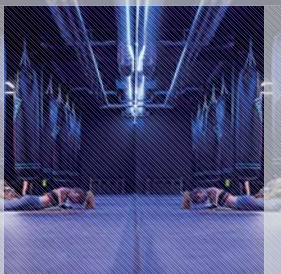
There are three of us: me, Gareth Evans and Kevin Scott. I was a director at Simply Gym, a budget chain where we

V1BE has been set up with a view to franchising the boutique model in the near future





**A higher percentage of V1BE members are women, aged from 21-35**



went from start-up to 12 clubs in five years. Kevin was former chief executive of the Harlands Group and Gareth has over 10 years' experience owning and operating budget and mid-range clubs.

#### **Why did you choose boutique?**

Having ridden the budget wave, we felt the market was moving towards boutiques and the timing was right to make the move into this sector.

#### **When and how did you set about doing it?**

The club launched in March 2017, prior to which we'd spent a year doing market research, locating our first site, setting up the company, the concept and the brand.

#### **What were the main challenges?**

In London, people are familiar with the boutique concept, but elsewhere it's still relatively new, so initially it was a challenge to educate people in Manchester about our benefits, when they were used to paying budget club prices.

With high-end pricing, the product and service have to be spot on. You don't have the sleeping membership which the budget sector enjoys. If people aren't using and enjoying the experience – not to mention seeing some results – their payments soon stop!

#### **Who is your target market?**

We're finding that a higher percentage of females are using the club, and generally an age range between 21 and 35. The vast majority live or work in Manchester city centre. That said we're genuinely trying to be inclusive.

#### **Have you made any changes since you opened?**

I think it's important to constantly learn and evolve. We're conscious that as the

studio is class-based – six to seven a day – there's lots of down time.

We've therefore opened up the studio for free training slots throughout the day, as well as power yoga which has proven to be very popular.

#### **What are your plans for the future?**

The second site is lined up for this year. However, the main focus is to franchise V1BE and the model has been set up with this in mind. Outline discussions are already taking place.

We also see the potential for a 'club within a club' scenario. There are traditional health clubs out there with spare space and capacity where we feel there would be a mutual benefit to having a V1BE on site. ►

# SUSAN GRADY

CEO, KILDARE SPORTS AND LEISURE FACILITIES



As an operator, you need to pick your price point and do what you can for that, but do it really well. We have great quality facilities, but what we offer isn't luxury

## ► How did you get into leisure management?

I always loved participating in sport – I was an international high jumper for Ireland – which led me to a degree in sports management.

When I graduated, I went into an assistant manager position with the local authority in Kildare, and from there to a start-up in Dublin helping to develop and grow a new gym, which is where I discovered how much I love developing facilities.

Ten years ago, I was the first employee of Kildare Sports and Leisure, a non-profit, private operator created to manage the local authority facilities in Kildare. I came on board, as CEO, at the tail end of the construction of two sites, which were being constructed to replace existing facilities.

## What do you think are the main trends in fitness?

Technology is a big one: not just tracking, people want to share what they are doing as well. We have embraced this and use the Technogym mywellness app, so our instructors have a much clearer handle on what everyone is doing and can help them to achieve their goals. We're trying to get the balance between using technology to engage with members, but not bombard them.

We're also finding that gyms are now just part of a bigger picture in people's training. Participation in cycling sportives and Ironman events is skyrocketing, so we're seeing more people



coming to the gym to supplement the training they do outside.

Also we're seeing more participation from younger people, especially males from 15 years old, who are very influenced by body image and want to do weights. We have a huge responsibility to

show them that the gym should also be used for fitness and wellness and not just aesthetics.

Virtual is another trend we've embraced. I don't think virtual will ever take over from instructor-led classes, but it does reduce studio down-time and gives a non-intimidating introduction to new experiences, such as spinning.

## What are your biggest challenges?

An ongoing challenge has been to find quality staff. We now take the approach of employing people who show potential at entry level and training them.

We've seen some impact from the opening of warehouse facilities: large, independently-owned gyms, with basic facilities, such as no

changing rooms. They seem to attract a younger demographic, whereas we have a diverse audience of older adults, teens and people with disabilities. In my opinion, our facilities are more inclusive but this impacts on our ability to specialise in any particular aspect of

fitness. What the warehouse gyms do offer, is a personalised, social experience so going forward, we've identified that we need to improve our social and community element.

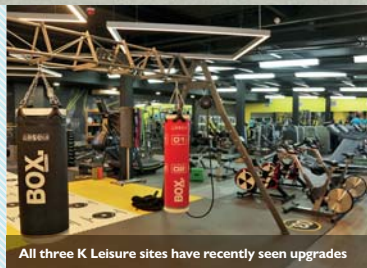
When we started in business we were the least expensive offering locally, but since then many of the surrounding clubs have dropped to the same price as us, or lower, rather than reposition their offering. We do have a strong local market positioning: as an operator, you







Functional training zones have become a popular part of the sites



All three K Leisure sites have recently seen upgrades



Kildare is working to appeal to a wide range of ages

need to pick your price point and do what you can for that, but do it really well. We have great quality facilities, but what we offer isn't luxury.

### What has been your biggest achievement?

I'm proud of the way that we've built the brand from nothing. The sites had been known by their names for 30 years and we needed to rebrand them all as K Leisure, which we've successfully achieved.

We've also just completed extensions at our Naas and Newbridge sites, which were completely self-funded, and will help to drive up participation by increasing the capacity.

All three sites have benefitted from cardio equipment upgrades. A significant investment was also made in all three

to upgrade energy efficiency systems, with the installation of CHP units in both swimming sites. Naas has a new functional training area and an additional group fitness studio. Newbridge is a land locked site, so we reconfigured the sports hall area and created a functional training zone.

### Going forward, where will your focus lie?

We're constantly looking at what we can do to improve the member journey and experience. All three sites will be 10 years old in March, so we're starting a strategic review to see where the next focus should be.

We'll also be continuing to put a big focus on engaging with older people. We have huge participation in aqua among older ladies, but it's difficult to get

them into the gym or classes. We want to create an environment which isn't based on the body beautiful and where everyone feels comfortable coming. ●

## ABOUT K LEISURE

**Kildare Sports and Leisure Facilities** runs three sites, branded as K Leisure. The Athy and Naas sites each offer a swimming pool, sauna and steamroom, a gym and fitness classes. The Newbridge site is dry, but offers Astroturf and a sports hall. Membership costs €45 or €69 for a couple, with reduced rates for concessions.

## Online fitness platform Zwift secures US\$120m funding

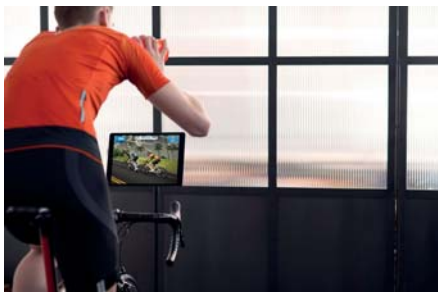
**Z**wift, a multiplayer online training and racing platform for cyclists and runners, has secured US\$120m worth of series B funding.

The company will use the investment to grow its new running discipline and also to

expand into the fast growing new esports market.

The Zwift app enables users to ride or run with friends from all over the globe, complete structured workouts, and participate in group events in virtual environments. Riders can train and compete with each other in 3D-generated worlds by wirelessly connecting their devices and hardware – such as cycle trainers, power meters, treadmills and heart rate monitors.

The Series B round was led by Highland Europe – whose existing investments include fitness equipment provider eGym and file transfer giant WeTransfer. It also included injections from True, the leisure investment firm behind the



**Zwift enables riders to compete with people across the globe**

Ribble cycling brand; Causeway Media, an investor in both traditional sports and esports; and investor Novator.

"Zwift is a fantastically innovative company and they

are certainly leading the way in the indoor training space," says Tony Zappala, partner of Highland Europe.

More: [http://lei.sr/k4F9b\\_H](http://lei.sr/k4F9b_H)



**Zwift is leading the way in indoor training**

Tony Zappala

## Youfit to begin offering genetic testing to members

**US budget club** operator Youfit Health Clubs will begin offering its members genetic testing through its YouCoach personal training programme. Youfit has signed a partnership with Advanced Genomic Solutions (AGS) and the test will be made available to all members across the operator's sites in Arizona and Florida.

"Partnering with AGS is our first step in helping Youfit members take control of their health," said J.J. Creegan, COO of Youfit Health Clubs.

"This partnership will allow us to be on the forefront of individualised health discovery that assesses wellness needs."

AGS specialises in genomic testing and the company will offer Youfit members its signature 'Health & Wellness DNA Test'. The assessment will provide users with an individualised report,



**We'll help members take control of their health**

J.J. Creegan



**The test will provide users with an individualised report**

outlining how their genetics could affect their diet, exercise and nutrition.

"Having knowledge of the chemical structure will empower members to make

smarter decisions on what they eat and how they work out based on their unique genes," Creegan added.

More: [http://lei.sr/G8C3P\\_H](http://lei.sr/G8C3P_H)



## Anytime's parent acquires Basecamp Fitness

**S**elf Esteem Brands, owner of Anytime Fitness, has acquired a new fitness concept with plans to franchise it worldwide.

Basecamp Fitness – developed by entrepreneur Nick Swinmurn – currently has five locations in California and is based on providing high-energy workouts.

Designed to increase members' strength while improving their cardio performance, Basecamp offers 35-minute HIIT sessions, which alternate 60-second bursts of various strength-training exercises with 60-seconds on a stationary 'airbike'.



“  
**We hope to  
begin franchising  
Basecamp in 2020**  
Chuck Runyon

“Our plan is to build additional, corporate-owned Basecamp Fitness studios next year to explore consumer preferences and perfect the brand experience,” said



### Basecamp Fitness offers 35-minute HIIT training sessions

Chuck Runyon, co-founder and CEO of Self Esteem Brands and Anytime Fitness. “We hope to begin franchising Basecamp Fitness in the US and internationally in 2020.”

Dave Mortensen, co-founder of Self Esteem Brands, added that the two businesses will complement each other.

“We believe that Basecamp Fitness and Anytime Fitness

will appeal to two very different types of consumers,” Mortensen said.

“Anytime Fitness gyms feature convenient, 24-hour access, a welcoming, supportive environment and a growing variety of coaching programmes to help members achieve their fitness goals.”

More: [http://lei.sr/t5m6f\\_H](http://lei.sr/t5m6f_H)

## eGym raises US\$20m to grow fitness platform in the US

**German startup** eGym has secured US\$20m (€18m, £15m) worth of financing led by NGP Capital.



“  
**We now have a  
knowledgeable digital  
health investor**  
Philipp Roesch-Schlenderer

eGym, which provides fitness equipment and software-based training solutions to health clubs, will use the funding to “aggressively accelerate” its international expansion, with a focus on the US market, as well as its corporate wellness offering. The company currently supplies its training products to nearly 14,000 gyms and businesses across Europe and the US.

As well as NGP Capital, the latest round of funding was supported by existing investors Highland Europe and HPE Growth Capital.



### eGym's products include strength machines

“The US is by far the largest market for eGym, and we need to be there,” said eGym co-founder and CEO Philipp Roesch-Schlenderer. “Working with NGP Capital, we now have

a knowledgeable digital health investor with an extensive US network to help guide our global expansion efforts.”

More: [http://lei.sr/b4a5j\\_H](http://lei.sr/b4a5j_H)

## 82 per cent of kids fail to hit recommended activity levels

Less than one in five of children and young people (17.5 per cent) are meeting the Chief Medical Officer's guidelines of more than 60 minutes of activity a day, every day of the week. Perhaps most worryingly, a third of children (32.9 per cent) lead inactive, sedentary lives, doing fewer than 30 minutes of physical activity a day.

The figures come from Sport England's *Active Lives*

*Children and Young People Survey*, published on 6 December. The survey is the largest ever of its kind and gives a comprehensive insight into how children in England are taking part in sport and physical activity, both in and out of school.

Other findings include that nearly a quarter of children (23 per cent) leave primary school unable to swim 25 metres.

More: [http://lei.sr/a5m5s\\_H](http://lei.sr/a5m5s_H)



A third of children now lead inactive, sedentary lives



These figures are a national disgrace

Baroness Grey-Thompson



## 'Industry first' as Legend plans to make its data available

Legend Club Management Systems will enable all of its customers to have the ability to open their data for collaboration with third parties. The announcement is an industry first and is seen as a landmark

moment for the OpenActive collaboration, funded by Sport England and led by the Open Data Institute (ODI).

OpenActive is a community-led initiative designed to help people in England get active using open data.

One of its aims is to make physical activity opportunities easier for people to discover, by improving access to information online and offline.

Legend will adopt the open data standards developed by OpenActive and drive its



We live in an era of rapid change

Sean Maguire

1,700 locations around the world to "maximising the potential of collaboration" with third parties.

Sean Maguire, MD of Legend, said: "We live in an era of rapid change where operators cannot be sure where the next innovation will come from with the potential to grow their business."

More: [http://lei.sr/M5n5z\\_H](http://lei.sr/M5n5z_H)



OpenActive is a community-led initiative

## Boutique operator Victus Soul opens first studio in London

**London's thriving boutique** fitness market has a new entrant – Victus Soul, a studio offering boxing and running-inspired group exercise classes.

Located close to the Tower of London, Victus Soul offers two workouts, one based on running and one on boxing.

The concept has been created by founders Paul Trendell and Chris Djuric, in collaboration with fitness presenter Dean Hodgkin and master trainers Alice

Rickard and Jamal Kurdi. The 60- and 40-minute classes combine either running or boxing with strength training and recovery. According to Trendell and Djuric, Victus Soul will prioritise technique, form and recovery, with a focus on providing an experience "similar to personal training, but with the high-energy atmosphere of working out in a group".

The first site features two studios, housing Woodway



**The first site in Aldgate features two studios**

treadmills, Aquabags and custom-made benches.

There is also a 'Soul Bar', situated in the studio gallery, serving post-workout healthy snacks and drinks.

The studio will initially offer 36 classes per week.

● Read our interview with Victus Soul in February HCM.

More: [http://lei.sr/5j3j3\\_H](http://lei.sr/5j3j3_H)

## Neil King named énergie CEO, Jan Spaticchia expands strategic role

**B**udget operator énergie Fitness has named Neil King as its new CEO. King, the former MD of 1Life, joined énergie in 2018 as chief operating officer, to support the business as it gears up for sale.

The new appointment completes a top team reorganisation, which sees Jan Spaticchia, the chair and

founder of énergie Group, taking up a high-level strategic role as executive chair, focusing on group direction and expansion.

"Having Neil King strengthening the focus on operations, productivity and club performance, will allow me to concentrate on building company growth and extending our international footprint," Spaticchia said.

He added that the company is growing rapidly – and developing its boutique club-in-club concept, thé YARD – and will continue to "play to its strengths".

"One of the key lessons we've learned in our 15 years in business is to remain focused on what we're good at – which is franchising world-class fitness concepts – and avoiding straying into areas that dilute our mission," he said.

"Our aim is to sit above competitors in the health club market and own the 'high-service, low-cost' space," Spaticchia explained.

King outlined the scope of his new role to delegates at the conference, which was

held at Coventry's Ricoh Stadium, saying: "My key areas of focus will be landing the new énergie Fitness brand, differentiating our product in the marketplace."

More: [http://lei.sr/j2N7B\\_H](http://lei.sr/j2N7B_H)



**Our aim is to own the high-service, low cost space**  
Jan Spaticchia



**Neil King (right), has been named CEO while founder Jan Spaticchia (left) will take up the role of executive chair**

## Trust body Sporta rebrands as Community Leisure UK

**S**porta, the body representing charitable leisure trusts across the UK, has rebranded as Community Leisure UK as part of a plan to "tackle a false perception of being a solely sport-focused body".

According to CEO Cate Atwater, the new name better reflects members' focus on improving the physical and mental health and wellbeing of communities across the UK.

"The new name, brand and proposition for the association came from bespoke research and is far more representative of our members' work," Atwater said.

"Our members are there for everyone in the community, whatever they want to do in their leisure time."

She added that the charitable trust model has



**The new name and brand came from bespoke research**

Cate Atwater



**The body represents independent community trusts**

"helped to develop and protect" public services in tough economic times.

"Charitable trusts don't tend to shout about it, but they have managed to not

only keep facilities open and effective services delivering, but also improve and develop them," she said.

More: [http://lei.sr/z9N5z\\_H](http://lei.sr/z9N5z_H)

## Exeter's 'super-efficient' centre to form part of £300m project

**Exeter City Council** has approved measures to spend an extra £11.8m on the environmentally 'super efficient' leisure complex planned for the city's St Sidwell's Point.

The St Sidwell's Point Leisure Complex will include a 150-station gym, an eight-lane

main pool, a learner pool with moveable floors, a soft play area, a café and a creche.

The building will be the UK's first leisure centre to be built to super-efficient low energy Passivhaus standard, which will save "around 70 per cent on annual fuel costs".

**The centre will be built to low energy Passivhaus standard**

The centre, which was initially expected to cost in the region of £26.5m, will be part of a larger, £300m regeneration project of the city centre, which will also include a new multi-use entertainment venue, two hotels, restaurants and cafés and housing – as well as a new bus station.

Exeter City Council CEO Karime Hassan said: "The development concept provides a mix of uses that will complement the High Street, supporting both the daytime and night time economy, and responds to the demand for housing and offices within the city centre."

"This is a major and vital investment in a key site, adding almost a million



**This is a major and vital investment in a key site**

Karime Hassan

square feet of additional development. Everyone knows the difficulties retail is facing. We need to ensure Exeter city centre is viable, sustainable and continues to thrive, and this investment is crucial for the city."

More: [http://lei.sr/F9N9s\\_H](http://lei.sr/F9N9s_H)





## WHAT OUR PARTNERS SAY

“PayAsUGym has quickly become a valuable revenue stream for Nuffield Health, attracting genuinely new customers into our clubs.

The onboarding process was extremely easy, whilst operationally we have found the service to be both simple and secure.

What's more, the PayAsUGym team provide data, insight and energy to the whole process.”



# MAKE LIFE **WORK OUT**

[payasugym.com/managers](https://payasugym.com/managers)

## Five NGBs pledge 'greater strategic alliance' with leisure sector

**F**ive national governing bodies (NGBs) have pledged to work 'more closely' with the leisure sector as part of efforts to increase sports participation numbers.

As part of their commitment to a "long-term strategic alliance with the wider physical activity sector", the five organisations – Badminton England, British Gymnastics, British Weightlifting, British

Tennis and Swim England – have all become members of ukactive, the not-for-profit body representing the sector.

The move will allow the five to forge closer relationships with ukactive's membership network of gyms, leisure centres and physical activity providers. The move comes as ukactive's public affairs director Huw Edwards called for all NGBs to make better use of existing facilities within the



**Swim England is one of the NGBs to have made the pledge**



**NGBs are seeing the potential of partnering with the sector**

Huw Edwards

sector, as well as finding new opportunities to collaborate.

Speaking at the Why Sports Conference in London, Edwards said: "NGBs are beginning to see the powerful

potential of partnering with the wider physical activity sector in order to boost participation in their sports."

More: [http://lei.sr/N8x8U\\_H](http://lei.sr/N8x8U_H)

## David Stalker joins Myzone to drive European expansion

**Former ukactive CEO** David Stalker has been named CEO of Europe, Middle East and Africa (EMEA) for fitness tech company Myzone.

Stalker will lead the EMEA executive team to expand its direct operations in mainland

Europe, while continuing to support its existing Myzone partners. He will be working closely with Myzone founder and group CEO Dave Wright and sit on the Myzone Board.

"My focus will be on helping Myzone with its European

plans," Stalker said. "There are two ways for us to do business on the continent – either through distributors or going direct – and we like the idea of going direct.

"While we will have some distributors, much of my time will be spent setting up European offices – almost certainly in Germany – and we are currently recruiting teams in each of the countries we plan to go into and finding country managers.

"We're also looking at distribution units, because we don't know what comes out of Brexit – and whether we can send things out of the UK, or whether we will need a presence in Europe."



**Much of my time will be spent setting up European offices**

David Stalker

**Stalker (right) with Myzone founder Dave Wright**



Stalker, who has spent his entire career in fitness, added that he will also spend time on growing Myzone's business across developing markets.

More: [http://lei.sr/R4w3t\\_H](http://lei.sr/R4w3t_H)



## Wellbeing should 'sit alongside other subjects' at school

**C**reating a role for a 'head of wellness' at schools would get students and staff more physically active – and make a positive difference to their emotional and physical wellbeing.

According to new research by Nuffield Health, having a dedicated member of staff with the responsibility of teaching children about health and wellbeing showed "significant" changes in wellbeing. The *Improving wellbeing in schools* report is based on a two-year pilot that installed a head of wellbeing within a secondary school.

Comparing the "level of wellness" (using the Warwick-Edinburgh Mental Wellbeing Scale, WEMWBS) at the



**The gap in the provision of wellbeing in schools needs to be addressed**

Davina Deniszczyk



**A head of wellness resulted in students exercising more regularly**

beginning and the end of the pilot, Nuffield found that the mean score for staff wellbeing increased by 12 per cent during the two years.

In terms of exercise, the presence of a dedicated staff

member offered both new opportunities and a better understanding of their bodies – resulting in students exercising more regularly.

More: [http://lei.sr/B4B2J\\_H](http://lei.sr/B4B2J_H)

## Financial incentives – key to getting people more physically active?

### **A study by research institute**

RAND Europe has suggested that there is a guaranteed way to dramatically increase people's physical activity levels – by offering them tangible financial rewards.

Described as the "largest behaviour change study

on physical activity" RAND charted the behaviours of more than 400,000 people in the UK, US and South Africa.

The study examined the effect of a physical activity rewards programme run by health insurer Vitality, which traditionally offers its

customers "treats" – such as cinema tickets – in return for regular trips to the gym.

These are verified by swiping membership cards.

For the study, however, Vitality launched a new incentive with a direct financial benefit. Called Vitality Active Rewards with Apple Watch, the programme allowed members to acquire an Apple Watch by paying a minimal up-front amount – and then reducing their monthly payments to zero by meeting their physical activity goals.

Participants taking up the Apple Watch offer increased their physical activity levels, on average, by 34 per cent.

Crucially, activity levels increased across the customer



**This gives us a deeper idea of how people can be incentivised**

Adrian Gore

spectrum, regardless of health status, age or gender.

According to Vitality founder, Adrian Gore, the study proved the incentive to not pay more for the watch was effective in increasing activity.

More: [http://lei.sr/U2Y6k\\_H](http://lei.sr/U2Y6k_H)

### **The prospect of a free Apple Watch made people more active**





**“ WE BELIEVE **XERCISE4LESS**  
COULD GET TO 200 CLUBS.  
AND IN AN ESTATE OF THAT SIZE,  
IF YOU HARNESS YOUR DATA  
TO IMPROVE RETENTION  
– EVEN BY JUST ONE PERCENTAGE POINT –  
IT HAS A HUGE FINANCIAL IMPACT**

# PETER WRIGHT

**UK low-cost operator Xercise4Less is going back to basics, building foundations in preparation for doubling in size to 100 clubs by 2021.**

**Its new CEO shares the details with Kate Cracknell**

**P**eter Wright, the recently appointed CEO of low-cost gym operator Xercise4Less, is clearly relishing the challenge ahead. "I'm not one for holding the reins of an established business and simply tweaking," he explains. "I'm better when there's a clearly defined outcome and some work to do to achieve it. I like getting stuck in and building a business."

"Xercise4Less fits well with my skillsets," he continues. "It's less structured than some of its larger rivals in the low-cost sector and has the largest opportunity for growth, particularly in the south of the UK. And growth is the ultimate brief: our target is to double the estate to 100 clubs by the end of 2021, with £42m of funding secured to deliver this."

"I'm confident we can achieve this," says Wright. "The key is rebuilding and opening up relationships with landlords and becoming credible again. We've only opened four clubs this year, and about the same last year, so to a degree the tap's been turned off. We have to change the narrative around what Xercise4Less is going to do – to explain that we're looking to aggressively expand – to build confidence in the market and secure a strong pipeline, even against competitors who have better covenants than us."

**Helen Gauden will focus on compliance, governance and reporting accuracy**



► “We also need to get the business itself thinking differently,” he explains, “So the team understands how it feels to be a faster-moving, higher-growth business and what that looks like in terms of planning, site analysis, the feasibility process, the legal process, how leases work and how you manage relationships with landlords, to be able to do deals faster.

“We have to be flexible around the type of space we’re willing to occupy too,” he says. “If we want to unlock the south of the country, we have to be flexible on pricing, otherwise the rents will be prohibitive. We’ve re-done our feasibility model and are completely open to the fact that membership prices have to reflect the rent and the area.”

## BUILDING THE TEAM

Wright feels a lot must change if the business is to achieve its growth targets, saying: “Having joined the business last July, one of the first areas we got stuck into was the team – looking at the structure of senior management.

“Our first new recruit was a CFO, Helen Gauden, who joined from retailer Wilko in September; we attracted a lot of high quality candidates, primarily because there was a growth story with funding behind it. Helen will be instrumental in building a robust infrastructure covering compliance, governance and reporting accuracy.

“As it’s grown, the business has also become very inconsistent operationally, so we’ve just appointed

## PETER WRIGHT: THE STORY TO DATE

**LATE 80<sup>s</sup>**

Recreation management degree from Sheffield University.



**1990**

Begins career as a fitness instructor with LivingWell. Progresses through the ranks to become a club manager, including of the flagship Milton Keynes club; part of the team opening new clubs; and ultimately operations director.

**1997**

Leaves LivingWell and joins forces with former colleagues Frank Reed and Matthew Bucknall to pitch a health club concept to the Virgin Group.



**1998–99**



Virgin buys into the concept, with Richard Branson investing £25m to launch an initial five clubs. The first Virgin Active club, in Preston, opens at the end of 1999.

**2000**

Nelson Mandela suggests to Richard Branson he bid for a South African health club business in liquidation – the 100+ club Health & Racquets Group. Wright goes out on a recce: “I witnessed an exercise culture the likes of which I’d never seen before. The clubs were in a dreadful state, but people still kept coming back.”



“THERE'S AN AWFUL LOT THAT CAN BE UNLOCKED IN OUR INDUSTRY THROUGH SENSIBLE AND CLEVER USE OF DATA. HOWEVER, THE WHOLE SECTOR IS IN THE DARK AGES AT THE MOMENT

There'll be more focus on promoting different clubs' USPs

2001



Following a successful bid, Wright moves to South Africa as COO through the turnaround phase – moving to direct debits, renegotiating supplier contracts, putting in new systems, refurbishing clubs, going through a rebranding. The result: “It became a hugely successful business and remains the crown jewel in the Virgin Active estate.”

2004

Local management team takes over at Virgin Active SA, with Wright staying in Cape Town to run his own ventures. He returns to the UK in 2009.

2010

Teams up with Harm Tegelaars (founder of Cannons Health Clubs) to produce a pan-European report into the low-cost gym market.



2011

Moves to Saudi Arabia to work for Bodymasters, but also takes on a non-executive and board advisor role for a Turkish private equity company.

2013



Moves to Turkey to take on the CEO role for Mars Sportif, the operator of premium MAC clubs and lower-cost MACFit clubs. “They needed someone to challenge the dominant shareholder, who didn't really want to do low-cost clubs; I developed a business plan for a true low-cost model.” Leaves in 2017, having rolled out MACFit to 70+ clubs.

2018

Joins UK low-cost operator Exercise4Less as CEO.







**“ I BELIEVE WE HAVE THE BIGGEST GROWTH OPPORTUNITY IN THE MARKET. THE SECTOR STILL HAS HUGE GROWTH POTENTIAL TOO: IT'S NOWHERE NEAR SATURATION. HOW CAN IT BE WITH PENETRATION AT 12-13 PER CENT, AND A MILLENNIAL MARKET THAT GOES TO THE GYM RATHER THAN THE PUB ON A FRIDAY NIGHT?**

► Mike Evans – ex-Virgin Active and ex-Goodlife Fitness Australia – as operations director. His brief is to make sure that whichever Xercise4Less club you go into, of whatever age, it looks as it should, and that club managers have ownership and know what they need to work on.

“We’ve appointed a new marketing manager too, Joe Gourvenec, who has a strong digital background. His role is to dramatically improve the experience in our digital marketing channels, so we drive more online sales.

“Xercise4Less has always had a number of USPs, from the size of the clubs to the boxing areas, ladies-only zones and the group exercise timetable, but we’ve never focused enough on promoting them.

“Of course, we sell on price – it’s spelled out in our name after all – but at the moment that’s too front and centre. We want to make a shift, encourage people to look at everything we offer, recognise we’re a good proposition for them... and only then, that we’re also good value.”

### **BUILDING THE INFRASTRUCTURE**

Next on Wright’s list of ‘things to do differently’ is the big picture around IT and data. He explains: “We currently lack an architecture that allows us to deliver a member experience from joining to leaving, so we’re planning to build new IT infrastructure.

“If you look at Pure Gym and the Gym Group, two or three years ago both of those companies invested very significantly in rebuilding everything from the web front-end to the data warehouse; you’re talking probably a club’s worth of investment. Pure Gym did it in-house, the Gym Group outsourced it. We’ll be launching a similar project this month.

“This will see us develop a fully-inclusive member journey built around an agile ability to interpret data, with responsive pricing, member profiling, communications with tailored messaging via relevant channels; millennials, for example, aren’t interested in emails.

“It goes back to what we were doing at MACFit in Turkey (see Peter Wright: The story to date, p32): improving retention, even within a low-cost and low-touch environment, by using data. Data is the key to creating a dramatically improved member journey: at MACFit we identified risk profiles, built churn models, analysed correlations between in-club behaviours and retention. In the UK, Pure Gym and the Gym Group are already doing this sort of thing, but very few others.”

### **AMAZON-STYLE ASPIRATIONS**

“We should be an IT business,” says Wright. “We aren’t at the moment, but we should be. I’m very data-focused, very IT centric, and I think there’s an awful lot that can be unlocked in our industry through sensible and clever use of IT. However, the whole sector is in the dark ages at the moment: the quality of apps, for example, is far below where it needs to be.

“We should be looking at Amazon-style AI recommendations and push notifications, Chatbot interactivity, WhatsApp integration... Ask anything on WhatsApp – can I have a new programme, can I cancel Wednesday, when does the class start, when does the club close? – and we’ll give it to you.

“We need to be using apps as entry-level PTs too, so for example if a new member sets a goal of five workouts a week, the app immediately moves to modify ►



Wright sees data as the key to dramatically improving the member journey – from analysing in-club behaviours to tailoring messages to members via more relevant channels



The company is re-examining how PT is delivered and creating small group training

- unrealistic expectations, saying something like 'let's start you on three'. This is the sort of stuff we were already working on in Turkey because we knew if we didn't fix retention, we wouldn't have a business. It's something I'm now keen to look at for Xercise4Less.

"My feeling is that, in the long-term, we should own this tech. I'm keen to create an app that gives us and our members exactly what we want, rather than a multi-tenanted app that gives everybody some of what they want... and a lot they don't."

"This is an area I'm really excited by," he tells HCM. "The whole IT piece is as wide as your imagination. Just think of Amazon: easy to use, easy even when it goes wrong – although 99 per cent of the time they deliver on their promises at a great price. Wow, if only we could take all that and translate it into health clubs."

"We're nowhere near this yet though. We have to build the foundations first: the IT infrastructure that will allow us to grow, analyse data, manage members' journeys more efficiently, and improve retention. This is going to be a huge focus for us in 2019."

#### KEEPING IT SIMPLE

Wright says his focus will be on uplifting the business:

"We'll be looking at the professionalism of the company generally. When I joined MACFit, the private equity exit was planned, the number of clubs was planned, the systems, the procedures... everything was structured, right down to what we did every day. That's the set-up we need to retrofit into the Xercise4Less business, so in two or three years' time, if you were to lift the bonnet, you'd see it functioning like a Ferrari, with the right systems, the right policies, the right procedures, good governance, good compliance... all the bases covered. We're not there yet, but we will be."



"In the end, this isn't a complicated business – it's just very entrepreneurial and has grown without the right structures and processes in place. My job is to simplify things, uniting the team and shareholders behind key priorities and executing those very well and diligently."

Wright is planning other changes too: "There are specific initiatives we're looking at: revitalising our group exercise offering, as the quality of this was impacted by the recent move to make all PTs employed; refurbishing some of our clubs; and reviewing the way we deliver PT, including rolling out small group training and our 4Fit eight-week transformation camps."

"But mostly it's about simplification. And if we get that right, I believe we have the biggest growth opportunity in the market. The sector still has huge growth potential too: it's nowhere near saturation. How can it be with penetration at 12–13 per cent, and a millennial market that goes to the gym rather than the pub on a Friday night?"

"Xercise4Less could get to 200 clubs. And in an estate of that size, if you harness data to improve retention – even by just one percentage point – it has a huge financial impact. And that's what excites me. We know what we need to do. We just have to get on and do it." ●

# Surfaces for Sport & Leisure Facilities



## SPORT | FITNESS | PLAY | ACOUSTICS

- POINT ELASTIC & AREA ELASTIC SPORTS FLOORING
- IMPACT RESISTANT RUBBER FLOORING FOR FREE WEIGHT AREAS
- SLED LANES, EPDM SPRINT TRACKS & DANCE STUDIO FLOORING
- SOLUTIONS FOR PLAYGROUNDS, MUGAs & OUTDOOR PLAY SPACES
- ACOUSTIC WALL PANELS FOR SPORTS HALLS

### Contact us now:

Office: +44 (0) 1706 260 220

Email: [Sales@TVS-Group.co.uk](mailto:Sales@TVS-Group.co.uk)

Web: [www.TVS-Group.co.uk](http://www.TVS-Group.co.uk)



**TVS GROUP**

SPORT | FITNESS | PLAY | ACOUSTICS

[www.TVS-Group.co.uk](http://www.TVS-Group.co.uk)





# Is Matt Hancock's switch to prevention deliverable?

**Plans unveiled by Health Secretary, Matt Hancock, for the NHS to focus on prevention have been warmly welcomed by the industry, but can this become a reality and what role can we play? Kath Hudson reports**

In his green paper, *Prevention is better than cure*, and the recent *NHS Long Term Plan*, Matt Hancock announced that he wants to improve life expectancy, as well as lessen the burden of long term conditions on the NHS, by encouraging people to take personal responsibility for their own health and then be able to manage their conditions if they do fall ill. "It's about people choosing to look after themselves better, staying active and stopping smoking. Making better choices by limiting alcohol, sugar, salt and fat," says Hancock.

It might sound like a no-brainer, but getting from the current situation, where two thirds of the NHS budget of £116bn a year is spent treating long-term conditions – with obesity, inactivity and co-morbidities increasing – will be a far from easy task and require significant investment.

With facilities, services and know-how, the health and fitness industry is well placed to contribute, but will the government recognise this? Will there be sufficient investment for this change of focus and is the vision workable? HCM asks the experts.





“Clearly, the role of the physical activity sector in the preventative health agenda is vital. What we must see from government is a clear commitment to working with our sector to provide the preventative frontline for the NHS”

## Steven Ward

### ukactive: CEO

**We welcome the** Secretary of State for Health and Social Care's continued commitment to putting the preventative agenda at the heart of health policy. Hancock has reiterated the government's intention to transform public health and these targets rightly focus on health creation through exercise and nutrition, rather than a negative and hopeless focus on condition management.

Nonetheless, a transformation of public health can't happen without investment, and we're facing a £1bn cut in the public health budget for 2019/20, according to the Health Foundation's analysis.

As government re-evaluates its priorities for the next five years in the upcoming spending review, the preventative agenda, and the role of our sector, must feature centrally in the NHS Long Term Plan. To stem the tide of preventable diseases which are burdening

our health and social services, there must be more investment in prevention.

We've set out some opportunities with which the Secretary of State could make an immediate impact on public health. Firstly, we need to reimagine schools as community hubs which are focused on health and wellbeing, as well as education.

It's staggering that 40 per cent of community sports facilities are behind school gates. ukactive's *Generation Inactive 2* report recommends that government develops outward-facing and sustainable schools-as-community hubs, with integrated health, education and social care provision for children and family engagement.

Secondly, we should be building wellness hubs using private finance to transform the UK's ageing leisure centres into modern centres which see the co-location of leisure, health and community services under one roof.

Sport England's funding model shows wellness hubs could achieve a 30 per cent reduction in capital build cost and a 40 per cent improvement in efficiency.

Finally, we're calling for the implementation of a Workout from Work scheme, extending the Cycle to Work scheme to include other fitness equipment and gym memberships – which would see 209,000 inactive Britons take up physical activity.

This scheme has received backing from a coalition of business groups, health leaders and leisure operators, who have signed a joint letter which is currently being considered by the Chancellor.

Independent analysis shows a cost-to-benefit ratio of 2.6 to one, bringing significant cost savings to the NHS, improved workplace productivity and reduced premature mortality.

Clearly, the role of the physical activity sector in the preventative health agenda is vital. We have the facilities, infrastructure and skills to support public health across the country, by keeping people healthier and happier for longer. We must now see a clear commitment from government to working with our sector to provide the preventative frontline for the NHS.



The ageing stock of leisure centres could be turned into wellness hubs through private finance

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/BEN SCHONEVILLE



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ALAN RICO

As people age, they need encouragement to exercise more, not less

"I'd like to see £100m being switched from the drug budget to the fitness budget and for the NHS and the fitness industry to work together. There are 57,000 trainers and 51,000 physiotherapists currently working separately.

"I want to bring those communities together"

## ► Sir Muir Gray

**NHS National Knowledge Service: director**

**It's heartening** to see that prevention is now regarded as relevant and it's good to have a strategy. The next thing to do is to deliver it.

Most of my work – and where I think the fitness industry now needs to focus – is on people who already have long-term health conditions in their 60s, 70s, 80s and 90s.

There is a big overlap between those who are ageing and those who have long-term health conditions: 40 per cent of over 40s; 50 per cent of over 50s; and 60 per cent of over 60s. The more long-term conditions an individual has, the more exercise they need to do. As people get older, they need to exercise more.

Targeting an older demographic represents a good business opportunity



for the health and fitness sector, as lots of these people are wealthy. I'm working with ukactive on a number of measures to encourage clubs to think differently about this age group, in terms of their marketing, design and offering.

Eighty per cent of health club members are aged 20 to 40, which is good, because many of them have sedentary jobs, so will potentially be at high risk of developing health problems in the future. However,

a very small proportion of the over 60s are active, and this represents a huge opportunity. I think there could be some quick wins in this age group.

For example, after 12 weeks of strength training, 90-year-olds can show noticeable improvements – and having better strength would lead to them having increased resilience to falls and illness.

I'd like to see £100m being switched from the drug budget to the fitness budget and for the NHS and the fitness industry to work together. There are 57,000 trainers and 51,000 physiotherapists currently working separately. I want to bring those communities together.

Encouragingly, a lot is already happening, such as Moving Medicine, an initiative between Sport England and Public Health England, to get the medical industry to understand the importance of activity and recommend it to their patients.



Investment in cycle paths could help encourage more cycling to work

“Price still remains a barrier to many people and not everyone has easy access to affordable workouts. My research has shown that financial incentives, such as subsidising the price of a particular physical activity, can help to improve participation levels”

## Dr Subhash Pokhrel

**Brunel University: head of clinical sciences department**

### The preventative healthcare

vision is a welcome step, but it's not yet clear whether adequate investment will follow to allow it to work. The nature of preventative measures is such that the benefits accrue in the distant future – possibly under another government – unlike treatment, where benefits can be seen immediately.

A number of proposals in the government's prevention vision centre around people taking personal responsibility for making lifestyle changes, such as quitting smoking and losing weight. People generally need support to make these changes, so investments that



support people in making healthy lifestyle habits would create quick gains.

Such opportunities can lie in a very wide spectrum of complexity and investment. For example, research shows that people who cycle to work are five times more likely to meet the recommended levels of physical activity,

and so prevent several long term conditions, such as heart disease.

However, in order to make cycling to work a social norm, a range of infrastructure investment is needed, from creating cycle paths to installing showers at workplaces.

The government's vision articulates the role for local authorities to invest in supporting healthy living, including getting people to move more, so it makes sense for private operators to join forces with local authorities, to ensure more people have access to facilities.

Price still remains a barrier to many people and not everyone has easy access to affordable workouts. My research has shown that financial incentives, such as subsidising the price of a particular physical activity, can help to improve participation levels. ▶



Health and lifestyle interventions with at-risk groups can bring large savings to the NHS

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/ROBERT BUSINESS IMAGES

## ► Philip Newborough

### Bridges Fund Management: head of property funds

**The NHS is suffering** from a tidal wave of people piling into A&E and secondary care, so it makes perfect sense to focus on prevention, social care and primary care. The question is, how to do it? In my opinion, the smartest way is through social outcome contracts, which takes away the risk from commissioning services.

Bridges Fund Management is involved with a number of successful contracts of this nature: we invest in prevention and get paid according to the outcome. For example, Ways to Wellness is a pilot underway with the NHS CCG in Newcastle, which aims to work with 10,000 patients who suffer from long-term conditions which could be improved by a healthier lifestyle.

The interventions are non-medical and include education – particularly around nutrition and supporting patients to be more active. It's tailored individually, so the exercise may be fishing or dance classes.

Two years in, we've worked with 3,000 patients and are meeting our outcomes. Firstly, patients report that they're feeling three times better. Secondly, the NHS is saving an average of 20 per cent a year.

Over the seven-year period it's expected to generate £11m in secondary



care cost savings and £14m in other public service savings.

Another project we're funding is Healthier Devon, designed by Devon County Council for pre-diabetic people. Diabetes-related treatment uses up 10 per cent of the NHS budget. In Devon

“Healthier Devon targets 3,500 people at risk of developing type II diabetes, and educates them about nutrition, cooking skills and exercise”

alone there are 79,000 people at risk of developing type II diabetes and this number is increasing nationally by 3 per cent. Healthier Devon targets 3,500 at-risk people, and educates them about nutrition, cooking skills and exercise, with support to change their behaviour. ●

### ■ ACCORDING TO THE NATIONAL ARCHIVES...

- ◆ Around 15 million people in England have a long term condition and use 50 per cent of GP appointments and 70 per cent of in-patient beds.
- ◆ The number of people with co-morbidities is expected to rise by one third in the next 10 years.
- ◆ Long-term conditions fall more heavily on the poorest in society – with those in social class V (unskilled occupations) being 60 per cent more likely to have one than those in social class I (professional occupations).

REGISTER NOW

# ELEVATE

8-9 MAY 2019 | EXCEL | LONDON

## THE UK'S LEADING TRADE EVENT FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

HEADLINE SPONSOR

**fibodo**

CO-LOCATED WITH

**COPA**

**ELITE SPORTS** EXPO

### REGISTER NOW FOR YOUR FREE PASS TO ATTEND

Elevate is now firmly established as the UK's largest gathering of fitness, performance and healthcare professionals. With more exhibitors, physical activity innovations and expert speakers than ever before, make sure you don't miss out. Highlights include:

- Seminar streams:
  - Elevate Kids
  - Active Aquatics
  - Strategies for an Active Nation
  - The Business of Physical Activity
- Thought-leaders Conference
  - The Studio
  - The Tech Lab
- Elevate Build and Interiors
  - Innovation Awards
  - Drinks Reception

350+  
EXHIBITORS

1000+  
PRODUCTS

5 INNOVATION  
AWARDS

300+  
SPEAKERS

FANTASTIC  
NETWORKING

#### LEAD SUPPORTERS:



More people  
more active  
More often



CHARITABLE INSTITUTE FOR THE MANAGEMENT  
OF SPORT AND PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



INSTITUTE OF SPORT  
EXERCISE & HEALTH



inspire the nation



CHARTERED SOCIETY OF  
PHYSIOTHERAPY

#### EXHIBITORS INCLUDE:



#### SPEAKERS INCLUDE:



Dame Sally Davies



Tara Dillon



Mark 'Dot' Perkins



Dr Zoe Williams



Chris Grant



Ali Oliver



James Sanderson



Michael Brannen



Julie Creffield



Justin Musgrove

REGISTER NOW - [ELEVATEARENA.COM](http://ELEVATEARENA.COM)



# LEGAL HIGH

The UK's first hotel with high altitude rooms has opened its doors, hot on the heels of the launch of a hypoxic chamber at the new Third Space in London.

Is altitude training heading for the mainstream? **Kath Hudson** reports



The Altitude Centre has seen a growing interest in altitude training

Endurance athletes like Mo Farah have been using altitude training for decades, spending weeks at a time training at 2,400m, before heading off to compete, pumped up with a heap of extra red blood cells.

Now fitness enthusiasts with a decent amount of disposable income have the opportunity to train like a professional, as the options for getting an altitude hit have increased.

The body adapts to there being less oxygen in the air in a number of ways: increasing the number of red blood cells and levels of haemoglobin and altering muscle metabolism. This forces the body to work harder, meaning users get the benefits of a 45-minute workout in around 15 minutes.

With reduced oxygen, the body becomes much more effective at using what oxygen it has available,

**Hypoxic environments reduce the hunger-inducing hormone, ghrelin, making individuals less likely to overeat**

and so on returning to normal altitude levels the body is able to access to higher levels of oxygen.

"The benefits of training at altitude are beyond doubt – performance athletes have been doing it for years," says Colin Waggett, CEO of Third Space. "It increases the number of red blood cells and the number of small blood vessels, making the body more efficient at delivering oxygen to the muscles, and improving the body's ability to buffer lactic acid."

Delivering results in less time is one of the benefits of altitude training, which made the hypoxic chamber an ideal fit for Third Space's city-based club, where it joined a line-up of cutting edge features, including a sprint track and hot yoga studio.

Oxygen levels in the chamber are 15 per cent lower than outside, and members have the option to exercise in the chamber on a ski simulator, treadmills, bikes, a rower or a Woodway treadmill.

Waggett says take-up has been high among the club's time-pressed, fitness-savvy members and that hypoxic chambers will be considered at future sites. This is the second Third Space club to offer one, the first being in Soho. "We like to include features which people don't necessarily find elsewhere, but which have real practical use, and are founded in robust sports science or consumer insight," he says.



One of the groups showing an interest in altitude training is people who are planning mountain expeditions, for instance to Mount Kilimanjaro or Everest



Exercising for 15 minutes in a hypoxic environment is equivalent to a normal 45 minute workout

“



*“We like to include features in our clubs which people don’t necessarily find elsewhere, but which have real practical use, and are founded in robust sports science or consumer insight”*

Colin Waggett, Third Space

#### TURNKEY SOLUTION

Third Space is not the only health and fitness operator to be offering altitude training. Virgin Active has two chambers at its Walbrook Collection Club in Cannon Street, which were installed by hypoxic specialists, The Altitude Centre. The company runs a facility in central London, as well as offering an installation and set-up service, an accredited course

for coaches and the rental of portable oxygen chambers to the home market.

According to Sam Rees, manager at The Altitude Centre, interest and participation is growing year on year, as more people want to train like sport and fitness professionals.

The facility was opened in 2012, by Richard Pullan, who experienced altitude training in New Zealand. Initially aimed at

elite athletes, the centre has worked with many big name clients, including Alistair Brownlee, England Football, UK Athletics and England Rugby, however, now it’s broadening its reach.

According to Rees, there are now three clear markets beyond elite athletes. “Ambitious amateur athletes, such as runners, cyclists and triathletes, who want to improve their times and are happy to invest in this. Then, people who are planning mountain expeditions to the likes of Mount Kilimanjaro or Everest base camp. And, thirdly, those with no particular sporting goal, but who want to stay fit and healthy and like the fact that you can get better results out of a 30-minute class.”

A single session in the pod costs £29, but most people buy in blocks, or take out an unlimited use membership. Rees says, in general, the best way to gain the full benefit is to have two HIIT sessions



**Mo Farah (L) and Alistair Brownlee (R) have both benefitted from altitude training**

- a week and one session in the altitude pod. To see if there's potential to engage people who don't like working out, they're currently conducting research to see if people can lose weight simply by sitting in the centre and using the mask and also if there are variations in weight loss between training at altitude and sea level.

**Improving oxygen efficiency has been proven to strengthen the heart and lungs, ward off anxiety and depression and treat conditions such as diabetes, arthritis and even spinal cord injuries**

#### SLEEP AT ALTITUDE

Research into altitude training is also high on the agenda at Loughborough University's new Elite Athlete Centre and Hotel. Launched on 1 November, this is the first hotel in the UK to have 20 specially designed altitude bedrooms, featuring a unique system from Sporting Edge, which means that every room can be controlled independently to go from sea level up to 5,000m, which is the same altitude as Everest base camp.

"For altitude training to go mainstream will probably require a larger body of research into the exposure and potential performance gains," says Emma Boynton, sales and marketing manager of Imago Venues. "But one of the great things about the hotel is the potential to conduct robust research and make altitude training a far more accessible and cost-effective tool for athletes to utilise as part of their training programme."

Part of a new student village complex, Loughborough University believes the hotel will be a strong asset. "To have



*"There are clear markets for altitude training beyond elite athletes, such as ambitious amateur athletes and those planning mountain expeditions"*

**Sam Rees, The Altitude Centre**



Clockwise from left: Loughborough University's hotel featuring altitude bedrooms; Third Space's hypoxic chamber; The Altitude Centre



***"For altitude training to go mainstream will probably require a larger body of research into the exposure and potential performance gain"***

**Emma Boynton,  
Imago Venues**

**Training at heights of over 2,400m is optimum, but gains are made even at 1,500m. The average best height and training duration is believed to be 2,200m for four weeks**

a hotel designed specifically for elite athletes that provides an optimum environment for their training, gives our offer something truly unique and cements our position as a world-leading sporting hub," says Boynton.

Standard and accessible rooms start at £100 and altitude rooms from around £135. Interest has been keen from around the globe, including from national governing bodies, youth sport organisations, para-athlete teams, performance directors, strength and conditioning coaches and semi-professional sports teams all looking for a performance edge, as well as

the corporate market for sporting events, the defence sector and weekend warriors preparing for charity runs, triathlons, mountain ascents or extreme heat conditions.

Working out return on investment for health clubs who are tempted to launch a hypoxic chamber is difficult because it varies depending on the size you want to go for, and there are still unknowns about the optimal way to use altitude training. However, as more operators start to take the plunge and more research becomes available, it will soon become apparent whether or not this is set to become a mainstream trend. ●





Chambers and his team suffered near starvation battling extreme polar weather conditions in 2000



*"It's easy to teach skills – it just takes time and practice. What's more difficult to instill is passion. If people don't commit on day one, you won't get the extra you need from them when things go wrong"* Alan Chambers, arctic explorer



# Alan Chambers

The arctic explorer captivates the audience at this year's SIBEC Europe with lessons learned from his treacherous expedition to the Geographic North Pole

**F**ormer Royal Marine turned extreme explorer Alan Chambers recently addressed a captivated audience at SIBEC Europe, held this year in Marrakech, Morocco.

His keynote presentation, which opened proceedings on day one of the event, detailed his polar expedition from Canada to the Geographic North Pole, leading the first British team to complete the journey without support services.

The 672 nautical mile walk on ice lasted a gruelling 70 days, during which time he lost three stone and was living on 300 calories a day, but burning 14,000.

Suffering near starvation, with a dwindling fuel supply and experiencing the worst polar weather conditions recorded in 100 years, Chambers' team achieved what many said was impossible. It demanded an extraordinary level of commitment, focus and teamwork, for which Alan was awarded an MBE.

Chambers said the emphasis was on travelling light and the team constantly worked to shed anything from their kit

which could reduce its weight, including removing the toggles from the ends of their shoe laces!

Many SIBEC delegates reported that they took away many key learnings from Chambers' amazing account of his challenge.

## PASSION AND ATTITUDE

- Attitude wins over experience. A member of your team may have all the right skills, but if they don't have the right attitude or passion for the project, they'll never achieve what they set out to do. The wrong mindset has the potential to break a team, not just the individual.
- The importance of meticulous planning should never be underestimated. Being aware of all the variables and scenario planning for every eventuality prepares your team's mindset and empowers them to work with the unexpected.
- Break down one big project into several mini projects. This makes the challenge facing you both manageable and achievable, whilst maintaining your team's motivation, as they succeed through the phases.

● Question conventional thinking. Don't keep doing the same things in the same way and expect different results. It's important to keep thinking, keep innovating and making changes, no matter how small, in order to get the desired result.

● Make the time to talk. Chambers coined this as "tent time", where he would get his team together to talk and work collaboratively through difficulties to find solutions. He also took the time to talk to everyone individually to increase his understanding, so he could effectively support them through the challenge.

Chambers left the audience thinking about his personal mantra, O.P.E.R.A., which stands for "Ordinary People, Extraordinary Results Achieved".

Since the completion of that expedition on 16 May 2000, Chambers has been back to the North Pole 15 times and has never failed. With meticulous preparation, a questioning mindset, constant adaption and innovation and a driven team, he always believed he would succeed. ●



*The capitalist model may create wealth in the short term, but if it doesn't address the broader issue of serving society, it risks losing its licence to operate. If inequality grows, that might force more difficult change*

# PHILIP NEWBOROUGH

The co-founder of impact investor, Bridges Fund Management, tells **Kate Cracknell** capitalism risks losing its mandate, and why every business needs to start thinking about social impact

## When you refer to Bridges as an impact investor, what do you mean?

Bridges Fund Management is an investment company that uses commercial expertise to deliver both financial returns and social and environmental benefits. We believe that market forces and entrepreneurship can be harnessed to do well by doing good.

Over the course of the 20th century, the prevailing model of capitalism became all about maximising risk-adjusted returns. There was an unrelenting focus on shareholder value and profit maximisation, with scant regard to the other consequences that business or capitalism had. This has only accelerated with the emergence of private equity.

Our view at Bridges is that, in the 21st century, all businesses and investors should base their decisions not just on financial returns, but also on impact.

They need to take into account the effect they have on their broader stakeholders: employees, the supply chain, the environment and so on. If you don't do this, then you're not serving society terribly well – and that'll ultimately undermine the value of the business.

The capitalist model may create wealth in the short term, but if it doesn't start to address the broader issue of serving society, it risks losing its mandate – its licence to operate.

If inequality continues to grow, that might force more difficult change.

## What was your personal motivation for setting up Bridges?

During my career I'd seen grants being used to try and solve social issues such as the wealth divide, to little or no effect. Income inequality was just getting worse.

Our thesis at Bridges is that governments alone can't solve these problems by taxing and spending, and that philanthropy can only go so far; if you want to address these issues, you really need to tap in to the huge pool of private and investment capital that's out there.

That's why, over the last 16 or 17 years, we've tried to find different ways of using our capital to make a difference – matching capital to innovative, entrepreneurial solutions. ▶



Newborough says  
Bridges focuses on  
health and wellbeing;  
education and skills;  
sustainable living;  
and under-served  
populations

► **How do you decide which businesses to invest in?**

Obviously we look at the financials. Scale is another key aspect: our initial investment is typically £10–15m, so we're looking for established, high-growth businesses. There needs to be a 'specialness' around the business too: it needs to be disruptive, differentiated and led by a team that believes very strongly in both the impact and the financial plan.

However, the first thing we look at is the impact the business can have, and here we focus on four areas: health and wellbeing; education and skills; sustainable living; and under-served populations.

Within the fitness sector, from an impact point of view, low-cost gyms have always been an obvious investment for

us. Going to a high-quality gym was really a luxury until the emergence of low-cost gyms: they've made high-quality fitness much more accessible. Even people on lower incomes can be members.

**Are all your investments in the UK?**

Our investments are predominately UK-based – The Gym Group as a prime example in the fitness sector – but we do invest outside the UK too. We own Viva, which is the largest low-cost gym business in Spain, as well as Portuguese market leader Fitness Hut. We also own Planet Fitness, one of the largest fitness franchises in the US.

The challenges we're facing in the UK in terms of income equality, climate change, ageing populations and so on –

are pretty much the same across Europe and the US. We find our approach resonates across the developed world.

**Some have seen fitness as a risky investment, what's your view?**

Actually we love it: it really chimes with our investment style.

The fitness market is very local, with proximity people's main consideration. That makes these businesses very scalable: you know the population, you understand the demographics of the people you're trying to serve, you know how many of them there are, and you can, therefore, predict realistic penetration rates. You can go step by step, reflecting on and improving the model as you roll out one site at a time.

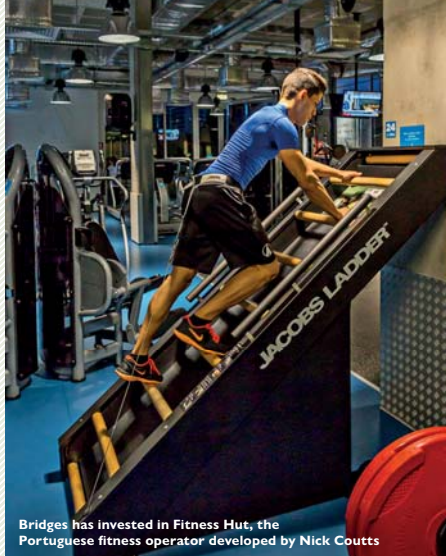


CEO and founder John Treharne started The Gym Group in 2008. The group has now grown to include 130 clubs, 20 per cent of which are located in the UK's most deprived areas.



PHOTOS: THE GYM GROUP

**Bridges Fund Management was an early investor in John Treharne's The Gym Group**



**Bridges has invested in Fitness Hut, the Portuguese fitness operator developed by Nick Coutts**

PHOTOS: FITNESS HUT



CEO of Fitness Hut Nick Coutts co-founded the brand in 2011, with the aim of creating a chain of premium, low cost clubs that each have a dynamic, community atmosphere.



You also invest mainly via capex, so you can speed up, slow down and then pause before moving forward if needed.

So, we very much like the dynamics from an investment point of view. The site-by-site roll-out means you get good data – and the more sites you open, the better your data gets.

#### **Aside from the actual investment itself, what does Bridges bring to the table?**

We bring a lot in terms of the execution and the operation. Our day job is helping businesses work through the growing pains that are associated with all successful companies: helping them scale, developing the tech systems that sit around the business, involving the management team, driving employee engagement and so on.

Employee engagement tends to be very strong in the companies we invest in: one of the great things about an impact-driven approach is that it tends to create a stronger sense of purpose. In the end, most people want to feel that what they're doing in their day job has meaning and value – so when you have a business with such a clear sense of purpose as The Gym Group, for example, you create a huge amount of employee engagement and dynamism. Your employees get behind what you're trying to achieve, not just in financial terms, but also in terms of your impact on members and the population as a whole.

#### **Bridges is a big player in Social Impact Bonds – what are these?**

Social Impact Bonds (SIBs) are a way to help social sector organisations deliver outcomes-based contracts for government.

A Social Impact Bond is based around an intervention from a social sector organisation that addresses an important social issue – something the organisation has done before, or piloted on a small scale, with good results.

A government department agrees to commission the programme on a 'payment by results' basis; we provide the project finance, plus any management support the provider needs to deliver the contract successfully. As the government makes payments based on the outcomes achieved, we're paid only when the programme has achieved the desired results.

It works well, because it allows smaller, more innovative Third Sector organisations to take on these government contracts. That's something they normally find quite hard to do, because they don't have the balance sheet to bid for many of these contracts, even if they wanted to.

Impact Bonds are also good because, whereas standard government contracts see organisations being paid for the delivery of a specific service that they can't vary from, with SIBs it's the outcome rather than the service delivery that's being prescribed. ▶





PHOTO: FITNESS.MUT

Bridges owns Planet Fitness, one of the biggest operators in the world

## “ We raised around £20m of capital for our first Social Impact Fund. We're on course to receive outcomes payments of about £60m, with predicted savings to government of about £130m

- Typically these are long-term contracts too: three-, five-, even seven-year programmes. That allows for upfront investment in really good people, better systems and so on. It also allows for change within the programme.

From the outset, you keep track of what's working well, and for what kinds of people. Which elements are the most efficient, the most cost-effective, and produce the best outcomes.

You can continually adjust what you're doing by tweaking the variables – just as you would in a normal business – until you find the right formula.

That's why it works so well, because you just focus on what produces the best outcome. This is in contrast to delivering a standard 'fee-for-service' contract, where you just have to show you've delivered that service – which means you simply do it all as cost-effectively as possible so you make a profit.

### Do you have to be a charity to get involved in Social Impact Bonds?

To date, most Social Impact Bonds have been delivered by social sector organisations, but in theory there's no reason why SIBs couldn't be open to trusts, mutuals, or even normal companies with an interest in social outcomes.

The thing you must have, though, is an intervention with clear, measurable

outcomes that benefit the Commissioner or the tax payer in such a way that the Commissioner is willing to pay for them.

### How significant are Impact Bonds in the health and fitness arena?

Bridges has funded 27 of the 43 Social Impact Bonds created in the UK to date, but only two of these have been in the area of healthcare. The scope to do more is massive: healthcare should be the biggest platform we have.

One of our health-focused SIBs is a diabetes prevention programme commissioned by Devon County Council and delivered by local charity Westbank. It's the first local authority-commissioned diabetes prevention programme in the UK, working with those who are pre-diabetic, and it's producing good results.

However, as a general rule it's proving quite difficult to get healthcare Impact Bonds off the ground, and there are two main reasons for that. Firstly, the impact is by definition quite long-term. When you're dealing in preventative health and looking to make secondary care savings – which is the main benefit to the Treasury and the tax payer – it takes some time for those savings to manifest themselves.

The other challenge has been the amount of change that's been going on throughout the NHS and commissioning: with all the different CCGs and different

agendas, decision-making is less centralised than in some other sectors, which makes it harder to achieve scale. There's also some suspicion of private capital and what it means for the health service.

### How do the finances of an Impact Bond work?

It really is a win-win. As an example, we raised £20m of capital for our first fund. We're on course to receive outcomes payments of about £60m, with predicted savings to government of about £130m.

So it's absolutely possible to make a financial return on these projects – and whenever we get an outcomes payment, the savings to the tax payer are typically twice the figure we receive.

The challenge is always to agree outcome prices with the Commissioner who's going to benefit from the savings, which obviously you have to do before you take on any project.

In the Devon case, for example, it revolved around what they were prepared to pay to prevent people becoming diabetic.

If we can take an individual with all the pre-diabetic signs – raised glucose levels, probably a BMI that made them obese, and so on – and manage to change that person's lifestyle, thereby massively reducing the chances of them becoming diabetic, what's the estimated saving



PHOTO: THE GYM GROUP

Bridges has funded 27 of the 43 Social Impact Bonds created in the UK to date

to the tax payer or to the CCG? And therefore, what was the Commissioner prepared to pay us – what portion of the savings were they willing to let us have? That's the shape of it.

### What trends do you see influencing your fitness sector investments moving forward?

I see four main trends driving the sector over the next decade or so.

The first is changing consumer behaviour – especially the move towards 'à la carte' behaviour.

What we're seeing across the world is that low-cost gyms are very complementary to other ways in which people are choosing to exercise – not just in boutique studios, but also functional training, CrossFit, climbing centres, dancing, cycling, soccer centres, Parkrun and a wide range of sports.

I think the traditional gym has really already been disrupted out of the market and in its place are low-cost gyms that sit alongside all the other forms of activity as somewhere people can maybe go and stretch, or do some weight-bearing exercise, or stay fit for the other activities they enjoy doing.

The second is under-served populations, which links back to the Impact Bonds. How do we get the older generation more active, for

example, creating facilities for our ageing populations? How do we keep innovating and creating activity options that are acceptable and accessible to the less affluent in society? Because there remains a strong correlation between prosperity and a healthy lifestyle. And how do we better cater for the other under-served population – young people?

Even with all the low-cost gyms, we're only just scratching the surface.

The next one is technology: wearable technology, virtual technology, exercise at home or in the workplace. Also, within technology, how will the aggregator business model evolve?

We haven't yet found the right investment in this sector, but I think tech has a huge capacity to help address things like long-term health conditions.

And the fourth trend is infrastructure investment and looking at how we can insert activity into people's day-to-day lives through things like cycle sharing schemes, better environments in which to walk, and so on.

We believe these four trends will be the drivers of fitness sector growth for the next decade or so. Ours is a very proactive approach – we don't sit back and wait for companies to come to us – so we'll be searching for businesses, entrepreneurs and projects that tap into these trends and solve these issues. ●

## FAVOURITES

### Place

Lagos, Portugal

### Season

Summer

### Sport

Football

### Book

*Sapiens*, by Yuval Noah Harari

### Film

*The Silence of the Lambs*

### App

BBC Sport

### Public figure you most admire

Nelson Mandela

### Person you'd most like to meet

Roger Federer

### Best piece of advice you've ever been given

If you believe in something, stick at it

### What you'd like to be remembered for

Being a pioneer and champion of sustainable investment

# Fitness gets personal

Precor partners with eGym SmartStart on its CV equipment to provide gym members with a fully individualised, connected training experience that delivers motivational results

**M**ost of us, at some point, need a little motivation and direction to achieve our goals when working out at the gym. Just imagine if you could achieve great results with a personalised fitness plan, but without the cost of regular one-on-one personal training sessions.

That's exactly the reason Precor has partnered with eGym SmartStart on its cardiovascular equipment; to provide a fully interactive, connected training that gives members a personalised experience. We want to provide all members with the ability to complete effective cardio training and save time in the gym.

## How does it work?

Logging on using RFID or account details on the cardio machines, exercisers select

the option to take a step-by-step physical performance test. On completion of the cardio test, the software displays their endurance capability as a 'Cardio-Age'. The software then uses these results to automatically prescribe an individual and customised training programme aligned with their result and based on a training goal selected by the member – such as general fitness, body toning, athletic, muscle building, metabolic fit, rehabilitation or weight loss.

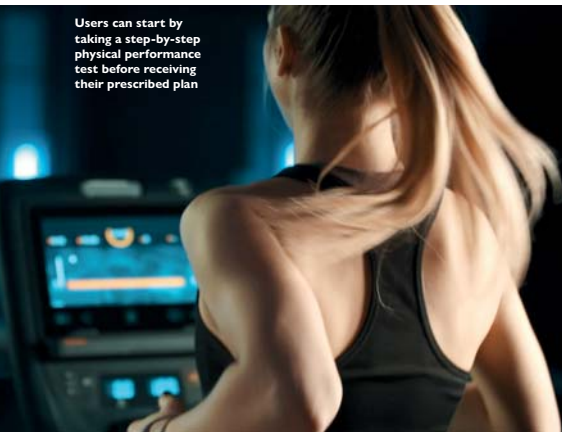
As activity can be constantly monitored, facilities can use eGym SmartStart to proactively encourage members to focus on their goals by training on the Precor equipment at least twice a week. Automatic progression is built in with prompts to repeat the physical performance test every 21 days,



*"With the number of consumers calling boutique studios their destination of choice having grown by 70 per cent over the past few years, and with consumers looking for innovative, varied and exhilarating fitness experiences, facilities must continually strive to make the exercise experience more individual and personal"*

Steve Carter, managing director, Precor UK

Users can start by taking a step-by-step physical performance test before receiving their prescribed plan



so trainers can be sure members are always working at the optimum intensity.

## What does training using eGym SmartStart look like?

Once logged on to eGym SmartStart, the exerciser is presented with a choice of personalised programmes, created by the results of their fitness test and by their trainer. Once a workout is selected the user can enjoy the eGym training experience, which includes interactive,



The eGym experience includes visually-engaging graphics to guide members through their workout

visually-engaging graphics to guide them through their workout. Members stay on track by keeping a ball in an orange target corridor and when finished, can instantly see if they are on target to reach their goals with a summary of results and historical analysis in graph form.

Steve Carter, managing director of Precor UK comments: "With the number of consumers calling boutique studios their destination of choice having grown by 70 per cent over the past few years, and with consumers looking for innovative, varied and exhilarating fitness experiences, facilities must continually strive to make the exercise experience more individual and personal; where achievements are regularly updated and in line with the members goals."

Boutique gym, Astons Exclusive Health Studio in Chichester, along with prestigious private members' clubs, Wentworth and The Hurlingham Club, are the first in the country to offer eGym SmartStart on their Precor equipment.

Jo Perkins, gym manager at Astons explains: "Installing eGym software on our Precor equipment was important to us to complete our fully-connected gym, in combination with our eGym strength equipment. We want to provide all members with the ability to complete effective cardio training and save time in the gym. eGym SmartStart enables them to experience personalised cardio training programmes, align workouts to their training goals, monitor training sessions and track results easily."



"It delivers members with quick results, automated progression, as well as tracking and sharing results. It enables them to train independently and instantly see their progression. In addition, with the strength test on the eGym equipment, we are also able to provide information on muscle imbalances and a biological age of the muscles. The combination of eGym and Precor working together is the future of fitness and is perfect for a boutique health studio."

#### Fitness made personal

Carter concludes: "Facilities are continually challenged to integrate technology and connectivity as consumers now expect this in every aspect of their lives, including fitness. While the benefits of technology are vast, this can lead to a non-personal interactive gym experience. Based on

sports science, eGym provides facilities with the perfect tool to guarantee fitness results, enhance trainer support and engagement with exercisers."

"Creating a positive, encouraging member experience is fundamental to Precor and the integration between ourselves and eGym Smart Start embodies our core mission of 'Fitness Made Personal', bringing a personalised element to the experience of every exerciser."



**TEL: 01276 404900**  
**EMAIL: [info@precor.com](mailto:info@precor.com)**  
**WEB: [www.precor.com](http://www.precor.com)**



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/GUTESA

**Treadmills remained the number one attraction at US health clubs, used by 43 per cent of total members**

# BEST YEAR EVER



**The US fitness market had more members in 2017**

**than at any time since records began, says Kristen Walsh**

**T**he latest research into the US fitness market has been released by Sports Marketing Surveys for IHRSA.

The annual *IHRSA Health Club Consumer Report* was published in September, and is based on nearly 31,000 interviews conducted with health club consumers in 2017.

In total, US health clubs attracted more than 70 million consumers in 2017, a record high since IHRSA began tracking health club consumer statistics in 1987.

US health club membership totalled 60.9 million last year, up 6.3 per cent from 57.3 million in 2016. Another 9.1

million non-member consumers reported using a health club at least once in 2017.

The 2018 report takes an in-depth look at the demographics and behaviours behind these numbers. How old are health club members and non-member users? What's their household income and education level? What ethnicity are they?

It also looks at the type of facilities they're visiting – commercial, nonprofit, corporate, or boutiques – and how much they're spending on membership.

Importantly, it examines how long they stay as members of a club once they join and what activities they favour. Finally, Sports Marketing Surveys looked at how

many are investing in personal training, and also at generational behaviour in relation to club usage. ●

## ACCESS THE REPORT

To purchase a copy of *The 2018 IHRSA Health Club Consumer Report* visit: [www.ihrsa.org/publications](http://www.ihrsa.org/publications)





## IHRSA PASSPORT PROGRAM GOES MOBILE IN 2019

IHRSA is upgrading its Passport Program, which offers members of participating clubs discounted guest access to a global network of health clubs when they travel.

From this year, the passport will be available on a mobile app which has been created by Copenhagen-based tech business TrainAway.

"Pairing the Passport with a mobile app will give millions of members of IHRSA clubs a convenient way to find and gain discounted access to IHRSA clubs around the world, making it easy for them to stay active when they travel," said Jay Ablondi, IHRSA's EVP of global products.

In 2018, more than 1,500 health clubs participated in the programme.

To participate, clubs must enroll through TrainAway to provide the benefit to members.

[www.ihrsa.org/passport](http://www.ihrsa.org/passport)



PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK/FLAMINGO IMAGES



On average, members attended a health club 98 days in 2017

## [ 10 KEY FINDINGS ]

**1** The average annual household income (HHI) for health club members was **US\$80,300** in 2017, which is consistent with recent years. Approximately two out of five health club members (**41 per cent**), come from households with an annual income of at least **US\$100,000**.

**2** On average, members attended a health club **98 days** in 2017. Members between the ages of **35 and 44** used a health club most frequently, at an average of **113 days**, while the **under-18** age group used a health club least frequently at an average of **64 days**.

**3** Consistent with historic trends, treadmills remained the number one attraction at health clubs in the US, being used by **43 per cent** of total members. Resistance machines were second, attracting usage from **35 per cent** of members.

**4** Roughly **14 per cent** of health club consumers used a personal trainer in 2017. A slightly greater share of female consumers (**16 per cent**) used a personal trainer than male (**13 per cent**).

**5** One out of five Americans belong to a health club. More than **60 million** Americans belonged to a club in 2017, representing **20.3 per cent** of the total population aged six and older.

**6** Health clubs attracted a record-high number of Americans in 2017 and when including both members and non-member users, health clubs attracted a total of **70.3 million** consumers that year.

**7** Roughly **27 per cent** of health club consumers engaged in small group training in 2017. Approximately **28 per cent** female and **26 per cent** male.

**8** Core health club members, who attended the club for at least **100 days** in 2017, accounted for **47 per cent** of total members. The level of core members varied by facility type, as full-service clubs such as multi-purpose and fitness-only facilities attracted a greater share of core members than boutiques.

**9** Average tenure for all members was **4.9 years**. Older members had been members longer than younger members, with the **65+ age group** indicating being members for an average of **7.3 years**, against **2.8 years** for the **18-24 age group**.

**10** More than **one in five members** belonged to more than one club (**23 per cent**). Members of boutique studios were more likely to belong to more than one club.



# Retail Revenue

Your gym's untapped revenue source

Years ago, gym retail meant a small selection of basic products sold behind a counter. Now retail can turn more profit more than anywhere else in the gym, with opportunities in activewear, supplements and specialised gym equipment. We look at what's working according to three industry experts

*"We generate more than £3m a year from retail.  
The key thing is to put it in the right place"*

**Duncan Jefford, regional director, Everyone Active**

## Location, location, location

**The wise adage** is true: people buy with their eyes. However, in health club retail, buying incentive is more than visual interest alone. Allowing people to touch and feel the products creates a scenario in which they are much more likely to buy.

According to Everyone Active's Duncan Jefford, when done well, retail can generate more profit per square meter than anywhere else in the gym.

"We generate more than £3m a year from retail," says Jefford. "The key is to put it in the right place. Many operators put their retail section behind the reception, which is a huge loss. People need to be able to touch and feel the product to drive purchase."

While he admits that the retail space at his centres can never compete with online retailers, positioning products in the right place can make a massive difference in terms of sales.

Seems obvious, right? But Duncan says that concerns around theft often prevent a facility from

moving their retail to the front of house. But reassuringly, he said that their stock loss is minimal – less than 2 per cent per year.

Another major sales driver is to have a range of quality products available.

"The vast majority of retail sales are for goggles and swimming costumes," he says. "These are usually distress purchases, made on-site when a member has come for a workout and forgotten a critical piece of kit."

"However, one thing we're noticing is that people are willing to pay a bit more for a quality product if there's one available."

Expanding the appeal of retail to include pop-up shops in partnership with new companies, especially athleisure brands, is also now proving to be a fruitful strategy.

These work well in a larger facility with a little more space. They're not a permanent fixture, says Jefford, but they keep things fresh and interesting and have proven to give a great return.





MoreYoga has partnered with Yogangster founder Goldie (left) to sell its range of apparel

***“Lack of retail space isn’t stopping us from making the most of retail. We’re pushing ahead in more creative ways”***

**Shamir Sidhu, founder, MoreYoga**

## No space for retailing?

**What do you** do if you don’t have retail space in your facility? London’s MoreYoga, one of the capital’s most affordable yoga studios, is proving that you can still have a lucrative retail offering even without owning the required floor space.

The company has been selling a range of Yogangster activewear through a mixture of partnership events, in-studio events and online.

More recently, MoreYoga showcased and sold an exclusive selection of Yogangster t-shirts and hoodies at the Om Yoga Show in London.

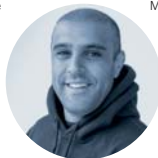
Highlighting their partnership with Yogangster founder Goldie, an internationally renowned DJ, artist and yoga enthusiast, MoreYoga was able to

drive sales and brand awareness by capitalising on this modern yoga icon.

“Retail presents a huge opportunity for MoreYoga,” says Shamir Sidhu, MoreYoga founder. “We have 16 locations across London, but our lack of retail space isn’t stopping us from making the most of retail. We’re pushing ahead in more creative ways.”

Shamir says that a retail strategy makes sense for all health and fitness clubs. The key is to decide on the scope of what you want to do, based on the capabilities of your facility.

If you can’t have a robust retail footprint, offer something meaningful by partnering with brands that align with your core values.



GymPro sells a variety of athletic apparel in 40 leisure centres across the UK



- ***“The theatre and energy around a retail space is something we’re trying to hammer home to our operator partners”***

**Adam Rai, co-founder, GymPro**

## The importance of merchandising

**When people walk** into a high street shop, they’re primed to buy. Not so in the gym environment.

According to Adam Rai, co-founder of the GymPro fitness apparel brand, health club operators really need to work twice as hard to drive retail sales in a gym environment.

“People come to the gym with their head down and their headphones on. They’re not thinking about buying new kit,” says Rai. “For that reason, a bog-standard rail is not going to cut it. But when you attract the eye, it sells.”

GymPro sells a variety of hoodies and athletic apparel in 40 leisure centres across the UK.

Rai says operators need only to look at what large sports and fashion brands are doing from a merchandising perspective for inspiration in their own facilities.

“The theatre and energy around a retail space is something we’re really trying to hammer home to our operator partners,” says Rai.

He adds that operators need to ensure they have passionate retail staff to drive sales.

“Retail staff need to believe in the products that they’re selling,” says Rai.

“When retail is done right, it can have a huge impact on sales.” ●





# THE UK'S LEADING INDEPENDENT SERVICE PROVIDER

REMANUFACTURING   ●   PARTS   ●   ELECTRONIC REPAIR  
INSTALLATION   ●   SERVICING   ●   EQUIPMENT   ●   UPHOLSTERY

[www.servicesport.co.uk](http://www.servicesport.co.uk)   ●   0845 402 2456




## EVERROLL® >>>> GYM FLOORING

**Kinetics Club, Towcester**  
everroll® Gym Flooring – high quality floors for the diverse activity areas in fitness centres. Elastic, robust, easy on joints, shock-resistant quick and simple to install and available in a wide range of colours and various thicknesses.

In fitness centres all over the world.

BSW GMBH  
[WWW.EVERROLL.BIZ](http://WWW.EVERROLL.BIZ)



IMAGE © ESCAPE FITNESS



# Screens can't kill people CONTENT CAN

■ By Jak Phillips

**A**ddictive, 'deadly', 'the scourge of modern living' – just some of the warning sirens from our growing moral panic around screen time.

Whether it's new ukactive research that UK adults spend an average of 12 hours a week watching on-demand TV, or those amusing YouTube videos of toddlers furtively trying to swipe and zoom in on newspapers, seemingly everything today signals the impending apocalypse where screens finally take over.

Make no mistake, screens are everywhere. They're in our living rooms, atop our desks, in our pockets even. The chances are, you're reading these words on a screen.

But what's so bad about that? Screens aren't to blame for our 'box-set binges' and love affair with the chair, it's the content. Screens don't force people to stare at them for hours at a time, it's the fact that Netflix does such a bloody good job of producing addictive content.

## CONTENT LANDMARKS

Idle forms of content currently dominate our screen time, but there's no reason why the health and fitness sector can't fight back with its own inspiring content to get people moving. It's not like we haven't done it before.

Think back to Jack LaLanne in the 1950s, Jane Fonda in the 1980s and Mr Motivator in the 1990s – they all became big 'on the box'. Far from being the enemy of exercise, many of the landmark moments in our fledgling fitness movement have stemmed from the screen.

The ubiquity of screens offers our sector greater reach than ever before. The challenge now is to find creative solutions to transform this perceived threat into an unprecedented opportunity.

Many firms have already started, and as digital fitness has exploded in recent years, the mission to establish fitness facilities as consumers' 'third space' has moved into cyberspace.



*Peloton aims to persuade consumers to part with £2,000 for a bike and £40 a month in subscription fees to work out at home with its array of streamed classes*

## THE FITNESS CONTENT WAR IS COMING

And this is where the quality of content is key. Just as the dodgy on-screen instructors and faded projectors initially gave virtual fitness a bad name in health

clubs, it's the high-quality offerings now becoming the norm that are currently fuelling this new wave of virtual and on-demand fitness.

The content war is well underway, and the stakes are quickly rising. US private equity-backed Peloton recently arrived in London with much fanfare, and is opening a production studio dedicated to creating 'UK-centric' fitness content.

Pitting itself against the traditional gym market, Peloton aims to persuade consumers to part with £2,000 for a bike and £40 a month in subscription fees to work out at home instead, with its array of streamed classes.

Meanwhile, established market players – such as Fitness On Demand, Wexer Virtual and Les Mills On Demand – are working with health and fitness clubs to bridge the gap between members' homes and the gym, with fitness subscription services that offer an exercise touchpoint in between club visits.

And then there are a growing number of boutique clubs starting to offer live and recorded feeds of their workouts to be broadcast through streaming services such as ClassPass Live.

## WHAT DOES ALL THIS MEAN FOR HEALTH CLUBS?

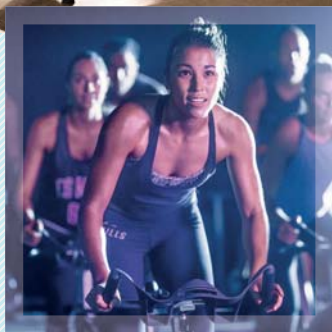
There are those who believe that on-demand fitness offerings will negate the need for the health club and ultimately cost them members.

But the initial numbers don't seem to bear this out. As the digital fitness revolution has gathered pace over the past decade, gym memberships and penetration rates have continued to steadily increase.

The evidence suggests that digital fitness is helping to bring more people into the world of fitness – the inactive, the self-conscious, the time-poor – with many then graduating into the club space, as they did in droves when the Fondas and LaLannes first hit our screens.



Companies like Peloton (left), Fitness on Demand (bottom left) and Les Mills (bottom right) are harnessing screen power to offer engaging fitness options



You only have to look to the music industry, which has similarly been disrupted by streaming services to see how this can play out. Most people have a Spotify subscription, but live music has never been more popular, with attendances to gigs and festivals at an all-time high. It just shows how live experiences will always be the pinnacle.

It's the same story with virtual fitness in gyms. Far from cannibalising the group fitness crowd, industry research has shown clubs that install virtual fitness in their studio see an average 12 per cent increase in attendances to live classes.

Quality content gets people moving and crucially, it helps provide sustainable inspiration. We know the main reasons people leave gyms are down to perceived cost, convenience and lack of time – all of which ultimately boil down to a loss of motivation. A loss of motivation to fork out for that membership, to make that trip to the gym, to create the time for that regular workout.

By offering fitness at members' fingertips, we can support them to stay in the fitness groove and maintain motivation whether they're stuck at home, or at work or are travelling.

The gyms that win will be those that can form the right partnerships to extend their reach beyond their four walls through top quality content. They'll keep current members engaged and will open up a route to reach the 85 per cent of adults who aren't currently members of a gym. They'll be primed to help these audiences dip their toe into the world of fitness, before graduating from home workouts into the club space.

The competition will be fierce, but the potential spoils are seismic. Forget being our biggest enemy, screens could yet prove to be the gym's best friend. ●

# GET UPGRADED

HCM asks the industry's leading software suppliers about the new tech and software features you can look forward to getting your hands on in 2019

**Health outcomes management and Open Data will continue to be key areas of ongoing development**

Sean Maguire, managing director, Legend

## LEGEND CLUB MANAGEMENT SYSTEMS

Legendware.co.uk

Twitter: @legendware



### What new features will you be launching in 2019?

We'll be delivering membership features to enable customers to build innovative new membership packages in a more dynamic way and with self-administration built in.

There'll also be new apps, such as tablet-based active attendance to help in-club bookings and other new app features such as push marketing and referral promotions.

Health outcomes management and Open Data will continue to be key areas of ongoing development.

### What makes your system special?

We're differentiating in three key ways: helping customers save money in a tough leisure management climate

which has been caused by reductions in government spending; investing in R&D to help customers keep ahead of the pack; and protecting their data and systems through state-of-the-art servers and security accreditations.

If clients were to vote on three leading USPs in our software solution they're likely to be our reporting functionality, native app, and either digital marketing or integrated website solution.

All these functions have features that help operators save money or engage their customers more effectively.

Our customers also enjoy that we're engaging them, along with our partners and other stakeholders – such as Sport England, ukactive and the Open Data Institute – to further inform the direction of our R&D and investment.

A single platform such as Legend – which is a 'one system, one solution' package – has inherent benefits over older systems. These benefits include greater data quality and developability. These are key to being able to respond quickly to opportunities.


### Tell us about your latest contracts

We've had another strong year, with 159 new sites installed to date.

Our most recent wins have been Causeway Coast and Glens BC, Lisburn and Castlereagh CC, and Mid and East Antrim BC, a win which follows the success of Newry Mourne and Down DC and Fermanagh and Omagh DC earlier this year.

Another contract worthy of mention is the City of Toronto, a large project in Canada.





Eden Fitness in London has partnered with Ez-Runner for the installation of new management software

We've partnered with Eden Fitness in London. It was great to work with them. Our solution complements their online ecosystem"

Stefan Drummond



#### EZ-RUNNER

[www.ez-runner.com](http://www.ez-runner.com)

##### What new features will you be launching in 2019?

We'll be adding central operational reporting, as well as a new self-service kiosk, and credit card subscriptions functionality.

##### In a competitive software market, how are you differentiating your business?

We continue to add features to our online stable. Our differentiation is in the

continued flexibility of our products and our drive to increase spend online for our customers.

##### Tell us about your latest contracts

We've partnered with Eden Fitness in London.

It was great to work with them. Our solution complements their online ecosystem. They offer a hybrid between a traditional and boutique-style gym.



## We're adding PT booking functionality, a web-based tool to simplify PT bookings and management and Online Reserve Lists

David Harris, managing director, XN Leisure

### What new features will you launch this year?

New features for 2019 will include web-based contact centre functionality to reduce costs and set up a team of experts to enable operators to meet their customers' needs. This will free up front of house staff to interact with members more effectively.

We're also adding PT booking functionality – a web-based tool to simplify PT bookings and management.

In addition, our system will get new integrated session ticketing – allowing ticketing of pool and other regular session tickets online and at the front of house.

Finally, we'll be offering an Online Reserve List – all new central waiting list functionality to simplify the management of the most popular sessions and bookings.

### Which features make your system special?

One key feature is The Leisure Hub, a self-service solution for the B2C market. Our software also works off a single login, so there's no need to access multiple applications or websites, making it straightforward to use.

We also offer seamless integration with a wide range of apps and services and face-to-face account

### XN LEISURE

[xnleisure.com](http://xnleisure.com)

Twitter: @xnleisure

management and customer training, rather than online. This way, we can provide a more personal service and discuss key objectives in a convenient way. Online and remote meetings are not nearly as efficient.

We work in close partnership with customers to stay on top of their current and future needs, to ensure we design and develop software which is based on their feedback.

### Tell us about your latest contracts

One of our most recent wins is Moray Sports Centre, which is due to open in June 2019. The Moray Sports Foundation is providing a sports facility designed by the community ([www.moraysportscentre.co.uk](http://www.moraysportscentre.co.uk)).

We've also signed Greenvale Leisure Centre, Mid Ulster Council's flagship facility and Blair Mayne Health and Leisure Complex, the £30m facility which is named after SAS founder and war hero – Blair 'Paddy' Mayne.

The Mayne Health and Leisure Complex will have a contemporary gym and fitness studios, a spa with sensory areas and holistic and beauty therapies, as well as a six-lane pool, splash and soft play areas, a blacklight adventure zone and a 100 seat café.



## The Exerp Staff Mobile App includes a Swap Board, where classes without an instructor can be posted and picked up by other instructors

Jacob Nathan, CCO, Exerp

### What makes your system special?

The Exerp Platform adapts to clients' business processes rather than forcing clients to adapt to the system.

We're constantly developing the system to meet the requirements of some of the world's most recognised health and fitness businesses, such as Goodlife Fitness Canada, Sats Elixia, Pure Gym and Virgin Active.

Our data warehouse, which runs on Amazon Redshift, extracts and reconciles client data, giving clients easy

### EXERP

[www.exerp.com](http://www.exerp.com)

Twitter: @exerp

access to fault-tolerant data for business analysis and reporting – a reliable source for critical business decisions.

### What are your standout features?

The Exerp Staff Mobile App lets staff view their calendar and bookings, both for classes and personal sessions.

It also enables them to manage their PT bookings, view statistics on their classes and input their work hours.

The app also includes a Swap Board, where classes without instructors can be posted and picked up by other instructors in the club.

Our courses functionality enables operators to manage various courses, such as swimming and to organise tennis activities such as levels, ranking and scheduling.

At the same time, it streamlines reporting and billing of activities.



The system manages course waiting lists, and operators can move participants from one course to another, with the system calculating the pro-rated amounts to be paid.



XN Leisure's new online central waiting list simplifies the management of the most popular sessions

PHOTO: LES MILLS



We've partnered with Strava so people can share their participation in classes which are offered via the Mindbody app

Josh Todd, chief marketing officer, Mindbody

#### What new features can you tell us about?

On the consumer side, we've refreshed our Fitbit integration within the Mindbody app, to deliver a more complete picture of users' activity levels by loading key fitness data in one convenient place.

The updates aim to better immerse app users with the fitness metrics that matter most to them.

The integration digs deeper for fitness classes booked through the Mindbody app, by recording vital statistics such as heart rate in a new beats per minute (BPM) graph.

#### MINDBODY

[www.mindbodyonline.com](http://www.mindbodyonline.com)

Twitter: @mindbodypowered

#### What makes your system special?

While many clubs traditionally run their software from a desktop, Mindbody mobile solutions enable operators to function on-the-go.

With the Mindbody business app, operators can run their day-to-day business from a mobile device which enables them to manage scheduling, control client info

and check-in, and run their point of sale and marketing.

Additionally, with Mindbody branded apps, operators can create their own customised mobile app with their own branding and integration with online booking.

This is a powerful marketing tool – when clients are willing to give you prime space on their phone, you know they'll be dedicated customers.

#### Tell us about your latest collaborations

We've partnered with Strava, the social network for athletes.

By syncing their Strava accounts with our app, people are able to share their participation in the 5.2 million fitness classes and wellness services offered via Mindbody.

This enables people to discover new classes, while sharing successes and accomplishments with friends along the way.

● Mindbody announced on December 24th 2018 that it has entered into an agreement to be acquired by Vista Equity Partners for US\$1.9bn. ▶



We're working on an open API which will make the functions that already exist within our software more intelligent

Leonie Wileman

#### PREMIER SOFTWARE

[www.premiersoftware.co.uk](http://www.premiersoftware.co.uk)

Twitter: @corebypremier

##### What new features will you be launching in 2019?

We're working on an open API which will allow our software to talk to other systems and makes the client journey smoother.

The first phase will be launched during the early part of 2019 and will essentially

make the functions which already exist within our software more intelligent.

It will do this by creating a smarter way of communicating and assimilating data quickly.

Premier is also looking to launch another new system this year, so watch this space.

##### Tell us more about Core

Core by Premier Software is a multi-layered solution that integrates with existing PMS systems and has been designed for both single- and multi-site operators.

Its functionality means it can be adapted to meet the needs of a growing business.

With over 400 reports to choose from, managers can do things such as track revenue, manage staff and monitor resources.

Core's hero feature is its intuitive reporting system

which enables clients to run data in real-time and also to keep track of their businesses while they're on the go.

Core by Premier Software is accompanied by a support package which includes advice from a UK-based in-house support team; software updates; remote access between Premier's customer care team and its clients and access to Premier's mobile app for booking on-the-go.

The software is PCI-DSS certified, GDPR compliant and SEPA accredited.

#### CLUBWISE SOFTWARE

[www.clubwise.com](http://www.clubwise.com)

Twitter: @clubwise

Our system has a suite of integrated products which have been designed to boost member engagement

Guy Foster

##### What new features will you be launching in 2019?

We're launching an in-app group heart rate and member loyalty programme, called FitSense Rewards My Body, as well as integrating with Body Composition Analysis



##### What makes your system special?

Our integrated solution provides an FCA-accredited billing service, club and member management, marketing and a suite of integrated products designed to boost member engagement and increase members' overall length of stay.

Our FitSense member app and other integrated products include group heart rate and body composition analysis.

We'll be adding improved course management systems, membership modelling and waiting list handling

Paul Duncalf

#### SPORTSOFT

[www.sportsoft.co.uk](http://www.sportsoft.co.uk)



##### What new features will you be launching this year?

We'll be adding more options to our web systems, such as an improved course management system, improved membership modelling, front-desk application and also waiting list handling.

##### What are the three main things which make your system special?

We offer more types of access and entry system control than most, including biometrics, while our integrated web systems offer online activity, class and course bookings, membership join-ups and complex registration procedures which work across all platforms. ●



**EZ RUNNER**

## FOR PEOPLE WHO WANT SOMETHING MORE

Our system can be moulded to your specific requirements.

We give you a flexible solution, highly experienced team,  
and a solid two decade strong foundation.

Our stack of solutions are designed to expand your customers  
spend online, and reduce the day-to-day admin time.

### TRUST THE HERITAGE

### BENEFIT FROM THE EXPERIENCE

Book, sign-up and pay-off debt via websites, tablets, and smart phones.

All fully integrated into your DESIGN and your ONLINE BRAND.

**T** +44 (0) 844 847 5827

**W** [www.ez-runner.com](http://www.ez-runner.com)

**E** [info@ez-runner.com](mailto:info@ez-runner.com)



*We'll be opening our own fitness studios, offering a mixture of group and personal training, and bringing our own consumer products to market via a new partnership with Moda Living*

# JOE GAUNT

**The founder of health and wellbeing provider Hero talks to**

**Kate Cracknell about its blended approach to wellbeing**

**What's your background and how did it lead to the creation of Hero?**

My whole life, I've had a strong interest in people and health. I studied anatomy and kinesiology at college, as well as leisure, and then studied for a degree in psychology. My whole education was centred around an understanding of people – the physical, mental and social reasons why we are who we are, and why we do what we do.

I had every intention of becoming a clinical psychologist, but was advised to get some life experience first. Given my huge passion for helping people with their health, I went to work at Fitness First. I worked my way up the business in Malaysia and Australia, then joined Virgin Active where I was promoted to operations director and then to sales director.

It was a great 10 years, but I couldn't help feeling that the fitness industry had an opportunity to close the loop, by finding new solutions to help people even more. So this is where my other big passion came in: technology.

I'd always wanted to run my own business and passionately believed I just needed to find the right idea: I wanted to see if I could create something really meaningful.

When the idea for Hero came to me – a wellbeing technology product designed to genuinely help people – I decided to resign from my job and get started on this.

I was just about to get going when WeWork approached me and offered me the MD role. I did that for a year, but then decided I really did want to follow my passion.

This was 2017, and was when I decided to formally launch Hero.

**What was the opportunity you identified?**

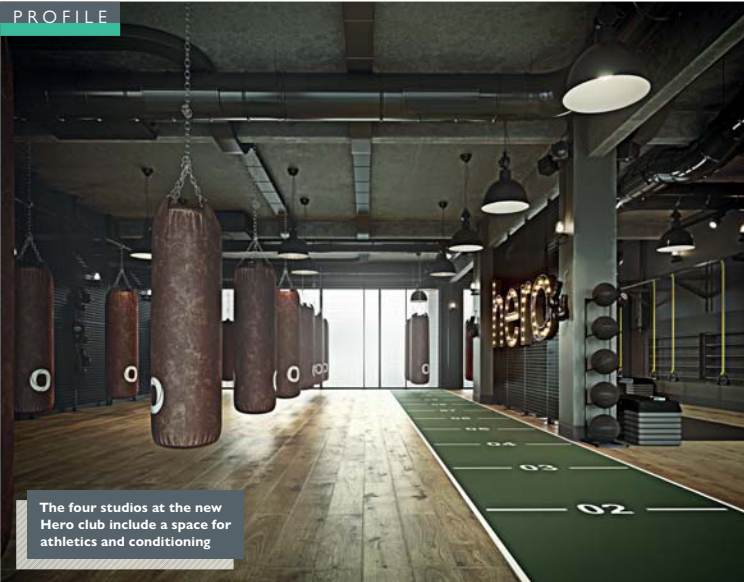
Health is such a personal thing. For a certain percentage of the market, the health and fitness industry absolutely ticks the boxes.

However, there are also people who fall into other categories: those who turn up at the gym and feel intimidated, so never go back; those who go to the gym, but who do the same routine; those who do well at the gym but have no holistic overview of their wellbeing the other 23 hours of the day – are they getting the right amount of sleep, the right level of social interaction, does their nutrition support the effort they're making in their training?



Gaunt says his wellbeing technology product is built to genuinely help people





The four studios at the new Hero club include a space for athletics and conditioning

- I just felt there was an opportunity to provide a more comprehensive offering to people by helping them at a lifestyle level, as opposed to focusing only on their training.

This is what Hero aims to deliver, but we come at it from a very specific angle: although our product is used by individuals, our relationships are with corporate organisations and operators – of student accommodation, residential living and so on – who then promote our services to their residents, employees and clients.

#### So, what exactly is Hero?

The first aspect of Hero is its technology platform. We've created a wellbeing platform we've called Navigator, which is a preventative solution and a lifestyle product all rolled into one.

Personalisation is central to the Hero concept: everyone's on a different journey in terms of their physical, mental and social health, so it's important that you either have intuitive technology or a variety of services to help people across all these aspects.

The second aspect of what we do is community and social wellbeing. Once you understand yourself and what you're trying to do in terms of your health

goals, we believe the best way to achieve them is by forging a real relationship with people – those at a similar level as you, or perhaps with similar interests – to help you adopt new habits and behaviours.

With that in mind, you can create challenges through our platform – heart rate challenges, sleep challenges, calorie burn challenges, whatever you like – but equally importantly you can create groups.

This is a good example of blending the in-person experience with intuitive technology: our technology is the facilitator, allowing you to create things like dog walking groups, book clubs, cooking groups off the back of an on-site cooking class we might deliver. It's about bringing like-minded people together.

Next our focus is on holistic health – physical, mental and social – helping people adopt a healthy lifestyle by making meaningful changes they can sustain. We don't go in for shock tactics.

Then finally, we focus on achievement. Our aim is to support everyone better than they've ever been supported before, whether you're an experienced exerciser or someone who's just setting out and needs to form some social bonds. The technology we've created is really intuitive – it allows for the recognition of

every little win as it happens, whatever shape that win might take.

#### What's the specific functionality within Hero's Navigator platform?

Navigator encompasses a comprehensive set of products.

From an activity perspective, you can link all your wearables and apps – from iOS to Android, Fitbit to Strava – to see all your data in one place, with a dashboard to help you manage your health goals.

It covers mindfulness too, with an extensive wellbeing library and programmes to help people with anything from meditation to concentrated breathing to managing anxiety through positive psychology. The platform also allows you to set goals – around sleep, breathing, meditation and so on – which it then monitors, sending you reminders throughout the day. Essentially it's about education and tracking.

Our nutritional offering is very outcomes-based. There's barcode scanning, so you can track your macros and your calorie intake. There's our wellbeing library too, plus actionable tips, recipes and so on. We also recently acquired Colour-Fit – a nutrition specialist that works



A Rejuvenate studio by Hero will be installed at the new FoodWell in Manchester



*We signed an agreement with FoodWell, to be part of its inaugural 9,000sq ft site in Manchester, offering group fitness classes, a mindful restaurant and a series of workshops on healthy living options and we'll be operating a Rejuvenate studio within this development*



with the likes of Manchester United, Arsenal and the Welsh Rugby Union team – and its expertise has been built into the technology too, with more developments to come.

We also have a reporting suite where people can access meaningful data to monitor their progress. We process it in such a way that the data becomes actionable and useful for the individual.

Meanwhile, for companies, we can produce anonymised, aggregated data to show trends. We can see what articles people are reading, for example, which in turn allows us to steer the overall strategy, improving that company's wellbeing initiatives in real time by making them more relevant to users' needs. Nothing we do is static – we're constantly modifying in response to feedback.

So that's the digital aspect of what we do, but we've also spent a lot of time procuring key partners to complement the technology with on-site services.

#### **Tell us more about these complementary services**

We have a delivery arm which complements our digital offering by going on-site at the corporations and residential complexes we work with.

Our education programme, Mind Set, covers everything from gut health and weight management to positive psychology and behaviour change, so we can go on-site to run workshops and seminars on any number of health- and wellness-related topics.

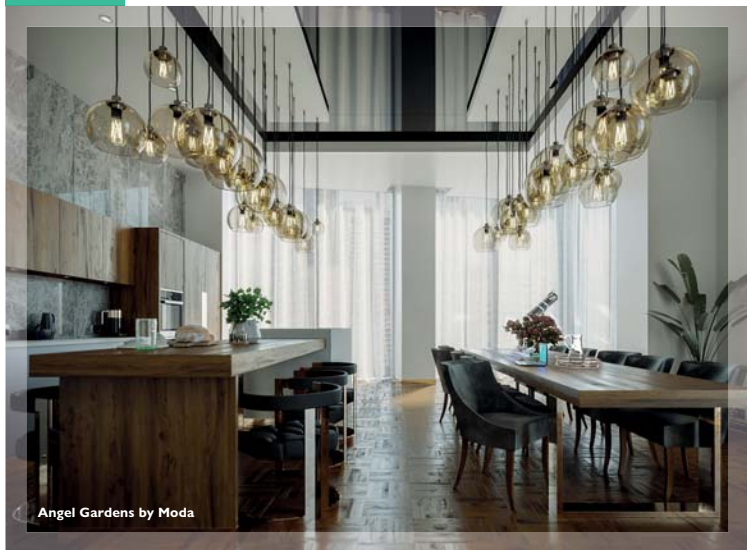
We also deliver a wide range of services including on-site GPs, physios,

nutritionists, group training classes, cookery workshops and so on.

Ultimately, we tailor the package very specifically to each company, devising the perfect blend of digital and in-person support, based on the findings of the in-depth wellbeing survey we conduct at the beginning of every project, as well as ongoing feedback.

Our offering is entirely sculpted around the needs of end users. If the organisation or operator feels a service is worth adding to the list of available services based on user demand, we can do it.

This flexibility has been enhanced still further by our recent acquisition of UKWellbeingCoach, which provides a range of health and wellbeing services to UK businesses, including health checks and screenings, seminars, training ▶



Angel Gardens by Moda



## *Our education programme, Mind Set, covers everything from gut health and weight management to positive psychology and behaviour change*

- programmes, bootcamps, one-to-one coaching, physiotherapy and massage.

### **Can Navigator work as a standalone solution?**

Individuals don't have to use our on-site services: there's plenty on offer within Navigator, including optional extras, should you want them. You can book a virtual PT session, for example, or pay for a single sign-in to Les Mills On Demand to do a virtual group fitness class.

We can even arrange for recipes from our platform to be cooked and delivered to your apartment block if you don't have the time or inclination to cook for yourself.

We've made it so that, irrespective of any in-person services, you have the tools and tracking you need within Navigator to have a positive impact on your holistic wellbeing.

The whole point of Hero is that there's

enough variety to allow for personal choice. All of the services available at any one location are based around the needs of the users there, but even within this, each individual will be able to choose what they feel will best enhance their physical, mental and social wellbeing.

Our expectation is therefore that we can engage with everyone on some level.

### **You're also launching your own fitness facilities. Tell us more.**

We're bringing our own consumer products to market via a new partnership with Moda Living, which we're really excited about. We'll be opening our own fitness studios, offering a mixture of group and personal training.

But let's take a step back, because the whole partnership with Moda is really interesting. Moda is a residential developer of build-to-rent apartment blocks – you can only live there if you're

renting – and it wanted to do something to address the high levels of loneliness among renters. It wanted to improve their physical, social and mental wellbeing, all of which are inextricably linked.

Moda's first development – a 466-home build in Angel Gardens, Manchester, which opens this year – features lots of great communal spaces, but it wanted to bring Hero on board to complement this. As with all our clients, we'll be devising a package of digital and in-person services to support the residents.

But we're also opening a 10,000sq ft Hero-branded training club on the ground floor – a first for Hero. It will be operated by us, delivering group and PT only, and will be based on the same pillars as our tech platform: personalisation, health, achievement and community.

We'll have four different studios – Rejuvenate, Strength and Conditioning, Athletics and Cardiovascular – and the



**Moda – a Hero partner – has opened Angel Gardens (above and left), which has large, open community spaces**

training will be very outcome-focused. But when you leave the studio, you'll also be able to use Hero's tech platform to track your movement, sleep, meditation, nutrition. We see the club as very much part of the broader, balanced lifestyle we support through Hero as a whole.

With this in mind, we'll also be delivering on-site education in the club – Lunch and Learn workshops and seminars, for example, which we'll tailor around our members' needs and interests as they emerge.

The club will also be open to the public, not just to Moda residents, with a single class priced at around £25. Monthly membership – our Wellness Commitment package – will cost £100+.

#### **Any plans to collaborate with Moda beyond this Manchester project?**

Moda is such an innovative business and it really cares about the experience for its residents – it wants to create something genuinely differentiated from a wellbeing perspective.

I believe that we have the perfect arrangement with Moda: great city centre locations and a partner that passionately



believes in the same things as us.

We've therefore partnered with them for the long-term, with a strong pipeline of sites already confirmed in Leeds, Birmingham, Brighton, Edinburgh and Glasgow; and London is also on the agenda.

#### **Where else can you see the Hero model working?**

We've actually just announced a new partnership with an innovative operator in the retirement village space – an operator called Inspired Villages. We'll be collaborating with ukactive on an active ageing initiative there, looking at best practice ways to help people be healthier and live longer.

We also signed an agreement in November with FoodWell, to be part of its inaugural 9,000sq ft site in Manchester.

FoodWell will offer group fitness classes, a mindful restaurant and a series of workshops on healthy living options – and we'll be operating a 30-person capacity Rejuvenate studio within this development.

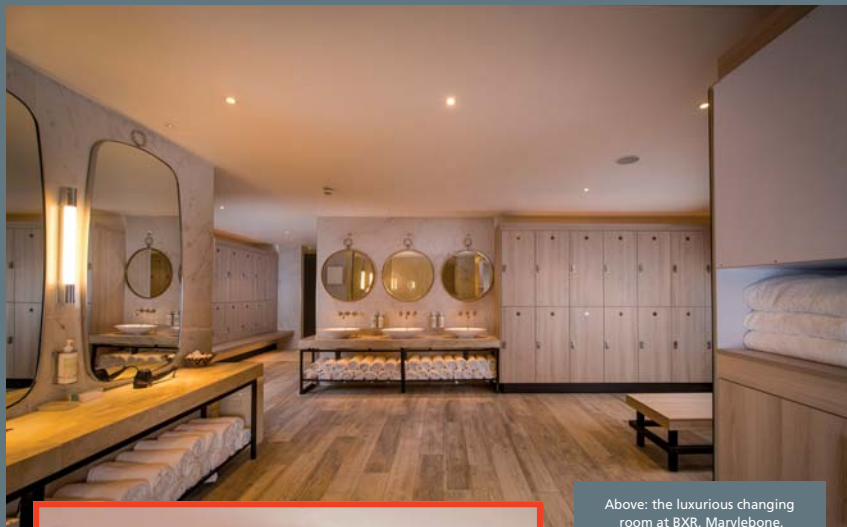
In addition, we're working on a number of deals with companies that operate co-working spaces; this is an ideal environment for Hero.

Ultimately, though, we could work with any operator or company that really cares about having an impact on the health of its customers, clients or residents. ●



*"2018 was a busy year at Ridgeway; we moved out of two factories and into our new premises, which are just north of London. We're absolutely delighted that industry veteran John Gibbs has joined Ridgeway and we're looking forward to completing projects in both the UK and Europe in the first quarter of 2019"*

**Mark Cutler, Managing Director, Ridgeway**



Above: the luxurious changing room at BXR, Marylebone, London. Left: Virgin Active Salford Quays – part of a £4.5 million redevelopment. Below: Smart and functional; locker details from Virgin Active's 200 Aldersgate club near the Barbican, London.







Main image: the changing rooms at Third Space City Club. Below: images of Fitness First Looker Room.



**Ridgeway are specialists in the design and manufacture of bespoke lockers and changing room furniture.**

To enhance a changing experience contact the Ridgeway team today.

**+44 (0)870 420 7818**  
**[sales@ridgewayfm.com](mailto:sales@ridgewayfm.com)**



Body scanning and fitness testing kit can now look in detail at the impact of exercise on the body over time at a cellular level

# BODY INSIGHTS

Want to know your biological age or your bone density, or maybe get a 3D model printed showing

your hard-won new biceps? The latest tech enables this and much more. HCM does a

roundup of the new kit on the market for fitness testing and body scanning

## TANITA

www.tanita.eu

Tanita's technology works by sending an imperceptible electric current through the body as users stand on and hold electrodes.

The signal, which uses Bioelectrical Impedance Analysis (BIA) passes quickly through water in hydrated muscle tissue, but meets resistance when it hits fat.

This resistance allows impedance to be input into scientifically validated equations to calculate body composition in as little as 20 seconds.

The system also measures reactance using higher frequencies, which penetrate the cell membranes to measure the electrical capacitance of a cell and determine its biological age.

Tanita's multi-frequency monitors can measure bioelectrical impedance analysis at three and six different frequencies. These additional frequencies give higher levels of accuracy and consistency, as well as offering additional information on things such as intra- and extra-cellular water and cell phase angle. They also allow for segmental analysis of each measure.

### What's the ideal setup?

Tanita monitors take up no more room than scales. They need mains power.

Customers using the device for the first time are advised to work with a trained professional who can ensure the equipment is being used correctly and advise on how to analyse measurements.

### What's the customer journey?

We recommend an initial assessment and updates every four to six weeks.

This allows whole-body data to be analysed, rather than focusing on weight and BMI, and enables the development of personalised training programmes and nutritional support.

### What measures does it provide?

The Tanita MC-780 is a multi-frequency device which provides 26 measurements including weight, body fat, visceral fat, total body water, intra- and extra-cellular water, muscle mass, bone mineral mass, phase angle and metabolic age. It gives a limb-by-limb analysis to offer a comprehensive overview.

### How do you interpret results?

Results are calculated by scientifically validated Tanita algorithms and reporting is designed to be



Tanita offers a range of body scanners

## Tanita is the first company to offer CIMSPA-validated CPD training courses for exercise professionals in Bioelectrical Impedance Analysis

understandable for users by colour-coding measures against World Health Organization ranges, meaning progression is clear, targets can be discussed and motivation maintained.

Tanita is the first BIA company to offer CIMSPA validated CPD training courses for exercise professionals.

### What's fed back to the customer?

Feedback is either directly on the monitor on the device, via a printout, through the Tanita Pro Software or via the new Tanita Pro App on iOS or Android devices.

### What responses have you observed?

Results such as metabolic age can be a real motivator and act as a wake-up call for people to start making healthier choices, or it can reinforce healthy choices already being made, ensuring people continue on the right path.

### Do you aggregate results to create cohorts for research purposes?

Tanita software allows data to be mined and explored with large population groups and Tanita has been used on many studies both at UK government

level and at international research centres. Through the Tanita Pro Software or Tanita Pro App, group trends and changes can be recorded and analysed, allowing professionals easy access to their own mass data.

### What are the benefits to gyms?

Body composition analysis is becoming much more common in gyms and is used as an incentive by many to attract and retain customers, either as part of a standard gym package, or offered as an added paid-for service by gyms wanting to increase their revenues.

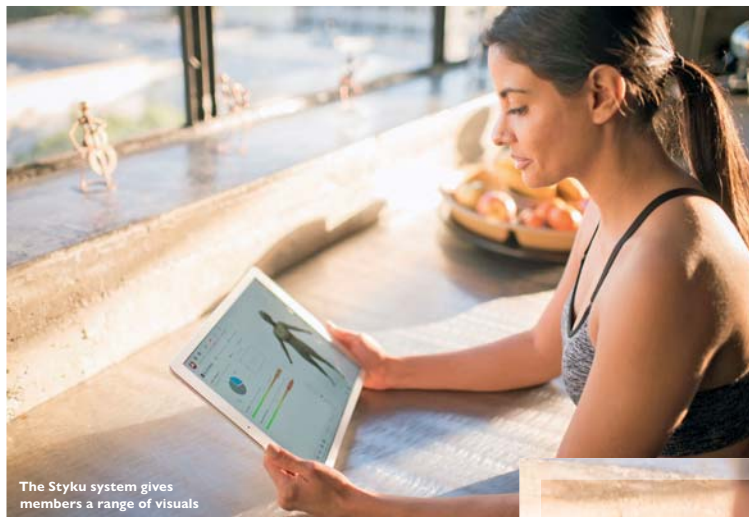
Once customers begin using the devices as an integral part of tracking their fitness journeys, they're more likely to continue with their gym and are less likely to be lured away by a competitor.

Body composition also helps personal trainers demonstrate expertise and can assist in locking down clients to a formal, monitored programme.

### How much does the system cost?

The Tanita MC-780MA is £5,465. Leasing is available from 1-5 years to match the warranty.





The Styku system gives members a range of visuals

## STYKU

[www.react-fitness.com](http://www.react-fitness.com)

[@ReactFitUK](https://twitter.com/ReactFitUK)

The Styku 3D body scanner provides 3D visuals and health metrics to educate and motivate.

Clients stand on a rotating platform for 30 seconds in form-fitting clothing, with arms outstretched. Using harmless infrared, Styku captures millions of data points in less than a minute to reproduce the member's body in 3D.

Once the 3D scan has been processed, the fitness professional and the member review body composition, analyse body shape and health risks, view circumferences and identify postural and muscular imbalances.

### What setup is needed?

The Styku system requires a small footprint. The hardware comprises a camera tower, rotating turntable and touch-screen laptop which comes with pre-installed software.

The key to maximising the success of Styku is training, as each area of the club can benefit from it in different ways.

For PTs it's about interpreting and bringing results to life in a meaningful way for clients. For the sales and support teams we educate on the benefits of

Clubs can send the scan outputs to a 3D printer to produce 'before and after' 3D models of members,

data-driven, outcome-focused training and using Styku as a sales and USP tool.

### What's fed back to the customer?

After the first body scan and assessment the scan report is emailed with all the relevant data and targets on how to achieve agreed goals.

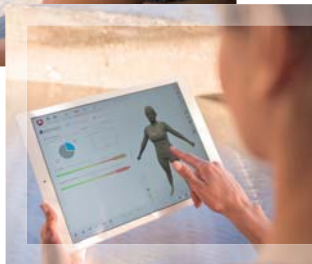
Scans are repeated every 6-8 weeks, or can be used as part of a transformation challenge. Follow-up progress reports help ensure the member is on track and working towards achieving their fitness goals.

Clubs can even send the report to a 3D printer to produce before and after models.

### Can it change behaviour?

Having a scan can be a humbling experience for many people. It opens up an honest conversation between the member and trainer.

The system offers goal-setting software to set targets to improve body composition and reduce health risks.



Operators have reported significant increases in member retention by providing the motivation and data that's meaningful when it comes to inspiring behaviour and lifestyle changes.

### What are the benefits to gyms?

Styku acts as a starting point for engagement and a tool for PTs to tailor programmes and also to upsell services to increase secondary spend in a non-sales-like manner.

A recent Styku trial with operator Gold's Gym saw an increase in PT sales compared to clubs not using Styku.

### How much does the system cost?

£10,500 + VAT.

### What upgrades are available?

Regular free and unlimited software updates are provided.





FitQuest can be used by members alone or with a PT

## ► FITQUEST

[www.miefitquest.com](http://www.miefitquest.com)

@MieFitQuest

### How does FitQuest work?

It uses tests developed and recognised by sports scientists combined with bio-mechanical lab technology to provide self-administered fitness measurement.

In four minutes, FitQuest measures human performance over eight parameters: upper body strength and endurance, cardiovascular fitness, lower body strength and endurance, speed ability, explosive power and balance.

It then combines these to provide an overall fitness assessment.

It also provides body composition measurement using Bioelectrical Impedance. Combining this with other measures such as height, body weight and gender, an individual's body fat, muscle and hydration can be estimated.

### What setup is needed?

The machine is approximately 1.4m x 1m but ideally requires a clear floor area of 1m x 2.5m to give enough space for exercises to be completed safely. A clear head height of 3m or more is ideal.

The machine should be sited on a solid floor and have power and an internet connection – either LAN or WiFi. No staff are required to supervise the machine.

### What's the customer journey?

Once on the machine, they provide their email address and basic information before completing each task by following the instructions on the screen.

Once they complete the tests, their results are emailed to them and they

can track progress in the operator's members area or the FQscore portal.

If someone is working with a PT, their test results can be linked to the trainer's account, so progress can be tracked and training programmes modified to support them in achieving their goals.

### How do results get interpreted?

Users can access insights into their results and information about how to improve each area. There's a range of support tools available to both the user and the operator to understand how to get the most from the system and utilise results to help people achieve their goals.

### Does testing change behaviour?

Our operator customers have experienced engagement with FitQuest from members who use it independently or alongside personal training to help support them in achieving their goals.

Fitquest can generate revenue by supporting a premium membership or through payments taken on the machine

FitQuest can be used to support operators by offering a USP, while improving member retention and helping PTs recruit and retain clients.

### Do you use results for research?

FitQuest machines are often used in research however we don't disclose information about research and treat all results as medical data.

### What are the benefits to gym owners of offering your service?

FitQuest can act as a USP for operators helping their members to understand how they're progressing towards their goals, supporting member retention and encouraging members to attend more regularly to achieve results.

It can also be used to generate revenue, either by supporting a premium membership or through payments which can be taken on the machine.

# SHAPEWATCH

[www.shapewatch.com](http://www.shapewatch.com)

[@shapewatch](https://twitter.com/shapewatch)

## How does your system work?

Shapewatch is a 3D body scanner and visualisation solution which enables users to scan their bodies, monitor key biometrics and see their body shape in 3D, as well as track progress towards their goals via the Shapewatch app.

## What setup is needed?

Shapewatch requires a space of 3m x 2m, as well as a WiFi connection and power.

While the in-built battery allows for several hours of usage between charges, we recommend it's connected to a mains power supply at all times.

## What's the customer journey?

The user is very much in control of their journey. It's a user-operated body scanning solution, meaning members can scan themselves, monitor results and see their body shape change without assistance, all in a little over a minute.

We recommend that a trainer takes the user through their first scan, and that trainers assist and support their members to make the positive changes required on their fitness journey.

## What measures does it provide?

Shapewatch measures over a hundred points on the body, however the app provides a set of body measurements: body fat percentage, lean body mass, waist:hip ratio, weight and circumference.

All the remaining data can be accessed via the Shapewatch user portal.

## How do you interpret measures?

Users can view circumference and weight on the app, these are familiar measures and interpretation is simple.

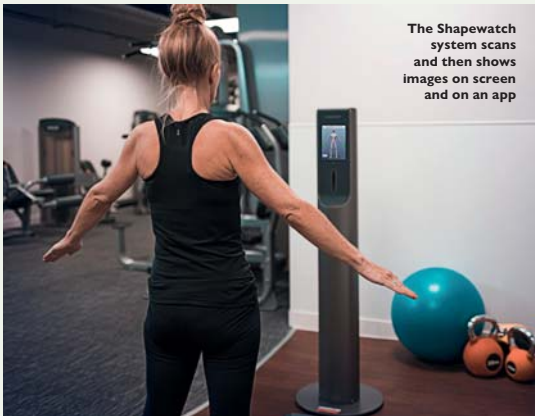
We've partnered with a University for the creation of our body fat prediction algorithm, which shows a close correlation to results provided by BodPod.

Shapewatch provides a direct measurement of both waist and hips, and can quickly and simply provide users with their waist to hip ratio.

## What's fed back to the customer?

Gains and losses are visualised on the app in three ways – numerically, based on the data provided during the scan, through a heat map feature which glows to highlight changes between scans and through shape changes to a 3D avatar.

The Shapewatch system scans and then shows images on screen and on an app



“We're a new product with big aspirations and we're backed by the global leader in large-format 2D scanning technologies”

## What responses have you observed as a result of people being tested? Does it change their behaviour?

Users who are regularly scanned see a greater connection to the impact of their recent lifestyle choices.

If positive lifestyle choices are made between scans, the outcomes promote long-term behaviour change.

## Do you aggregate results to create cohorts for research purposes and if so, how does this work?

Shapewatch has been three years in development, but is only a matter of months old in the commercial fitness space and as such we have yet to formalise any research collaborations.

We're a new product with big aspirations and we're backed by a global leader in large-format 2D scanning tech.

## How can PTs use the results?

We recommend regular interactions with users in order to provide support and educate them in the benefits of positive lifestyle choices. Shapewatch allows members and exercise professionals to establish goals and check progress, providing accountability for both parties.

## What are the benefits to gyms?

Shapewatch allows fitness facilities to provide an immersive and personal digital user experience.

It also enables revenue-generating opportunities and integrates with existing health club apps.

## What upgrades are available?

The software is automatically updated and new features are automatically pushed to each scanning kiosk.

## ► FIT3D

[www.fit3d.com](http://www.fit3d.com)

[@fit3dukofficial](https://twitter.com/fit3dukofficial)

**F**it3D was founded to showcase changes in body shape and body composition for people who work out.

As well as tracking shape change through a virtual avatar, the system also provides a wellness assessment.

The Fit3D ProScanner works by taking 1,200 images of users while they stand on a rotating base-plate. Using algorithms, it then extracts measurements, such as body fat percentage and fat mass vs lean mass.

All of these measures are then compared over time to prove success from working out.

### What's the set up?

The kit needs a space of 2m x 1m and two plug sockets. The ProScanner is designed to be operated by the user.

### And the customer journey?

The journey depends on the user's goals. Because we use several methods to test, it doesn't matter whether members are looking to lose weight or improve their fitness level, both can be measured to keep them on track.

We recommend taking a scan every four weeks, so at the milestone of a year they can see a monthly record of improvements in their body and fitness level.

### What measures does it provide?

We provide over 100 measurements to enable gain and loss to be measured and also enable symmetry across the body to be assessed, while a full posture report measures shifts or tilts across the body.

Using the avatar, the system also gives a body shape rating which shows how members compare with averages in their age group and ethnicity.

Other measures include weight, fat mass vs lean mass, trunk to leg volume ratio and waist to hip ratio.

### How do you interpret these results for the member?

The results can either be interpreted by the user or a PT. We make it simple by providing visual graphs to show if improvements are needed.

Alongside this, if a user is confused about what a particular metric means, we give full explanations in their log-in portal, along with indications on how that result can impact their long-term health.



Fit3D can be a chargeable service for operators

Most gyms charge between £20 and £50 for a scan, meaning it's a great revenue stream

### What's fed back to the customer?

We give users and PTs a lot of information, which means we had to come up with a way to make this easy to interpret, while also making sure the process of taking a scan is simple.

After a 40 second scan, users have all results sent through to their online account. We also send all results through to the gym's admin account so PTs can view progress of their clients.

### What responses have you observed as a result of people being tested?

The majority of new members join a gym to make a visual change to their body.

No one likes their first scan, but one to three months down the line, we to see a big increase in retention, after gyms take on Fit3D, because users are seeing the improvements they joined to make.

### Do you aggregate results to create cohorts for research purposes?

We do. Visual results are strictly private to the user and gym, but we use the metric results taken on ProScanners worldwide to develop new algorithms.

By using results for our research we've been able to develop many new

features in order to improve our offering to ProScanner operators worldwide via simple software updates.

### How can exercise pros use results?

PTs can design bespoke plans based on results and access these on their phones while clients are working out, to advise on improvements.

They might notice a client's posture is misaligned or that a member's muscle symmetry needs to be rebalanced – these kinds of things can be improved by altering the way they work out.

### What are the benefits to gyms?

Most gyms charge between £20 and £50 for a scan, meaning it's an additional revenue stream, with repeat scans taking place every 4 weeks. Another benefit is increased retention.

### How much does the system cost?

The system is £10,000. It can also be financed for £202 per month.

### What ongoing upgrades are there?

Because it's cloud-based, when we add new features, operators can take advantage of them with the same login. ►



# shapewatch

your body in 3D



## Track Biometrics

With the latest 3D body scanning  
and visualisation technology



## Drive Differentiation

With a digital rich member  
experience & open API integration



## Enhance Member Motivation

With amplified accountability  
for long term behaviour change



## Create Transformation

With actionable data  
and progress goals



## Support Business Growth

With opportunities for  
secondary spend



Shapewatch is a 3D body scanner and visualisation solution for fitness and wellness environments. To find out how to enhance your member experience visit [shapewatch.com](https://shapewatch.com) or email [enquiries@shapewatch.com](mailto:enquiries@shapewatch.com)



## ► INBODY UK

[www.uk.inbody.com](http://www.uk.inbody.com)

### How does your system work?

InBody devices use Bio-electrical Impedance Analysis (BIA) to measure body composition. This divides your weight by tissue type, such as lean body mass and fat mass, to assess health.

InBody's medical-grade body composition analysers rely on patented technologies to give accurate and precise BIA results.

### What setup is needed?

The InBody scale requires a 1m x 1m working area, a power supply and WiFi access for app connection if required.

The device can be used either as part of a consultation with fitness instructors or for self-testing by members - guided by easy intuitive on-screen instruction and voice commands.

### What's the customer journey?

After measuring their body composition starting point and working with an instructor or PT to customise their training or nutrition programme, it's then recommended that tests are retaken every 4-6 weeks to assess progress.

### What measures does it provide?

InBody provides detailed data such as total body water, skeletal muscle mass, body fat mass, segmental lean analysis, body fat percentage, visceral fat, intra- and extra-cellular water balance, bone mineral content and metabolic rate.

### How do you interpret the results?

The InBody test produces a detailed results sheet that can be printed out or viewed on the Inbody app. Interpretation of clients' results can be provided by the PT, as part of a consultation.

### What's fed back to the customer?

The device console shows key data on screen at the conclusion of each scan, and then more detailed information and results interpretations either via the results sheet print out or the InBody app.

### What responses have you observed as a result of people being tested? Does it change their behaviour?

The test is useful in helping customise training and nutrition programmes - eg. showing muscle imbalances, how many excess pounds of body fat to lose, resting



Members can be charged for consultations or they can be included as part of a premium membership

“Seeing changes in muscle mass and body fat percentage is more motivating than looking at weight change alone”

metabolic rate and estimated daily calories expenditure, so plans are more specific to the client.

As a tool for retention and programme adherence, we find that when members look at changes in muscle mass and body fat percentage, this is more motivating for them than looking at weight changes alone.

### Can the data generated be used for research purposes?

The Inbody data management software is used by fitness and medical professionals in assessing both medical research outcomes and the effects of different training and nutrition strategies on body composition for different user groups - eg. GP referral or weight management programmes.

### What are the benefits to gym owners of offering your service?

The Inbody device can be used in a range of different business models, from charged consultations, group programme testing, a premier membership service or simply to improve member motivation and retention.

### How much does the system cost?

There is a range of devices ranging from £4,600 to £13,000. Leasing is available.

### What ongoing upgrades are there to the system?

With new models recently launched, the key upgrades are the 'LookInBody' web app and data management software, along with API integrations to clients' own platforms. ●





# ICG® COACH BY COLOR®

## EXPLOSIVE POWER-BASED COACHING



Maximise your group cycling classes by incorporating the Coach By Color® training system - our unique method of accurately managing intensity through power training.

Exclusively available on our IC5, IC6 and IC7 indoor cycles, Coach by Color delivers real-time individual zonal training using colour, ensuring that every member works at optimum intensity levels and achieves their fitness goals quicker.

[LifeFitness.co.uk/ICG](http://LifeFitness.co.uk/ICG)

INDOOR CYCLING GROUP *LifeFitness*

### Time to Ignite your space

Choose between an indoor or outdoor rig

Select your attachments

Add your colour

Engrave your logo



## Short on space?

The Ignite Rig is also available as a half wall rig.

Order in December for New Year delivery

Email: [sales@jordanfitness.co.uk](mailto:sales@jordanfitness.co.uk)

Call: 01553 763 285

[WWW.JORDANFITNESS.COM/IGNITERIG](http://WWW.JORDANFITNESS.COM/IGNITERIG)





JORDANFITNESSUK

*Jordan™*

# DFC

Revenue Management Solutions



In 2017 almost **57,000**

**GYM & HEALTH CLUB DIRECT DEBIT SUBSCRIPTIONS WERE PROCESSED**

**WHY ARE MORE GYMS AND HEALTH CLUBS USING DIRECT DEBIT THAN EVER BEFORE?**



## **DIRECT DEBIT IS:**

Cheaper  
than other  
payment  
methods

Easy to  
maintain

Paperless

A 24/7  
sales aid

**Let the experts handle your Direct Debit collections so you can focus on running - and growing - your business**

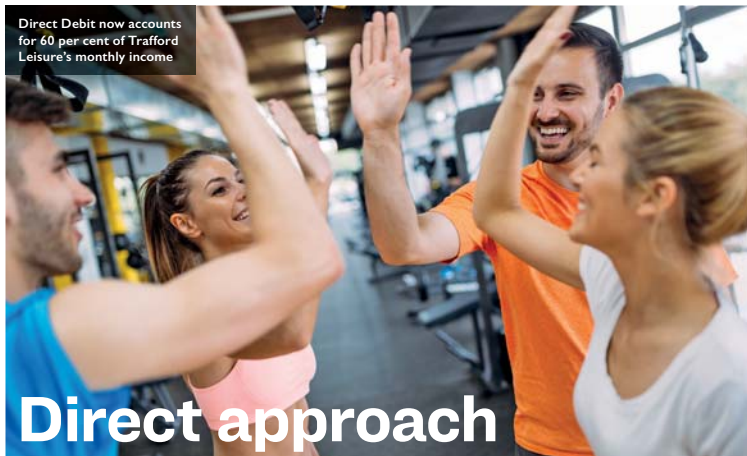
**Get in touch today**



*"We'd already looked at DFC three years earlier before continuing to manage this in-house. We chose to work with them at this point because they give us a really personable experience. Their values are really closely aligned to those of Trafford Leisure"*

Emma Thomas, head of development, Trafford Leisure

Direct Debit now accounts for 60 per cent of Trafford Leisure's monthly income



## Direct approach

How Trafford Leisure is improving the member journey through its partnership with DFC

**M**ajor leisure operators Trafford Leisure have joined forces with DFC. Their goal? To simplify the digital journey for their members and standardise Direct Debits across the organisation.

The partnership is set to speed the online joining process up by an impressive eight-minutes. But they can also expect equally big benefits to in-house administration and customer service.

### WHO IS TRAFFORD LEISURE?

Trafford Leisure manages the leisure facilities in the Trafford area on behalf of Trafford Council. They are a Community Interest Company (CIC), meaning their profits are reinvested into their facilities to benefit the wellbeing of their customers.

Since they began trading in 2015, Trafford Leisure has been a part of call for all those interested in indoor and outdoor activities like fitness, swimming, gymnastics and golf. With nine facilities over nearly 10 miles, and 350 staff, Trafford Leisure attracts a wide demographic, from young adults to families and old age pensioners.

### JOINING FORCES

Twelve months ago, Trafford Leisure underwent a migration to Direct Debit for gymnastics, trampolining and swimming lessons. Since this move, Direct Debit has claimed responsibility for 60 per cent of Trafford Leisure's total monthly income, leading the operators to outsource.

Emma Thomas, head of development at Trafford Leisure, said: "Since moving our swimming lesson and gymnastics memberships across to Direct Debit, collections have almost doubled overnight so the time seemed right to think about contracting this resource out.

"We'd already looked at DFC three years earlier before continuing to manage this in-house. We chose to work with them because they give us a really personable experience. Their values are closely aligned to those of Trafford Leisure."

### EXCITING PLANS AHEAD

Thomas continues: "Our primary goal is to speed up the buying time and improve the overall digital experience.

"Our previous online buying journey took 11-minutes from start to finish.

Whereas DFC's online joining portal, FastDD, takes just over three minutes.

"The process should become much more customer-friendly, with a number of additional communication avenues like My Payments and SMS in place as a way of reducing pain points".

Trafford Leisure are also looking to clean up their cancellation process and reposition their membership offering for people considering leaving. They are now working with DFC partner, Leisure Net, to develop a cancellation portal.

### DOING THINGS DIFFERENTLY

DFC is a leading revenue management solutions provider in the leisure industry. As Direct Debit experts, they take away all the hassle of collections for busy health and fitness organisations.

It's their mission to help facilities improve customer relationships, so that customers stay longer. They do this through a commitment to maximise income, streamline administration processes and reduce customer churn.

Find out more at:

[www.debitfinance.co.uk](http://www.debitfinance.co.uk).

# UNLEASH THE ATHLETE INSIDE YOU

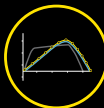


## SKILLROW™

ATHLETIC TRAINING



**MULTIDRIVE  
TECHNOLOGY™**  
(PATENT PENDING)



**AQUAFEEL™**



**ENGAGING  
RACES**  
(PATENT PENDING)

SKILLROW™ is the only indoor rowing equipment on the market that offers:

- **MULTIDRIVE TECHNOLOGY™** to train cardio and power skills
- **AQUAFEEL™** to enjoy the unique feel of rowing on water
- **RACES** to engage in virtual crew challenges.

Discover more: [technogym.com/skillrow](https://technogym.com/skillrow)

**TECHNOGYM**

The Wellness Company



The Engine Room in London seeks to empower its members with valuable fitness data

# Boutique rowing

Technogym helps The Engine Room studio raise indoor rowing to a whole new level



**M**arylebone's newest boutique studio - The Engine Room - turns indoor rowing into a fitness experience.

Everything about this studio is designed to deliver a high-quality indoor rowing experience. Even the building – a stunning Grade II-listed church – is near the popular boating lake in Regent's Park.

"We offer an immersive and data-driven rowing experience," says founder Chris Heron. "Technogym's SKILLROW was the obvious choice. Rowing is often part of a gym workout, but here it's the main focus. SKILLROW machines help our customers develop great technique, track progress, and assess useful data."

## MEMBER JOURNEY

Learning technique is a central part of the offer. Heron and his trainers need machines they can rely on as customers get fitter and more skilled. He says: "Our ROW 101 class is the perfect introduction to the fundamentals, including rhythm and movement patterns. Part of this involves teaching connection to the machine. SKILLROW helps people fall in love with rowing while learning proper technique."

## DEDICATED APP

Smart studio owners know the power of digital for an enhanced customer



*"Innovative technology helps differentiate our offering and gives more value to our members. SKILLROW's digital solution takes rowing to a new level – and that's exactly what we set out to do at The Engine Room"*

**Chris Heron, founder and owner, The Engine Room**

experience The Engine Room has its own app – powered by Technogym's mywellness platform – which lets participants capture workout data and the results of their Tanita body composition tests. The app links to third-party apps, so

members can keep lifestyle stats in one place.

"We were keen to partner with innovative technology," says Heron. "People love being able to access and track their data and see changes happen. From our point of view, this helps differentiate our offering and add even more value to those who choose to train with us."

## SIGNATURE CLASSES

The Engine Room offers two signature classes after ROW 101. 'Beats' combines time on the SKILLROW with floor work using functional products from the Technogym SKILLTOOLS range. The class finishes with a friendly team race.

'Breathe' classes focus on improving performance using varied metrics. The SKILLROW machines and Technogym-powered app record user data and give individual scores. This science-led approach creates an individualised experience.

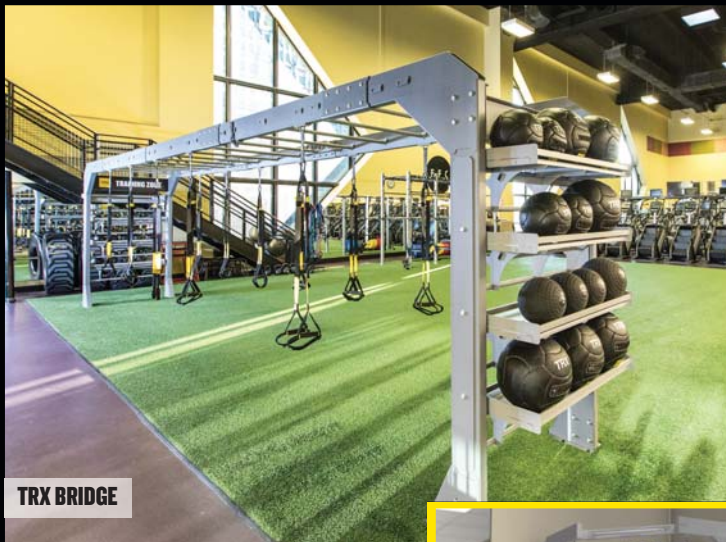
Heron says: "SKILLROW takes rowing to a new level – and that's exactly what we set out to do at The Engine Room. The future of fitness lies in empowering customers with data. SKILLROW's digital solution helps us offer a truly cutting-edge fitness experience."

To discover more about Technogym's market-leading equipment, visit:  
[www.technogym.com](http://www.technogym.com)  
[www.theengineroomlondon.com](http://www.theengineroomlondon.com)



**TRX**

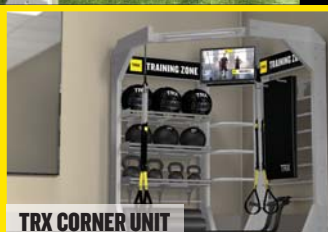
# TRX STUDIO LINE



**TRX BRIDGE**

## TRANSFORM THE SPACES IN YOUR FACILITY

Create the ultimate Functional Training Zone in your facility. These highly customizable suspension anchoring and storage systems maximize space efficiency and exercise functionality, while emphasizing design and aesthetics to suit the needs of each unique member, space and activity.



**TRX CORNER UNIT**

### CONTACT YOUR REP TO ORDER

[jwoolley@trxtraining.co.uk](mailto:jwoolley@trxtraining.co.uk)

[trxtraining.co.uk/commercial/trx-training-zone-solutions](http://trxtraining.co.uk/commercial/trx-training-zone-solutions)



Members of all abilities can access the TRX training zone

# Getting in the zone

FTC Gym transforms its functional training space with the TRX Studio Line

Since opening in March 2018, FTC Gym in Suffolk has worked closely with TRX to add its TRX Training Zone® Studio Line in order to deliver functional training solutions that will maximise its gym floor space, enhance the training offering and create an engaging zone for members.

The line offers modular solutions in various configurations to meet an array of functional training, suspension training and storage needs. Having opted for the TRX Bridge Solution and three extra storage bays, the installation at FTC Gym has created an impressive training zone.

John Grindrod, FTC gym director says: "We chose the TRX Studio Line because of the high quality frame and storage shelves. This ensures equipment is stored properly, removing chance of damage, injury risk to members and improving the longevity of the equipment life."

"It's been a fantastic addition to our space and seamlessly elevates our functional training identity. In order to best enhance the sizeable area we had to work with, we opted for the TRX Bridge Solution and the rig has been immensely popular with members and PTs alike."

The TRX Bridge Solution is used for small group training, open use and 1-1 PT sessions. Offering a complete functional solution, as well as TRX Suspension trainers and TRX RIP Trainers, the zone also contains TRX functional training accessories including kettlebells, slam balls, battle ropes, resistance bands, gym mats and magnetic exercise posters.

Grindrod continues: "We wanted to provide a training option that allows all of our members, regardless of ability, to access the functional training method they need. The TRX Studio Line gives us that, thanks to how flexible we were able to be with the design."

To complement the rig, FTC Gym has a 25ft TRX S-Frame with 11 TRX C4 Suspension Trainers. Used for studio classes, it can meet the demands of high-volume usage.

Commenting on the TRX Training Zone® UK IRE country manager Julian Woolley says: "With unlimited configurations, customisable storage

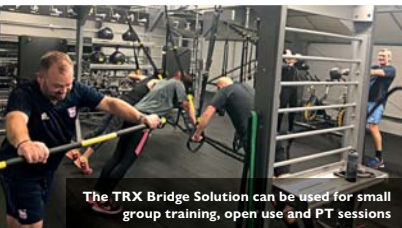


*"In order to best enhance the sizeable area we had to work with, we opted for the TRX Bridge Solution and the rig has proven immensely popular with members and personal trainers alike"*

John Grindrod, FTC gym director

solutions and single or multi-bay options, we're able to work closely with gyms and studios at the early stages to maximise space efficiency and exercise functionality, while emphasising design and aesthetics to suit the needs of each member, space and activity."

To find out more about these modular functional training installations and how they can transform under-utilised gym spaces, visit: [www.trx.co.uk](http://www.trx.co.uk)



The TRX Bridge Solution can be used for small group training, open use and PT sessions

# PRODUCT INNOVATION

Lauren Heath-Jones rounds up the latest product launches in health and fitness

Tollefson partnership will allow clubs to offer professional running training, says **Ian Donley**

**W**ellbeats, an app-based content and software-as-a-service company, has partnered with Olympic athlete Carrie Tollefson to develop a new fitness channel dedicated to running.

The channel is being developed in response to user feedback, which suggests that running or walking is one of the most common forms of exercise amongst Wellbeats users. It will feature exclusive content, created by Tollefson – a middle-distance runner who competed as part of Team USA at the Summer 2004 Olympic Games – including

tutorials and guidance for runners of all abilities.

Ian Donley, CEO of TVI Fitness, Wellbeats' UK provider said: "We expect the



*"We expect the new running channel to have wide-ranging appeal"*

**Ian Donley**

new running channel to have wide-ranging appeal. It will be a real boost for Wellbeats users, beneficial for seasoned runners that don't have a virtual training provision and offer an alternative format for people that would like to take up running but aren't interested in joining running clubs," he said.

"Having Carrie on board is a real coup that will mean fitness clubs that subscribe to the service will be able to offer professional running training."

Wellbeats offers over 400 on-demand virtual fitness classes and 20 fitness channels, via a multi-platform app.



**Wellbeats currently has over 2,000 clients**

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD  
**WELLBEATS**

Matrix's expanded Connexus range gives users more options, says **Matt Glead**

**M**atrix has launched the Connexus Step+ and Connexus Column, two new training options for its Connexus Functional Training Rig.

Designed to improve the user's core and lower-body strength, as well as

cardiovascular fitness, the Step+ is a multi-use functional stability step. When used as a traditional step it facilitates a number of functional exercises, including mountain climbers, squats, dips and push-ups, while integrated hand grips in the legs enable users to perform deeper range push-ups and dips upside down.

It also has a removable contoured surface that acts as an instability platform to de-stabilise users and improve balance and core strength.

Designed to be used in any gym regardless of size, the Connexus Column offers multiple options for suspension and resistance band training. It is wall mounted, so takes up minimal space, and includes three different attachment points, as well as built-in storage for resistance bands.

The Column also features device storage so users can



**Connexus has options for suspension and resistance band training**

keep their smartphone in view throughout training, enabling them to train with fitness apps. Matt Glead, master trainer at Matrix, says: "The versatility of Connexus makes it a great

system that helps maximise space, bring variety and support training options."

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD  
**MATRIX**



*"The versatility and adaptability of Connexus makes it a great training system that helps to maximise space, bring variety and support training options"*

**Matt Glead**



***"We were one of the industry's first brands with a deep heritage in the treadmill business as one of the originators of tracking technology"***

**Tim Hawkins, Core's global vice president of sales and marketing**

Star Trac's FreeRunner delivers a revolutionary running experience, while cutting costs for owners

**T**readmills are the number one cardio equipment used in the gym – but they've seen the least amount of innovation in the past 15 years. If the unforgiving deck causes joint pain or flares an old injury, members are banished to the elliptical. If a deck needs to be replaced every two years, it's 'just a cost of doing business'.

Free yourself from what you know about treadmills with the new Star Trac FreeRunner™. This patent-pending treadmill generates a revolutionary feel for both runners and walkers with its HexDeck System – an aluminium running deck supported by proprietary hexagonal polymer suspension.

Whether you're a facility buyer, performance runner, or recovering from an injury, this treadmill improves performance and comfort, while also significantly increasing belt and deck life.

#### LOW IMPACT

A standard treadmill is a hindrance to aggressive training, potentially causing injury or pain from repetitive pounding on an unforgiving surface.

The FreeRunner's HexDeck offers unprecedented responsiveness with an initial cushion and flex when the foot strikes, reacting immediately to impact. The returning support for the push off the toe mimics that of an Olympic track.

University-based research participants described the feeling as "very easy on the legs, with low impact on the feet", and "like less work than a standard treadmill." For running members, there is no better outdoor training substitute than the FreeRunner.



**FreeRunner's aluminium deck dissipates heat and reduces wear and tear**

In an independent study by California State University, Fullerton, more than three out of four study participants preferred the FreeRunner to a traditional treadmill.

For those members who are less fond of rigorous cardio sessions, the unique design of the FreeRunner makes aerobic activity easier on the body for every fitness level.

#### RESPONSIVE RUNNING

Core Health & Fitness senior master instructor and running

world record holder, Sonja Friend-Uhl, says: "If there's one word I'd use to describe the feel of the FreeRunner it would be 'responsive'. The surface and mechanics allow one's running or walking form and gait to work FOR them."

"It's not so soft that it slows down your cadence, rather it cushions your impact and allows your foot to roll and then push off efficiently. It's the closest surface to a Mondo (all-weather) running track I have ever experienced."

Facility owners will also enjoy reduced maintenance requirements. FreeRunner's aluminium deck dissipates heat and keeps the belt surface cooler than a traditional treadmill, reducing wear and tear and extending belt life.

Star Trac says its FreeRunner is the only cardio product to use a thin, phenolic layer that can be replaced when worn, rather than changing the entire deck.

"Star Trac has taken back its position at the front of the pack," says Tim Hawkins, Core's global VP of sales and marketing. "We were one of the industry's first brands with a deep heritage in the treadmill business as one of the originators of tracking technology."

Star Trac is also unveiling a new series of consoles with OpenHub technology, that will take the treadmill experience to even greater heights. ●  
[www.corehandf.com](http://www.corehandf.com)



**The new consoles will feature a high definition screen**

**fitness-kit.net KEYWORD**

**CORE HEALTH**

## MotivatePT portal 'removes barriers to fitness,' says **Kira Mahal**

**M**obile personal training provider MotivatePT has launched a new client portal that aims to help users achieve their personal fitness goals.

Giving users a detailed overview of their fitness journey, the portal enables them to visualise their progress, while connecting

them to their personal trainer. Features include shared interactive calendars, which the company says form the basis of a successful programme, as well as forward mapping.

It also notifies users when they are running out of pre-paid personal training sessions and reminds them to re-book.

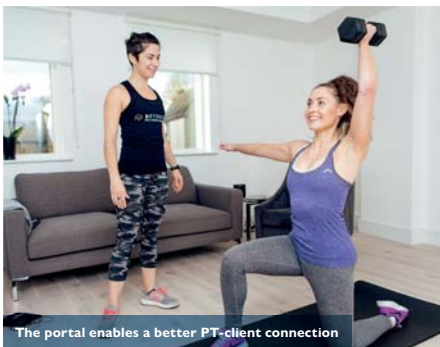
Future plans for the portal include a scoring system, based on the MotivatePT method, as well as a food diary that can be shared with the trainer, giving them full visibility of the user's diet, which allows the trainer to provide a more personalised service for their client.

"MotivatePT removes the barriers to fitness; equipping clients with knowledge, motivation and a schedule built around their lives," says Kira Mahal, CEO of MotivatePT.



*"MotivatePT removes the barriers to fitness; equipping clients with knowledge, motivation and a schedule built around their lives"*

**Kira Mahal**



The portal enables a better PT-client connection

"Our new online client portal helps to do just this.

"By allowing clients to easily view upcoming and remaining sessions and to see their personal trainer's

profile, it's easier to keep their training consistent," Mahal adds.

**fitness-kit.net KEYWORD**  
**MOTIVATEPT**

## Free Soul celebrates women's health and wellbeing, says **Arjun Sofat**

**F**ree Soul, a UK-based lifestyle brand, has celebrated its first year in business by expanding its product range to include new Vegan and Whey Protein blends.

Developed in partnership with nutrition specialists,

the products are designed to meet the nutritional needs of women at all ages and stages, as well as support hormone balance, boost energy and maintain healthy weight.

The Vegan blends feature a pea and white hemp base and are available in ginger biscuit, vanilla protein, chocolate and berry flavours.

The complete range consists of four flavours of Free Soul Whey Protein and Vegan Protein blends, as well as a stainless steel protein shaker, Her PWR Wellness tablets, and Wake and Sleep teas.

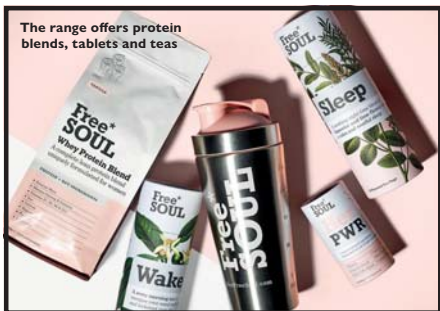
Arjun Sofat, founder of Free Soul, says: "We're delighted to have achieved so much in our first year. It's meant we've been able to develop and launch new products to add to our core range.



*"We regularly undertake research with consumers to ensure we understand their personal motivations and needs"*

**Arjun Sofat**

The range offers protein blends, tablets and teas



"We regularly undertake research with consumers to ensure we understand their personal motivations and needs.

"Free Soul is about empowerment, support and

the celebration of health and wellbeing for real women," Sofat adds.

**fitness-kit.net KEYWORD**  
**FREE SOUL**





***“Operators are going biometric to tackle the bypassing of access controls which is making a dent in their pocket from lost memberships. Once it’s in place they can begin to watch their bottom line improve”*** Jason Watts, sales director at Xn Leisure

Making science fiction a reality – the rise of facial recognition in health clubs across the UK

**T**his September, Xn Leisure orchestrated its first facial recognition system integration at the University of Exeter, with some happy consequences for security and visibility.

The new technology has replaced magnetic strips with faces, using biometric readings to guarantee that people entering the facilities are who they say they are.

With health and safety concerns on the increase, the new software has allowed the university’s sports department to breathe a big sigh of relief. They can now accurately monitor and measure who’s using facilities with absolute efficiency.

### Stop fraud

The collective voice of many fitness operators is that membership cards and fobs simply don’t cut the mustard anymore. They’ve gone biometric in a bid to tackle the

prolific bypassing of access devices and to modernise their facilities.

Jason Watts, sales director at Xn Leisure, furthers this train of thought: “We regularly hear about issues with access points where customers try

to circumvent card entry systems, or where queues form, often in wet areas. There’s also the regular cost of card or fob replacements.

“Facial recognition has helped make all these issues things of the past.”

A much quicker and more accurate way of determining who’s entering a facility, facial recognition works almost instantly upon sensing a person’s presence.

Communication between the hardware – namely the camera and barriers – and Xn Leisure’s system, which gives the green light to access, takes milliseconds.

### 24-hour gyms

This is particularly beneficial for 24-hour gyms, or centres with remote access points, where card cloning and passing undetected can be rife.

This improved customer visibility brings a host of positive effects, not least that membership data on record

directly translates to gym users and their behaviours. This information can be used to improve customer experience and marketing moving forward.

On top of this, there’s the money saved in lost membership and access devices – an issue denting the pockets of gyms and health clubs across the UK. Once visitors into the gym finally begin to pay up for their memberships and gyms don’t have to fork out for lost keys, fobs and wristbands, bottom lines improve.

Jason Watts continues, saying: “Xn’s facial recognition is a robust solution which meets specific entry management needs, by simplifying admittance and data collection, while minimising barriers for customers.”

● Details: [xnleisure.com](http://xnleisure.com)



Xn Leisure's access control systems have biometric scanners built in



Facial recognition stops the sharing of memberships

PHOTO: SHUTTERSTOCK.COM/VLADY YEMENIN

fitness-kit.net KEYWORD

**XN LEISURE**

# Directory

To book your promotion, call the sales team on +44 (0)1462 431385

## ARCHITECTS & DESIGNERS

**zynk** | INTERIOR  
ARCHITECTURE  
& DESIGN

zynkdesign.com

WWW.ZYNKDESIGN.COM

## COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE

**BrightLime**

SHARPER WEB BASED  
CLUB MANAGEMENT

0844 493 3696  
info@brightlime.com

WWW.BRIGHTLIME.COM

## AV / SOUND

**Lightmasters**

Audio Visual Systems

Effects & Mood Lighting

PA Systems

info@lightmasters.co.uk  
www.lightmasters.co.uk

lightmasters uk ltd.

WWW.LIGHTMASTERS.CO.UK

## COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE

A highly functional,  
constantly improving  
system, to manage  
most leisure  
environments

- Membership/CRM
- Activity & Class Bookings
- Course Management
- Till & Payment Systems
- Access Control
- Online Bookings & Sign-ups

CONTACT US ON:  
+44 (0)1423 873 873  
www.sportsoft.co.uk

SPORTSOFT

WWW.SPORTSOFT.CO.UK

## COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE

**Legend**

Call Legend today  
0800 031 7009  
legendware.co.uk



WWW.LEGENDWARE.CO.UK

## CUSTOMER ENGAGEMENT

GET MEMBERS..... KEEP MEMBERS!



memberdrive

www.cfm.net

www.myzone.org

myzone

WWW.CFM.NET

## COMPUTER MEMBERSHIP SOFTWARE

**WHATEVER YOUR SECTOR...**



Need a management  
solution?  
Get in touch and find  
out how you can start  
saving and making  
money, year after year...

**EZ/RUNNER**

Management Software: made easy

0844 847 5827 www.ez-runner.com

WWW.EZ-RUNNER.COM

## DIRECT DEBIT COLLECTION

We do more than  
just collect your  
subscriptions




www.debitfinance.co.uk  
sales@debitfinance.co.uk  
01908 422 026

WWW.DEBITFINANCE.CO.UK

## DIRECT DEBIT COLLECTION



www.harlandsgroup.co.uk

**Maximum Revenue, Minimum Hassle**

We don't just process your payments, we manage your memberships so you can manage your facilities more effectively...

- Maximise profitability
- Reduce admin time
- Unlock the potential in your staff
- Increase income

01444 449 157 sales@harlandsgroup.co.uk

WWW.HARLANDSGROUP.CO.UK

## EXERCISE EQUIPMENT

### THE FUNCTIONAL FITNESS SPECIALISTS

+44 (0)1553 763285  
jordanfitness.com  
sales@jordanfitness.co.uk

Jordan™

WWW.JORDANFITNESS.COM

## EXERCISE EQUIPMENT



Service and sales of equipment

- Fitness Equipment Servicing
- Sportshall Servicing
- Equipment Sales
- Parts Sales



Call: 0845 402 2456 www.servicesport.co.uk

WWW.SERVICESPORT.CO.UK

## FLOORING

### GYM FLOORING & ACOUSTIC SOLUTIONS



Contact us now:

Office: +44 (0) 1706 260 220

Email: Sales@TVS-Group.co.uk



**TVS GROUP**

SPORT | FITNESS | PLAY | ACOUSTICS

www.TVS-Group.co.uk

WWW.TVS-GROUP.CO.UK

## FUNCTIONAL TRAINING / FLOORING

Regupol®

### IMPACT SOUND INSULATION | GYM FLOORING



INFO@BERLEBURGER.DE • WWW.EVERROLL.BIZ

BSW

WWW.EVERROLL.BIZ

## FUNCTIONAL TRAINING / FLOORING

**TARAFLEX**  
SPORTS

High Performance Fitness Flooring  
Recognised Brand Trusted Quality



www.gerflor.co.uk

**Gerflor**  
theflooringurus

WWW.GERFLOR.CO.UK

## LOCKERS & INTERIORS

**CRAFTSMAN**



- Changing Rooms
- Treatment Rooms
- Lighting & Interiors
- Bespoke Storage & Lockers

sales@cqlockers.co.uk

+44 (0)800 030 6082

WWW.CQLOCKERS.CO.UK

## LOCKERS & INTERIORS

**CROWN**  
SPORTS LOCKERS

Tel: 01803 555885

Email: sales@crownsportslockers.co.uk

Web: www.crownsportslockers.co.uk

### MORE THAN JUST LOCKERS

Changing Rooms - Treatment Rooms - Washrooms



WWW.CROWNSPORTSLOCKERS.CO.UK

## LOCKERS & INTERIORS

### FITLOCKERS

Quality Affordable Locker Room Solutions

**T: 01923 770435**

[sales@fitlockers.co.uk](mailto:sales@fitlockers.co.uk) [www.fitlockers.co.uk](http://www.fitlockers.co.uk)

[WWW.FITLOCKERS.CO.UK](http://WWW.FITLOCKERS.CO.UK)

## LOCKERS & INTERIORS



**RIDGEWAY**  
furniture manufacturing  
[ridgewayfm.com](http://ridgewayfm.com)

tel 01525 384298 [sales@ridgewayfm.com](mailto:sales@ridgewayfm.com)

[WWW.RIDGEWAYFM.COM](http://WWW.RIDGEWAYFM.COM)

## LOCKERS & INTERIORS



- LOCKERS
- BENCHES
- PADLOCKS
- CUBICLES
- VANITIES
- SERVICING

Contact us today for further information

T: 0203 651 1500

E: [info@safespacelockers.co.uk](mailto:info@safespacelockers.co.uk)

[www.safespacelockers.co.uk](http://www.safespacelockers.co.uk)



**SAFE SPACE**  
THE CHANGING ROOM EXPERTS

[WWW.SAFESPACELOCKERS.CO.UK](http://WWW.SAFESPACELOCKERS.CO.UK)

## RETAILS SOLUTIONS



YOUR COMPLETE RETAIL SOLUTION



0121 550 2700

[sales@srsleisure.com](mailto:sales@srsleisure.com)

[www.srsleisure.com](http://www.srsleisure.com)

## SALES & MARKETING

GET MEMBERS...



**memberdrive**

...KEEP MEMBERS

**myzone**



0115 777 3333 [WWW.CFM.NET](http://WWW.CFM.NET)

[WWW.CFM.NET](http://WWW.CFM.NET)

To book your advert  
call the sales team on  
**+44 (0)1462 431385**





**SIBEC<sup>19</sup>**

UK

**2-3 May 2019**

The Belfry, Wishaw, West Midlands, UK

[www.sibecuk.com](http://www.sibecuk.com)



**SIBEC<sup>19</sup>**

Europe

**5-8 November 2019**

The Westin Dragonara Resort,

St. Julians, Malta

[www.sibeceu.com](http://www.sibeceu.com)

## What do you get at SIBEC?

- Guaranteed pre-qualified audience of key decision makers
- Pre-set appointments with buyers of your choice
- Limited competition
- 3 full days of exceptional networking
- Unparalleled value for money
- High Quality Seminar Program



I think will be my 5th year at SIBEC and from both a business and personal perspective there are a number of reasons why I continue to attend yearly-

1. It is one of the best business networking events I have attended in the industry and year on year continues to put me in touch with new suppliers and buyers that consistently open my eyes to further business opportunities.
2. It allows me to be a source of referral for any of our existing suppliers who are looking to work with other operators.
3. It gives me the opportunity to meet up and socialise with other industry leaders within their field.



**Michelle Dand,**  
Group Health & Fitness Manager,  
David Lloyd Leisure Ltd

For more information about  
**SIBEC** please contact:

**David Zarb Jenkins**

Email: [dzarbjenkins@questex.com](mailto:dzarbjenkins@questex.com)

Tel: +356 9944 8862



**SIBEC**

[www.sibec.com](http://www.sibec.com)



**HOTEC**

[www.hoteceu.com](http://www.hoteceu.com)



**SPATEC**

[www.spateceu.com](http://www.spateceu.com)



# COLOURS SPEAK LOUDER THAN WORDS

Attract more riders to your cycling classes and keep them coming back with our revolutionary CXP Target Training Cycle. Only CXP combines refined ergonomics, superior comfort, streamlined serviceability and all-original programming with an LED wrap that uses vibrant colours to precisely measure effort and keep everyone on track for their goals. Riders can measure watts, calories, heart rate and distance, leading to tangible results for members and enhanced engagement for you.



MatrixFitnessUK



MatrixFitnessUK



MatrixFitnessUK

[matrixfitness.co.uk](http://matrixfitness.co.uk)